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Promoting a Collaborative Culture for a Learning Community

Strategies for Managing Change

Activities for Professional Development

Monday, March 18, 1996

Eleanor Adam

Overview of Sessions:

This section of the Institute focuses on creating your school as a learning community for both students and staff.

Planning for both societal and educational change requires simultaneous action on many fronts: a strong research base to improve student learning, processes or models for growth planning, effective staff development and a culture that builds an internal capacity to deal with change.

Developing a collaborative culture that instills values and beliefs, promotes shared decision making and enhances teamwork as a foundation of successful reform. In our sessions today, we will look at practical strategies to build this foundation.

Readings:

- Fullan, Michael G., and Miles, Matthew B. "Getting Reform Right: What Works and What Doesn't,"
- Fullan, Michael G. "The Complexity of the Change Process."

Study Questions:

1) How do you model your values and beliefs?

2) How do you define and promote a collaborative culture?

3) How do you help staff to teach effectively, promote cultural norms, and deal with the change in education?

School as a Learning Organization

Creating a Collaborative Culture

Leadership and Vision in Jewish Education
Harvard Graduate School of Education
March, 1996

Eleanor Adam

Articles

Getting Reform Right: What Works and What Doesn't

There are as many myths as there are truths associated with change, Messrs. Fullan and Miles assert, and educators need to deepen the way they think about change. To that end, the authors analyze seven reasons change fails and offer seven "propositions" for successful change.

By Michael G. Fullan and Matthew B. Miles

AFTER YEARS of failed education reform, educators are more and more in the habit of saying that "knowledge of the change process" is crucial. But few people really know what that means. The phrase is used superficially, glibly, as if saying it over and over will lead to understanding and appropriate action.

We do believe that knowing about the change process is crucial. But there are as many myths as there are truths associated with change, and it is time to deepen the way we think about change. We need to assess our knowledge more critically and describe what we know. One needs a good deal of sophistication to grasp the fundamentals of the change process and to use that knowledge wisely.

We also believe that serious education reform will never be achieved until there is a significant increase in the number of people – leaders and other participants alike – who have come to internalize and habitually act on basic knowledge of how successful change takes place. Reformers talk of the need for deeper, second-order changes in the structures and cultures of schools, rather than superficial first-order changes.[1] But no change would be more fundamental than a dramatic expansion of the capacity of individuals and organizations to understand and deal with change. This generic capacity is worth more than a hundred individual success stories of implementing specific innovations. As we shall see, even individual success stories don't last long without an appreciation of how to keep changes alive.

Rather than develop a new strategy for each new wave of reform, we must use basic knowledge about the do's and don'ts of bringing about *continuous improvement*. In this article we present this knowledge in the form of seven basic reasons why reform fails – and seven propositions that could lead to success.

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WHY REFORM FAILS

Schools and districts are overloaded with problems – and, ironically, with solutions that don't work. Thus things get worse instead of better. Even our rare success stories appear as isolated pockets of excellence and are as likely to atrophy as to prosper over time. We get glimpses of the power of change, but we have little confidence that we know how to harness forces for continuous improvement. The problem is not really lack of innovation, but the enormous overload of fragmented, uncoordinated, and ephemeral attempts at change.

We begin with reasons why typical approaches do not work. In our view there are seven basic reasons why reforms fail. Though each one has its own form, these seven should be understood in combination, as a set.

1. Faulty maps of change. It's hard to get to a destination when your map doesn't accurately represent the territory you're to traverse. Everyone involved in school reform – teachers, administrators, parents, students, district staff members, consultants, board members, state department officials, legislators, materials developers, publishers, test-makers, teacher educators, researchers – has a personal map of how change proceeds. These constructs are often expressed in the form of a proposition or statement.

1. Resistance is inevitable, because people resist change.
2. Every school is unique.
3. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*
4. Schools are essentially conservative institutions, harder to change than other organizations.
5. You just have to live reform one day at a time.
6. You need a mission, objectives, and a series of tasks laid out well in advance.

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7. You can never please everyone, so just push ahead with reforms.

8. Full participation of everyone involved in a change is essential.

9. Keep it simple, stupid: go for small, easy changes rather than big, demanding ones.

10. Mandate change, because people won't do it otherwise.

People act on their maps. But maps such as these don't provide reliable or valid guidance. Some, like number 1, are simply self-sealing and tautological. Others, like number 2, are true in the abstract but totally unhelpful in providing guidance. Imagine if a Michelin guide book were to tell you that "each restaurant is unique," refuse to make ratings, and tell you that you're on your own.

Some, like number 3, have the seductive appearance of truth, though they are mostly false. It stretches the bounds of credulity to say that the schools we see today are no different from those of yesteryear or that all change efforts are self-defeating. Such maps are self-defeating. At their worst, they tell us that nothing really changes – and that nothing will work. On such self-exculpatory propositions as number 4, there's simply very little evidence, and what there is leads to the verdict of "not proven."[2]

Sometimes our maps are in conflict with themselves or with the maps of colleagues. For example, number 5 advocates the virtues of improvisation, while number 6 lauds rational planning. In fact, the literature on organizational change and a recent study of major change in urban high schools show that *neither* statement is valid as a guide to successful school reform.[3] The same appears to be true for propositions 7 and 8.

Still other mapping statements are directly contradicted by empirical evidence. For example, though number 9 looks obvious, studies of change have repeatedly found that substantial change efforts that address multiple problems are more likely to succeed and survive than small-scale, easily trivialized innovations.[4]

And number 10, as attractive as it may be politically, simply doesn't work. Indeed, it often makes matters worse. You can't mandate important changes, because they require skill, motivation, commitment, and discretionary judgment on the part of those who must change.[5]

Our aim here is not to debunk all our maps. Maps are crucial. But unless a map is a valid representation of the territory, we won't get where we want to go. Later in this article, we will outline a map that, we believe, corresponds well with the real territory of change.

We must have an approach to reform that acknowledges that we may not know all the answers.

2. Complex problems. Another major reason for the failure of reform is that the solutions are not easy – or even known in many cases. A number of years ago Arthur Wise labeled this problem the "hyperrationalization" of reform:

> To create goals for education is to will that something occur. But goals, in the absence of a theory of how to achieve them, are mere wishful thinking. If there is no reason to believe a goal is attainable – perhaps evidenced by the fact that it has never been attained – then a rational planning model may not result in goal attainment.[6]

The reform agenda has broadened in fundamental ways in the last five years. One need only mention the comprehensive reform legislation adopted in virtually every state and the scores of restructuring efforts in order to realize that current change efforts are enormously complex – both in the substance of their goals and in the capacity of individuals and institutions to carry out and coordinate reforms.

Education *is* a complex system, and its reform is even more complex. Even if one considers only seemingly simple, first-order changes, the number of components and their interrelationships are staggering: curriculum and instruction, school organization, student services, community involvement, teacher inservice training, assessment, reporting, and evaluation. Deeper, second-order changes in school cultures, teacher/student relationships, and values and expectations of the system are all the more daunting.

Furthermore, higher-order educational goals for all students require knowledge and abilities that we have never demonstrated. In many cases, we simply don't know how to proceed; solutions have yet to be developed. This is no reason to stop trying, but we must remember that it is folly to act as if we know how to solve complex problems in short order. We must have an approach to reform that acknowledges that we don't necessarily know all the answers, that is conducive to developing solutions as we go along, and that sustains our commitment and persistence to stay with the problem until we get somewhere. In other words, we need a different map for solving complex rather than simple problems.

3. Symbols over substance. In the RAND-sponsored study of federal programs supporting educational change, Paul Berman and Milbrey McLaughlin found that some school districts adopted external innovations for opportunistic reasons rather than to solve a particular problem. These apparent reforms brought extra resources (which were not necessarily used for the intended purpose), symbolized that action was being taken (whether or not follow-up occurred), and furthered the careers of the innovators (whether or not the innovation succeeded). Thus the mere appearance of innovation is sometimes sufficient for achieving political success.

Education reform is as much a political as an educational process, and it has both negative and positive aspects. One need not question the motives of political decision makers to appreciate the negative. Political time lines are at variance with the time lines for education reform. This difference often results in vague goals, unrealistic schedules, a preoccupation with symbols of reform (new legislation, task forces, commissions, and the like), and shifting priorities as political pressures ebb and flow.

We acknowledge that symbols are essential for success. They serve to crys-

tallize images and to attract and generate political power and financial resources. Symbols can also provide personal and collective meaning and give people faith and confidence when they are dealing with unclear goals and complex situations.[7] They are essential for galvanizing visions, acquiring resources, and carrying out concerted action. When symbols and substance are congruent, they form a powerful combination.

Nonetheless, reform often fails because politics favors symbols over substance. Substantial change in practice requires a lot of hard and clever work "on the ground," which is not the strong point of political players. After several experiences with the dominance of symbolic change over substantive change, people become cynical and take the next change that comes along much less seriously.

Symbolic change does not have to be without substance, however. Indeed, the best examples of effective symbols are grounded in rituals, ceremonies, and other events in the daily life of an organization. While we cannot have effective reform without symbols, we can easily have symbols without effective reform — the predominant experience of most educators and one that predisposes them to be skeptical about *all* reforms.

Reforms also fail because our attempts to solve problems are frequently superficial.

4. Impatient and superficial solutions. Reforms also fail because our attempts to solve problems are frequently superficial. Superficial solutions, introduced quickly in an atmosphere of crisis, normally make matters worse.[8] This problem is all the more serious now that we are tackling large-scale reforms, for the consequences of failure are much more serious.

Reforms in structure are especially susceptible to superficiality and unrealistic time lines, because they can be launched through political or administrative mandates. Two examples at opposite ends of the political spectrum provide cases in point. A recent study of the impact of statewide testing in two states found that, while new testing mandates caused action at the local level, they also narrowed the curriculum and created adverse conditions for reform:

> [C]oping with the pressure to attain satisfactory results in high-stakes tests caused educators to develop almost a "crisis mentality" in their approach, in that they jumped quickly into "solutions" to address a specific issue. They narrowed the range of instructional strategies from which they selected means to instruct their students; they narrowed the content of the material they chose to present to students; and they narrowed the range of course offerings available to students.[9]

Site-based management — opposite in many ways to the strategy of centralized testing — also shows problems associated with structural reforms. Daniel Levine and Eugene Eubanks, among others, have indicated how school-based models often result in changes in formal decision-making structures but rarely result in a focus on developing instructional skills or on changing the culture of schools.[10] There are numerous other examples of new legislation and policies — career ladders, mentoring and induction policies, testing and competency requirements, and so on — being rushed into place with little forethought about possible negative consequences and side effects.

A related bane of reform is faddism. Schools, districts, and states are under tremendous pressure to reform. Innovation and reform are big business, politically and economically. The temptation is great to latch on to the quick fix, to go along with the trend, to react uncritically to endorsed innovations as they come and go. Local educators experience most school reforms as fads.

There are two underlying problems. One is that mistaken or superficial solutions are introduced; the other is that,

"For many years, you've been preparing to enter uncharted waters — and today you walk the plank."

even when the solution is on the right track, hasty implementation leads to failure. Structural solutions are relatively easy to initiate under the right political conditions, but they are no substitute for the hard work, skill, and commitment needed to blend different structural changes into a successful reform effort. In other words, changes in structure must go hand in hand with changes in culture and in the individual and collective capacity to work through new structures. Because education reform is so complex, we cannot know in advance exactly which new structures and behavioral patterns should go together or how they should mesh. But we do know that neglecting one or the other is a surefire recipe for failure.

5. Misunderstanding resistance. Things hardly ever go easily during change efforts. Since change necessarily involves people, and people can commit willed actions, it seems natural to attribute progress that is slower than we might wish to their "resistance." Before a recent workshop, one of us asked a group of principals to list the problems they faced in a specific change project. More than half said "resistance" – variously known as intransigence, entrenchment, fearfulness, reluctance to buy in, complacency, unwillingness to alter behaviors, and failure to recognize the need for change. These traits were attributed to teachers and other staff members, though not to the principals themselves.

But it is usually unproductive to label an attitude or action "resistance." It diverts attention from real problems of implementation, such as diffuse objectives, lack of technical skill, or insufficient resources for change. In effect, the label also individualizes issues of change and converts everything into a matter of "attitude." Because such labeling places the blame (and the responsibility for the solution) on others, it immobilizes people and leads to "if only" thinking.

Change does involve individual attitudes and behaviors, but they need to be framed as natural responses to transition, not misunderstood as "resistance." During transitions from a familiar to a new state of affairs, individuals must normally confront the loss of the old and commit themselves to the new, unlearn old beliefs and behaviors and learn new ones, and move from anxiousness and uncertainty to stabilization and coherence. Any significant change involves a period of intense personal and organizational learning and problem solving. People need supports for such work, not displays of impatience.

Failure to institutionalize an innovation underlies the disappearance of many reforms.

Blaming "resistance" for the slow pace of reform also keeps us from understanding that individuals and groups faced with something new need to assess the change for its genuine possibilities and for how it bears on their self-interest. From computers across the curriculum, to mainstreaming, to portfolio assessments, to a radical change in the time schedule, significant changes normally require extra effort during the transitional stage. Moreover, there's little certainty about the kinds of outcomes that may ensue for students and teachers (and less assurance that they will be any better than the status quo). These are legitimate issues that deserve careful attention.

Many reform initiatives are ill-conceived, and many others are fads. The most authentic response to such efforts is resistance. Nevertheless, when resistance is misunderstood, we are immediately set on a self-defeating path. Reframing the legitimate basis of most forms of resistance will allow us to get a more productive start and to isolate the real problems of improvement.

6. Attrition of pockets of success. There are many examples of successful reforms in individual schools – cases in which the strong efforts of teachers, principals, and district administrators have brought about significant changes in classroom and school practice.[11] We do not have much evidence about the durability of such successes, but we have reason to believe that they may not survive if the conditions under which they developed are changed.

Successful reforms have typically required enormous effort on the part of one or more individuals – effort that may not be sustainable over time. For example, staff collaboration takes much energy and time to develop, yet it can disappear overnight when a few key people leave. What happens outside the school – such as changes in district policies on the selection and transfer of teachers and principals – can easily undo gains that have been made.

Local innovators, even when they are successful in the short run, may burn themselves out or unwittingly seal themselves off from the surrounding environment. Thus schools can become hotbeds of innovation and reform in the absence of external support, but they cannot *stay* innovative without the continuing support of the district and other agencies. Innovative schools may enjoy external suppor from a critically important sponsor (e.g., the district superintendent) or from a given agency only to see that support disappear when the sponsor moves on or the agency changes policies. Of course, the failure to institutionalize an innovation and build it into the normal structures and practices of the organization underlies the disappearance of many reforms.[12]

We suspect that few things are more discouraging than working hard against long odds over a period of time to achieve a modicum of success – only to see it evaporate in short order as unrelated events take their toll. It is not enough to achieve isolated pockets of success. Reform fails unless we can demonstrate that pockets of success add up to new structures, procedures, and school cultures that press for continuous improvement. So far there is little such evidence.

7. Misuse of knowledge about the change process. The final problem is related to a particular version of faulty maps: "knowledge" of the change process is often cited as the authority for taking certain actions. Statements such as "Ownership is the key to reform," "Lot of inservice training is required," "The school is the unit of change," "Vision and leadership are critical," and so on are all

half-truths. Taken literally, they can be misused.

Reform is systemic, and actions based on knowledge of the change process must be systemic, too. To succeed we need to link a number of key aspects of knowledge and maintain the connections before and during the process of change. In the following section we offer seven such themes, which we believe warrant being called propositions for success.

PROPOSITIONS FOR SUCCESS

The seven basic themes or lessons derived from current knowledge of successful change form a set and must be contemplated in relation to one another. When it comes to reform, partial theories are not very useful. We can say flatly that reform will not be achieved until these seven orientations have been incorporated into the thinking and reflected in the actions of those involved in change efforts.

1. Change is learning – loaded with uncertainty. Change is a process of coming to grips with new personal meaning, and so it is a learning process. Peter Marris states the problem this way:

> When those who have the power to manipulate changes act as if they have only to explain, and when their explanations are not at once accepted, shrug off opposition as ignorance or prejudice, they express a profound contempt for the meaning of lives other than their own. For the reformers have already assimilated these changes to their purposes, and worked out a reformulation which makes sense to them, perhaps through months or years of analysis and debate. If they deny others the chance to do the same, they treat them as puppets dangling by the threads of their own conceptions.[13]

Even well-developed innovations represent new meaning and new learning for those who encounter them initially and require time to assimilate them. So many studies have documented this early period of difficulty that we have given it a label – "the implementation dip."[14] Even in cases where reform eventually succeeds, things will often go wrong before they go right. Michael Huberman and Matthew Miles found that the absence of early difficulty in a reform effort was usually a sign that not much was being attempted; superficial or trivial change was being substituted for substantial change.[15]

More complex reforms, such as restructuring, represent even greater uncertainty: first, because more is being attempted; second, because the solution is not known in advance. In short, anxiety, difficulties, and uncertainty are *intrinsic to all successful change.*

Ownership of a reform cannot be achieved *in advance* of learning something new.

One can see why a climate that encourages risk-taking is so critical. People will not venture into uncertainty unless there is an appreciation that difficulties encountered are a natural part of the process. And if people do not venture into uncertainty, no significant change will occur.

Understanding successful change as learning also puts ownership in perspective. In our view, ownership of a reform cannot be achieved *in advance* of learning something new. A deep sense of ownership comes only through learning. In this sense, ownership is stronger in the middle of a successful change process than at the beginning and stronger still at the end. Ownership is both a process and a state.

The first proposition for success, then, is to understand that all change involves learning and that all learning involves coming to understand and to be good at something new. Thus conditions that support learning must be part and parcel of any change effort. Such conditions are also necessary for the valid rejection of particular changes, because many people reject complex innovations prematurely, that is, before they are in a sound position to make such a judgment.

2. Change is a journey, not a blueprint. If change involved implementing single, well-developed, proven innovations one at a time, perhaps we could make blueprints for change. But school districts and schools are in the business of implementing a bewildering array of innovations and policies simultaneously. Moreover, reforms that aim at restructuring are so multifaceted and complex that solutions for any particular setting cannot be known in advance. If one tries to account for the complexity of the situation with an equally complex implementation plan, the process will become unwieldy, cumbersome, and usually unsuccessful.

There can be no blueprints for change, because rational planning models for complex social change (such as education reform) do not work. Rather, what is needed is a guided journey. Karen Seashore Louis and Matthew Miles provide a clear analysis of this evolutionary planning process in their study of urban high schools involved in major change efforts:

> The evolutionary perspective rests on the assumption that the environment both inside and outside organizations is often chaotic. No specific plan can last for very long, because it will either become outmoded due to changing external pressures, or because disagreement over priorities arises within the organization. Yet there is no reason to assume that the best response is to plan passively, relying on incremental decisions. Instead, the organization can cycle back and forth between efforts to gain normative consensus about what it may become, to plan strategies for getting there, and to carry out decentralized incremental experimentation that harnesses the creativity of all members to the change effort. . . . Strategy is viewed as a flexible tool, rather than a semi-permanent expansion of the mission.[16]

The message is not the traditional "Plan, then do," but "Do, then plan . . . and do and plan some more." Even the development of a shared vision that is central to reform is better thought of as a journey in which people's sense of purpose is identified, considered, and continuously shaped and reshaped.

3. Problems are our friends. School

improvement is a problem-rich process. Change threatens existing interests and routines, heightens uncertainty, and increases complexity. The typical principal in the study of urban schools conducted by Louis and Miles mentioned three or four major problems (and several minor ones) with reform efforts. They ranged from poor coordination to staff polarization and from lack of needed skills to heart attacks suffered by key figures. Problems arise naturally from the demands of the change process itself, from the people involved, and from the structure and procedures of schools and districts. Some are easily solved; others are almost intractable.

