Maximizing Leadership for Change

Michael Fullan

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MichaelFullan.ca

Overview

Welcome to the workshop. Our goal is to provide an update of the ideas from some of the key work that we are engaged in in partnership with schools and school systems around the world. We base our work on three fundamental assumptions:

1. The Moral Imperative Realized
   (raise the bar and close the gap for all students on deep learning goals);
2. Whole System Involvement
   (100% of schools and jurisdictions are engaged);
3. Precision and Practicality
   (clear strategies that become jointly owned).

We have organized this session around five modules:

Module I	The Leader in You	p. 1
Module II	Professional Cultures	p. 13
Module III	Leading Professional Capital	p. 23
Module IV	The Leader and Technology	p. 33
Module V	Closing	p. 43
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Please feel free to reproduce and use the material in this booklet with your staff and others.

2013

MOTION LEADERSHIP

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Notes

1 The Leader in You

Choosing the Right/Wrong Drivers

Four Criteria:

1. Foster intrinsic motivation
2. Engage teachers and students in continuous improvement
3. Inspire collective or teamwork
4. Affect all teachers and students

Right vs Wrong Drivers

Right

- Capacity building
- Collaborative work
- Pedagogy
- Systemness

Wrong

- Accountability
- Individual teacher and leadership quality
- Technology
- Fragmented strategies

Good Accountability

- Is a function of good data, used as a strategy for improvement
- Requires non-judgmentalism
- Depends on widespread transparency
- Produces strong 'internal accountability' which in turn produces strong public accountability
- Fuses assessment and instruction

Capacity Building

- Focus on the development of individual and collective competencies essential for improvement at school and district levels.

Human vs Social Capital

- Team work trumps individual work (do both).
- Be careful: focusing on school principal competencies and professional development of teachers is NOT the driver (it is an enabler).
- 'Learning is the work' is the driver, not personnel decisions.

Technology vs Pedagogy

- The main investment strategy has been 'buy, buy, buy'.
- It has limited impact unless instructional practice drives the use of technology.
- The digital revolution is now unstoppable: technology for learning becomes 24/7; the roles of student and teacher are flipped.

Fragmented vs Systemic

- It's a system thing.
- You need inspirational focus, good diagnosis and a coherent plan of action (the latter based on the four right drivers, using the so-called wrong drivers judiciously).

—Mourshed, et al, 2010

Leadership Tip

Coherence Making

- Alignment is about structures; coherence is about mindsets
- System coherence is about shared mindsets
- A tool is only as good as the mindset using it

Elements of Coherence

- A small number of ambitious goals
- A focus on instruction and the student achievement agenda
- Continuous capacity building around that agenda
- Cultivation of 'systemness' on the part of all

Impact of Coherence

- Focus/Consistency
- Sustained attention on improved practice
- Multiple reinforcing energies to get results
- Better performance
- Large numbers of people talk the walk as they walk the talk

Seven Competencies for School Leadership

1. Challenges the Status Quo
2. Builds Trust through Clear Communication and Expectations
3. Creates a Commonly Owned Plan for Success
4. Focuses on Team over Self
5. Has a High Sense of Urgency for Change and Sustainable Results
6. Commits to Continuous Improvement for Self
7. Builds External Networks and Partnerships

—Kirtman, 2013

Task

- Complete the Lyle Kirtman's Self Assessment on the *Seven Competencies for School Leadership*.

