

Kansas Teacher of the Year Team Leadership Conference



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Shaping School Culture



TERRENCE E. DEAL
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Living Symbols



- *The symbolism of action.* How principals spend their time sends a powerful symbolic message. What leaders pay attention to sends a strong message of core values.
- *The symbolism of intellectual engagement.* Read the most current educational books.
- *The symbolism of writing.* Write letters to students.
- *The symbolism of communicating ideas.* Memos to staff, students, and parents are profound discussions of issues in the school, from school violence to trust, from instruction to assessment.

The Leadership Challenge



Effective school leaders are asking three basic questions:

- What is the culture of the school now: it's history, values, traditions, assumptions, and ways?
- What can I do to strengthen aspects of the culture that already fit my idea of an ideal school?
- What can be done to change or reshape the culture, when I see a need for a new direction?

Reading the Current School Culture



A school leader can get an initial reading of the current culture by posing several key questions...

- What does the school's architecture convey? How is space arranged and used? What subcultures exist inside and outside the school? Who are the recognized (and unrecognized) heroes and villains of the school? What do people say (and think) when asked what the school stands for? What events are assigned special importance? How is conflict typically defined? How is it handled? What are the key ceremonies and stories of the school? What do people wish for?

School Leaders as Symbols



Everyone watches leaders in a school. Who school leaders are – what they do, attend to, or seem to appreciate – is constantly watched by students, teachers, parents, and members of the community. Their interests and actions send powerful messages.



Whether students and teachers
think of a school as a Factory or a
Family will have powerful
implications for day to day
behavior.

Technical vs. Cultural



Too often, the technical side of leadership eclipses available time and willingness for its much-needed cultural aspects. As a result schools become sterile, incapable of touching the hearts of students and teachers, or securing the trust and confidence of parents and local residents.

Pathways to Successful Culture



- The way leaders spend their time, what they attend to, and how they direct their efforts all serve to communicate the school's values and model its principles.
- One element of the school's purpose is to make school a place that is fun and offers children special chances to enrich their lives.

Schools with Soul



In the next decade consumers' or clients' confidence and loyalty will be given to organizations with a “soul.”

“If you don't have one, you better get one quickly”.

Phi Delta Kappa Gallop Poll



- 1 in 4 people are open to an alternative to public education.
- 50% of public is open to Charter Schools.

The Future of Schools



- Students deserve the best schools we can give them – schools full of heart, soul, and ample opportunities to learn and grow.
- Reforms that bring new technologies or higher standards won't succeed without being embedded in supportive, spirit-filled cultures. Schools won't become what students deserve until cultural patterns and ways are shaped to support learning.



*School leaders can make a
difference by restoring hope, faith,
and a shared spirit to the place
called School*