It seems perverse to say that problems are our friends, but we cannot develop effective responses to complex situations unless we actively seek and confront real problems that are difficult to solve. Problems are our friends because only through immersing ourselves in problems can we come up with creative solutions. Problems are the route to deeper change and deeper satisfaction. In this sense, effective organizations "embrace problems" rather than avoid them.

Too often, change-related problems are ignored, denied, or treated as an occasion for blame and defense. Success in school reform efforts is much more likely when problems are treated as natural, expected phenomena. Only by tracking problems can we understand what we need to do next to get what we want. Problems must be taken seriously, not attributed to "resistance" or to the ignorance and wrongheadedness of others.

What to do about problems? In their study of urban schools, Louis and Miles classified coping styles, ranging from relatively shallow ones (doing nothing at all, procrastinating, "doing it the usual way," easing off, or increasing pressure) to deeper ones (building personal capacity through training, enhancing system capacity, comprehensive restaffing, or system restructuring/redesign). They found that schools that were least successful at change *always* used shallow coping styles. Schools that were successful in changing could and did make structural changes in an effort to solve difficult problems. However, they were also willing to use Band-Aid solutions when a problem was judged to be minor. It's important to note that successful schools did *not* have fewer problems than other schools – they just coped with them better.

The enemies of good coping are passivity, denial, avoidance, conventionality, and fear of being "too radical." Good coping is active, assertive, inventive. It goes to the root of the problem when that is needed.

Success in school reform efforts is much more likely when problems are treated as natural.

We cannot cope better through being exhorted to do so. "Deep coping" – the key to solving difficult problems of reform – appears to be more likely when schools are working on a clear, shared vision of where they are heading and when they create an active coping structure (e.g., a coordinating committee or a steering group) that steadily and actively tracks problems and monitors the results of coping efforts. Such a structure benefits from empowerment, brings more resources to bear on problems, and keeps the energy for change focused. In short, the assertive pursuit of problems in the service of continuous improvement is the kind of accountability that can make a difference.

4. Change is resource-hungry. Even a moderate-sized school may spend a million dollars a year on salaries, maintenance, and materials. And that's just for keeping schools as they are, not for changing them. Change demands additional resources for training, for substitutes, for new materials, for new space, and, above all, for time. Change is "resource-hungry" because of what it represents – developing solutions to complex problems, learning new skills, arriving at new insights, all carried out in a social setting already overloaded with demands. Such serious personal and collective development necessarily demands resources.

Every analysis of the problems of change efforts that we have seen in the last decade of research and practice has concluded that time is the salient issue. Most recently, the survey of urban high schools by Louis and Miles found that the average principal with a schoolwide reform project spent 70 days a year on change management. That's 32% of an administrator's year. The teachers most closely engaged with the change effort spent some 23 days a year, or 13% of their time on reform. Since we have to keep school while we change school, such overloads are to be expected.

But time is energy. And success is likely only when the extra energy requirements of change are met through the provision of released time or through a redesigned schedule that includes space for the extra work of change.

Time is also money. And Louis and Miles discovered that serious change in big-city high schools requires an annual investment of between $50,000 and $100,000. They also found some schools spending five times that much with little to show for it. The key seemed to be whether the money simply went for new jobs and expensive equipment or was spent for local capacity-building (acquiring external assistance, training trainers, leveraging other add-on funds, and so on). Nevertheless, some minimum level of funding is always needed.

Assistance itself can be a major resource for change. It may include training, consulting, coaching, coordination, and capacity-building. Many studies have suggested that good assistance to schools is strong, sustained over years, closely responsive to local needs, and focused on building local capacity. Louis and Miles found that at least 30 days a year of *external* assistance – with more than that provided internally – was essential for success.

We can also think of educational "content resources" – such big ideas as effective schools, teaching for understanding, empowerment, and school-based management – that guide and energize the work of change. In addition, there are psychosocial resources, such as support, commitment, influence, and power. They're

supposedly intangible, but they are critical for success.

The work of change requires attention not just to resources, but to "resourcing." The actions required are those of scanning the school and its environment for resources and matching them to existing needs; acquiring resources (buying, negotiating, or just plain grabbing); reworking them for a better fit to the situation; creating time through schedule changes and other arrangements; and building local capacity through the development of such structures as steering groups, coordinating committees, and cadres of local trainers.

Good resourcing requires facing up to the need for funds and abjuring any false pride about self-sufficiency. Above all, it takes willingness to invent, to go outside the frame in garnering and reworking resources. (We are reminded of the principal who used money for the heating system to pay for desperately needed repainting and renovation, saying, "I knew that, if the boiler broke, they'd have to fix it anyway.") The stance is one of steady and tenacious searching for and judicious use of the extra resources that any change requires. Asking for assistance and seeking other resources are signs of strength, not weakness.

5. Change requires the power to manage it. Change initiatives do not run themselves. They require that substantial effort be devoted to such tasks as monitoring implementation, keeping everyone informed of what's happening, linking multiple change projects (typical in most schools), locating unsolved problems, and taking clear coping action. In Louis and Miles' study, such efforts occurred literally 10 times more frequently in successfully changing schools than in unchanging ones.

There appear to be several essential ingredients in the successful management of change. First, the management of change goes best when it is carried out by a *cross-role group* (say, teachers, department heads, administrators, and – often – students and parents). In such a group different worlds collide, more learning occurs, and change is realistically managed. There is much evidence that steering a change effort in this way results in substantially increased teacher commitment.

Second, such a cross-role group needs *legitimacy* – i.e., a clear license to steer. It needs an explicit contract, widely understood in the school, as to what kinds of decisions it can make and what money it can spend. Such legitimacy is partly conferred at the front end and partly earned through the hard work of decision making and action. Most such groups do encounter staff polarization; they may be seen by others as an unfairly privileged elite; or they may be opposed on ideological grounds. Such polarization – often a sign that empowerment of a steering group is working – can be dealt with through open access to meetings, rotation of membership, and scrupulous reporting.

The management of change goes best when it is carried out by a *cross-role group*.

Third, even empowerment has its problems, and cooperation is required to solve them. Everyone has to learn to take the initiative instead of complaining, to trust colleagues, to live with ambiguity, to face the fact that shared decisions mean conflict. Principals have to rise above the fear of losing control, and they have to hone new skills: initiating actions firmly without being seen as "controlling," supporting others without taking over for them. All these stances and skills are learnable, but they take time. Kenneth Benne remarked 40 years ago that the skills of cooperative work should be "part of the general education of our people."[17] They haven't been, so far. But the technology for teaching these skills exists. It is up to steering groups to learn to work well together, using whatever assistance is required.

Fourth, the power to manage change does not stop at the schoolhouse door. Successful change efforts are most likely when the local district office is closely engaged with the changing school in a collaborative, supportive way and places few bureaucratic restrictions in the path of reform.

The bottom line is that the development of second-order changes in the culture of schools and in the capacity of teachers, principals, and communities to make a difference *requires* the power to manage the change at the local school level. We do not advocate handing over all decisions to the school. Schools and their environments must have an interactive and negotiated relationship. But complex problems cannot be solved from a distance; the steady growth of the power to manage change must be part of the solution.

6. Change is systemic. Political pressures combine with the segmented, uncoordinated nature of educational organizations to produce a "project mentality."[18] A steady stream of episodic innovations – cooperative learning, effective schools research, classroom management, assessment schemes, career ladders, peer coaching, etc., etc. – come and go. Not only do they fail to leave much of a trace, but they also leave teachers and the public with a growing cynicism that innovation is marginal and politically motivated.

What does it mean to work systemically? There are two aspects: 1) reform must focus on the development and interrelationships of all the main *components* of the system simultaneously – curriculum, teaching and teacher development, community, student support systems, and so on; and 2) reform must focus not just on structure, policy, and regulations but on deeper issues of the *culture* of the system. Fulfilling both requirements is a tall order. But it is possible.

This duality of reform (the need to deal with system components and system culture) must be attended to at both the state and district/school levels. It involves both restructuring and "reculturing."[19] Marshall Smith and Jennifer O'Day have mapped out a comprehensive plan for systemic reform at the state level that illustrates the kind of thinking and strategies involved.[20] At the school/district level, we see in the Toronto region's Learning Consortium a rather clear example of systemic reform

Wishful thinking and legislation have poor records as tools for social betterment.

in action.[21] Schools, supported by their districts, avoid ad hoc innovations and focus on a variety of coordinated short-term and mid- to long-term strategies. The short-term activities include inservice professional development on selected and interrelated themes; mid- to long-term strategies include vision building, initial teacher preparation, selection and induction, promotion procedures and criteria, school-based planning in a system context, curriculum reorganization, and the development of assessments. There is an explicit emphasis on new cultural norms for collaborative work and on the pursuit of continuous improvement.

Systemic reform is complex. Practically speaking, traditional approaches to innovation and reform in education have not been successful in bringing about lasting improvement. Systemic reform looks to be both more efficient and more effective, even though this proposition is less proven empirically than our other six. However, both conceptually and practically, it does seem to be on the right track.[22]

7. All large-scale change is implemented locally. Change cannot be accomplished from afar. This cardinal rule crystallizes the previous six propositions. The ideas that change is learning, change is a journey, problems are our friends, change is resource-hungry, change requires the power to manage, and change is systemic all embody the fact that *local* implementation by everyday teachers, principals, parents, and students is the only way that change happens.

This observation has both an obvious and a less obvious meaning. The former reminds us all that any interest in systemwide reform must be accompanied by a preoccupation with how it plays itself out locally. The less obvious implication can be stated as a caution: we should not assume that only the local level counts and hand everything over to the individual school. A careful reading of the seven propositions together shows that extralocal agencies have critical – though decidedly not traditional – roles to play. Most fundamentally, their role is to help bring the seven propositions to life at the local level.

Modern societies are facing terrible problems, and education reform is seen as a major source of hope for solving them. But wishful thinking and legislation have deservedly poor track records as tools for social betterment. As educators increasingly acknowledge that the "change process is crucial," they ought to know what that means at the level at which change actually takes place. Whether we are on the receiving or initiating end of change (as all of us are at one time or another), we need to understand why education reform frequently fails, and we need to internalize and live out valid propositions for its success. Living out the seven propositions for successful change means not only making the change process more explicit within our own minds and actions, but also contributing to the knowledge of change on the part of those with whom we interact. Being knowledgeable about the change process may be both the best defense and the best offense we have in achieving substantial education reform.

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Chapter 3

The Complexity of the Change Process

Productive educational change roams somewhere between overcontrol and chaos (Pascale, 1990). There are fundamental reasons why controlling strategies don't work. The underlying one is that the change process is uncontrollably complex, and in many circumstances 'unknowable' (Stacey, 1992). The solution lies in better ways of thinking about, and dealing with, inherently unpredictable processes.

How is change complex? Take any educational policy or problem and start listing all the forces that could figure in the solution and that would need to be influenced to make for productive change. Then, take the idea that unplanned factors are inevitable — government policy changes or gets constantly redefined, key leaders leave, important contact people are shifted to another role, new technology is invented, immigration increases, recession reduces available resources, a bitter conflict erupts, and so on. Finally, realize that every new variable that enters the equation — those unpredictable but inevitable noise factors — produce ten other ramifications, which in turn produces tens of other reactions and on and on.

As you think through the reality of the previous paragraph there is only one conclusion: 'No one could possibly come to figure out all these interactions' (Senge, 1990, p. 281). As one of Senge's participants exclaimed *after* being engaged in an exercise to map out all the complexities of a particular problem:

> All my life, I assumed that somebody, somewhere knew the answer to this problem. I thought politicians knew what had to be done, but refused to do it out of politics and greed. But now I realize that nobody knows the answer. Not us, not them, not anybody. (p. 282)

Senge makes the distinction between 'detailed complexity' and 'dynamic complexity'. The former involves identifying all the variables that could influence a problem. Even this would be enormously difficult for one person or a group to orchestrate. But detailed complexity is not reality. Dynamic complexity is the real territory of change: 'when "cause and effect" are not close in time and space and obvious interventions do not produce expected outcomes' (*ibid*, p. 365) because other 'unplanned' factors dynamically interfere. And we keep discovering, as Dorothy in Oz did, that 'I have a feeling that we are not in Kansas anymore'. Complexity, dynamism, and unpredictability, in other words, are not merely things that get in the way. They are normal!

Stacey (1992) goes even further. Since change in dynamically complex circumstances is non-linear, we cannot predict or guide the process with any precision:

> While Senge concludes that cause and effect are distant from each other in complex systems and therefore difficult to trace, this chapter concludes that the linkage between cause and effect disappears and is therefore impossible to trace. (p. 78)

Stacey concludes:

> The long-term future of such organizations is completely unknowable because the links between specific actions and specific outcomes become lost in the detail of what happens. We can claim to have achieved something intentionally only when we can show that there was a connection between the specific action we took and the specific state we achieved; in other words, that what we achieved was not materially affected by chance. Since it is impossible to satisfy this condition when we operate in a chaotic system, it follows that successful human organizations cannot be the realization of some shared intention formed well ahead of action. Instead, success has to be the discovery of patterns that emerge through actions we take in response to the changing agendas of issues we identify. (p. 124)

What all this means is that productive change is the constant 'search for understanding, knowing there is no ultimate answer' (*ibid*, p. 282). The real leverage for change, says Senge involves:

- Seeing interrelationships rather than linear cause — effect chains, and
- Seeing processes of change rather than snapshots. (*ibid*, p. 73)

The goal then is to get into the habit of experiencing and thinking about educational change processes as an overlapping series of dynamically complex phenomena. As we develop a non-linear system language, new thinking about change emerges:

> The sub-conscious is subtly retrained to structure data in circles instead of lines. We find that we 'see' feedback processes and system archetypes everywhere. A new framework for thinking is embedded. A switch is thrown, much like what happens in mastering a foreign language. We begin to dream in the new language, or to think spontaneously in its terms and constraints. When this happens in systems thinking, we become . . . 'looped for life'. (*ibid*, p. 366)

Sounds complicated? Yes. Impractical? No. It is eminently more practical than our usual ways of introducing change, if for no other reason than that the latter does not work. Indeed, wrong solutions to complex problems nearly always make things worse (worse than if nothing had been done at all).

So, what is this new language for harnessing the forces of change? Chart 1 contains eight basic lessons arising from the new paradigm of dynamic change.[1] Each one is somewhat of a paradox and a surprise relative to our normal way of thinking about change. They go together as a set, as no one lesson by itself would be useful. Each lesson must benefit from the wisdom of the other seven.

CHART 1: The Eight Basic Lessons of the New Paradigm of Change

Lesson One:	You Can't Mandate What Matters (The more complex the change the less you can force it)
Lesson Two:	Change is a Journey not a Blueprint (Change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement and sometimes perverse)
Lesson Three:	Problems are Our Friends (Problems are inevitable and you can't learn without them)
Lesson Four:	Vision and Strategic Planning Come Later (Premature visions and planning blind)
Lesson Five:	Individualism and Collectivism Must Have Equal Power

(There are no one-sided solutions to isolation and groupthink)

Lesson Six: Neither Centralization Nor Decentralization Works
(Both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary)

Lesson Seven: Connection with the Wider Environment is Critical for Success
(The best organizations learn externally as well as internally)

Lesson Eight: Every Person is a Change Agent
(Change is too important to leave to the experts, personal mind set and mastery is the ultimate protection)

Lesson 1: You Can't Mandate What Matters

(The more complex the change, the less you can force it.)

Mandates are important. Policymakers have an obligation to set policy, establish standards, and monitor performance. But to accomplish certain kinds of purposes — in this case, important educational goals — you cannot mandate what matters, because what really matters for complex goals of change are skills, creative thinking, and committed action (McLaughlin, 1990). Mandates are not sufficient and the more you try to specify them the more narrow the goals and means become. Teachers are not technicians.

To elaborate, you can effectively mandate things that (i) do not require thinking or skill in order to implement them; and (ii) can be monitored through close and constant surveillance. You can, for example, mandate the cessation of the use of the strap, or mandate a sales tax on liquor or petrol. These kinds of changes do not require skill on the part of implementers to comply; and provided that they are closely monitored they can be enforced effectively.

Even in the relatively simple case — detailed, not dynamic complexity — almost all educational changes of value require new (i) skills; (ii) behaviour; and (iii) beliefs or understanding (Fullan, 1991). Think of: computers across the curriculum, teachers' thinking and problem solving skills, developing citizenship and team work, integration of special education in regular classrooms, dealing with multiculturalism and racism, working with social agencies to provide integrated services, responding to all students in the classroom, cooperative learning, monitoring the performance of students. All of these changes,

to be productive, require skills, capacity, commitment, motivation, beliefs and insights, and discretionary judgment on the spot. If there is one cardinal rule of change in human condition, it is that you cannot *make* people change. You cannot force them to think differently or compel them to develop new skills.

Marris (1975) states the problem this way:

> When those who have the power to manipulate changes act as if they have only to explain, and when their explanations are not at once accepted, shrug off opposition as ignorance or prejudice, they express a profound contempt for the meaning of lives other than their own. For the reformers have already assimilated these changes to their purposes, and worked out a reformulation which makes sense to them, perhaps through months or years of analysis and debate. If they deny others the chance to do the same, they treat them as puppets dangling by the threads of their own conceptions. (p. 166)

In addition to the introduction of more and more mandated requirements, there is the general expectation in education that more and more innovation is needed. School people often respond to this expectation in a knee-jerk fashion adopting the latest 'hot' items (site-based management, peer coaching and mentoring, restructuring, co-operative learning, whole language etc.) It is no denial of the potential worth of particular innovations to observe that unless deeper change in thinking and skills occur there will be limited impact. It is probably closer to the truth to say that the main problem in public education is not resistance to change, but the presence of too many innovations mandated or adopted uncritically and superficially on an *ad hoc* fragmented basis.

The result, as Pascale (1990) observes: 'not surprisingly, ideas acquired with ease are discarded with ease' (p. 20). New ideas of any worth to be effective require an in-depth understanding, and the development of skill and commitment to make them work. You cannot mandate these things. The only alternative that works is creating conditions that enable and press people to consider personal and shared visions, and skill development through practice over time. The more that mandates are used the more that fads prevail, the more that change is seen as superficial and marginal to the real purpose of teaching. The more that you 'tighten' mandates, the more that educational goals and means get narrowed, and consequently the less impact there is.

Lesson 1 says that the acid test of productive change is whether

individuals and groups develop skills and deep understandings in relation to new solutions. It finds mandates wanting because they have no chance of accomplishing these substantial changes even for single policies let alone for the bigger goals of moral purpose and the reality of dynamic complexity. Mandates alter some things, but they don't affect what matters. When complex change is involved, people do not and cannot change by being told to do so. Effective change agents neither embrace nor ignore mandates. They use them as catalysts to reexamine what they are doing.

Lesson 2: Change is a Journey, Not a Blueprint

(Change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty, and sometimes perverse.)

I have already made the case in this chapter that change is a never-ending proposition under conditions of dynamic complexity. Another reason that you can't mandate what matters, is that you don't know what is going to matter until you are into the journey. If change involved implementing single, well-developed, proven innovations one at a time, perhaps it could be blueprinted. But school districts and schools are in the business of implementing a bewildering array of multiple innovations and policies simultaneously. Moreover, restructuring reforms are so multifaceted and complex that solutions for particular settings cannot be known in advance. If one tries to match the complexity of the situation with complex implementation plans, the process becomes unwieldy, cumbersome and usually wrong.

I think of the school in England described by McMahon and Wallace (1992) engaged in school development planning. Experienced in the planning process, working together, and committed to the plan they produced, they nonetheless encountered a series of unanticipated problems: staff training sessions had to be postponed because of delays in the production of national guidelines; a training project had to be deferred because the teacher appointed to run it had left after six weeks, leaving a vacancy which could not be filled for several months; the headteacher became pregnant and arrangements had to made for a temporary replacement; the Government introduced a series of new changes that had to be accommodated — and on and on. I think of the group in the Maritimes in Canada with whom we were working who defined change as 'likened to a planned journey into uncharted waters in a leaky boat with a mutinous crew'.

