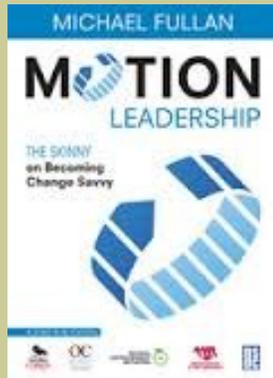


GREG WOITAS

EADM 826

UNIVERSITY OF  
SASKATCHEWAN



<http://goo.gl/ObpaC5>

**Inside this issue:**

The Skinny	1
Change Problems	2
Change Itself	2-4
Connect Peers with Purpose	5
Capacity Building Trumps Judgmentalism	6
Learning is the Work	7
Transparency Rules	7
Love, Trust, and Resistance	8
Leadership for All	8

# Motion Leadership

THE SKINNY on Becoming Change Savvy

By Michael Fullan

## Executive Book Summary

August 21st, 2014

### SKINNY Dipping

Educational leadership is not for the faint of heart and a major influence in increasing student achievement and instilling change within a school environment. One must continue to be a lead learner and grow to increase the chances of survival and success. Fullan describes “Motion” Leadership as helping leaders to move individuals, institutions, and whole systems forward in a positive way while managing and embracing the detailed challenges inherent to the change process.

“THE SKINNY is about the naked unadorned facts - the core unobscured essence of the matter” (pg. 3).

The skinny on Motion Leadership is best described around eight elements that will be discussed in this executive book summary. The Skinny will identify key components that leaders will need to know about in order to strip away the clutter involved in change. The simplicity of the concepts will immerse you with ideas to confront real change issues and push for a positive impact in your organization. The insights to change are practical and creates an attitude of learning by doing while thinking about what you are doing. The Skinny is a mind set (attitude) and action set (practical/grounded) where an entire system must be engaged, not just isolated individuals. “Effective change can’t be accomplished overnight, but the skinny change agents can accomplish quality implementation with high impact in remarkable short time frames - much shorter than we hitherto thought possible” (pg. 7).

### About the Author.....Michael Fullan

- Former Dean and professor emeritus at the Ontario Institute for studies in education at the University of Toronto.
- Currently a special advisor to the premier and minister of education in Ontario.
- Recognized as an international authority on large scale reform, leadership, and educational change.
- Engaged in training, consulting, and advising governments around the world.
- His work is driven by the moral purpose of raising the bar and closing the gap for all students.



<http://www.michaelfullan.ca/>



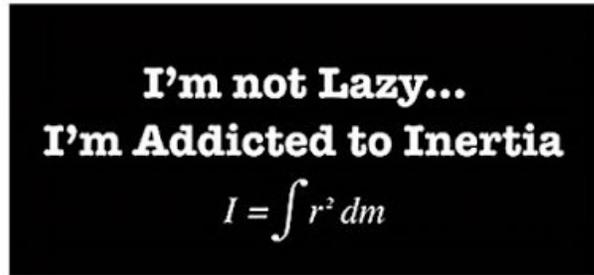
<http://www.michaelfullan.ca/>



<http://goo.gl/PwRjvC>

## Change Problems

Change problems come in a variety of sizes and are bogged down in inertia. The goal of all change leaders is to get movement in an improved direction and take the fear out of change. The change problem is ‘whole system reform’ and is focused on getting inside movement and thinking about how to change the status quo and overcome inertia. This inertia is not the lack of movement but movement of what they are already doing. When it comes to change, less is more. “The skinny is about simplicity - finding the smallest number of high leverage, easy to understand actions that unleash stunningly powerful consequences. (pg. 16). The Skinny of Motion Leadership change is searching for and using ideas with maximum impact with concise effort.



<http://goo.gl/00dbXO>

### Discussion point:

What simple changes can you implement as a leader that will make the largest impact with your teachers?