Good to Great



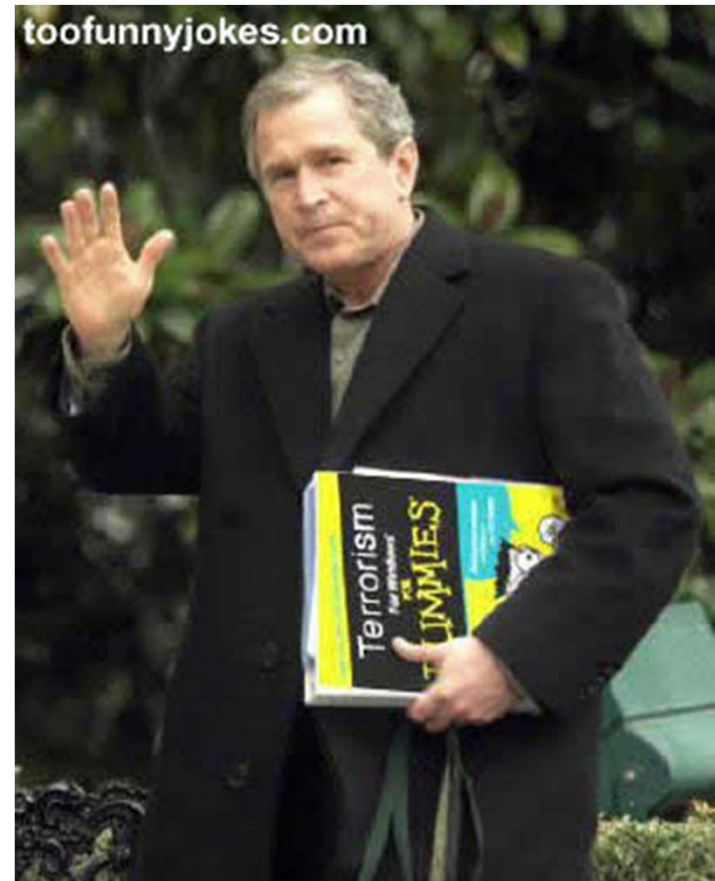
JIM COLLINS

Level 5 Leadership



**”I never stopped
trying to
become
qualified for
the job.”**

-Darwin Smith,
Kimberly-Clark Corp.



Level 5 Leaders



They exist all around us, if we just know what to look for.

Look for situations where extraordinary results exist but where no individual steps forth to claim excess credit.

Level 5 Leaders



Level 5 Leaders **look out the window** to attribute success to factors other than themselves. When things go poorly, however, they **look in the mirror** and blame themselves, taking full responsibility.

The Right People



In determining “the right people”, the good-to-great companies placed greater weight on **CHARACTER** attributes than on specific educational background, practical skills, specialized knowledge, or work experience.

Who is on the BUS



- They first got the RIGHT people on the bus, the WRONG people off the bus, the RIGHT people in the right seats, then figured out where to drive it.
- Good people will get ON the bus because of WHO is on it. Good people will also get OFF the bus because of WHO is on it.

How to be Rigorous



- *Practical Discipline #1: When in doubt, don't hire—keep looking.*
- *Practical Discipline #2: When you know you need to make a people change, act.*
- *Practical Discipline #3: Put your best people on your biggest opportunities, not your biggest problems.*

If we spend the vast majority of our time with people we love and respect—people we really enjoy being on the bus with and who will never disappoint us—then we will almost certainly have a great life, no matter where the bus goes. The people we interviewed from the good-to-great companies clearly **loved what they did**, largely because they **loved who they did it with**.



Retain faith that you will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties.

AND at the same time...

Confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.

Understanding Your Passion



You can't manufacture passion or "motivate" people to feel passionate. You can only *discover* what ignites your passion and the passions of those around you.

"I feel that I was just born to be doing this."

"I get paid to do this? Am I dreaming?"

"I look forward to getting up and throwing myself into my daily work, and I really believe in what I'm doing."

A Culture of Discipline



Most companies build their bureaucratic rules to manage the small percentage of wrong people on the bus, which in turn drives away the right people on the bus, which then increases the percentage of wrong people on the bus, which increases the need for more bureaucracy to compensate for incompetence and lack of discipline, which then further drives the right people away, and so forth.



You can change your plans
through the year, but you never
change what you measure
yourself against.

Technology as Accelerator



- Technology by itself is never a primary cause of either greatness or decline.
- When used right, technology becomes an *accelerator* of momentum, not a creator of it.

The Flywheel



Good-to-great comes about by a cumulative process—step by step, action by action, decision by decision, turn by turn of the flywheel—that adds up to sustained and spectacular results.



When people begin to feel the magic of momentum—when they begin to see tangible results, when they can *feel* the flywheel beginning to build speed—*that's* when the bulk of people line up to throw their shoulders against the wheel and push.



Question:

“What work makes you feel compelled to try to create greatness?”

If you have to ask the question, “Why should we try to make it great? Isn’t success enough?” then you’re probably engaged in the wrong line of work.



“Brick walls were not built to stop us, they were built to see how determined we are.”

-Randy Pausch, The Last Lecture

Total Leaders



CHARLES J. SCHWAHN
WILLIAM SPADY

“Maintaining the status quo is not an option; it is the kiss of death.”





Today's leaders are expected to **involve** and **empower** their people, to be **visible** to their employees and constituents, to **act with integrity**, and to be **accountable** for their organization's performance and results.

TGIF



- Total Leaders pull into the parking lot on Friday mornings wondering what they can still do this week to create significant change.
- Others pull in wondering how to keep the lid on until next week, at least.