Self-Evaluation Resources

Assessment Template:
Kirtman's Seven Competencies for School Leadership

Name of Person Self-Assessing _____ Date _____

SELF REFLECTION

1. Challenges the Status Quo

Competency	Self-Rating (Circle One) Target for Improvement				Strength	Score
Maintain focus on a vision for success	1	2	3	4	5	
Prioritize getting results over following traditions	1	2	3	4	5	
Question or challenge current practices	1	2	3	4	5	
Take risks to achieve results	1	2	3	4	5	

COMPETENCY SCORE 'A'

Competency Summary for "Challenges the Status Quo"				
Ratings	Vision for Success	Results over Traditions	Challenges Current Practices	Takes Risks to Achieve Results
1 = Target for Improvement				
2 = Needs Improvement				
3 = Low Improvement Priority				
4 = Strength Most of the Time				
5 = Strength to Build On				

2. Builds Trust Through Clear Communication and Expectations

Competency	Self-Rating (Circle One) Target for Improvement				Strength	Score
Is direct and honest about performance expectations	1	2	3	4	5	
Follows through with actions on all commitments	1	2	3	4	5	
Makes sure there is a clear understanding based on written and verbal communications	1	2	3	4	5	
Is comfortable dealing with conflict	1	2	3	4	5	

COMPETENCY SCORE 'B'

Competency Summary for "Builds Trust Through Clear Communication and Expectations"				
Ratings	Direct about Expectations	Follows Through	Ensures Clear Understanding of Communications	Comfortable Dealing with Conflict
1 = Target for Improvement				
2 = Needs Improvement				
3 = Low Improvement Priority				
4 = Strength Most of the Time				
5 = Strength to Build On				

3. Creates a Commonly Owned Plan for Success

Competency	Self-Rating (Circle One) Target for Improvement				Strength	Score
Creates written plans with input of stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5	
Ensures that people buy into the plan	1	2	3	4	5	
Monitors implementation of the plan	1	2	3	4	5	
Develops clear measurement for each goal in the plan	1	2	3	4	5	
Adjusts the plan based on new data and clearly communicates changes	1	2	3	4	5	
Creates short- and long-term plans	1	2	3	4	5	

COMPETENCY SCORE 'C'

Competency Summary for "Creates a Commonly Owned Plan for Success"						
Ratings	Creates Written Plans with Stakeholders	Ensures That People Buy In	Monitors Implemen-tation	Adjusts the Plan Based on New Data	Develops Clear Measurement for Each Goal	Creates Short- and Long -term Plans
1 = Target for Improvement						
2 = Needs Improvement						
3 = Low Improvement Priority						
4 = Strength Most of the Time						
5 = Strength to Build On						

4. Focuses on Team over Self

Competency	Self-Rating (Circle One) Target for Improvement				Strength	Score
Hires the best people for the team	1	2	3	4	5	
Commits to the ongoing development of a high-performance leadership team	1	2	3	4	5	
Builds a team environment	1	2	3	4	5	
Seeks critical feedback	1	2	3	4	5	
Empowers staff to make decisions and get results	1	2	3	4	5	
Supports the professional development of all staff	1	2	3	4	5	

COMPETENCY SCORE 'D'

Competency Summary for "Focuses on Team over Self"						
Ratings	Hires the Best	Commits to Ongoing Team Development	Builds a Team Environment	Seeks Critical Feedback	Empowers Staff to Make Decisions	Supports Professional Development
1 = Target for Improvement						
2 = Needs Improvement						
3 = Low Improvement Priority						
4 = Strength Most of the Time						
5 = Strength to Build On						

5. Has a High Sense of Urgency for Change and Sustainable Results in Improving Achievement

Competency	Self-Rating (Circle One) Target for Improvement				Strength	Score
Is able to move initiatives ahead quickly	1	2	3	4	5	
Can be very decisive	1	2	3	4	5	
Uses instructional data to support needed change	1	2	3	4	5	
Builds systemic strategies to ensure sustainability of change	1	2	3	4	5	
Sets a clear direction for the organization	1	2	3	4	5	
Is able to deal with and manage change effectively	1	2	3	4	5	

COMPETENCY SCORE 'E'

Competency Summary for "Has a High Sense of Urgency for Change and Sustainable Results in Improving Achievement"						
Ratings	Move Initiatives Quickly	Can Be Very Decisive	Uses Instructional Data to Support Change	Builds Systemic Strategies	Sets Clear Direction	Able to Deal With and Manage Change
1 = Target for Improvement						
2 = Needs Improvement						
3 = Low Improvement Priority						
4 = Strength Most of the Time						
5 = Strength to Build On						