Thus, a journey into the partially known or unknown is an apt metaphor. As we will see, so many of the other lessons feed into and corroborate this one. Even well developed innovations represent journeys for those encountering them for the first time. With skills and understanding at stake — never acquired easily — it could not be otherwise. Other more complex reforms represent even greater uncertainty because more is being attempted, but above all because the solution is not known in advance. 'Route and destination', says Stacey (1992), 'must be discovered though the journey itself if you wish to travel to new lands' (p. 1). In the face of unpredictable change, 'the key to success lies in the creative activity of making new maps'. (p. 1)

Under conditions of uncertainty, learning, anxiety, difficulties, and fear of the unknown are *intrinsic* to all change processes, especially at the early stages. One can see why a risk-taking mentality and climate are so critical. People will not venture into uncertainty unless they or others appreciate that difficulties are a natural part of any change scenario. And if people do not venture into uncertainty, no significant change will occur (see Lesson 3 — problems are our friends).

We know that early difficulties are guaranteed. The perverse part is that later stages are unpredictable as well. It is true that in cases of eventual success there are great highs, ecstatic feelings of accomplishment, and moments of deep personal satisfaction and well being. With greater moral purpose and change agent capacity (chapter 2) the chances are greater that there will be more successes than failures. But sometimes things get worse rather than better even if we are doing all the right things. And sometimes they get better, even if we are making mistakes. As dynamic complexity generates surprises, for better or for worse, there is an element of luck. Non-luck comes into play in how we relate to these unanticipated events, not in whether we can prevent them in the first place. Sometimes they will be overwhelmingly frustrating and bad, and we won't be able to do a thing about it. People who learn to control their inner experiences, while contending with the positive and negative forces of change will be able to determine the quality of their lives (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Productive educational change, like productive life itself, really is a journey that doesn't end until we do.

Lesson 3: Problems are our Friends

(Problems are inevitable, but the good news is that you can't learn or be successful without them.)

It follows from almost everything I have said that *inquiry* is crucial. Problems are endemic in any serious change effort; both within the effort itself and via unplanned intrusions. Problems are necessary for learning, but not without a capacity for inquiry to learn the right lessons.

It seems perverse to say that problems are our friends, but we cannot develop effective responses to complex situations unless we actively seek and confront the real problems which are in fact difficult to solve. Problems are our friends because it is only through immersing ourselves in problems that we can come up with creative solutions. Problems are the route to deeper change and deeper satisfaction. In this sense effective organizations 'embrace problems' rather than avoid them.

Too often change-related problems are ignored, denied, or treated as an occasion for blame and defense. Success in school change efforts is much more likely when problems are treated as natural, expected phenomena, and are looked for. Only by tracking problems can we understand what has to be done next in order to get what we want. Problems need to be taken seriously, not attributed to 'resistance' or the ignorance or wrong-headedness of others. Successful change management requires problem-finding techniques like 'worry lists', and regular review of problem-solving decisions at subsequent meetings to see what happened. Since circumstances and context are constantly changing, sometimes in surprising ways, an embedded spirit of constant inquiry is essential. Says Pascale (1990, p. 14) 'inquiry is the engine of vitality and self-renewal'.

Louis and Miles (1990) found that the least successful schools they studied engaged in 'shallow coping' — doing nothing, procrastinating, doing it the usual way, easing off, increasing pressure — while the successful schools went deeper to probe underlying reasons and to make more substantial interventions like comprehensive restaffing, continuous training, redesigning programs, and the like. Successful schools did not have fewer problems than other schools — they just coped with them better. Moreover, the absence of problems is usually a sign that not much is being attempted. Smoothness in the early stages of a change effort is a sure sign that superficial or trivial change is being substituted for substantial change attempts. Later on, once mastered, changes can produce incredible highs through seemingly easy effort. There is nothing like accomplished performance for increasing self-esteem and confidence to go to even greater heights.

Avoidance of real problems is the enemy of productive change because it is these problems that must be confronted for breakthroughs to occur. Senge (1990, p. 24) paints the negative case:

> All too often, teams in business tend to spend their time fighting for turf, avoiding anything that will make them look bad personally, and pretending that everyone is behind the team's collective strategy — maintaining the *appearance* of a cohesive team. To keep up the image, they seek to squelch disagreement; people with serious reservations avoid stating them publicly, and joint decisions are watered-down compromises reflecting what everyone can live with, or else reflecting one person's view foisted on the group. If there is disagreement, it's usually expressed in a manner that lays blame, polarizes opinion, and fails to reveal the underlying differences in assumptions and experience in a way that the team as a whole could learn.

Problems are our friends is another way of saying that *conflict is essential* to any successful change effort:

> People do not provoke new insights when their discussions are characterized by orderly equilibrium, conformity, and dependence. Neither do they do so when their discussions enter the explosively unstable equilibrium of all-out conflict or complete avoidance of issues . . . People spark new ideas off each other when they argue and disagree — when they are conflicting, confused, and searching for new meaning — yet remain willing to discuss and listen to each other. (Stacey, 1992, p. 120)

The proper way to deal with confusion, observes Saul (1992, p. 535), 'is to increase that confusion by asking uncomfortable questions until the source of the difficulties is exposed'. Yet we do the opposite by affirming rhetorical truths, and covering up conflict.

A pattern is beginning to emerge. Substantial change involves complex processes. The latter is inherently problem rich. A spirit of openness and inquiry is essential to solving problems. Change is learning. Pascale (1990, p. 263) summarizes why problems are our friends:

> Life doesn't follow straight-line logic; it conforms to a kind of curved logic that changes the nature of things and often turns them into their opposites. Problems then, are not just hassles to be dealt with and set aside. Lurking inside each problem is a workshop on the nature of organizations and a vehicle for

personal growth. This entails a shift; we need to value the *process* of finding the solution — juggling the inconsistencies that meaningful solutions entail.

In short, problems are our friends; but only if you do something about them.

Lesson 4: Vision and Strategic Planning Come Later

(Premature visions and planning can blind.)

Visions are necessary for success but few concepts are as misunderstood and misapplied in the change process. Visions come later for two reasons. First, under conditions of dynamic complexity one needs a good deal of reflective experience before one can form a plausible vision. Vision emerges from, more than it precedes, action. Even then it is always provisional. Second, *shared* vision, which is essential for success, must evolve through the dynamic interaction of organizational members and leaders. This takes time and will not succeed unless the vision-building process is somewhat open-ended. Visions coming later does not mean that they are not worked on. Just the opposite. They are pursued more authentically while avoiding premature formalization.

Visions come later because the process of merging personal and shared visions takes time. Senge (1990) provides an illuminating discussion of the tension between personal and collective ideals.

> Shared vision is vital for the learning organization because it provides the focus and energy for learning. While adaptive learning is possible without vision, generative learning occurs only when people are striving to accomplish something that matters deeply to them. In fact, the whole idea of generative learning — 'expanding your ability to create' — will seem abstract and meaningless *until* people become excited about some vision they truly want to accomplish.
>
> Today, 'vision' is a familiar concept in corporate leadership. But when you look carefully you find that most 'visions' are one person's (or one group's) vision imposed on an organization. Such visions, at best, command compliance — not commitment. A shared vision is a vision that many people are truly committed to, because it reflects their own personal vision. (p. 206)

And,

> Organizations intent on building shared visions continually encourage members to develop their personal visions. If people don't have their own vision, all they can do is 'sign up' for someone else's. The result is compliance, never commitment. On the other hand, people with a strong sense of personal direction can join together to create a powerful synergy toward what I/we truly want. (Senge, 1990, p. 211)

By contrast, the old and dead wrong paradigm is still being promulgated, such as Beckhard and Pritchard's (1992) recommendations for vision-driven change. There are four key aspects, they say: creating and setting the vision; communicating the vision; building commitment to the vision; and organizing people and what they do so that they are aligned to the vision (p. 25). Not!

In their study of twenty-six plants over a five-year period, Beer, Eisenstat and Spector (1990) conclude just the opposite:

> Change efforts that begin by creating corporate programs to alter the culture of the management of people in the firm are inherently flawed even when supported by top management. (p. 6)
>
> The programmatic approach often falsely assumes that attempts to change how people think through mission statements or training programs will lead to useful changes in how people actually behave at work. In contrast our findings suggest that people learn new patterns through their interaction with others on the job. (p. 150)

Stacey (1992) extends these ideas starting with a critique of the vision-driven model which prescribes the following:

> . . . form a vision of the future state we desire to achieve, persuade others to believe in it as well, and then together, if we get our facts right, we will be able to realize it. In this view, top management action will take the form of trying to find out in advance what is likely to happen. Managers will prepare forecasts, and they will go off for weekends to formulate visions and missions. They will mount comprehensive culture change programs of persuasion and propaganda to get people throughout the organization to commit to a new vision. But if the

> belief upon which these actions are based is unfounded, they will have wasted their time and probably missed doing what was really necessary for success. (p. 125)

Further:

> Reliance on visions perpetuates cultures of dependence and conformity that obstruct the questioning and complex learning necessary for innovative leadership. (p. 139)

Recall Stacey's advice that 'success has to be the discovery of patterns that emerge through actions we take in response to the changing agendas of issues we identify' (p. 124). Stacey concludes:

> The dynamic systems perspective thus leads managers to think in terms, not of the prior intention represented by objectives and visions, but of continuously developing agendas of issues, aspirations, challenges, and individual intentions. The key to emerging strategy is the effectiveness with which managers in an organization build and deal with such agendas of issues.
>
> This perspective produces a different definition of intention in an organization. Instead of intention to secure something relatively known and fixed, it becomes intention to discover what, why, and how to achieve. Such intention arises not from what managers foresee but from what they have experienced and now understand. It is intention to be creative and deal with what comes, not intention to achieve some particular future state. (p. 146)

In short, the critical question is not whether visions are important, but *how* they can be shaped and reshaped given the complexity of change. Visions die prematurely when they are mere paper products churned out by leadership teams, when they are static or even wrong, and when they attempt to impose a false consensus suppressing rather than enabling personal visions to flourish.

And yes, visions can die or fail to develop in the first place if too many people are involved at the beginning, when leaders fail to advocate their views, when superficial talk rather than grounded inquiry and action is the method used. Another paradox. Trying to get everyone on board in advance of action cannot work because it does not connect to the reality of dynamic complexity. Understanding this process puts the concept of ownership in perspective. Ownership cannot be achieved *in advance* of learning something new.

Deep ownership comes through the learning that arises from full engagement in solving problems. In this sense, ownership is stronger in the middle of a successful change process than at the beginning, and stronger still at the end than at the middle or beginning. Ownership is a process as well as a state. Saying that ownership is crucial begs the question, unless one knows how it is achieved.

Strategic planning is also called into question. Spending too much time and energy on advance planning, even if it builds in principles of flexibility, is a mistake. Participation, elaborate needs assessment, formal strategic plans are uncalled for at the outset of complex change processes. Louis and Miles (1990) call this the evolutionary perspective.

> The evolutionary perspective rests on the assumption that the environment both inside and outside organizations is often chaotic. No specific plan can last for very long, because it will either become outmoded due to changing external pressures, or because disagreement over priorities arises within the organization. Yet, there is no reason to assume that the best response is to plan passively, relying on incremental decisions. Instead, the organization can cycle back and forth between efforts to gain normative consensus about what it may become, to plan strategies for getting there, and to carry out decentralized incremental experimentation that harnesses the creativity of all members to the change effort . . . Strategy is viewed as a flexible tool, rather than a semi-permanent expansion of the mission. (p. 193)

The development of authentic shared vision builds on the skills of change agentry: personal vision building through moral purpose, inquiry, mastery, and collaboration (chapter 2). Collective vision-building is a deepening, 'reinforcing process of increasing clarity, enthusiasm, communication and commitment' (Senge, 1990, p. 227). As people talk, try things out, inquire, re-try — all of this jointly — people become more skilled, ideas become clearer, shared commitment gets stronger. *Productive change is very much a process of mobilization and positive contagion.*

'Ready, fire, aim' is the more fruitful sequence if we want to take a linear snapshot of an organization undergoing major reform. Ready is important, there has to be some notion of direction, but it is killing to bog down the process with vision, mission, and strategic planning, before you know enough about dynamic reality. Fire is action and inquiry where skills, clarity, and learning are fostered. Aim is crystallizing new beliefs, formulating mission and vision statements and

belief upon which these actions are based is unfounded, they will have wasted their time and probably missed doing what was really necessary for success. (p. 125)

Further:

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Recall Stacey's advice that 'success has to be the discovery of patterns that emerge through actions we take in response to the changing agendas of issues we identify' (p. 124). Stacey concludes:

The dynamic systems perspective thus leads managers to think in terms, not of the prior intention represented by objectives and visions, but of continuously developing agendas of issues, aspirations, challenges, and individual intentions. The key to emerging strategy is the effectiveness with which managers in an organization build and deal with such agendas of issues.

This perspective produces a different definition of intention in an organization. Instead of intention to secure something relatively known and fixed, it becomes intention to discover what, why, and how to achieve. Such intention arises not from what managers foresee but from what they have experienced and now understand. It is intention to be creative and deal with what comes, not intention to achieve some particular future state. (p. 146)

In short, the critical question is not whether visions are important, but *how* they can be shaped and reshaped given the complexity of change. Visions die prematurely when they are mere paper products churned out by leadership teams, when they are static or even wrong, and when they attempt to impose a false consensus suppressing rather than enabling personal visions to flourish.

And yes, visions can die or fail to develop in the first place if too many people are involved at the beginning, when leaders fail to advocate their views, when superficial talk rather than grounded inquiry and action is the method used. Another paradox. Trying to get everyone on board in advance of action cannot work because it does not connect to the reality of dynamic complexity. Understanding this process puts the concept of ownership in perspective. Ownership cannot be achieved *in advance* of learning something new.

Deep ownership comes through the learning that arises from full engagement in solving problems. In this sense, ownership is stronger in the middle of a successful change process than at the beginning, and stronger still at the end than at the middle or beginning. Ownership is a process as well as a state. Saying that ownership is crucial begs the question, unless one knows how it is achieved.

Strategic planning is also called into question. Spending too much time and energy on advance planning, even if it builds in principles of flexibility, is a mistake. Participation, elaborate needs assessment, formal strategic plans are uncalled for at the outset of complex change processes. Louis and Miles (1990) call this the evolutionary perspective.

The evolutionary perspective rests on the assumption that the environment both inside and outside organizations is often chaotic. No specific plan can last for very long, because it will either become outmoded due to changing external pressures, or because disagreement over priorities arises within the organization. Yet, there is no reason to assume that the best response is to plan passively, relying on incremental decisions. Instead, the organization can cycle back and forth between efforts to gain normative consensus about what it may become, to plan strategies for getting there, and to carry out decentralized incremental experimentation that harnesses the creativity of all members to the change effort . . . Strategy is viewed as a flexible tool, rather than a semi-permanent expansion of the mission. (p. 193)

The development of authentic shared vision builds on the skills of change agentry: personal vision building through moral purpose, inquiry, mastery, and collaboration (chapter 2). Collective vision-building is a deepening, 'reinforcing process of increasing clarity, enthusiasm, communication and commitment' (Senge, 1990, p. 227). As people talk, try things out, inquire, re-try — all of this jointly — people become more skilled, ideas become clearer, shared commitment gets stronger. *Productive change is very much a process of mobilization and positive contagion.*

'Ready, fire, aim' is the more fruitful sequence if we want to take a linear snapshot of an organization undergoing major reform. Ready is important, there has to be some notion of direction, but it is killing to bog down the process with vision, mission, and strategic planning, before you know enough about dynamic reality. Fire is action and inquiry where skills, clarity, and learning are fostered. Aim is crystallizing new beliefs, formulating mission and vision statements and

all paradoxes there are no one-sided solutions. To illustrate let us trace through the problem of isolation in search of a solution.

Teaching has long been called 'a lonely profession', always in pejorative terms. The professional isolation of teachers limits access to new ideas and better solutions, drives stress inward to fester and accumulate, fails to recognize and praise success, and permits incompetence to exist and persist to the detriment of students, colleagues, and the teachers themselves. Isolation allows, even if it does not always produce, conservatism and resistance to innovation in teaching (Lortie, 1975).

Isolation and privatism have many causes. Often they can seem a kind of personality weakness revealed in competitiveness, defensiveness about criticism, and a tendency to hog resources. But people are creatures of circumstance, and when isolation is widespread, we have to ask what it is about our schools that creates so much of it.

Isolation is a problem because it imposes a ceiling affect on inquiry and learning. Solutions are limited to the experiences of the individual. For complex change you need many people working insightfully on the solution and committing themselves to concentrated action together. In the words of Konosuke Matsushita, founder of Matsushita Electric Ltd.

> Business, we know, is now so complex and difficult, the survival of firms hazardous in an environment increasingly unpredictable, competitive and fraught with danger, that their continued existence depends on the day-to-day mobilization of every ounce of intelligence. (quoted in Pascale, 1990, p. 27)

Educational problems are all the more complex, and collaborative, 'learning enriched' schools do better than those lingering with the isolationist traditions of teaching (Rosenholtz, 1989; Fullan and Hargreaves, 1991). So what do we do? We drive a good idea to extremes. Collaboration is celebrated as automatically good. Participatory site-based management is the answer. Mentoring and peer coaching are a must. Well, yes and no. Pushed to extremes collaboration becomes 'groupthink' — uncritical conformity to the group, unthinking acceptance of the latest solution, suppression of individual dissent (CRM Films, 1991). People can collaborate to do the wrong things, as well as the right things; and by collaborating too closely they can miss danger signals and learning opportunities.

In moving toward greater collaboration we should not lose sight of the 'good side' of individualism. The capacity to think and work

independently is essential to educational reform (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1991). The freshest ideas often come from diversity and those marginal to the group. Keeping in touch with our inner voice, personal reflection, and the capacity to be alone are essential under conditions of constant change forces. Solitude also has its place as a strategy for coping with change (Storr, 1988).

> When from our better selves, we have too long
> Been parted by the hurrying world, and droop,
> Sick of its business, its pleasures tired,
> How gracious, how benign, is Solitude
> (Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, cited in Storr, 1988)

Groups are more vulnerable to faddism than are individuals. The suppressing role of groups is clearly portrayed in Doris Lessing's (1986) *Prisons We Choose To Live Inside.*

> People who have experienced a lot of groups, who perhaps have observed their own behaviour, may agree that the hardest thing in the world is to stand out against one's group, a group of one's peers. Many agree that among one's most shameful memories are of saying that black is white because other people are saying it. (p. 51)

Group-suppression or self-suppression of intuition and experiential knowledge is one of the major reasons why bandwagons and ill-conceived innovations flourish (and then inevitably fade, giving change a bad name). It is for this reason that I see the individual as an undervalued source of reform. Lessing puts it this way: 'it is my belief that it is always the individual, in the long run, who will set the tone, provide the real development in society' (p. 71).