**“READY  
FIRE  
AIM”**



## Change Itself

Fullan creates a focus on increasing knowledge rather than providing tips and strategies for practicing and aspiring leaders. He uses the metaphor “**Ready, Fire, Aim**” which includes a powerful list of change savvy ideas that will have implications for all forms of leadership and change itself. Fullan’s approach targets systemic change (large scale change leadership) which includes school boards, superintendents, supervisors, educational theorists, and may appeal to local school leaders like principals and vice principals. Ready, Fire, Aim identifies nine components of change savvy ideas:



<http://www.revelstonelabs.com/blog/>

## Relationships First

Motion Leaders understand that relationships are paramount and little can be completed without trust and positive connections. The leader must be apart of the change process and learn from experiences along the way. Solid relationships and understanding the learning process will build capacity in others.



Change Savvy leadership involves:

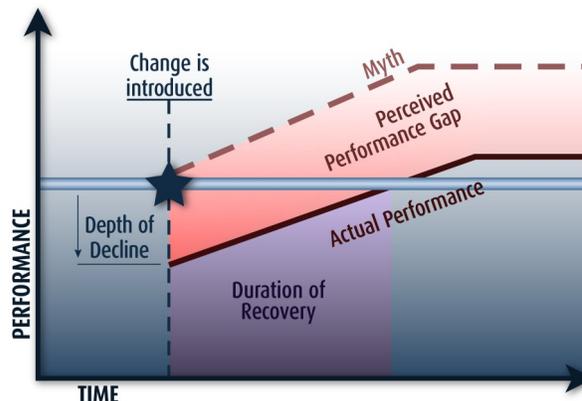
- Careful entry to the new setting.
- Listening and learning from those that have been there before.
- Engaging in fact finding and joint problem solving.
- Carefully diagnosing the situation
- Forthrightly addressing people's concerns.
- Being enthusiastic, genuine, and sincere about the change circumstances.
- Obtaining buy-in for what needs fixing
- Developing a credible plan for making that fix.



<http://goo.gl/HCCcjr>

## Honor the Implementation Dip

The implementation dips are inevitable where a decline in results may cause concern and avoidance. The changes will be difficult to spot and will be smaller than expected. The leader has an important job of reinforcing communication through the struggles to continue to encourage resilience and risk taking. "The combination of resolute leadership and empathy enables these leaders to find alternative ways when they get stuck. They demonstrate persistence and flexibility but never stray away from the core purpose" (pg. 23). Search out small successes!



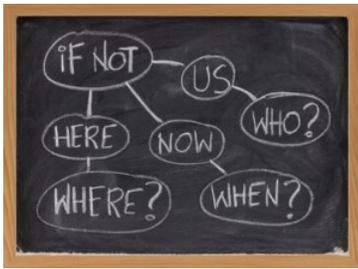
<http://goo.gl/eCcYgW>

**“Leaders have to be aware that their job is to help people get through the dip” (pg 22)**

## Beware of Fat Plans

We must be aware not to ‘over plan’ on paper but it is necessary to initiate planning at the ready stage. Leaders must consider relationships and develop clear and concise action plans that should be viewed as a learning process. It is important to remind ourselves to go easy on judgment at this point. Simplicity of plans will allow for all participants to understand the process and their role in the action. The Skinny “one page plan” may be critical in making plans as simple as possible. Less is more if you know the essence of motion leadership. The more you know, the briefer you get. That’s skinny talk!





<http://goo.gl/yVD4o6>

## Behavior Before Beliefs

Do Not overload on vision, evidence, and sense of urgency! Instead, give people new experiences in relatively nonthreatening circumstances, and build on it, especially through interaction with trusted peers. New positive experiences will lead to the sense that change is possible.

## Communication During Implementation is Paramount

**“Communication in the abstract, in the absence of action, means almost nothing” (pg. 26)**

The motion leader will understand that communication during implementation is far more important than communication prior to implementation. When all invested people listen, discuss, and debate during the process this when resilience and risk taking will be easier. By communicating, problems will be identified providing leaders an opportunity to adapt and modify the implementation game plan. The comfort to admit mistakes, provide alternative solutions, and discover safety in the process is critical.