6. Commits to Continuous Improvement for Self

Competency	Self-Rating (Circle One) Target for Improvement				Strength	Score
Has a high sense of curiosity for new ways to get results	1	2	3	4	5	
Possesses a willingness to change current practices for themselves and others	1	2	3	4	5	
Listens to all team members to change practices to obtain results	1	2	3	4	5	
Takes responsibility for their own actions—no excuses	1	2	3	4	5	
Has strong self-management and self-reflecting skills	1	2	3	4	5	
Is able to deal with and manage change effectively	1	2	3	4	5	

COMPETENCY SCORE 'F'

Competency Summary for "Commits to Continuous Improvement for Self"					
Ratings	High Sense of Curiosity	Willingness to Change Current Practices	Listens to All Team Members	Takes Responsibility for Actions	Strong Self-Management and Self-Reflection Skills
1 = Target for Improvement					
2 = Needs Improvement					
3 = Low Improvement Priority					
4 = Strength Most of the Time					
5 = Strength to Build On					

7. Builds External Networks and Partnerships

Competency	Self-Rating (Circle One) Target for Improvement				Strength	Score
Sees their role as a leader on a broad base manner outside the work environment and community walls	1	2	3	4	5	
Understands their role as being a part of a variety of external networks for change and improvement	1	2	3	4	5	
Strong ability to engage people inside and outside in two-way partnerships	1	2	3	4	5	
Uses technology to expand and manage a network of resource people	1	2	3	4	5	

COMPETENCY SCORE 'G'

Competency Summary for "Builds External Networks and Partnerships"				
Ratings	Sees Role as Leader on a Broad Base	Understands Role for Change and Improvement	Strong Ability to Engage People	Uses Technology to Expand and Manage Network
1 = Target for Improvement				
2 = Needs Improvement				
3 = Low Improvement Priority				
4 = Strength Most of the Time				
5 = Strength to Build On				

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY SUMMARY

How Competent a Leader Are You?

Competency	Total Possible Score	Your Item Score
1. Challenges the status quo	20	
2. Builds trust through clear communication and expectations	20	
3. Creates a commonly owned plan for success	30	
4. Focuses on team over self	30	
5. Has a high sense of urgency for change and sustainable results in improving achievement	30	
6. Has a commitment to continuous improvement for self	30	
7. Builds external networks and partnerships	20	
TOTAL	180	

TOTAL COMPETENCY SCORE

WHAT YOUR SCORE INDICATES	
A score of …	**Indicates that you are …**
180-120 points	A strong and competent principal-leader
119-80 points	A capable principal-leader who needs development in selected targeted areas
79 points or below	A principal with potential who needs development in multiple targeted competencies

- What is interesting?
- What questions do you have?

Notes

Task: 'Say Something'

Strong Teams, Strong Schools

- With your Say Something Partner, read the following article 'Strong Teams, Strong Schools'. Together, decide on a mid-point for reflections.
- Use the advance organizer to record the key ideas from the article.
- Have a brief discussion to summarise your observations, identify a key point, make a connection to your own work, share thinking about a new idea or raise a question about a concept or strategy.

Strong Teams, Strong Schools Advance Organizer: What? So What? Now What?	
What? Identify the key points.	
So What? What are the implications?	
Now What? What should we do now that we have this knowledge?	

theme COLLABORATION

STRONG TEAMS, STRONG SCHOOLS

TEACHER-TO-TEACHER COLLABORATION CREATES SYNERGY THAT BENEFITS STUDENTS

By Dennis Sparks

If you want to go quickly, go alone; if you want to go far, go together. — African proverb

You must undertake something so great that you cannot accomplish it unaided. — Phillips Brooks

Schools rise and fall based on the quality of the teamwork that occurs within their walls. Well-functioning leadership and teaching teams are essential to the continuous improvement of teaching and learning. That is particularly true when schools have clearly articulated, stretching aspirations for the learning of all their students. Effective teams strengthen leadership, improve teaching and learning, nurture relationships, increase job satisfaction, and provide a means for mentoring and supporting new teachers and administrators.