Authentic Leader



- You have to be a person to be a leader.
- Who you are as a person will ultimately be reflected in your leadership.
- If you don't have your personal act together, don't expect to have your leadership act together.
- Developing yourself as a leader begins with personal reflection, personal assessment, and personal growth.
- Organizational change will reflect the personal change and character you model in both your personal and leadership life.
- They lead by example and by establishing the most important thing in an organizational change process: its purpose.

Check Your Character





“In the absence of organizational purpose, leadership does not exist. And if the purpose is not compelling, why would anyone want to follow?”

Cultural Leaders



- Whether or not leaders are perceptive enough to recognize it, organizations have cultures, which take root, grow, evolve, and silently control the attitudes and behaviors of organizational members even when, and perhaps especially when, no one pays them any special attention.



Cultural leaders intentionally influence their organization through the power of their presence and example, messages they convey, input from external sources they solicit, decisions they make, people and efforts they recognize, and principles they advocate and consistently uphold.

Wrong Belief



Change is too frequently represented as “what we want those other people to do.” In education, this is called “fixing the teachers” but leaving the rest of the system untouched.

Cultural Leaders



Demand a flat, nimble organization by cutting down the decision-making layers in the organization and placing authority close to where the action is. That way, they can respond more rapidly and creatively to challenges.

Quality Leaders



W. Edwards Deming believed that 94 percent of the problems in any organization are caused by the organization itself, and 6 percent are caused by the workers.

Service Leaders

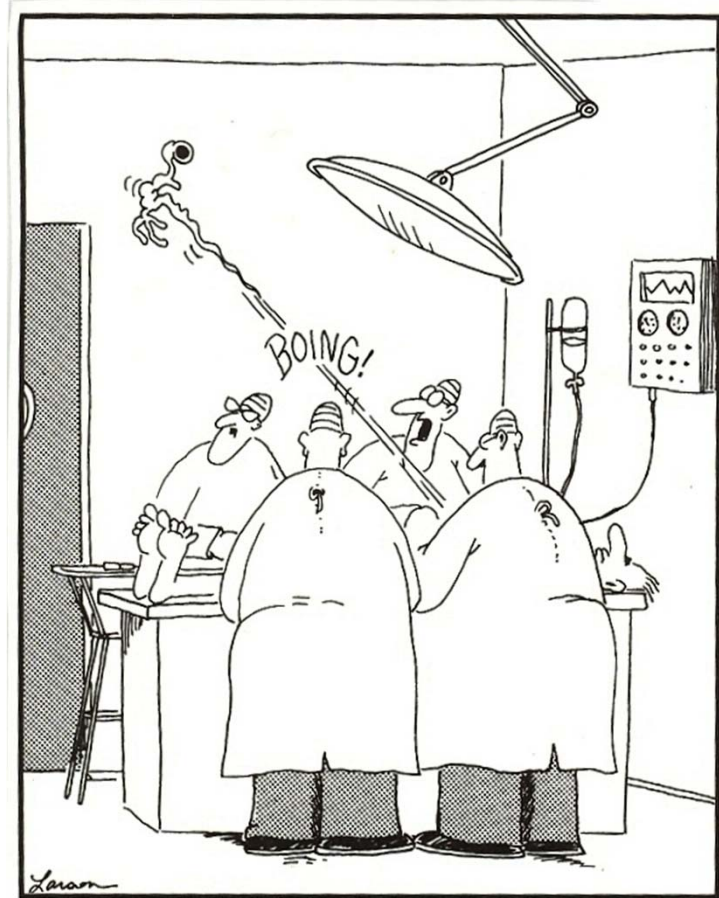


- *When push comes to shove and the integrity of organizational purpose and success are at stake, they're the first to step in.*
- *They will be the first to say that the compassionate thing to do is to deal with issues and get to the bottom of problems, not ignore them.*
- *To sidestep issues that impair the effectiveness of the organization and its members is no act of kindness.*



*Framing the vision is one thing;
keeping and managing it is
another. And that's what
service leaders were born to do.*

Clearly, service leaders are about rewarding positive contributions, so they have to know a good contribution when they see one.



"Whoa! Watch where that thing lands—
we'll probably need it."

Total Leaders



They aren't afraid to let those who haven't gotten on board know that they need to do so. They clearly state their message, which is that implementing the vision of quality learning for all students is the reason we all are allowed to work here.