The dark side of groupthink is not just a matter of avoiding the dangers of overconformity. Under conditions of dynamic complexity different points of view often anticipate new problems earlier than do like-minded close-knit groups. Pascale elaborates:

> Internal differences can widen the spectrum of an organization's options by generating new points of view, by promoting disequilibrium and adaptation. There is, in fact, a well-known law of cybernetics — the law of requisite variety — which states that for any system to adapt to its external environment,

its internal controls must incorporate variety. If one reduces variety inside, a system is unable to cope with variety outside. The innovative organization must incorporate variety into its internal processes. (p. 14)

Thus, a tight-knit shared culture is not a desirable end-point:

> The dynamic systems perspective leads to a view of culture as emergent. What a group comes to share in the way of culture and philosophy emerges from individual personal beliefs through a learning process that builds up over years. And if the learning process is to continue, if a business is to be continually innovative, the emphasis should be on questioning the culture, not sharing it. A dynamic systems perspective points to the import-ance of encouraging counter cultures in order to overcome powerful tendencies to conform and share cultures strongly. (Stacey, 1992, p. 145)

Strong sharing and non-sharing cultures are both defective because they have the effect of creating boundaries that are respectively too tight or too loose (Stacey, 1992). Some degree of multiple cultures is essential for questioning the *status quo* in the face of continually changing and contentious issues in the environment. Canon and Honda, for example, hire some managers from other organizations 'for the express purpose of establishing sizable pockets of new cultures' (Stacey, 1992, p. 198).

It is for these reasons that having a healthy respect for individuals and personal visions is a source of renewal in inquiry-oriented organizations. When the future is unknown and the environment changing in unpredictable ways, sources of difference are as important as occasions of convergence. Because conflict (properly managed) is essential for productive change, i.e., because problems are our friends, the group that perceives conflict as an opportunity to learn something, instead of as something to be avoided or as an occasion to entrench one's position, is the group that will prosper. You can't have organizational learning without individual learning, and you can't have learning in groups without processing conflict.

However, we can overcompensate for groupthink by glorifying the individual, stressing autonomy, and failing to work on shared visions thereby dispersing energy. We come full circle — isolation is bad, group dominance is worse. Honouring opposites simultaneously — individualism and collegiality — is the critical message.

Lesson 6: Neither Centralization or Decentralization Works

(Both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary.)

Centralization errs on the side of overcontrol, decentralization errs towards chaos. We have known for decades that top-down change doesn't work (you can't mandate what matters). Leaders keep trying because they don't see any alternative and they are impatient for results (either for political or moral reasons). Decentralized solutions like site-based management also fail because groups get preoccupied with governance and frequently flounder when left on their own (see chapters 4 and 5, and Fullan, 1991, pp. 200–9). Even when they are successful for short-periods of time, they cannot stay successful unless they pay attention to the centre and vice-versa. Pascale (1990) puts it this way, in examining the Ford case:

> Change flourishes in a 'sandwich'. When there is consensus above, and pressure below, things happen. While there was no operational consensus at the top as to precisely what should be done at Ford, the trips to Japan caused many senior managers to agree that the problems lay in the way the organization worked. This might not have led anywhere, however, were it not for pressures for change coming from the rank and file. (pp. 126 and 128)

Control at the top as many reform-minded leaders have found, is an illusion. No one can control complex organizations from the top. The key question (or more accurately the constant contention) as Senge (1990, p. 287) says is 'how to achieve control without controlling'. He continues:

> While traditional organizations require management systems that control people's behaviour, learning organizations invest in improving the quality of thinking, the capacity for reflection and team learning, and the ability to develop shared visions and shared understandings of complex business issues. It is these capabilities that will allow learning organizations to be both more locally controlled and more well coordinated than their hierarchical predecessors.

Similarly, it is a mistake for local units, even operating under decentralized schemes to ignore the centre (see lesson 7). For example,

school and district development must be coordinated. It is possible for individual schools to become highly collaborative despite their districts, but it is not possible for them *to stay* collaborative under these conditions. Personnel moves, transfers, selection and promotion criteria, policy requirements, budget decisions including staff development resources all take their toll on schools if the relationship is not coordinated (see Fullan, in press).

Put differently, the centre and local units *need each other*. You can't get anywhere by swinging from one dominance to another. What is required is a different two-way relationship of pressure, support and continuous negotiation. It amounts to simultaneous top-down bottom-up influence. Individuals and groups who cannot manage this paradox become whipsawed by the cross-cutting forces of change.

Lesson 7: Connection with the Wider Environment is Critical

(The best organizations learn externally as well as internally.)

Many organizations work hard on internal development but fail to keep a proactive learning stance toward the environment. This fatal flaw is as old as evolution. Smith (1984) makes this profound observation:

> For a social entity such as an organization to reflect on itself, it must have a system representing both itself and the context in which it is imbedded. That's where nonequilibrium comes in. A social system that promotes paradox and fosters disequilibrium (i.e., encourages variation and embraces contrary points of view), has a greater chance of knowing itself (as the by-product of continually reexamining its assumptions and juggling its internal tensions). This in turn generates a reasonable likelihood of being aware of the context in which it operates. (p. 289, quoted in Pascale, 1990)

Dynamic complexity means that there is constant action in the environment. For teachers and schools to be effective two things have to happen. First, individual moral purpose must be linked to a larger social good. Teachers still need to focus on making a difference with individual students, but they must also work on school-wide change to

create the working conditions that will be most effective in helping all students learn. Teachers must look for opportunities to join forces with others, and must realize that they are part of a larger movement to develop a learning society through their work with students and parents. It is possible, indeed necessary, for teachers to act locally, while conceptualizing their roles on a higher plane.

Second, to prosper, organizations must be actively plugged into their environments responding to and contributing to the issues of the day. They must engage state policies, not necessarily implement them literally, if they are to protect themselves from eventual imposition. But most fundamentally, learning organizations know that expectations and tensions in the environment contain the seeds of future development. There are far more ideas 'out there' than 'in here' (see chapter 5). Successful organizations have many antennae to tap into and to contribute to the demands of change which are constantly churning in the environment. They treat the internal and external milieu with equal respect. Seeing 'our connectedness to the world' and helping others to see it is a moral purpose and teaching/learning opportunity of the highest order.

Lesson 8: Every Person is a Change Agent

(Change is too important to leave to the experts.)

There are two basic reasons why *every person* working in an enterprise committed to making continuous improvements must be change agents with moral purpose. First, as we have seen, since no one person can possibly understand the complexities of change in dynamically complex systems, it follows that we cannot leave the responsibility to others. Second, and more fundamental, the conditions for the new paradigm of change cannot be established by formal leaders working by themselves. Put differently, each and every teacher has the responsibility to help create an organization capable of individual and collective inquiry and continuous renewal, or it will not happen.

Formal leaders in today's society are generated by a system that is operating under the old paradigm. Therefore, they are unlikely to have the conceptions and instincts necessary to bring about radical changes consistent with the new mindset we have been describing in this chapter. Saul (1992) claims that the 'age of reason' has become bastardized, while burying common sense and moral purpose:

> The rational advocacy of efficiency more often than not produces inefficiency. It concentrates on how things are done and loses track of why. It measures costs without understanding real costs. This obsession with linear efficiency is one of the causes of our unending economic crisis . . . Worst of all, it is capable of removing from democracy its greatest strength, the ability to act in a non-conventional manner, just as it removes from individuals their strength as nonlinear beings . . . How could a civilization devoted to structure, expertise and answers evolve into other than a coalition of professional groups? How, then, could the individual citizen not be seen as a serious impediment to getting on with business? (Saul, 1992, pp. 582–583)

It is only by individuals taking action to alter their own environments that there is any chance for deep change. The 'system' will not, indeed cannot, do us any favours. If anything, the educational system is killing itself because it is more designed for the *status quo* while facing societal expectations of major reform. If teachers and other educators want to make a difference, and this is what drives the best of them, moral purpose by itself is not good enough. Moral purpose needs an engine, and that engine is individual, skilled change agents pushing for changes around them, intersecting with other like minded individuals and groups to form the critical mass necessary to bring about continuous improvements.

Conclusion

There are exciting, but no comfortable positions in contending with the forces of change because one must always fight against overcontrol on the one hand, and chaos on the other. There is a pattern underlying the eight lessons of dynamic change and it concerns one's ability to work with polar opposites: simultaneously pushing for change while allowing self-learning to unfold; being prepared for a journey of uncertainty; seeing problems as sources of creative resolution; having a vision, but not being blinded by it; valuing the individual and the group; incorporating centralizing and decentralizing forces; being internally cohesive, but externally oriented; and valuing personal change agentry as the route to system change.

What this analysis means is that in the current struggle between state accountability and local autonomy, *both* are right. Success depends on the extent to which each force can willingly contend with if not embrace the other as necessary for productive educational change.

In so doing, learning all eight lessons and recognizing their dynamic interdependency is essential.

The change process is exceedingly complex as one realizes that it is the *combination* of individuals and societal agencies that make a difference. Teachers are major players in creating learning societies, which by definition are complex. Development is 'the continuing improvement in the capacity to grow and to build ever more connections in more varied environments' (Land and Jarman, 1992, p. 30). Internal connections (within oneself, within one's organization) and external connections (to others and to the environment) must co-exist in dynamic interplay.

As the scale of complexity accelerates in post-modern society our ability to synthesize polar opposites where possible, and work with their co-existence where necessary, is absolutely critical to success. One starts with oneself, but by working actively to create learning organizations, both the individual and the group benefit.

Note

[1] I am indebted to Matt Miles who has developed several of these lessons (see Fullan and Miles, 1992).

"In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."

--Eric Hoffer

Just a few of the changes...

- *6 dozen human body parts can be implemented*
- *scientific knowledge is doubling every 9 months*
- *telecommunication innovations have a six-month life span*
- *biohackers are the coming concern*
- *global power grid envisioned by Buckminster Fuller will be realized*
- *microcomputers are showing up everywhere, even in toilets*

Change

Creating a Culture for Change

The issues of managing change and building collaborative work cultures are central to school success in the 90's. No longer can schools respond to issues in succession or rely on external solutions. Schools must develop the internal capacity to manage multiple changes by becoming dynamic learning organizations.

The Future

Children born in 1995 will, on the average,

- *enter school in 2000*
- *graduate in 2012*
- *enter the job market between 2012 and 2021*
- *have children who start school in the 2030's*
- *run things for two or three decades*
- *retire from work in the 2060's and watch the return of Halley's comet in 2061*
- *ninety percent of what we will see in the year 2000 has yet to be invented*
- *the body of information will double four times between 1986 and 2000*
- *if you are under 25, you can expect to change careers every decade and jobs every four years*

What we do to reform education during the next five or ten years will affect an entire life span...those children soon to be born, soon to start their education, soon to be responsible for future civilization

The Learn by Doing Approach

CHANGING THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOL

Shifting Teacher Beliefs and Actions About:	Knowledge Transfer	Knowledge Construction
Classroom Activity	Teacher Centered Didactic	Learner Centered Interactive
Teacher Role	Fact Teller Always Expert	Collaborator Sometimes Learner
Student Role	Listener Always Learner	Collaborator Sometimes Expert
Instructional Emphasis	Facts Memorization	Relationships Inquiry and Invention
Concept of Knowledge	Accumulation of Facts	Transformation of Facts
Demonstration of Success	Quantity	Quality of Understanding
Assessment	Norm-referenced Multiple-choice Instruments	Criterion-referenced Portfolios and Performances
Technology	Passive Delivery	Active medium for thinking

The Process of Change

Change is often complex and takes place at a number of levels.

Beliefs and Attitudes

Equipment and Materials

Behaviours and Practices

Structure

Of these, which would you change first--second--third?

To Change or Not to Change

- What values are involved?
- Who will benefit?
- How much of a priority is it?
- How achievable is it?
- What areas of potential change are being neglected?

❖Adapted from Fullan M. The New Meaning of Educational Change. Teachers College Press, 1991, p. 27.

ADOPTER TYPES

Another piece of research is the Adopter Types developed by Everett Rogers and others who have studied how an innovation diffuses through a group of people. People differ in their readiness to accept change. Some adopt quickly, others take a long time.

	Needs
'Trailblazers' or Innovators 8% • eager to try ideas, open to change, willing to take risks usually perceived as naive and a little crazy and not well integrated in staff.	Vision and Support
'Pioneers' or Leaders 17% • open to change, but more thoughtful about getting involved: trusted by staff and sought for advice and opinions.	Demonstration - That it works
'Settlers' or Early Majority 29% • cautious and deliberate about deciding to adopt an innovation: tends to be a follower, not a leader.	How to do it - information demonstration
'Stay at Homes' or Late Majority 29% • skeptical of adopting new ideas and 'set in their ways': can be won over by peer pressure and administrative expectations.	Come for a visit but won't stay
'Saboteurs' or Resister 17% • suspicious and generally opposed to new ideas: usually low in influence and often isolated from the mainstream.	Don't want to go and don't want anyone else to go

Adapted from Rogers, Everett

Gayle Gregory

Resistance to Change

Symptoms

- Tension
- Stress
- Sabotage
- Turnover
- Undermining
- Squabbling
- Past Grievances Surface
- Frustration
- Work Slow Downs

Reasons to Resist

Loss of:

- Control
- Identity
- Meaning
- Belonging
- Certainty
- Predictability
- Confidence
- Competence

The Grieving Process

The Complexity Of Change

Eight Lessons

1. You can't mandate what matters.

2. Change is a journey, not a blueprint.

3. Problems are our friends.

4. Vision and strategic planning come later.

5. Individualism and collectivism must have equal power.

6. Neither centralization nor decentralization works.

7. Connection with the wider environment is critical.

8. Every person is a change agent.

❖ Fullan (1992)

The Principal and Change

Leadership Styles

Initiator "Make it Happen" 23%

- holds a clear and strong vision
- listens then decide
- applies pressure but supports
- focuses achievement and self esteem of students
- sets high expectations
- informed
- seeks resources creatively and aggressively
- expects loyalty

Manager "Help it Happen" 33%

- takes pride in being efficient
- protects staff by limiting the number of changes
- implements changes quickly once determined
- interested in staff development

Responder "Let it Happen" 44%

- oriented to the present rather than the future
- delays decisions
- lacks knowledge
- concerned about perceptions of others
- allows others to lead
- criticizes innovations

Planning for Change

Self Renewing Schools

- **Research Base**

  Knowledge of "what" improves student learning.

- **Process**

  Models to make collaborative decisions and implement plans.

- **Staff Development**

  Knowledge of effective processes and options.

- **Culture**

  Strategies to build capacity for change.

❖ Adpated from The Self-Renewing School by B. Joyce, J. Wolf, E. Calhoun

Strategies for Change...

- Building active, creative, social and technology rich learning environment.

- Study teaching and learning.

- Document and share results.

- Recreate the vision.

Assumptions About Change

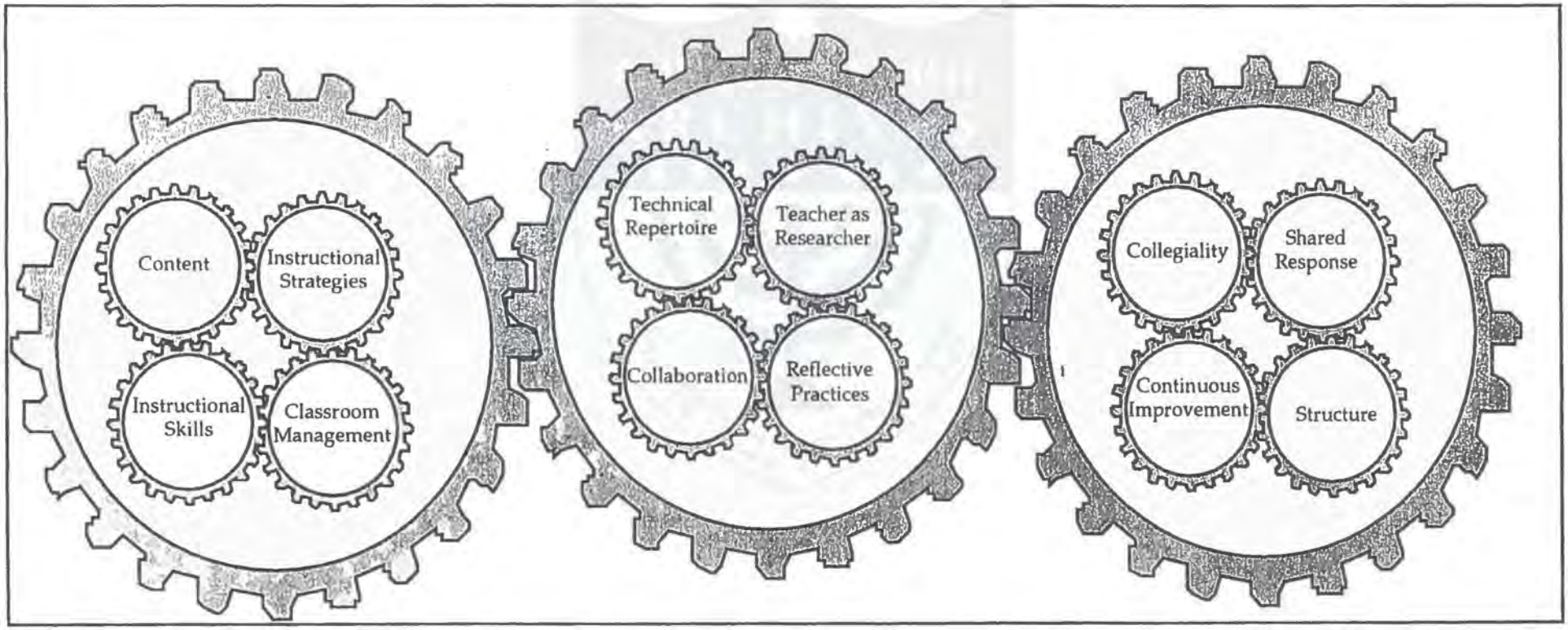
- Your version of change is not the only one.
- People must understand the innovation.
- Conflict and disagreement are fundamental.
- Pressure and support are necessary.
- Change takes time.
- There are many reasons for lack of implementation.
- Do not expect all people to change.
- Plan for the above.
- Change is never totally clear.
- The real agenda is changing institutional culture.

❖ Fullan (1990)

A Comprehensive Framework for Classroom and School Improvement

Student Engagement and Learning

Classroom Improvement	*Teacher as Learner*	*School Improvement*



Leadership and Mobilization

Barrie Bennett, Carol Rolheiser-Bennett, and Michael Fullan

Characteristics of Effective Schools

❖ *Source:* *Effective Schools Task Force, Halton Board of Education*

Managing Transitions

Three Steps to Change

1. Letting go of the old.

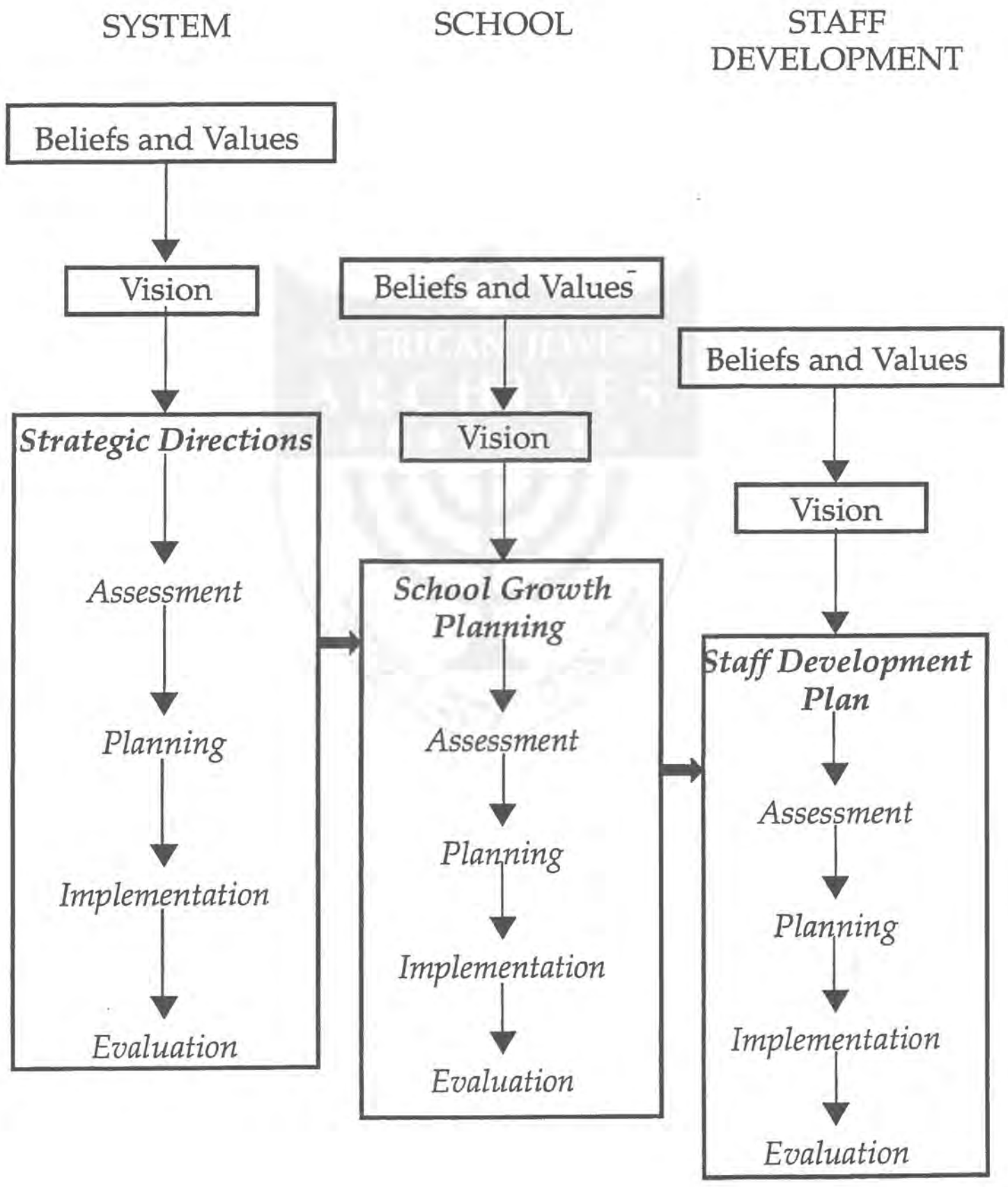
2. Neutral Zone

3. New Beginnings

"Unless transition occurs, change will not work."