Schools will improve for the benefit of every student only when every leader and every teacher is a member of one or more strong teams that create synergy in problem solving, provide emotional and practical support, distribute leadership to better tap the talents of members of the school community, and promote the interpersonal accountability that is necessary for continuous improvement. Such teamwork not only benefits students, it also creates the "supportive leadership" and the process and time for meaningful collaboration that enable teachers to thrive and are better able to address the complex challenges of their work.

In *Leading for Results* (Sparks, 2007), I wrote: "A widely held view of instructional improvement is that good teaching is primarily an individual affair and that principals who view themselves as instructional leaders promote it by interacting one-on-one with each teacher to strengthen his or her efforts in the classroom. The principal is like the hub of a wheel with teachers at the end of each spoke. Communication about instruction moves back and forth along the spoke to the hub but not around the circumference of the wheel."

Such a form of instructional leadership, however, fails to tap the most important source of instructional improve-

ment in schools — teacher-to-teacher professional learning and collaboration. "[S]ome of the most important forms of professional learning," I observed in *Leading for Results,* "occur in daily interactions among teachers in which they assist one another in improving lessons, deepening understanding of the content they teach, analyzing student work, examining various types of data on student performance, and solving the myriad of problems they face each day."

DEFINING EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK

Simply labeling a group of people a team (or a professional learning community) rather than a committee or task force does not, however, make it a genuine team. To address this issue, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District near Rochester, N.Y., developed a rubric based on Patrick Lencioni's *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* (2002) (see box above) to enable it to better understand teamwork and to chart the district's progress in developing effective teams. (See "Key characteristics of effective teams" on p. 30.)

The Rush-Henrietta rubric lists four key characteristics: clarity of purpose, accountability, team structure, and trust. Each key characteristic is defined by a number of indicators. For instance, indicators of effective team structures include "uses protocols to help guide the group work and provide a consistent framework" and "has agreements in place that are clear, purposeful, and understood." Accountability asks team members to be "committed to decisions and plans of actions" and asks them to "hold one another accountable for delivering against the plans agreed to and feel a sense of obligation to the team for its progress."

Lencioni's 5 dysfunctions of a team

- Inattention to results.
- Avoidance of accountability.
- Lack of commitment.
- Fear of conflict.
- Absence of trust.

Source: Lencioni, 2002.

A starting point for teams is to assess the quality of teamwork in your setting using the Rush-Henrietta rubric, the team assessment provided by Patrick Lencioni in *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, or other tools you may have available to you. Better yet, to stimulate professional learning and teamwork, develop a rubric with your team using the Rush-Henrietta document as a starting point. You may want to make separate assessments for the leadership team of which you are a part and teacher instructional teams, which may go by other names like "professional learning community."

REFERENCES

Lencioni, P. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team: A leadership fable.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Sparks, D. (2007). *Leading for results: Transforming teaching, learning, and relationships in schools* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

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Dennis Sparks (thinkingpartner@gmail.com) serves as a thinking partner to educators and learning teams and is the emeritus executive director of NSDC (now Learning Forward). This article was previously published as a blog post at http://dennissparks.wordpress.com, where Sparks writes regularly about transforming teaching, learning, and relationships. ■