We are leading the world's most important profession, and in doing so, we must take advantage of the best we know about effective leadership and systemic change.



Our times and challenges demand that education and educators reinvent themselves by adopting new ways of thinking and acting that take advantage of the best we know about our profession and our professional role as educational leaders.

Monday Morning Leadership



DAVID COTTRELL



**Your team should like, or
respect, you for the right
reasons.**

Drivers and Passengers



- As a driver (leader) you no longer have the right to “mess around.”
- You cannot join pitty parites and talk about upper management
- You lose the right to blame others

Management Land



- People quit people before they quit companies.
- Hire good employees
- Coach every member of the team to become better
- De-hire the people who aren't carrying their share of the load.



Ignoring issues puts your own integrity at risk. And if you lose your integrity, you won't be able to develop or maintain trust, the very basis of relationships.

Hire Tough



- The most important asset in your company is having the **RIGHT PEOPLE** on your team. The greatest liability in your company could be having the **WRONG PEOPLE** on your team.
- The decision you have to make is to hire tough and manage easy, or hire easy and manage tough.

2 facts about a leader:



- Your scorecard as a leader is the result of your team. You are needed; you are important. But you get paid for what your staff does, not necessarily what you do.
- You need your team more than your team needs you. The individuals in your building accomplish much more than you.

Buckets and Dippers



- Some people add water to their employees buckets.
- Some people dip water out of their employees buckets.
- Never forget that your job is to help each team member become better at the job they've chosen.

Buckets and Dippers



- A full bucket requires knowing what are the main things that are important to doing a good job.
- To keep buckets filled, you need to provide the bucket holders with feedback on how they're doing.
- Let team members know you care about them and the job they do.
- The team needs to know how well they are doing as a team.

Enter the Learning Zone



- A forceful enemy to your potential is your comfort zone. To fulfill your potential, you need to move out of your comfort zone and into the “learning zone.”
- People do not learn unless there is some form of friction, stress, or reason for them to step out of their zone.

Learning Zone Rooms



- **Reading Room:** Have the discipline to set aside time to read. You learn more by reading more.
- **Listening Room:** Executives fail due to arrogance, out-of-control egos, and insensitivity.
- **Giving Room:** You cannot succeed without giving back.



You can become a great role model for others to follow. However, most people don't want to follow someone who loses their health or their family because they work all the time. People want to follow people who are balanced in all areas, not just work.

Raising the Bar



“Your job is not to lower the bottom by adjusting for and accommodating the lowest performing employees. You should be raising the top by recognizing and rewarding superstars.”