❖*Source:* *William Bridges, 1991*

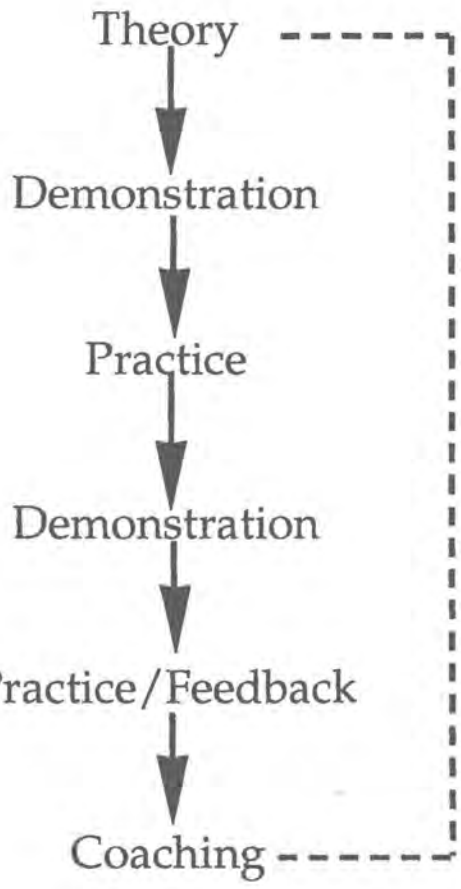
Planning Structures

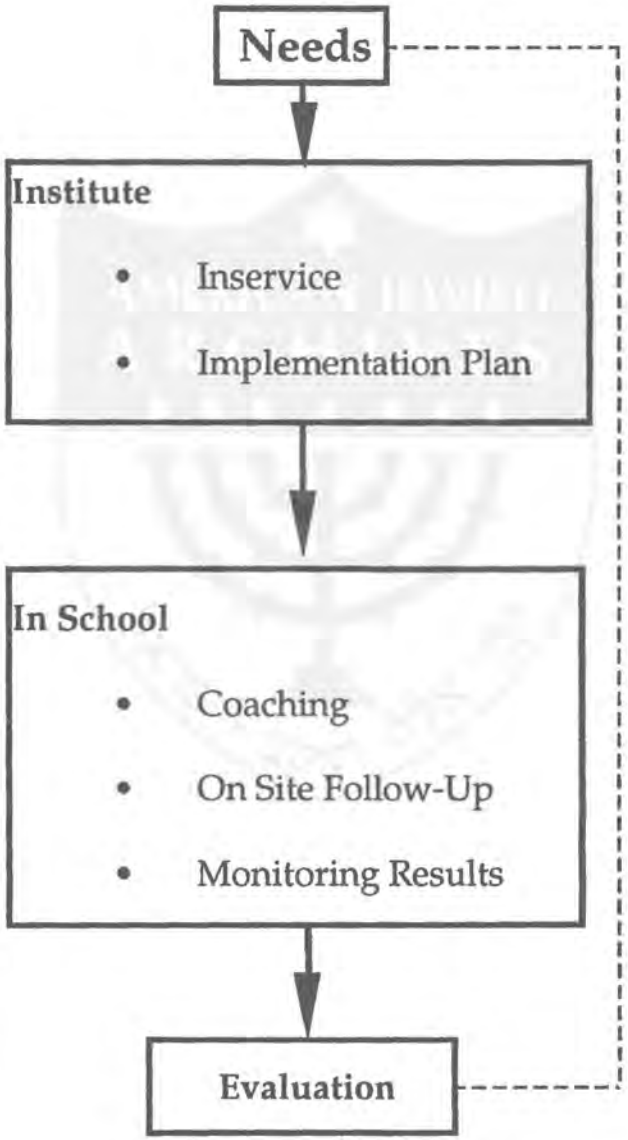


Building the Capacity for Change

Staff Development Model

Components of Effective Training...*B. Joyce*





Process

- Identified through school growth plan process
- Attend as teams with administration
- Usually 4 days intensive experience modelling new strategies and skills
- Team develops plan to put new learnings into practice including coaching
- Coaching partners/teams practice new learnings
- School requests instructional consultants and co-ordinators to provide: inservice to extend and refine; resources; and feedback
- Monitor and adjust
- Progress evaluated by the team
- May attend follow-up regional inservice 1-2 years

Stages of Concern

Typical Expressions of Concern about an Innovation

STAGES OF CONCERN	EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN
6. REFOCUSING	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.
5. COLLABORATION	How can I relate what I am doing to what others are doing?
4. CONSEQUENCE	How is my use affecting kids? How can I refine it to have more impact?
3. MANAGEMENT	I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.
2. PERSONAL	How will using it affect me?
1. INFORMATIONAL	I would like to know more about it.
0. AWARENESS	I am not concerned about it.

❖ Adapted from: Shirley M. Hord. William L. Rutherford, Leslie Huling-Austin, and Gene E. Hall. Taking Charge of Change, Alexandria, VA: ASCD and Austin, TX: SEDL, 1987.

Stages of Concern about the Innovation

6. **Refocusing**

   - The focus is on exploration of more universal benefits from the innovation, including the possibility of major changes or replacement with a more powerful alternative. Individual has definite ideas about alternatives to the proposed or existing form of the innovation.

5. **Collaboration**

   - The focus is on coordination and cooperation with others regarding use of the innovation.

4. **Consequence**

   - Attention focuses on impact of the innovation on students in his/her immediate sphere of influence. The focus is on relevance of the innovation for students, evaluation of student outcomes, including performance and competencies, and changes needed to increase student outcomes.

3. **Management**

   - Attention is focused on the processes and tasks of using the innovation and the best use of information and resources. Issues related to efficiency, organizing, managing, scheduling, and time demands are utmost.

2. **Personal**

   - Individual is uncertain about the demands of the innovation, his/her inadequacy to meet those demands, and his/her role with the innovation. This includes analysis of his/her role in relation to the reward structure of the organization, decision-making and consideration of potential conflicts with existing structures or personal commitment. Financial or status implications of the program for self and colleagues may also be reflected.

1. **Informational**

   - A general awareness of the innovation and interest in learning more detail about it is indicated. The person seems to be unworried about himself/herself in relation to the innovation. She/he is interested in substantive aspects of the innovation in a selfless manner such as general characteristics, effects, and requirements for use.

0. **Awareness**

   - Little concern about or involvement with the innovation is indicated.

CBAM Project
Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

Stages of Concern

Typical Expressions of Concern about an Innovation

	STAGES OF CONCERN	EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN	ACTIVITIES
IMPACT	6. REFOCUSING	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.	
	5. COLLABORATION	How can I relate what I am doing to what others are doing	
TASK	4. CONSEQUENCE	How is my use affecting kids? How can I refine it to have more impact?	
	3. MANAGEMENT	I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.	
	2. PERSONAL	How will using it affect me?	
SELF	1. INFORMATIONAL	I would like to know more about it.	
	0. AWARENESS	I am not concerned about it.	

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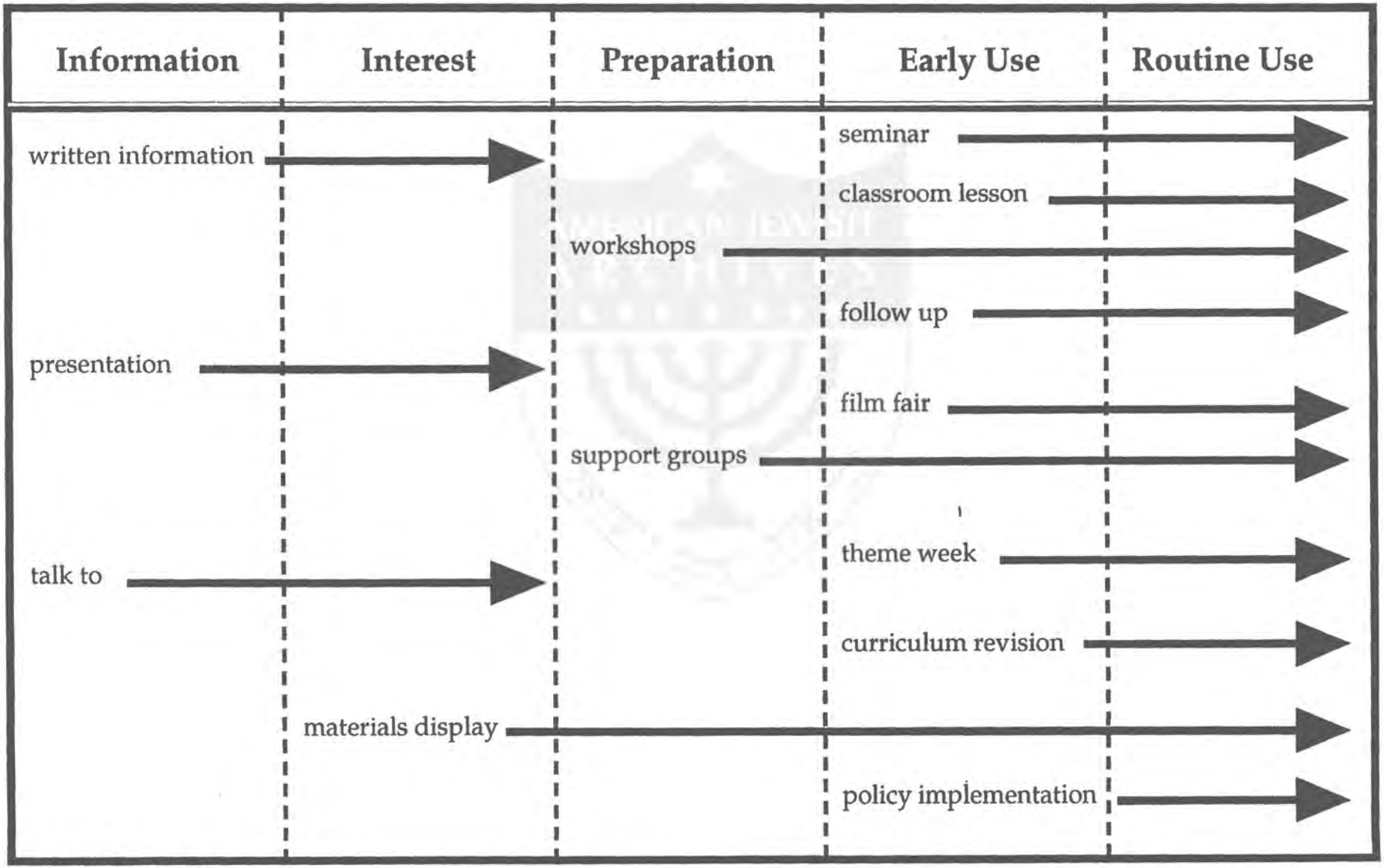
❖ Adapted from: Shirley M. Hord. William L. Rutherford, Leslie Huling-Austin, and Gene E. Hall. Taking Charge of Change, Alexandria, VA: ASCD and Austin, TX: SEDL, 1987.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

	STAGES OF CONCERN	KEY QUESTIONS	STRATEGIES	WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
SELF	0. Awareness 1. Informational	Concept Clarification: What is it? A shared understanding is necessary for the 'player' so that everyone understands what the change is or can be and understands the change process.	• discussion and rationale • speakers • video? • graphic organizers • articles, journals, books • exploration of model • Common Curriculum/Ministry	
	2. Personal	• What does it mean to me? To us? • Where can we start? • What am I already doing? • What more do I need?	• START SMALL, THINK BIG! • gap analysis • visiting other schools/teachers • inservice, workshops, institutes • examining curriculum units as models • 'carded' model	
TASK	3. Management	• How will I manage this? • Time to plan? • Resources? • Using learning outcomes? • Backwards mapping?	• have administration support (morale and tangible) • block timetabling • planning time • staff development (instruction) • resource funding • use models • work alone/communicate with colleagues	
IMPACT	4. Consequence	• What difference will it make for students?	• reaction papers • journals • student achievement • aligning with learning outcomes • portfolios • student feedback • professional teacher reflection	
	5. Collaboration	• How can I work with colleagues? (grade teams, divisions, other departments?	• talk • study group, technology • arrange planning time together • share assessment plans • team teach • peer coach	
	6. Refinement	• How can we integrate school wide? • What would a school framework look like?	• explore school wide themes • explore themes across divisions • integrate beyond the classroom • connect to real world	

Making Change for School Improvement
Implementation Strategies



Culture

Collaborative Cultures

Imagine that you would become a better teacher, just be virtue of being on the staff of a particular school –just from that one fact alone.

❖ *Little (1989)*

In collaborative cultures, the examination of values and purposes is not a one time event...but a continuous process that pervades the whole school.

❖ *Fullan and Hargreaves (1991)*

Collaborative cultures facilitate commitment to change and improvement.

They also create communities of teachers who no longer have the dependent relationships to externally imposed change that isolation and uncertainty tend to encourage.

❖ *Fullan and Hargreaves (1991)*

Successful schools realize that development planning is about creating a school culture which will support the planning and management of changes of many different kinds.

❖ *Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991)*

The values and beliefs shared
by people within an organization
establish guidelines for their
behaviour and for the criteria
that they use in making judgements.

❖ *Brunett and Crossley, 1990*

The only thing of
real importance that
leaders do is create and
manage culture.

❖ *Edgar Schein*
Organizational Culture and Leadership, 1983

Successful schools realize that
development planning is about
creating a school culture which will
support the planning and
management of changes
of many different kinds.

❖ *Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991)*

What is Culture?

An informal understanding of the
way we do things around here, i.e.,
what keeps the herd moving in
roughly the right direction.

❖ *Terence Deal*

Why Collaborate

MOVING	STUCK
• shared school goals	• little attachment
• norms of collaboration	• norms of self reliance
• norms of continuous improvement	• "a numbing sameness"
• certainty	• victims
• optimism	• fatalism

❖ Rosenhotz 1989

Collaborative Cultures

- ❑ Joint Work
- ❑ Norms of Continuous Improvement
- ❑ Professional Collegiality
- ❑ Interdependence
- ❑ Professional Talk
- ❑ Coaching--Sharing Expertise

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

The 12 Norms Of School Culture

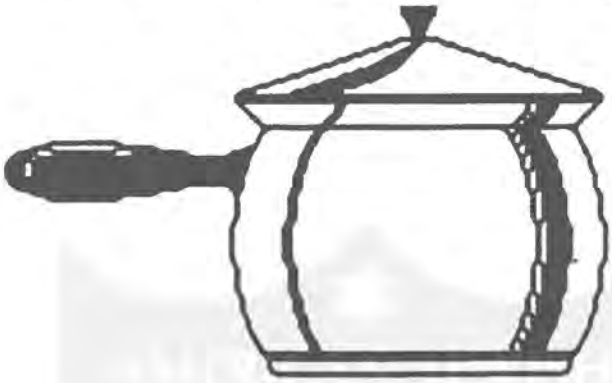
1. Collegiality
2. Experimentation
3. High expectations
4. Trust and confidence
5. Tangible support
6. Reaching out to the knowledge bases
7. Appreciation and recognition
8. Caring, celebration and humour
9. Involvement in decision making
10. Protection of what's important
11. Traditions
12. Honest, open communication

❖ Adpated from Good Seeds Grow in Strong Cultures

Creating a Culture for Change

A Good School

"A good school does not emerge from a microwave in 5 seconds, rather it is like a simmering pot."



- Model values and beliefs consistently
- Know when to add ingredients (innovations/changes)
- Delegate "cooking"
- Allow time for ideas to percolate
- Appreciate those who stir the pot
- Know when to raise and lower the heat
- Know when to put the lid on
- Grasp the handle for support
- Enjoy along the way

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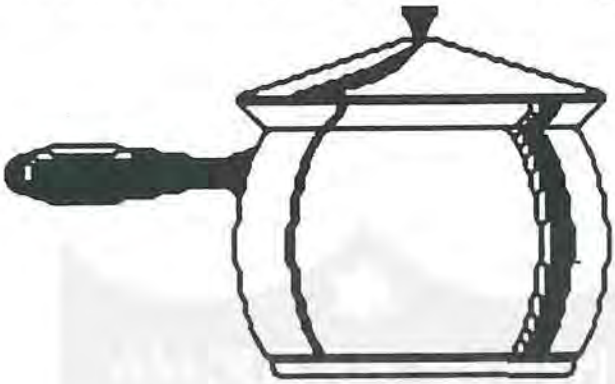

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Teams

Teams...