**Discussion point:** How can you deliver communication during school change to stakeholders?

## Learn About Implementation During Implementation

Motion leaders and their implementation strategies are rarely alone. They have the ability to learn from others that find themselves in a similar situations that are further down the implementation road. We are a global learning environment and need to discover resources that will save us time and energy to prevent repeatable issues. The creation of a we-we identity will support the complexity of implementation by sharing ideas and adjusting procedures to maneuver the journey.



<http://goo.gl/xrT113>

## Excitement Prior to Implementation is Fragile

“Excitement in advance of doing something is understandable, but it does not have much of a foundation. The fall of the implementation dip will be even greater if high aspirations precede it. Premature excitement is no substitute for hard work of implementation” (pg. 28). Generating authentic positive energy focusing around the process and teamwork will help guide the sensitive issues. It is okay to meet real problems face to face, admit errors, protect your people, and celebrate success along the way. The leader and group will appreciate positive results but they must understand the highs and lows may revolve around implementation. “You have to earn and experience excitement; you can’t fake it” (pg. 28).

**Discussion point:** Think of a practical school experience where excitement prior to change caused problems?

## Take Risks and Learn



<http://goo.gl/kZo3CK>

The skinny on risk taking is for leaders to create a climate and culture that encourages action and learning from mistakes. A leader must develop a safe and caring environment that allows for failure and the ability to practice resiliency. To pursue personal and team goals, the leader must be supportive and stress new learning through experiences.



© marketoonist.com

**Discussion point:** Identify a recent personal leadership failure and how you reacted to it?

## Its Okay to be Assertive

“To know about change is to know about inertia and sometimes people and organizations need a wake up call” (pg. 30).

Fullan identified **Three Conditions of Assertive Leadership**.

1. When leaders have built trusted relationship.
2. When it turns out leaders have a good idea and
3. When they empower people from day one to help assess and shape the idea.

### Change Savvy Leaders:

- Know a great deal because they are learners.
- Respect complexity and live by the definition of wisdom - using your knowledge while doubting what you know. (Pfeffer & Sutton in Fullan, 2008)
- Combine assertiveness and humility.

### The Skinny of Change:

- To get anywhere you have to *do* something
- In doing something you need to focus on developing *skills*
- Acquisition of skills increases *clarity*
- *Clarity* results in ownership
- Doing this together with others generates *shared ownership*
- Persist no matter what - *Resilience* is your best friend

**You can't wait for success, you have to kick start it. Leadership is a mixture of authority and democracy” (pg. 30)**



<http://goo.gl/3Xla8f>

**Key Message:** All effective leaders combine resolute moral purpose with impressive empathy

## Connect Peers with Purpose

**“Top-down change doesn’t work...The skinny is that nothing succeeds like collective capacity” (pg.41)**

A leader’s role is to facilitate! It is paramount to get peers to interact on a focused basis. Every individual in a school must be part of a network to avoid the ‘island’ unto themselves phenomena. The network must be focused and link practice with outcomes. The strategy is to learn from peer success as the work becomes difficult. Collaboration is the key to getting focused and coher-

ence in an otherwise fragmented system. Leaders need to get involved and avoid dominating a situation. They push for specificity and connect instruction to practice, as well as foster transparency of outcomes. Key ideas are devoted to innovation, risk taking, leadership development and cultivating peer learning:

1. Need resolute leadership with a culture

of high expectations - no excuses, but shared focus on action.

2. Experience and build on allegiance to each other built over time
3. Professional power is unleashed
4. Conditions for sustainability are established.



<http://goo.gl/JqfjQf>

**Discussion point:** What are your two best strategies for connecting colleagues?

## Capacity Building Trumps Judgmentalism

- Improvement through constructive action requires capacity building (collective building of knowledge, skills, and disposition) and reduction of “judgmentalism”. Judgmentalism is perceiving something as not working and conveying negative, pejorative view or blaming others.
- It needs to be ‘changed/shifted from WRONG to “Yes this is hard and we need to build capacity to deal with it”’.
- Savvy leaders identify problems, are candid about their presence, yet are empathetic so the person affected is not personally judged. ie. feel good about working on and making progress with tough problems. The goal is to withhold judgement.
- You know something is wrong but maintain empathy and response for people who have not had the opportunity to develop capacity to be effective. “Judgement is best served through natural purposeful peer interaction, capacity building, and daily work with a focus on use of transparent data” (pg.52).
- The more judgement is parked, the more capacity building is center stage so actual improvement and internal accountability gets embedded where individuals and group feel and take responsibility for their own progress and are self propelled to corrective action.
- The goal is to make learning the work you do day after day so you and those around you work to instill real change in your local environment.