True Leadership

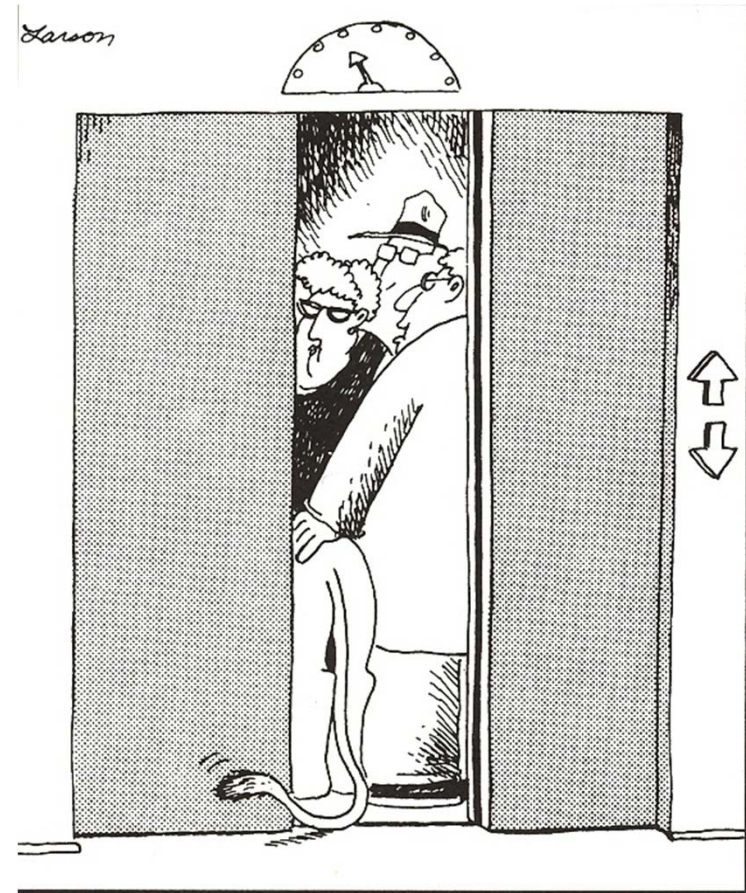


- “Doing the right thing isn’t always easy – in fact sometimes it’s real hard – but just remember that doing the right thing is always right.”
- “Everything you do matters because your team is watching... and depending on you to do the right thing.”
- “Guard your integrity as if it’s your most precious leadership possession, because that is what it is.”
- “You are the Chief Bucket-Filler, and the best way to fill buckets is with excellent communication.”

STAY POSITIVE!!



The question is not,
“Are unfair things
going to happen?”
The question is,
“How are you going
to react to whatever
happens?”



“Don’t be alarmed, folks—he’s completely harmless unless something startles him.”

What Great Principals Do Differently



TODD WHITAKER



The difference between more effective principals and their less effective colleagues is not what they KNOW. It is what they DO.



Outstanding principals know that if they have great teachers, they have a great school; without great teachers, they do not have a great school.

More importantly, all of their audiences take the same view.



All the way from kindergarten through college, the quality of the teachers determines our perceptions of the quality of the school.



There are really two ways to
improve a school significantly:

- **Get better teachers.**
- **Improve the teachers you have.**



**“If You Don’t Like Change, You are Going
to Like Irrelevance Even Less.”**

*Programs are never the solution, and they are
never the problem*



**This does not mean that no
program can encourage or support
improvement of people within our
school; however, no program
inherently leads to that
improvement.**

Who Is the Variable In the Classroom?

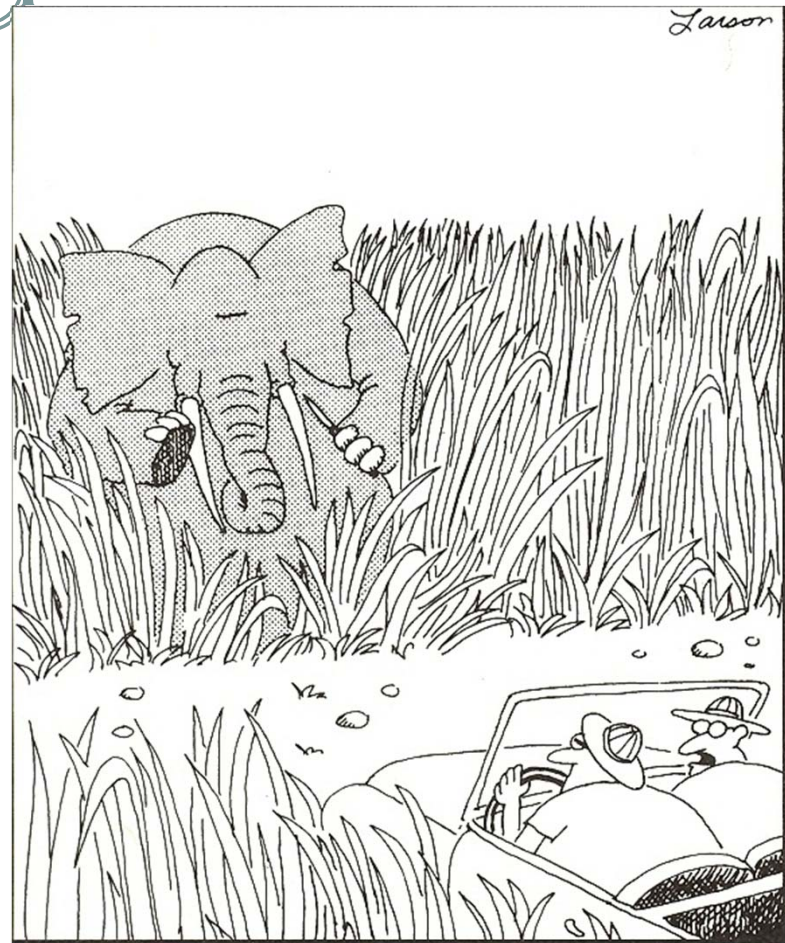
Principals know because the main variable in a classroom is *not* the students. The main variable is the teacher.