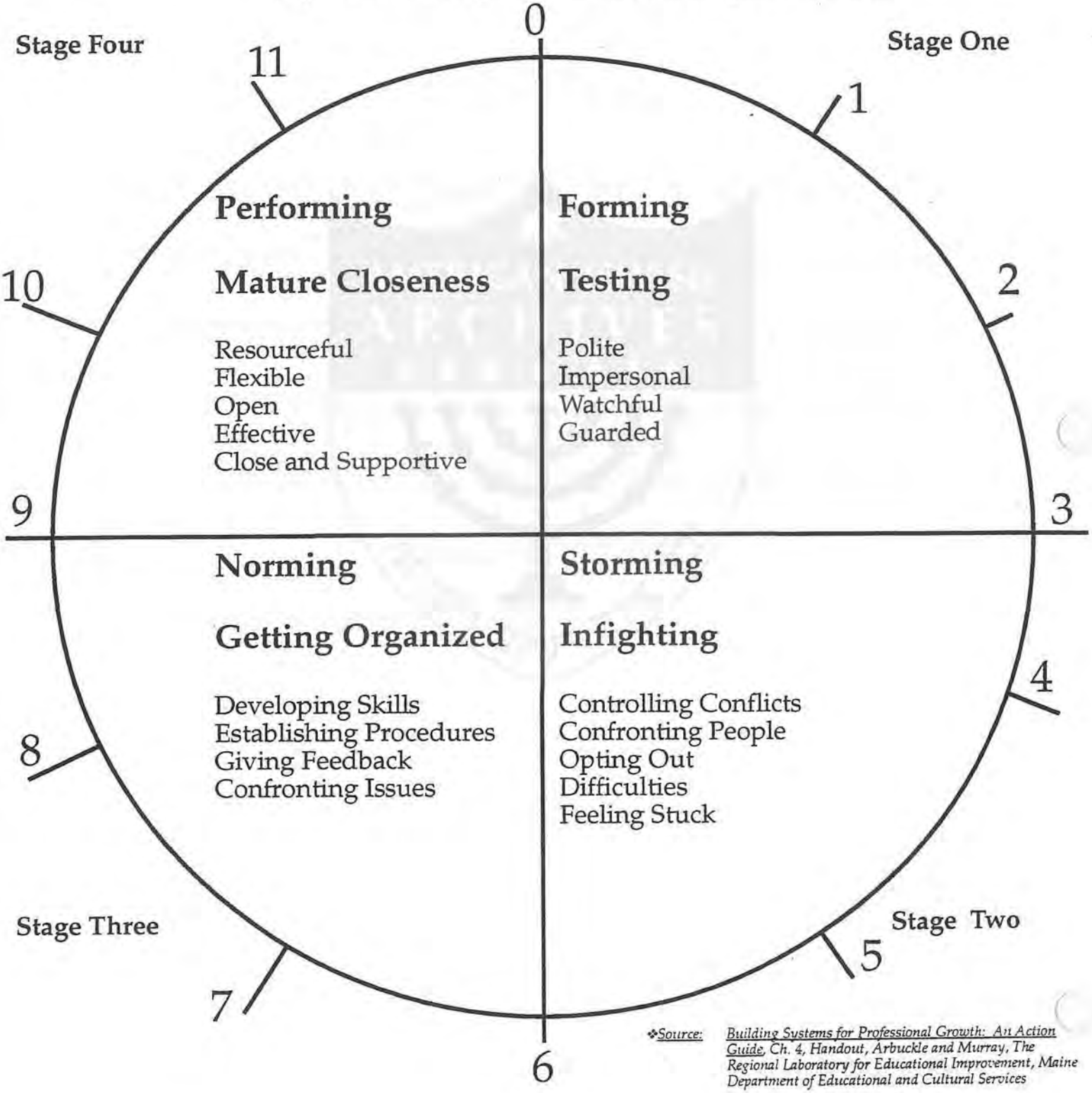
A Definition

"A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable."

❖*Source:* *Katzenbach and Smith, 1993*

Team Development Wheel

Instructions: Place a mark on the circumference of the wheel to represent the present status of your team.



❖Source: *Building Systems for Professional Growth: An Action Guide*, Ch. 4, Handout, Arbuckle and Murray, The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement, Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services

Characteristics of High Performing Teams

Self-Directed Work Teams
Burr Ridge
Irwin 1990

JIGSAW

Read the assigned section

Person 1 **Introduction - first page**

2 **Non Negotiable Skills**
- **Purpose**
- **Empowerment**
- **Spirit**
- **Integrity**

3 **Non Negotiable Skills**
- **Motivation**
- **Communication**
- **Celebration**

Teach your section to the group

Complete the worksheet

Characteristics of High Performance Teams

Is there a difference between a group of people coming together and solving a problem by forming a consensus versus a team of trained individuals pondering over the best possible solutions and then picking the one that is the best for the organization? The answer is emphatically yes. For years, reaching consensus was thought to be a very collaborative form of decision making. The idea of consensus is to foster agreement among the people grappling with a problem by discussing the pros and cons of selected solutions until one of the solutions surfaces as the one with the most support. Those not in favor of the solution would relinquish their opposition with the understanding that in future problem solving experiences, others would be required to do the same. All of the give and take is considered reasonable when you understand that you are helping the group to reach consensus in order for progress to be made. However, in reality, this form of decision making is really the majority rules concept.

Decision making conducted by high performance teams on the other hand is a process involving people who have been selected to work together because they represent a cross section of the constituencies that make up the organization. In addition, they possess specific identifiable skills that enable them to have a diverse pool of talent and resources to draw from. Their decision making process involves risk taking and a continued effort to surface the best possible decision regardless of popularity. Members of high performance teams are confident in their own ability and therefore may present an idea several times before it is accepted. They are also comfortable with debate and accept the premise that if an argument can not be challenged by one or more members, the idea will be accepted as the team's idea. In addition, high performance teams immerse members in intensive professional development so each person understands the uniqueness and complications of empowered teams responsible for specific tasks.

There are certain non-negotiable skills that all high performance teams possess. These skills help team members create a working environment that enables the team to allow each member an opportunity to present their best thinking. When each member feels that his/her contribution is valued, the end results are solutions that usually produce a higher level of attainment than solutions manifested by individual thinking. The following skills are those skills that practical experience, observation of over fifty teams, and research have identified as critical to the development of a high performance team.

Non Negotiable Skills Required of High Performance Teams

Purpose

All high performance teams have a sense of purpose that is the force that enables them to be more creative in their problem solving. When teams have purpose, it focuses all members on a primary objective allowing each to think clearly about the problem identified instead of spending quality time trying to discover what the problem might be. In essence, when the team is focused on a common purpose, the team's collective brain power produces a higher quality and quantity of solutions.

Empowerment

The crazy thing about empowerment is that most administrators make a very common mistake. They all think a person will think, act, and perform differently because they have empowered them to do so. The truth is, no one can empower another individual. What is possible is that an effective manager can manipulate the environment of his/her employees assisting them to take on more administrative and managerial tasks that strengthen their self-confidence. As their self-confidence becomes stronger and as they feel comfortable moving outside their assigned roles, employees empower themselves to take on more responsibility. When a manager effectively facilitates the empowerment of an entire team, the manager has created a team of people who are respected for the self-confidence and leadership capabilities they exhibit. More importantly, each member of the team values and relies on the skills of his colleagues to support and enhance his own as well as the team's development. ***This is empowerment!***

Spirit

Grace McGartland (1994) describes what we think, how we think and spirit as critical attributes necessary to engage in *Thunderbolt Thinking*. Thunderbolt thinking is revolutionary and causes one to step outside the boundaries of traditional thinking and become a catalyst for change. What we think, how we think, and our spirit are equally important attributes that allow us to feel safe as we engage in new wave thinking to guide us in our decision making models.

In McGartland's model, spirit is congruent to attitude and attitude is how we define ourselves.

We must look at five specific attitudes: flexibility, awareness, courage, humor and action. Members of high performance teams possess all of these attitudes but what is more important, they have assessed who they are as individuals and as a collective unit in relation to these attitudes. In their assessment, they realize their individual and collective strengths. In other words, high performance teams are not building flexibility, awareness, courage, humor, and action. They possess these attitudes to a great extent, yet they are still evolving and growing as they receive and assimilate new information.

There is another dimension to spirit in this author's opinion. Commitment! Commitment, in many references, is considered a separate characteristic of high performance teams. It is certainly heralded as an extremely important and necessary attribute. However, in this document, it is placed within the context of spirit with the understanding that highly committed people exhibit dedication to the task at hand and that dedication is a part of the spirit discussed in this section.

Integrity

Integrity is often an overlooked attribute because it is assumed that all people understand its importance and practice it in their everyday personal and professional lives. The fact is, integrity is too often left to assumptions and never clearly stated as an expectation. How often have we been surprised by the lack of integrity demonstrated by one of our colleagues in the completion of assignments or handling of people. In addition, how many times have we personally fell victim to: *Everyone does it this way.*

Stephen R. Covey (1990) states that there are ten processes and principles that will increase a leader's honor and power with others: persuasion, patience, gentleness, teachableness, acceptance, kindness, openness, compassionate confrontation, consistency, and...integrity. Integrity is the guiding principle that directs people to match their behavior with what they actually think. It is the conscious that dictates our moral behavior, demanding honesty in our actions and sincerity in our dealings with people, wanting only optimal performance from ourselves and certainly from others. Integrity does not allow for mediocrity, malicious thoughts or creating bad will.

High performance teams do assume that integrity is in place, they demand that each member functions on the team with the understanding that integrity is a necessary component of their existence.

Motivation

There are basically two forms of motivation, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. In our quest for quality, we often think that it is the job of the person in charge to motivate employees to do a better job. This form of motivation is typically manifested in incentives such as: pay scales, prizes, compensatory time, monetary rewards, promotions, sought after job assignments, and office perks. Incentive motivation relies on the premise that employees (students) will perform at a higher level if you, the supervisor, reward or punish their demonstrated behavior. In psychological behavioral terms, this type of motivation is called extrinsic motivation because it relies on an external force to provide positive or negative reinforcement. Although this is an acceptable form of stimulation, it can only be successful if the extrinsic motivation is something the individual being motivated needs, wants or desires.

The second form of motivation is intrinsic motivation. It is self-induced and is a direct result of positive experiences an individual has encountered over a life time. These experiences are so positive that (s)he responds to most situations in a proactive demeanor feeling empowered to take risks to solve unusual and unexpected problems. People who are motivated intrinsically out perform even the most creative incentive programs which in the long run result in only average performance. The reason why is because intrinsic motivation is self-induced and extrinsic motivation relies on an outside force. If the outside force (incentive) is removed, the motivation is relinquished and mediocrity and excuses replace high standards of performance.

Communication

Someone once wrote:

> *"I know you believe you understand what you think I said but I'm not sure you realize that you heard is not what I meant."*

This statements sums up the number one problem facing every organization: communicating effectively. What most of us fail to realize is that everyone has an invisible filter that they see and hear through. This filter is based on cultural background, life experiences, and innate personality type and temperament that we each possess. David Keirsey and Marilyn Bates (1978 and 1984) discuss how people are fundamentally different from each other and smart managers will learn how to use these differences to facilitate tasks assigned to them. These differences are based on our preference for how we function, what personally drives us and four basic innate temperaments that we all basically fall into: extraversion versus introversion, intuitive versus sensation, thinking versus feeling, and judging versus perceiving.

> *"Suppose it is so that people differ in temperament and that therefore their behavior is just as inborn as their body build. Then we do violence to others when we assume such differences to be flaws and afflictions. In this misunderstanding of others we also diminish our ability to predict what they will do. Likewise, we cannot even reward others should we want to, since what is reward to us is, very likely, a matter of indifference to the other. To each his own, different strokes for different folks. To achieve the intent of these sayings will take a lot of work in coming to see our differences as something other than flaws."* (Keirsey and Bates, 1984)

How then do we communicate better with people? We communicate by remembering that communication is a people process based on perception, assumptions and feelings rather than a language process. Our perceptions, assumptions and feelings, as mentioned earlier, are based on our cultural backgrounds, our life experiences and our personality type and temperament. High performance teams understand that the perceptions we have are not necessarily the perceptions of others. What we assume to be a natural condition may be interpreted as months of preparation time and additional monies to some other person. And finally what matters most to us may not even be a point of consideration for another individual. This is why communicating with our words and with our bodies is such a critical attribute of high performance teams. High performance teams recognize the rich diversity of the people that make up their organization. They see themselves as change agents who understand who they are, their responsibility to the organization and how to use their unique individual talents to increase the effectiveness of the collective team. Most importantly, high performance teams see beyond their individual

needs and look at the overall needs of the organization, they are "big picture thinkers."

There are three things that we can do to become better communicators:

1. Do not assume that the other person understands that you are saying because it is *perfectly clear to you.*

2. Do not engage in communication that may *cause the listener to become defensive.*

3. *Learn to listen.* Always check to determine if the listener understood you by asking him to share his understanding of what was said (remember everything is filtered by our own personal experiences). In addition, *pay attention* to your body language as well as the listener's body language to determine if the listener is comfortable. If the listener feels criticized, controlled, manipulated or you have no regard for his feelings, he is not able to hear you.

Celebration

We understand that rewarding individuals may be a difficult task but everyone likes to hear that they have done a good job. High performance teams reward individual performance but also focus on team performance often celebrating the completion of a significant even or each of several phases needed to accomplish the total project. When we celebrate the successes of individuals and the total team, we show our appreciation for doing work that is valued by the organization as significant to the accomplishment of its goals. Celebrating accomplishments also increases how the team is viewed by the organization. It increases the self-worth of individuals and the total team because their peers value the team as important for the contributions they make.

As important as celebrating is, most organizations overlook this important characteristic. The reasons for neglecting recognition and celebration are numerous: not enough time, lack of money, the feeling that employees are being paid to do a job, and so on. However, recognition through celebration and appreciation, promotes a sense of team identity by allowing the team to take pride in its progress and accomplishments. Recognition reassures team

members that they are performing well, thus encouraging continued effort toward the success of the team. (Osburn, Moran, Musselwhite and Zenger, 1990)

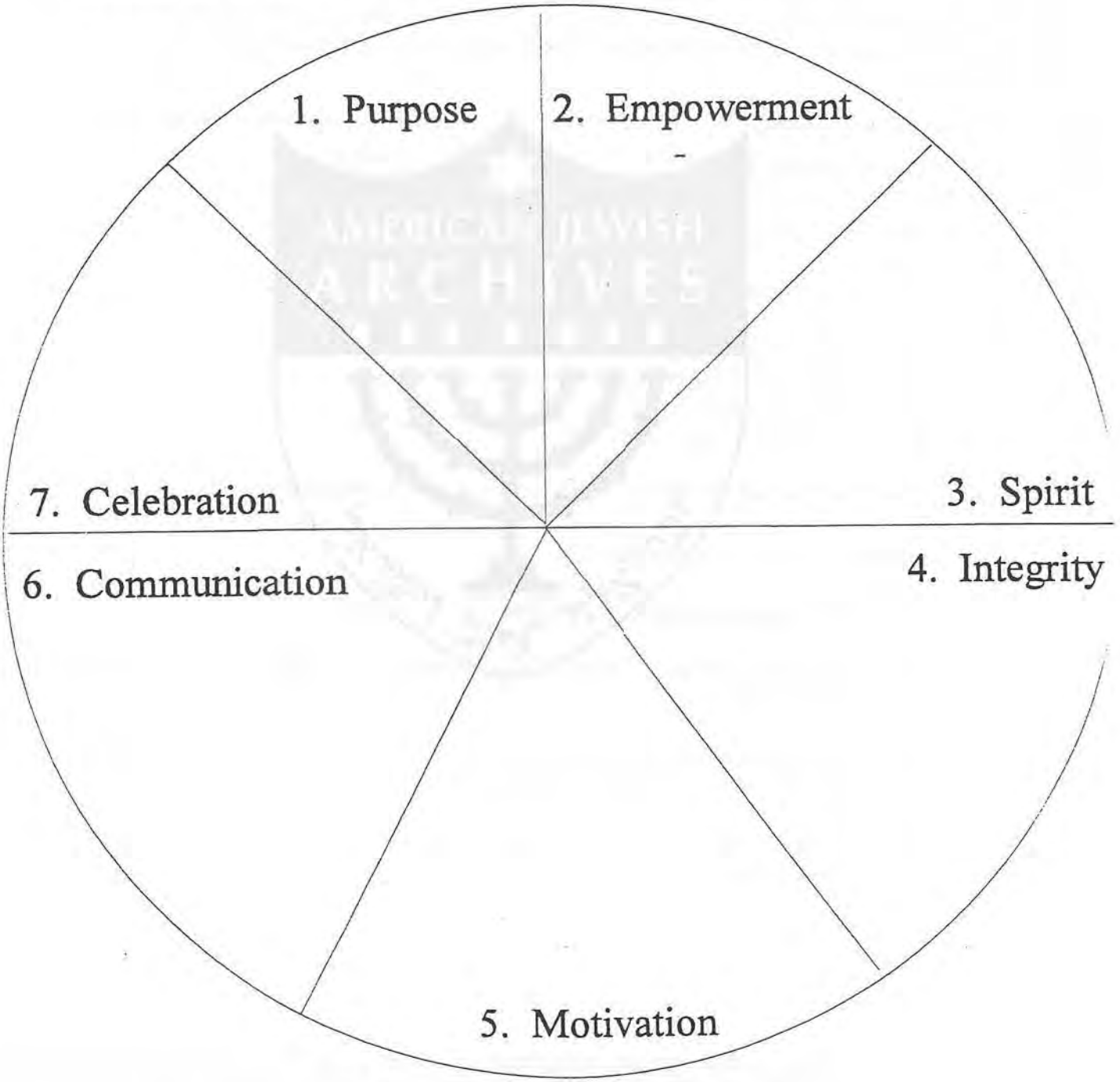
❖ Source: *Self-Directed Work Teams, Burr Ridge, Irwin, 1990.*

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Round Robin

High Performing Teams Worksheet

Consider as leader the strategies you would use to promote the non-negotiable skills with your school council ...



Stages of Team Development

Groups of people working together do not become a team in a day. Teams evolve and become productive over time. Regardless of their size or composition, teams go through certain stages of development. The length of each stage varies from team to team and may be as short as one meeting or may last for several months. The sequence of stages is the same for each, and while the specifics of each stage may vary from team to team, the overall nature of each stage is consistent across teams. During this process, some of the activities and feelings of team members may not appear to be productive. This is particularly true during the dissatisfaction stage when a sense of frustration and incompetence frequently emerges. However, working through each stage is a crucial part of the team's evolution if the end result is to be a fully functioning team.

1. Orientation Stage → **Forming**

- ❑ Members are somewhat eager and have positive expectations.
- ❑ Members are concerned about and want to know:
  - ❑ What is the purpose of the team?
  - ❑ What will they have to do?
  - ❑ Who will lead?
  - ❑ Will their efforts be fruitful?
- ❑ Members are dependent on the situation and whoever is leading.
- ❑ Energy and time are focused on:
  - ❑ Defining the goal(s) and the task of their team.
  - ❑ Devising at least an initial means for carrying out tasks, i.e., team process and procedures.
  - ❑ Determining what skills are needed for their team, which of those skills members lack and need to develop, and how those skills might be learned.
  - ❑ Once determined, trying out and becoming accustomed to team process and procedures.

❖*Source: Building Systems for Professional Growth: An Action Guide, Ch. 4, Handout, Arbuckle and Murray, The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement, Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services.*

2. Dissatisfaction Stage → Storming

- ❑ Members become somewhat frustrated.
  - ❑ Expectations and reality of team work do not coincide.
  - ❑ Dependence on the leader becomes unsatisfying.
  - ❑ Appropriate resources are not readily available.
  - ❑ Some problems presented to team are not easily solved.
- ❑ Members may feel some anger towards the leader, the goals and tasks of the team, and other members.
- ❑ Members may feel sad, discouraged.
  - ❑ They feel they cannot do what they hoped.
  - ❑ They feel incompetent.
- ❑ Energy and time are focused on:
  - ❑ Redefining what their task is in "achievable" terms.
  - ❑ Determining strategies for solving long-term problems.
  - ❑ Determining how best to accomplish their task, including assessing any additional skills needed.
  - ❑ Resolving their sense of frustration and incompetence.
  - ❑ Redefining their expectations so that they are more compatible with what is possible.

3. Resolution Stage → Norming

- ❑ Frustration is dissipating.
  - ❑ Expectations and reality are more closely, if not completely, meshed.
  - ❑ Skill in carrying out procedures and, therefore, in completing tasks is increased either by additional experiences with the process or specific training activities.
- ❑ Personal satisfaction is increasing.
  - ❑ Process and procedures are being mastered.
  - ❑ Self-esteem is heightened.
  - ❑ Pleasure in accomplishing task and getting positive feedback from staff through informal or formal monitoring processes outweigh earlier frustrations.
  - ❑ Collaborative efforts are beginning to jell.

4. Production Stage → Performing

- ❑ Members are once again eager to be part of the team effort.
- ❑ Individuals on the team feel greater autonomy.
- ❑ Members are working well together.
  - ❑ Leadership functions are shared.
  - ❑ Sense of mutuality (we sink or swim together) and interdependence has developed.
- ❑ Energy and time are focused on achieving the team's purpose; meeting staff needs through strong staff development activities.