theme COLLABORATION

Key characteristics of effective teams

Starting out	Developing	Deepening	Sustaining
Acquiring information and beginning to use ideas.	Experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment.	Well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits.	Introducing new developments and re-evaluating quality have become a way of life.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEAMS	Starting out	Developing	Deepening	Sustaining
CLARITY OF PURPOSE				
In a team with clarity of purpose: • There are clearly defined, transparent goals aligned with the mission and vision of the district. • All team members are committed to these goals and to a clearly articulated plan of action. • Goals are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (SMART). • There is shared clarity about how the work of the team will affect student achievement.				
ACCOUNTABILITY				
A team focused on accountability: • Is committed to decisions and plans of action. • Holds one another accountable for delivering against the plans agreed to and feels a sense of obligation to the team for its progress. • Focuses on the achievement of collective results for student learning. • Reviews, studies, interprets, and acts on data. • Willingly reviews its progress, can describe its work to others, and welcomes feedback and suggestions. • Identifies potential problems quickly by questioning one another's approaches without hesitation. • Engages in formal monitoring of progress on SMART goals.				
TEAM STRUCTURE				
A team with effective team structures: • Has observable processes in action when the team is working and meeting. • Has defined roles and responsibilities for members; however, the roles and responsibilities can and should be shared. • Uses protocols to help guide group work and provide a consistent framework. • Has agreements in place that are clear, purposeful, and understood. These agreements drive meetings, the intent being to maximize time and efficiency. • Has an identified facilitator, as well as secondary facilitators, who keep the team focused on the goals. Meetings have a start and end time, as well as an agenda. • Has an understanding of how decisions will be made. • Engages regularly in reflection on the content and process of team meetings and celebrates progress.				
TRUST				
Members of trusting teams: • Have discussions, with the encouragement of different viewpoints, about how to reach goals. Team members have the courage to share their viewpoint, even if it varies from the majority of the group. Team members are open-minded, listen, and give colleagues a chance to speak. Respectful dialogue is the norm. • Are able to engage in "unfiltered conflict" around ideas. • Admit weaknesses and mistakes and ask for help. • Accept questions and input about their areas of responsibility. • Give one another the benefit of the doubt before arriving at a negative conclusion. • Take risks in offering feedback and assistance. • Appreciate and tap into one another's skills and experiences. • Offer and accept apologies without hesitation. • Look forward to meetings and opportunities to work as a group.				

Portions adapted from: Lencioni, P. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team: A leadership fable.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Source: Rush-Henrietta Central School District.

Aligning Professional Learning, Performance Management and Effective Teaching

Peter Cole, CSE Seminar Series Paper 217, September 2012

What are the Characteristics of Effective Professional Learning?

Effective professional learning focuses on developing the core attributes of an effective teacher. It enhances teachers' understanding of the content that they teach and equips them with a range of strategies that enable their students to learn that content. It is directed towards providing teachers with the skills to teach and assess for deep understanding, and to develop students' metacognitive skills.

Studies of effective professional learning have delineated several characteristics found to be related to increased teacher capacity. One synthesis of various 'best practice' professional learning design principles (McRae et al, 2001) concludes that, to be effective, professional learning needs to be:

- embedded in or directly related to the work of teaching;
- grounded in the content of teaching;
- organised around collaborative problem solving; and
- integrated into a comprehensive change process.

Another concludes that

> ... to promote the kind of teacher learning that leads to improvement in teaching, professional development should concentrate on instruction and student outcomes in teachers' specific schools; provide opportunities for collegial inquiry, help, and feedback; and connect teachers to external expertise while also respecting teachers' discretion and creativity. (Newmann et al, 2000)

It has also been suggested that effective professional learning

> ... focuses on concrete classroom applications of general ideas; it exposes teachers to actual practice rather than to descriptions of practice; it involves opportunities for observation, critique, and reflection; it involves opportunities for group support and collaboration; and it involves deliberate evaluation and feedback by skilled practitioners with expertise about good teaching. (Elmore and Burney, 1997)

This research suggests that there is an emerging consensus about the shifts in practice that are needed to make professional learning more effective in bringing about teaching and learning improvements across a school. There appears to be a broad agreement that professional learning primarily should be school-based and school-managed, and be focused on improving teaching practice. It is also broadly agreed that schools need to become learning communities, in which professional learning is a part of the teacher's everyday work and is structured in ways that enable teachers to focus on how to become more effective practitioners.