“If you’ve taught it five times the same way
and they still don’t get it, who’s not
learning?”

The Elephant

I have always believed that if there is an elephant in the room, it's important to acknowledge its presence-not just tiptoe around it, pretending it isn't there.



"Not too close, Higgins. ... This one's got a knife."

What If the Students Do Poorly?



- The variable is *how the teachers respond*. Good teachers consistently strive to improve, and they focus on something they can control-their own performance.
- Great teachers look to themselves for answers; poor teachers look elsewhere.

Hey, Who's Responsible for This School?



- Effective principals viewed themselves as responsible for all aspects of their school.
- Less effective principals more often saw factors outside the school as keys to teacher morale, program development, and staff input.

High Expectations



- Great teachers have high expectations for students but even higher expectations for themselves.
- Poor teachers have high expectations for students but much lower expectations for themselves.
- All principals have high expectations for teachers.
- The difference between average and great principals lies in *what they expect of themselves*.

Have you ever
had the feeling
that you just
couldn't learn
anymore and
get better?



"Mr. Osborne, may I be excused? My brain is full."

Treat Everyone With Respect



- One of the hallmarks of effective principals is how they treat people. Like effective teachers, effective principals treat people with respect. The real challenge is to treat everyone with respect every day—and great principals do.
- If just once in a month, or even once in a year, we choose to make a sarcastic comment or cutting remark to a student or staff member, we might as well have carved it in stone.



In general, people know the difference between right and wrong, and they want their leaders to deal with irresponsible peers. If you *always* respond appropriately and professionally, everyone else will be on your team. But the first time you do not, you may lose some of your supporters-and you may never get them back.

Take A Positive Approach Each Day



- One of the key responsibilities of an effective leader is to create a positive atmosphere.
- As leaders, our role is to continually take a positive approach. In particular, effective leaders understand the power of praise.
- The principal who sets a positive tone can influence the interactions of everyone in the school.

Never Use E-mail to Discipline





If everyone in a school is treated with respect and dignity, you may still have nothing special. However, if everyone in a school is not treated with respect and dignity, you will never have anything special. Of that, I am sure.

The Principal Is the Filter



- Effective principals understand that they are the filters for the day-to-day reality of school. Whether we are aware of it or not, our behavior sets the tone.
- When the principal sneezes, the whole school catches a cold. This is neither good nor bad; it is just the truth. Our impact is significant; our focus becomes the school's focus.

If we have great credibility and good relationships, people work to please us. If we lack credibility, people work against us.

Once we make it clear what we want, supporters will work for it and opponents will drag their feet or head the other way.

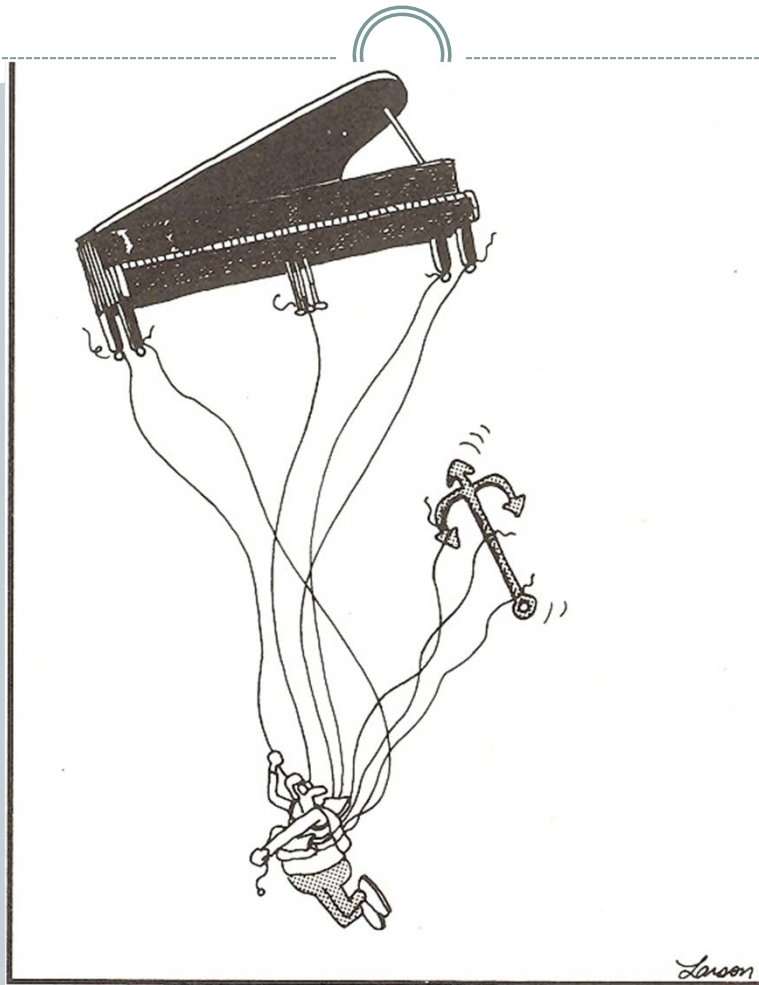
The relations we establish will determine how many are in each camp. We must keep our attention on the issues that matter, not divert our effort and energy to trivial annoyances.