5. Termination

- ❑ Members may feel:
  - ❑ Sense of sadness because the team is, at least for the time being, ending.
  - ❑ Strong sense of accomplishment.
  - ❑ Last minute urgency to tie up loose ends.
  - ❑ Regret, if they feel they were not able to do everything planned.
- ❑ Energy focused on:
  - ❑ An evaluation of what has been accomplished, quantity, and quality.
  - ❑ What needs to be done to complete the task for the time being.
  - ❑ If appropriate, how to begin the task anew the following school year and what changes, if any, should be made based on the previous year's experience.

Major Messages:

1. Teams evolve through several stages of development.
2. A stage may last for one hour or one year, and there is no way to know ahead of time how long a particular stage will last.
3. Dissatisfaction is a natural part of the team process and should not be viewed as a sign that the team is failing, but rather that it is time for the members to take stock and review goals, processes, resources, rewards, and outcomes.

Principles for Effective Teamwork

- Responsibility for the team is shared by all members.
- Decisions should always be agreed to by the team.
- Use methods which encourage full participation.
- Be flexible.
- Cut down the threat to individual members.
- Continually evaluate team progress.
- Team members should be conscious of the importance of their roles.

❖Source: *Building Systems for Professional Growth*

Team Skills

1. Technical or Functional Expertise

2. Problem solving and decision-making skills

3. Interpersonal

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

From the Innovator Tool Box

Building Effective Teams

Members of effective teams are committed to group goals above and beyond their personal goals and understand how the team fits into the overall business of the organization. Team members trust each other to honor commitments, maintain confidences, and support team goals, and they feel a sense of partnership with each other despite differences and disagreements.

On effective teams, everyone has a role and participates in achieving consensus on action plans, and every effective team has a clear purpose, established communication methods, agreed-upon ways of dealing with problems, planning procedures, regular meetings, and meeting agendas and minutes.

The following survey can help team members analyze strengths and challenges, plan staff development to address critical issues, and celebrate the team's progress in becoming more effective:

	We need help with this	*We're making progress*	*We have reason to celebrate*
1. The team includes members with varied teaching styles, learning styles, skills, and interests.			
2. Members respect and trust each other.			
3. Members agree on the team's mission.			
4. Members consider the team's mission as workable.			
5. The team has an action plan.			
6. The team has drawn up timelines describing project steps.			
7. Team members understand what resources are available to help meet team needs and goals.			
8. The team meets regularly.			
9. The team meets at times convenient for all members.			
10. Team meeting places are convenient and comfortable.			
11. Agenda are prepared and distributed before meetings.			
12. Written minutes are distributed shortly after meetings.			
13. The team has formally assigned roles.			
14. Members understand which roles belong to one person and which roles are shared.			
15. Each team member takes an active role in discussions.			
16. Team members listen attentively.			
17. The team has procedures for resolving conflict and reaching consensus.			
18. The team has established ways to communicate with the entire school community.			

Adapted from material prepared by the South Carolina State Department of Education and presented at the 1995 School Team Conference by Ann Lattes and Deborah Childs Boseen.

From the Innovator Tool Box

Building Trust Empowers Teams

Restructuring efforts demand a high level of trust among team members to enable them to share information openly, discuss innovative solutions, and develop creative plans for helping students. As a start toward increasing their level of trust, teams can use the following survey to identify those areas where they need more work.

	Seldom	*Frequently*	*Always*
1. I contribute facts, opinions, and suggestions during group discussions.			
2. I express willingness to cooperate with others and expect their cooperation.			
3. My dealings with the entire group are open and candid.			
4. I support members when they struggle to express themselves.			
5. I offer help to anyone in the group in an effort to improve the group's performance.			
6. I listen receptively to others and avoid judging them as "right" or "wrong."			
7. I avoid evaluating other members' contributions on the basis of whether these contributions are useful to me.			
8. I take risks in expressing my feelings and new ideas.			
9. I let other group members know I appreciate their talents, skills, and resources.			
10. I share books and other resources to promote the success of all members.			

Team Effectiveness: How Does The Team Measure Up?

Effective teams contribute greatly to the success of their schools, the people who work in them, and the students and communities they serve. To maintain the effectiveness of their teams, members must make frequent evaluations and adjustments and sometimes seek outside help in the area of training or other staff development opportunities to strengthen those factors which contribute to team success. Team members can use the survey to gauge how well they are doing with each factor that is critical to team success.

	We Should. . .			
Factors contributing to team effectiveness	**Celebrate success**	**Plan some fine tuning**	**Schedule a retreat to work on this**	**Seek help**
Shared goals and objectives are established				
Resources are well used				
All members contribute				
Members have mutual trust and respect				
Effective conflict resolution processes are used				
Leadership is shared				
Strong interpersonal communications are present				
Effective problem-solving approaches are used				
Appropriate decision-making processes are considered				
Atmosphere encourages creativity				

When Does a Group Need Team Building?

- Start-up of a new group that needs to develop quickly into a team.
- Confusion about assignments and unclear roles.
- Decisions that are misunderstood or not carried out properly.
- Conflicts or hostilities among group members.
- Apathy or lack of interest or involvement among group members.
- Ineffective meetings; low participation in group decisions.

❖ *Source:* *Dyer, 1987*

Objectives of Team Building Programs

- Improving the group's communication and listening skills.
- Establishing roles and responsibilities for the work-group members.
- Improving the effectiveness of a group in which members must work together to achieve results.
- Providing an opportunity for the group as a whole to analyze its functioning, performance, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Examining and improving the group's problem finding and problem solving strategies.
- Helping the group engage in a continuous process of self-examination.

❖ *Source:* *Dyer, 1987*

A Yardstick for Measuring the Growth of a Team

A. Goal Clarity

1	2	3	4	5
No apparent goals	Goal confusion	Average goal clarity	Goals mostly clear	Goals very clear

B. Trust and Openness

1	2	3	4	5
None	Little	Average	Considerable	Remarkable

C. Empathy among Members

1	2	3	4	5
None	Little	Average	Considerable	Remarkable

D. Balance between Group Task and Maintenance Needs

1	2	3	4	5
None	Little	Average	Good	Excellent

E. Leadership Needs

1	2	3	4	5
Leadership needs not met	Some leadership needs met	Average meeting of leadership needs	Good meeting of leadership needs	Excellent meeting of leadership needs

F. Decision Making

1	2	3	4	5
Unable to make decisions	Inadequate decision making	Average decision making	Good decision making	Full consensus

G. Use of Group Resources (knowledges, skills, experiences)

1	2	3	4	5
Not used	Poorly used	Average use	Well used	Fully and effectively used

H. Sense of Belonging

1	2	3	4	5
None	Some	Average	Good	Strong

❖*Source: Building Systems for Professional Growth: An Action Guide, Ch. 4, Handout, Arbuckle and Murray, The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement, Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services.*

Processes

Learning Principles

1. People are born learners.
2. People seek to understand new information and experiences by connecting them to what they already know.
3. People learn in different ways.
4. Thinking about one's own thinking improves performance and the ability to work independently.
5. Individuals' stages of development affect learning.
6. Although people may naturally make connections as they learn, they often need help to transfer knowledge to different contexts.
7. A repertoire of strategies enhances learning.
8. Certain dispositions, attitudes, and habits of mind facilitate learning.
9. Working with others of different styles and perspectives enhances learning.
10. Those who do the work do the learning.
11. A resource-rich environment facilitates learning.
12. Developing shared understandings about what consitutes quality work fosters learning.

❖Source: *Genuine Reward: Community Inquiry into Connecting Learning, Teaching and Assessing, by Jill Mirman Owen, Pat L. Cox., and John M. Watkins. The regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands. c 1994.*

Characteristics of a Learning-Centred School

1. The school focuses on successful learning for children and adults.

2. The school works to turn all of its students into successful learners.

3. The school affirms the values and uniqueness of each person, recognizing differences--culture, gender, learning style, age, language, and role--and drawing on different perceptions and contributions to design a shared future that works for all.

4. The school uses systems thinking as its conceptual framework for design, looking at the whole system of education and society and their mutual influence..

5. The school monitors learners' progress via assessment, evaluation, and reflection activities that are integral to the process of learning by design.

6. The school challenges conventional structures of schooling and explores new organizational structures and arrangements that enhance learning.

7. The school functions as a learning organization as well as an organization of learning.

8. The school works to build a sense of community among children and adults (both professional educators and community members) that ensures a continuity of values and cohesion between the school and the community it serves.

9. The school uses collaborative critical inquiry as the engine of design for learning.

10. The school manages the process of ongoing change effectively, thoughtfully, and sensitively.

11. The school uses what is known from its own history, from research and experience, and from demographic and other community information.

12. The school redefines the roles and relationships of those who provide assistance and those who are assisted, from student and teacher to localities and the state.

13. The school seeks to help people move beyond conceptions of power as control to that of enabling power that mobilizes everyone's capability to bring about a shared future that works for all.

❖Source: *Creating New Visions for Schools. The Regional Laboratory for Educa Improvement of the Northeast and Islands c 1994.*

Reflecting

- ❑ What happens in this school to make it special?

- ❑ What would a visitor note about the school?

  - physical environment
  - students
  - teachers
  - principal

- ❑ Why do teachers, parents, students like this school?

- Individually record your thoughts.
- Circle key words.
- Share.

Carousel Brainstorming

Directions

1. Divide into groups of 5-6.
2. Stand in front of 1 piece of newsprint.
3. Choose a recorder.
4. Brainstorm responses to the posted question--quickly.
5. After 2 minutes and at the signal, move one sheet to your right.
6. Brainstorm quickly at the new sheet (2 minutes).
7. At the signal, move to the right and repeat the process.
8. When you reach the last question, go back to question #1 and repeat at each sheet of newsprint until you have brainstormed responses to all the questions.

Then see the synergy you have produced!

Best of Five

The chairperson will ask the team members to state their feelings. Using one hand, according to the scale below, team members will show 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 fingers to indicate their response:

1. I cannot accept the decision and I must leave if the group makes this decision.

2. I strongly disagree and believe it will bring negative consequences, but I won't sabotage the group.

3. It doesn't make much difference to me.

4. This is a high priority and I will contribute in some way.

5. This is my first priority. You can count on me a lot.

❖*Adapted from:* *Regional Lab for Educational Improvement of Northeast and Islands, Andover, Mass.*

The Nominal Group Process

The nominal group process is a method for structuring groups to allow individual judgments to be pooled and used when there is uncertainty or disagreement about the nature of the problem and possible solutions. The process is helpful in identifying problems, exploring solutions, and establishing priorities. It works best with groups of five to nine participants. Larger groups can be handled by making minor changes in procedure, particularly Step 2, but any group larger than 12 should be sub-divided.

Step 1: Silent generation of ideas in writing.

Read the focus question aloud and ask participants to list their responses in phrases or brief sentences. Request that they work silently and independently. Allow four to eight minutes.

Step 2: Round-robin recording of ideas.

Go around the table and get one idea from each participant. Write the ideas on newsprint. As each sheet is finished, tape it on the wall so that the entire list is visible. Number each item. Leave space to the left of each number to record votes at a later time. Encourage hitchhiking on other ideas. Discourage discussion, elaboration, or justification.

Step 3: Serial discussion of the list of ideas.

Explain that the purpose of this step is clarification. Read item 1 aloud and invite clarifying comments. Then read item 2 and continue discussing each item in turn until the list is covered. Arguments are unnecessary because each participant will have a chance to vote independently in Step 4. As soon as the logic and meaning of the item are clear, cut off discussion.

Categorization: Once each item has been discussed, duplicate items should be identified and combined. This may necessitate rewriting some of the items before the voting step. However, resist the temptation to combine many items into broader categories. Some participants may seek to achieve consensus by this means and the precision of the original items may be lost, or the combined item will become so abstract and all-inclusive that the group in effect is able to avoid the difficult choices inherent in prioritizing.

❖*Reprinted with Permission from::* *The Regional Lab for Educational Improvement of Northeast and Islands, Andover, Mass.*

The Pyramidal Process

This process is most useful when a group needs to come up with one solution. It has been used most effectively in dealing with a wide variety of points of view:

1. Introduce and discuss the task at hand. For example, if the group is working on a vision scenario for the school, the characteristics of a well written vision and effective schools could be discussed. Everyone needs to have a good grasp of what the final product will look like.

2. On an index card, group members are asked to write their own individual version.

3. After each member has written his/her own draft, pairs are formed. Their task is to reach a consensual agreement on one statement which satisfies them both.

   Note: At this stage it is often necessary to review the "rules" of reaching consensus.

4. Each pair is then joined by another pair, and the consensus-building process begins again.

5. The size of the consensus-building group continues to grow until one product/statement is agreed upon by every member. As the groups form into 8's, 16's, etc., it is helpful to have a facilitator for each group. Encourage groups to be clear and succinct--no jargon!

❖*Adapted from:* *Regional Lab for Educational Improvement of Northeast and Islands, Andover, Mass.*

Consensus Building

Working Effectively with Others

Success as an educator is contingent upon your ability to work with a myriad of others. Each of you must work with students, colleagues, administrators, boards of education, and parents to accomplish your goals. Below is a list of characteristics or qualities. Read through the list and select what you believe to be the three most and three least desirable characteristics or qualities you would want present or absent when you work with others in a group. These will be difficult decisions, but you must force yourself to make the necessary choices.

Most Important or Desirable

1.

2.

3.

Characteristics or Qualities

O			S
_____	1.	Listens carefully and communicates effectively	_____
_____	2.	Friendly and sociable	_____
_____	3.	Orderly and efficient	_____
_____	4.	Good sense of humor	_____
_____	5.	Admits errors openly and honestly	_____
_____	6.	Is creative and has new ideas	_____
_____	7.	Shows respect and consideration for others	_____
_____	8.	Uses praise frequently	_____
_____	9.	Does what you want them to	_____
_____	10.	Is willing to compromise	_____
_____	11.	Never becomes angry: remains calm and cool	_____
_____	12.	Follows rules and procedures	_____
_____	13.	Says what he/she thinks: is frank in discussions	_____
_____	14.	Honest and trustworthy	_____
_____	15.	Helpful and supportive of others	_____
_____	16.	Independent and self-reliant	_____
_____	17.	Punctual and responsible	_____
_____	18.	Strives to do their best	_____

After you have made your individual choices, you will be asked to explain them to a small group. Each member should take two minutes for this task. Following these individual presentations, the small group should seek to arrive at consensus regarding the three most and the three least important or desirable characteristics or qualities. Don't give up! Keep trying...

Decision Making

10 Common Decision-Making Processes

Organizational or Leadership Announcement

Historical Precedent, Tradition

Unanimous Vote by Group

Leader Announcement using Group Input

10 Common Decision-Making Processes

Lottery, Coin Flip, Straws

Group Consensus

Policies/Written Guidelines

Compromise, Group Averaging, Bargaining

Expert Committee is Granted Power

Majority Vote by Group

E.A.Pres.#5--May, 1995

❖Source: Champion Tools for Change Workshops, National Staff Development Council, 1993.

Decision-Making Matrix

Issues	Who Makes the Decisions?					
	Given Contract District Policy State Requirements	Principal's Decision Alone with Rationale	Principal's Decision with Input	Collaborative Decision Principal with Staff and/or Site Council	Staff Decision with Input	Staff Decision with Rationale
Operational Facilities, schedules, discipline, field trips, assemblies, etc.						
Budget Department or grade level allocations, textbooks, materials, supplies, etc.						
Staffing New hires, assignments, teams, etc.						
Learning, Instruction, Curriculum Student outcomes, teaching strategies, assessments, programs, etc.						

Pres.#6--March, 1995

❖ ***School Team Innovator***, *April 1994*

Vision...

"Vision without action is merely a dream."

"Action without vision just passes time."

"Vision with action can change the world."

❖ *Source: Joel Barker* <u>*The Power of Vision*</u>

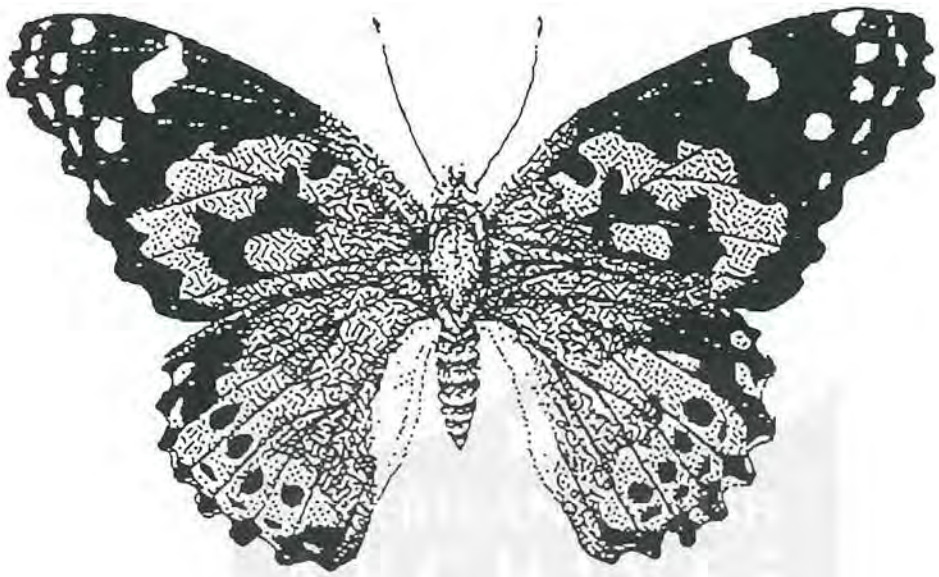
Making it Work for Me

Identify the Issue/Concern/Goal you want to work on when you get back home.

Issue/Concern/Goal:

Action Plan:

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES



Resources

BUILDING A SCHOOL GROWTH PLAN

Halton Board of Education, Ontario, Canada

BUILDING A SCHOOL GROWTH PLAN

What Is a School Growth Plan?

A School Growth Plan is a comprehensive overview of major priorities to which a school staff is dedicated for at least three years. The Plan describes areas which the school will emphasize, and for which it will commit its resources. Activities outlined in a Growth Plan will take the school beyond maintenance of present strengths towards an enhanced learning environment for students. The Growth Plan, therefore, is a process for a school to achieve sustained growth and development.

A Growth Plan is **selective.** It takes into account the size of the school, its context and the strengths of its staff, and focuses on only two or three major priorities.

A Growth Plan is **systematic.** It is built through stages of assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation.

A Growth Plan is **ongoing.** It projects activities over a significant period of time.

A Growth Plan **communicates** with the school, system and community.

A Growth Plan is **comprehensive.** It includes staff interest projects, as well as responses to Ministry and regional initiatives. It focuses on the characteristics of effective schools (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

This Booklet is designed to help Halton schools make Growth Plans work for them. Schools grow from within. They also operate within a large system and provincial context. The booklet will help schools reflect on their practice, and make changes which are appropriate to their individual situations and the needs of their communities.

How Does a School Growth Plan Fit In With Halton's Existing Structures?

- The School Growth Plan is an all encompassing document which replaces earlier planning efforts, for example school Aims and Objectives, school plans, or school improvement plans.
- The Principal's Manager's Letter includes the Principal's involvement in the Growth Plan, along with additional objectives negotiated with the Superintendent of School Services. These additional objectives might include personnel issues, personal professional development, and provincial or regional responsibilities.
- The teachers' Co-operative Supervision and Evaluation (C.S. + E.) agreements will reflect individuals' commitment to areas of emphasis in the Growth Plan, as well as areas of personal growth and commitment.
- A significant allocation of the school's Professional Development funds should be linked to the School Growth Plan.
- A selection of regional Staff Development will complement the plan.