However, just because professional learning is school-based and school-managed does not necessarily guarantee that it will impact on teaching practice in ways that produce school improvement. If schools simply replicate the information-giving sessions typically provided at conferences, if they require all teachers to attend, regardless of their learning need; and if they use presenters with less expertise than the presenters used by external professional learning providers, they are likely to provoke teacher resentment and gain very little benefit. School-based and school-managed professional learning needs to be constructed around what we know about effective professional learning practices and effective teaching practices.

Table 1 contains a summary of some of the **reorientation** needed in professional learning practice, to make it more effective.

Table 1. Professional learning practices that need to be strengthened

Traditional practice	Practice strengthened by reorientation
Professional learning is an isolated event triggered by the individual teacher.	Professional learning is a routine practice within the school, involving all teachers.
Professional learning usually equates to attendance at an externally-provided conference or workshop.	Professional learning is promoted within the school by instructional coaches, structured meetings and forums, teaching demonstrations, workshops conducted by teachers and external experts, and other routine opportunities for formal and informal professional discussions.
The professional learning focus is on the acquisition of educational knowledge (eg, new theories, new policies and new research findings).	The professional learning focus is on the implementation of teaching strategies and techniques that make the biggest difference to student learning.

It should be noted that the items in the left-hand column are not replaced by those in the right-hand column; rather it is suggested that the practices in the right-hand column are to be given greater emphasis than those in the left-hand column. Indeed, it might not be possible to achieve the practices in the right-hand column without first experiencing the practices in the left-hand column.

For example, it is likely that teachers, who are astute at regularly sourcing workshops where expert advice is provided that enhances their curriculum content knowledge and guides their teaching practice, would deliver engaging and effective lessons. The problem, though, is that few teachers can be afforded the opportunity to attend external professional learning events regularly; not all teachers are skilled enough to transfer into their own classroom practice what they heard or saw once at a workshop; and the vast bulk of teachers would not be able to find a professional learning activity that was tailored to meet their particular learning needs.

Table 2 summarises some of the traditional professional learning practices that need to be **replaced** by practices that have proved to be more effective in promoting improved teaching practice.

Table 2. Professional learning practices that need to be replaced

Traditional practice	Practice replaced with the following
No expectation of contributing to colleagues' professional learning.	Contributing to colleagues' professional learning is common practice.
Individual pursuit of professional learning for individual improvement.	Individual, group and whole-school pursuit of professional learning for school improvement.
Teachers' professional learning plans are a private matter and are not made public.	Teachers' professional learning plans, and particularly the teaching practices that are the focus of these plans, are made public so that teachers with a common learning focus can support each other and teachers who may be effectively using a practice that other teachers are looking to develop can offer them assistance.
Individual teacher professional learning plans are structured around generic professional learning.	Individual, group and whole-school professional learning plans are cumulative and structured around actions designed to promote precision teaching by skilling teachers in the use of evidence-based micro-teaching strategies and techniques.
Individual professional performance plans reviewed annually.	Individual, group and whole-school professional performance milestones are reported on and professional learning plans are reviewed and renewed each term.

The practices listed in the right-hand side of Tables 1 and 2 characterise a school in which professional learning is being managed by the school to meet the improvement needs of the school. The practices in the left-hand column of Tables 1 and 2 characterise a school in which the professional learning may not be serving the improvement needs of the school. This is because the school is likely to have pockets of good practice, pockets of adequate practice and pockets of less than adequate practice.

The professional learning practices described on the right-hand side of Tables 1 and 2 encourage teachers to

> *... function as members of a community of practitioners who share knowledge and commitments, who work together to create coherent curriculum and systems that support students, and collaborate in ways that advance their combined understanding and skill.* (Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2005)

Such an outcome is desired as effective schools are learning communities where there is a culture of teacher collaboration and collective responsibility for the development of effective teaching practices and improved student learning. Being part of a learning community is not simply about the pursuit of individual learning goals it also is about contributing to the learning and knowledge base of one's colleagues and the school.