This is the Worst Group of Kids We've Ever Had



We are very fortunate to work in education; sometimes we just forget how blessed we are. By consistently filtering out the negatives that don't matter and sharing a positive attitude, we can create a much more successful school. Consciously or unconsciously, *we decide* the tone of our school.

If You Panic, They all Panic



Murray didn't feel the first pangs of real panic until he pulled the emergency cord.

Teach The Teachers



- The best way to provide an exceptional learning environment for students is to give them outstanding teachers. Great principals focus on students-by focusing on teachers.
- I am convinced that most teachers do the best they know how. If we want them to do better, we must help them improve their skills and master new ones.
- As principals, we must recognize that unless we show teachers a better way, they will probably never even attempt a different instructional practice.

Teach The Teachers, cont'd



- The more we can build the skills of our teachers, the less we are drained by reacting to the results of ineffective practices.
- When teachers see us in their classrooms, they see how we expect them to interact with students. This is one of a principal's most significant jobs.
- Collaboration among classroom teachers is one of the most basic and effective ways to improve instruction.



**“The only thing worse than training
someone and losing them is not training
them and keeping them.”**

Teach Them to be Better



We Can't Teach From the Office



- Less effective principals have dozens of reasons for not having time to visit classrooms daily, or at least weekly. Great principals have an equal number of demands placed on their time. They just do not let these reasons keep them from doing what matters most: improving teacher effectiveness in their school.
- The more we can build the skills of our teachers, the less we are drained by reacting to the results of ineffective practices.

Hire Great Teachers



- It's simply impossible to improve a school by hiring people who fit right in with its average teachers.
- Great principals hire dynamic teachers and strive to keep them that way.
- Great principals look for the teachers who will be exceptional in the classroom; but more than that, they look for those who will be influential in the school.

Influencing Those Around You



Hire for Talent



- To me, talent means the total package: love of students, bright mind, positive attitude, congenial personality, great work ethic, leadership skills, charisma.
- I'd rather start with someone who has a jarful of talent and a thimbleful of technique than the other way around.

4 Out Of 3 People
Have Trouble With Fractions

There Is No Pecking Order



I would state my position clearly: “I am looking to add teachers who want to be part of the best school in the United States. I want new teachers to speak up at the very first faculty meeting if they so choose. If I did not welcome your ideas, I would not bring you on board. I value the people who work to make this school the best it can be. There is no pecking order here.”

Loyal to Whom?



- To a great principal, loyalty means making decisions based on what is best *for the student*—but more than that: what is best *for all the students*.
- Sadly, sometimes we must remove a student from a classroom or the school, not because it is best for that student, but because it is best for all the other students.

Base Every Decision on Your Best Teachers

One of the most critical differences between effective principals and other principals is where they place their focus when they make tough decisions. The best principals base every decision on their best teachers.

Who are our SUPERSTARS?



- Former students remember them as their best teachers.
- Parents regularly request these teachers for their children.
- Their peers respect these teachers.
- If they left your school, you probably would not be able to hire other teachers as good to replace them.