Remember your gestures count!

## Learning is the Work

- The only way to get depth in the daily workplace is through learning in the setting in which you work. (pg. 53) Gladwell gives the 10 000 hour rule that brings expert knowledge.
- People need to develop and get better at being more specific and precise about putting high yield learning practices into place in combination with the willingness to innovate and be creative to seek continuous improvement.
- Leaders must encourage but be patient to understand that ‘learning is the work’ is challenging until people gain competence in their skills. As you develop capacity, the work gets easier -Simplicity is key!
- Change savvy leaders **MUST** be consistent and innovative in their search for continuous improvements.

$$8 \times 5 \times 52 \times 4.8 = 10,000 \text{ HRS.}$$

hours days weeks years

MyColorMusic.com



<http://goo.gl/4MiAaF>

## Transparency Rules

**“Change savvy leaders always know that you can’t directly make people change. You create a system where positive change is virtually inevitable”**  
(pg. 62)

- Transparency is about openness of results in all its subcategories and deprivatization of practice. (pg. 59)
- You can’t change without understanding what is being done and who in the organization is experiencing success.
- There is an obvious connection between transparency and nonjudgmentalism. People become closed and reserved with increased judgment.
- Relational coordination is a key concept: measured by shared goals, shared knowledge, mutual response, frequent and timely communication and problem solving communication.
- Leaders need to get better by
  - A. Mobilizing peer power
  - B. Specialize in building capacity over judgement
  - C. Make learning the work
  - D. Trust transparency
- Trusting transparency is a skill and a stance. It is one of the most sophisticated components of leadership



<http://goo.gl/QnNlmg>

**Discussion point:** What is your biggest fear about transparency in your school?

## Love, Trust, and Resistance

“Love your Employees!” (Fullan) There is a general feeling that people respond according to how they are treated. People want to go the extra mile if the work is meaningful and they feel supported by the leader. Trust is powerful! Two major components of trust are: **integrity** (sincerity, reliability, honesty) and **competence** (skill, effectiveness). A savvy leader will have a balance of both attributes. There will always be some resistance and leaders need to take the time to listen and seek different opinions in order to grow and honor the process. There is power in knowing change itself as purposeful peer interaction, non judgmental capacity building, learning is the work, transparency of data and practice. These stances and strategies synergize support and pressure as an almost irresistible force. “Learn to combine love, trustworthiness, and empathetic but firm handling of resistance, and you will be rewarded by the speed of change. Complex becomes simply powerful.” (pg.73)



### Leadership For All

“Motion leadership changes context for the very reason that context is everything” (pg.77)

- ⇒ Leaders need to know about understanding and working with change.
- ⇒ An indicator of success is when scores of practitioners using the ideas come to internalize the change/concept in a way that they can articulate the theory in action better than the best academics.
- ⇒ There is a need to develop system/structures that support building skills and competencies as individuals work with insights gained.
- ⇒ Leaders have two responsibilities: to be learning themselves and to teach others. Recent leadership development approaches are job embedded with context embedded in everything. The skinny on change is to unclutter the fat to a very small number of gems that are simultaneously simple and powerful.

Leaders become great, not because of their power, but because of their ability to empower others.

~John Maxwell

[www.gauraw.com](http://www.gauraw.com)

**Discussion point:** Why is Motion Leadership important to create a positive legacy for oneself?

### Motion Leadership Extras....



[Click to view THE SKINNY](#)



<https://twitter.com/motionleader>

<https://twitter.com/MichaelFullanI>

Fullan, M., (2010). Motion leadership: the skinny on becoming change savvy. Thousand oaks, CA: Corwin press.