Your Best Teachers



- The most effective principals understand that their school will go as far as their best teachers take it.
- Before making any decision or attempting to bring about any change, effective principals ask themselves one central question: “What will my best teachers think?”



A critical hallmark of the best principals.

- They routinely consulted informal teacher leaders for input before they ever made a decision. Why? Ask yourself these two questions:
 - If my best teachers don't think something is a good idea, what are the chances that the rest of the faculty will accept it?
 - If my best teachers don't think something is a good idea, what are the chances that it is a good idea?

Not So Good Idea's



SUPERSTARS



- We ask for input from the vast majority of our faculty so they will feel a part of the decisions. We ask for input from our SUPERSTARS so we will make the best decisions.
- When we lack confidence in ourselves, we are uncomfortable having outstanding colleagues around. But if we can swallow our pride and ask them in advance when appropriate, all of us can improve our skills and practice. Something that the best principals consistently do.

Implementing a New Idea



- When we can draw on role models in our own school, the chances of expanding acceptance and implementation grow exponentially.
- Once the superstars move forward, the backbones will move with them. Even the staff members who fall in the category of “mediocre” tend to follow the crowd.
- Effective principals understand that the hardest teacher to move forward is the first one, not the last one.
- As respected role models for other staff members in the school, your superstars lead the way.

Our superstars will always be effective teachers, but if we do not value their contributions, they will limit their influence to their individual classrooms. It's as if they close their door to the school—not physically, but emotionally. As principals, we need our superstars to influence their grade level, their team, their department, and the entire school.

In Every Situation, Ask Who Is Most Comfortable And Who Is Least Comfortable

If a principal argues with a belligerent parent, who feels uncomfortable? Not the parent; hostile parents love to argue. It's the Principal who argues with a parent who feels uncomfortable and is likely to avoid the parent. The parent actually feels empowered—free to go tell everyone how the principal acted, what was said, and how the argument ended.



DELEGATION



- Principals must delegate anything that anyone else can do. If a secretary can do it, delegate; if our assistant can handle the task, pass it along. Why? Because there are so many things that *only the principal can do*.
- We must use the same rule for our highest achievers and best staff members. Don't ask them to do anything that someone else can do—because there are so many things that *only your high achievers can do*.

Grippers



We might think our grippers will be the first to go, but they seldom have other places that want them. Our best staff members can succeed anywhere, doing just about anything. If we do not take care of them, someone else will—and we will have squandered our most valuable resource.

Making it Cool to Care

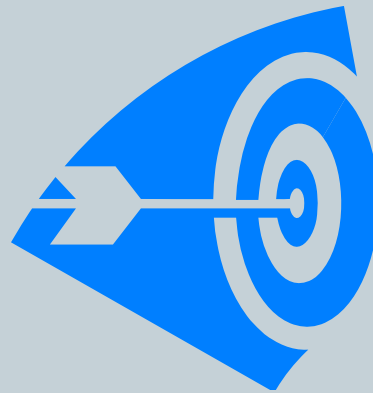


Treating everyone with respect and dignity; always taking a positive approach; teaching the teachers how to treat the students; expecting loyalty to the students; understanding that what matters is people, not programs; hiring great teachers; making every decision based on the best people—each of these helps create an environment where it is Cool To Care. If two people both make every decision on what is best for students, even if they don't agree, they will both be right.

Targets



If we become impatient and unprofessional, we are much more likely to throw darts. Though we may get over it, our targets may not. Effective principals understand this, so they aim to treat people with respect ten days out of ten.



The Start of the Year



- School leaders sometimes mistakenly assume that new staff members will absorb the culture and climate of the school through osmosis.
- As principals, we ought to express clear expectations at the first faculty meeting of the year, when we are still undefeated. This sets an important benchmark that we can revisit if people go astray later in the school year.

People, Not Programs



I'm convinced that the principal is the filter for whatever happens in a school. I believe that to improve your school, you must improve the teachers you have, or hire better teachers. I recognize that in any school, some programs work more successfully than others—but I'm sure that success comes from people, not programs.

The Principal



Being a principal is an amazing profession. It is challenging, dynamic, energizing, and draining—but most of all, it is rewarding. Our impact extends far beyond anything we can imagine. We know that our teachers talk about us; so do people throughout our community. We can decide what we want those conversations to be like.