Why Do We Have a School Growth Plan?

- A staff is more confident, committed and productive when it develops a group identity by planning for the future.
- A school makes change happen more effectively when the staff works together over time.
- Schools have to choose among the many things they could do, and the planning process helps schools sift and sort their priorities.
- Equal opportunities for all children are more likely when good planning takes place.
- Resources can be appropriately focused when the whole school agrees on a plan.

Who Should Be Involved In The School Growth Plan?

It is well known that successful school growth efforts involve all staff, and that more involvement leads to greater commitment. It is not necessarily practical, however, for everyone to be equally involved throughout the process. Rather, a small group of people, the School Growth Plan Team, should facilitate the process.

The School Growth Plan Team, selected by the staff, coordinates the School Growth Plan.

The Growth Plan Team, previously known in some schools as the School Planning Team or the School Goals Committee, should include both administrators and teachers representing various perspectives. The number of people on the team will depend on the size of the school.

Here are examples of School Growth Plan Teams:

In an elementary school:

- An administrator
- A teacher from each division
- The School Resource Teacher
- The teacher librarian

In a secondary school:

- One or two administrators
- Two department heads
- Three teachers

It is also worth considering involving the following people, because they can have valuable and different perspectives on issues being addressed:

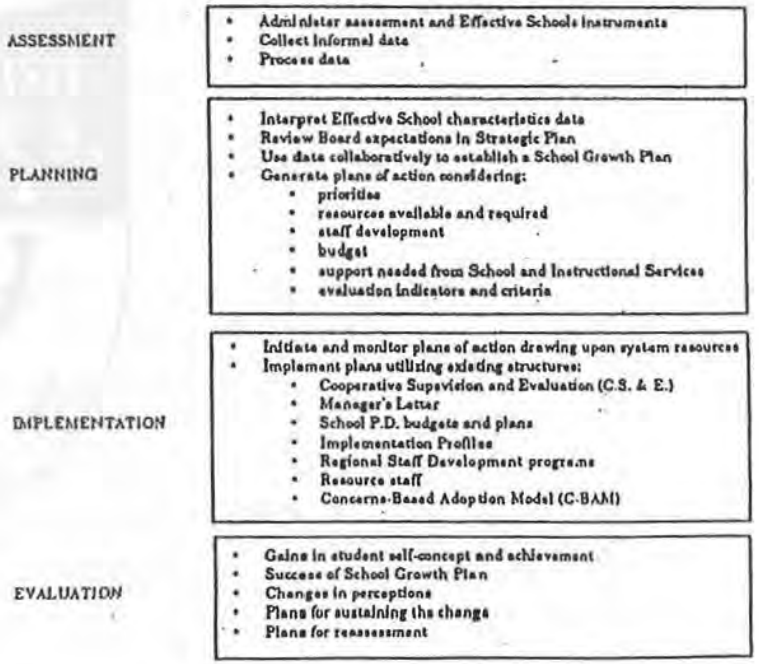
- Parents
- Students
- Trustees
- Community members
- A regional consultant

How Does a School Develop a School Growth Plan?

The process for developing a School Growth Plan is cyclical. There are four stages (see Figure 2) that correspond to four key questions:

Assessment	-	Where are we now?
Planning	-	Where would we like to be in three years?
Implementation	-	How best can we move in that direction?
Evaluation	-	How do we evaluate the changes we are making?

FIGURE 2 THE PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING A SCHOOL GROWTH PLAN



ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the pre-planning stage, where relevant information is gathered to provide an objective picture of the school.

The assessment process should not take a long time. Information can be collected from a variety of sources:

- Informal observations
- Interviews
- Discussions
- Notes of activities
- Surveys

A resource bank of assessment instruments will be co-ordinated and made available to schools. Examples of instruments are:

- Homework surveys
- Parental involvement questionnaires
- Cooperative learning questionnaire
- Collaborative planning questionnaire
- Student involvement and responsibility questionnaire
- School climate questionnaires
- Attitude to reading questionnaire
- Classroom observation instruments

How Does the School Profile Fit In?

Over the next few years a School Profile, related to the characteristics of effective schools, will be developed for use as a planning resource. It will be information specific to each school - its own personal profile - organized, collated and analyzed with regional support, and containing data collected from students, staff and the community of that school.

The Profile will evolve over time. Schools will be invited to provide feedback regarding specific inclusions in it. The School Profile will not be used to compare schools. It will be designed for schools to examine their own development over time, and in the context of their own community. It will include information on:

- Student progress and achievement
- Student self-concept
- Student attendance, retention and behaviour (historical data)
- Staff, student and parent perceptions of effectiveness, as related to the 12 Characteristics of Effective Schools

How Should Information be Analyzed?

The information should be examined for overall trends, as well as looking for differences between groups of students, for example:

- Females and males
- In different years
- Taking different subjects
- From different ethnic backgrounds (if appropriate)
- Taking subjects at different levels of difficulty (if appropriate)

What Are Some Examples of Questions to Ask at the Assessment Stage?

- Are students' progress and achievement equally satisfactory in all subject areas?
- Do students feel good about themselves?
- Could attendance be improved?
- Do females and males have equally positive attitudes?
- Do parents feel involved in their children's education?
- Are staff members working together to achieve common goals?
- Is work planned at an appropriate level for each student?

What External Support Will be Provided During the Assessment Stage?

If assistance is needed with assessment or interpretation of the School Profile or other data, help is available from School or Instructional Services.

Who Should be Involved at the Assessment Stage?

The initial data collection and analysis should be done by the Growth Plan Team. The rest of the school staff should be involved in the assessment process. Feedback of the results should then be given to them in advance of the planning phase, in which they will participate more actively.

PLANNING

Planning is the stage where the assessment information is used to establish the School Growth Plan. Priorities are identified for the next three years.

How Does Planning Begin?

When a staff plans, it must consider external factors as well as school needs. The School Growth Plan will be influenced by assessment results, expectations, and resources.

ASSESSMENT

Formal and informal information collected about the school should have a significant role in shaping the plan. This has already been described in the last section.

EXPECTATIONS

In addition to its own ideas, a staff must consider the expectations of others. For example:

- Ministry
  - Goals of the Ministry of Education
  - Implementation of guideline relating to Aids
- Region
  - Goals of the Halton Board
  - Primary Junior Science Program
  - Grade 10 Basic Level English
- School groupings
  - Collaborative Planning
- Community
  - Organization of Parents' Nights

RESOURCES

A school needs to examine what resources it possesses before planning commences, and how the resources might be organized. For example:

- Budget
- Staffing - teaching and non-teaching
- Management team

With this knowledge, a school staff is ready to build a plan that utilizes its present strengths to achieve its future goals.

What Do We Do Next?

Many schools have their own preferred and effective planning process. Here is one that has proven successful in many schools.

The School Growth Plan Team leads the staff in a detailed discussion of the assessment results. This sometimes forms part of the P.A. Days at the end of the school year. The Team might also find the involvement of a Process Consultant useful.

The process allows staff to develop priorities that require emphasis, which are then translated by groups of people into goal statements.

What Might a Goal Statement Look Like?

The goals should capture a description of what success would look like when the Growth Plan is completed. In other words, what needs to be changed as a result of this effort, and what will be acceptable as a measure of success?

Once goal statements have been outlined, teachers select the area that interests them, and work in groups to brainstorm activities and actions that will enhance that particular goal.

The School Growth Plan* includes:

School Growth Plan

- Responsibilities of staff members for specific activities.
- Timelines by which activities should be completed.
- Resources necessary to carry out the activities
  eg.- release time for peer observations
  - finance for student organizer booklets
  - collaborative planning time
  - budget for purchase of equipment
- Support needed, both internal and from School and Instructional Services
  eg.- what within-class support do we need from School Resource Teachers for integrated students?
  - what ongoing suport do we need from coordinators and consultants?
  - what occasional help do we need from coordinators and consultants?
  - what support do we need from consultants for specific instructional strategies?
  - what help do we need with developing questionnaires or analyzing results of assessments?
- Staff development needs
  eg.- what regional workshops or activities would we like to be provided?
  - do we need to visit schools where smilar projects are already in progress?
  - do we need on-going training and support for all of our goals or would a single workshop be adequate?
  - do we have anyone on staff with expertise in a particular area or do we need to call in someone from outside?
  - do we need training for the whole staff, for groups, or just for individuals?
- Indicators, criteria, methods and timelines for evaluation of each goal.
  eg.- how do we know we've made a difference?
  - how can we assess this?
  - when should we assess this?
    (evaluation is described in more detail, in a separate section)

Prior to implementation, a detailed outline of the School Growth Plan should be discussed with the Superintendent of School Services

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation is the process of translating the written Plan into action, and includes all of the activities necessary to carry out the Plan.

It is important, initially, to ensure that staff, students and other people involved have been fully informed about the School Growth Plan, and that they all understand what they have to do.

How Do We Initiate Implementation?

- Obtain curriculum support documents.
- Arrange appropriate consultative support through the Superintendent of School Services.
- Spend budget for necessary materials.
- Participate in relevant Staff Development programs.
- Apply new learning through coaching.

How Do We Maintain Momentum?

This is a long-range process, and will require periodical review and monitoring to see whether activities have been carried out as planned, and whether they appear to be having the intended effect.

Here are some questions to keep in mind:

- How can teachers who are starting out on a stage of development best be supported by the system, administrators and each other?
- Are all the necessary resources available and on-going?
  eg. time for meetings, additional curriculum materials, outside consultants?
- What strategies does the whole staff have for listening to teachers who want to discuss a professional development activity in which they have participated?
- What can be done if students react badly to a new way of doing something or new materials?
- Do all staff understand that initiating change and development can be difficult and needs support and patience?
- Is support necessary in the areas of conflict resolution, shared decision-making and collaborative planning?
- Are there signposts to check progress at regular intervals?
- Is each teacher being involved at their particular level of experience and interest?
- Are the regular monitoring processes of the system being used to support the implementation?
  eg.
  - Cooperative Supervision and Evaluation (C.S. + E.)
  - Implementation Profiles
  - The Principal's Manager's Letter
  - Concerns-Based Adoption Model (C-BAM)

EVALUATION

Evaluation assesses student and school growth related to the Effective Schools characteristics, external factors, and school needs. It also examines the Growth Plan process.

Means of evaluation are fundamental to the School Growth Plan. If the improvements are to be expressed in terms of students' learning and development, it is essential to devise ways of knowing whether the changes meet that purpose. Not only is it important to know the degree to which objectives have been achieved, but also whether the activities have been completed and if the plan itself has been useful.

Is Evaluation Internal or External?

The key feature of evaluation is that it is for internal school use, and its prime purposes are:

- to help teachers with their planning
- to give them information about what has been achieved

Schools may wish to request help from School or Instructional Services with the selection of indicators and methods of evaluation.

When Should Evaluation Take Place?

Although evaluation is the final stage of the School Growth Plan, it should be started early on in the process. Once started, evaluation becomes an ongoing part of the Growth Planning Process.

It will be necessary to decide when to assess the effectiveness of the Growth Plan and goals. The School Growth Plan Team should conduct two kinds of assessments:

- Formative, or ongoing, to find out if the Plan is working or adjustments have to be made. This might include several questions posed in the Implementation section.
- Summative, or final, to assess the success of the Plan and whether goals have been achieved.

What Are Some Questions to Ask in the Final Evaluation of the School Growth Plan?

- What effects have the activities had on the students' learning and self-concepts?
  eg. - has there been an improvement in students' math performance?
  - are the self-concepts of integrated students more positive than they were when they were in self-contained classes?

- How do teachers feel about what happened?
  eg. - do teachers now prefer to plan collaboratively?
  - do teachers enjoy using computers regularly as a teaching resource?

- What impact has there been on other people?
  eg. - do parents feel the school has increased its communication and feedback to them?
  - does the community feel more involved in school life than before?
  - does the community believe that students are better prepared to enter the workforce?

- What are people actually doing that they weren't doing before?
  eg. - are teachers making more use of problem-solving techniques in social science classes?
  - are more teachers using co-operative learning as a strategy?

- Did the school take on too much?

- What has stopped people from doing what they intended? To what extent was this unavoidable, or could planning have been better?

What Strategies Do We Use in Our Evaluations?

Monitoring and evaluating can use a mixture of formal and informal procedures and instruments. The Growth Plan's effect upon student performance can be evaluated using instruments from the assessment stage and the indicators selected at the planning stage.

In the following example, School X wishes to examine attitudes towards homework, and surveys students:

Assessment results -	students feel marking is erratic and that they receive insufficient follow-up
Goal -	Improvement in marking and follow-up of homework
Indicators -	• a clear policy will be developed for marking and follow-up • student satisfaction with marking and follow-up will be increased
Techniques of Evaluation -	• check that policy is written, communicated, and being implemented without problems • repeat homework survey • survey student attitudes towards any new marking or follow-up techniques

Other initial assessments can also be reapplied to look at change and/or growth, and historical data can be used to provide information on, for example, trends in attendance as related to achievement scores.

Where Should We Go From Here?

Monitoring of the Plan will be an ongoing process, and evaluation will take place at the end of the year. This is the time for review when decisions can be made about each goal within the Plan. The School Growth Plan Team, after examining all the evaluation, should prepare a short report about the main stages of the plan so far. This report describes what actually happened and people's reactions.

It is helpful to allow time for people to reflect upon this report before meeting to decide future directions. The report should also be shared with the Superintendent of School Services.

Each year, discussions might revolve around the changes that have been introduced, and some of the following questions could be addressed about each goal:

- Should this priority be altered or extended?
- In both cases, what are the consequences for:
  - explaining what is involved to 'newcomers'?
  - new administrators in the school?
  - demands upon time and other resources?
  - general school organization and the timetable?
  - other areas of organization?
  - classroom organization and teaching strategies?
  - staff development and training needs?
- If there is not yet sufficient information about the goal to decide whether it should be made a permanent feature of the school, can it be agreed when it would be appropriate to take this decision?

Change takes time, and growth may not be apparent immediately. Patience and continued enthusiasm should be encouraged.

After the Growth Plan priorities have been reviewed, the whole process can be repeated. For goals that will be a continuing focus, further planning, implementation and evaluation will be necessary. If new goals are selected, schools may wish to do some assessments before they start planning.

At the end of a specific time period, the final review and evaluation is likely to be more extensive.

School Growth Planning Makes a Difference!

While we are involved in the process, let's keep in mind.....

A SCHOOL GROWTH LIMERICK

There once was a school named Distress
Whose future was really a mess.
The problem you see
Was teachers would flee
Cause their involvement became less and less.

Then one year came a significant change.
The Admin. team was rearranged.
The new leaders believed
The school's strength was conceived
Not outside but at home on the range.

Not all staff want to remain
Cause their opinions are valued the same.
Each June they retreat.
Plans, goals they can meet
And feel proud from whence they came.

But why do they feel so great
When they've got more and not less on their plate?
Cause they've all been involved
In the problems they've solved,
And there's a school growth at a much quicker rate.

So the message is simple I see.
I don't need a brick to fall on me.
To decide what to do
I involve all of you
Cause these goals aren't for me they're for we.

Barry Finlay

TOPIC: _____

LEARNING OUTCOMES
What will my students:

Know _____

_____

Be able to do _____

_____

Value _____

_____

INDICATORS

How will I know?

- _____
- _____
- _____

BLENDED SKILLS

- _____
- _____
- _____

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- _____
- _____
- _____

MENTAL SET

OBJECTIVE/ PURPOSE

INPUT

MODELLING

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

PRACTICE

CLOSURE

LESSON TYPE

- Formal lesson
- Activity centres
- Research
- Indiv. activity
- Speaker
- Field trip
- Simulation
- Concept dev't
- Demonstration

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

- Log/Math
- Vis/Spatial
- Body/Kin.
- Music/Rhy.
- Verbal/Ling.
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal

SOCIAL SKILLS

- Encouraging
- Active listening
- Clarifying
- Extending ideas
- Disagree agreeably
- Asking for help
- Take turns
- Consensus seeking

COOPERATIVE GROUPING

- Think/Pair/Share
- 3 step Interview
- 4 corners
- Jigsaw
- Walkabout
- Round Table
- Paraphrase
- Simple Square

THINKING SKILLS

- Concept formation
- Attainment
- Attributing
- Brain Storming
- Analyzing
- Problem Solving
- Evaluation
- Inferring
- Sequencing
- Perceiving
- Metacognition

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

- Rank
- Venn
- Mindmap
- Word Cluster
- Fishbone
- Spectrum
- Pie chart
- Grid
- Agree/Disagree
- Sequence
- Right Angle

COMPUTER SKILLS

- Basics
- Keyboarding
- Word processing
- Database
- Spreadsheet
- Graphics
- Integrated Tech.
- Telecommun.
- Desk-Top Pub.

PROGRAM MODIFICATION

Knowledge
Skills
Affect

Kind	Grouping
Breadth	Time
Depth	People
Pace	Place

S.C.AM.P.E.R.

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

- Exhibitions
- Projects
- Presentations
- Demonstration
- Interviews
- Learning Logs
- Mind Maps
- Pen & Pencil Test
- Examinations
- Checklists/Anecdotals
- Observation
- Portfolio
- Contracts

A Case Study of Frontenac Public School, Burlington, Ontario

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Background

Frontenac Public School is one of 81 schools in the Halton Board of Education in Ontario. This case study of a school is located within a context of change in the entire school district over a six-year period, from 1986-1992. During this time, Halton was involved in an Effective Schools Project (Stoll and Fink, 1992; 1994)and joined The Learning Consortium, a partnership between four districts, the University of Toronto, the Faculty of Education and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (Fullan et al; 1990; Watson and Fullan, 1992). Participation in these two ventures, combined with major reviews of curriculum and special education in Halton, led to a restructuring of the entire system based on three strategic directions. The first decentralized the major part of decision-making to the school level, using a collaborative school growth planning process as the vehicle to effect school improvement. The second emphasized the vital importance of classroom instruction to the improvement process, while the third, staff development and resources, focused on the necessary support for this process. The system, having provided a framework for school-level improvement, re-oriented itself to a role of service provision, in addition to monitoring and assessing the process and outcome of the changes.

The school's context

Frontenac, a kindergarten to grade 8 school (5 to 14 years old) is located in the east end of Burlington and 41 teachers serve 660 students in 25 classes. While the school could generally be described as 'middle class', the housing ranges from subsidized apartment dwellings to single family homes. In most families, both parents are employed although there are a significant number of single parent families. Frontenac has few ethnic minority students. Approximately 14 per cent of the students have a program modified to meet their needs and receive additional support within the classroom. There are also two classes of learning disabled and trainable mentally challenged students. Instructional assistants are employed to work alongside teachers with these students.

Teaching staff vary in experience from three new graduates from faculties of education to four who have taught more than 25 years. Most have taught a variety of grades/ages and in other schools.

Impetus for change

In 1989 a new principal joined the Frontenac staff. She had teaching and administrative experience in both elementary and secondary schools and was co-ordinating the district's Integration project for Special Education when appointed to the school. As a member of the Halton Effective Schools Task Force she brought a knowledge of current research and the school growth planning process. She came to a school where staff had been little involved in decision-making, forward planning was not systematic and that lacked a strong emphasis on instruction. The school was orderly but had little

imagination, energy and enthusiasm. At this time, she articulated 10 beliefs and values she saw as the foundation of her role:

1 All students can learn
2 Students learn most effectively when they have positive self-esteem and when they are viewed as a 'whole person': that is, social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs should be addressed.
3 The school is a community of life-long learners; a partnership between students, teachers and parents. Working together strengthens.
4 Teachers need recognition and support to grow professionally and personally.
5 Schools work best when teachers are involved in decision-making and programme planning. Commitment and responsibility will develop or be enhanced.
6 Schools should be safe and inviting.
7 All schools can get better: that is, helping children to learn more effectively and to feel better about themselves.
8 Staff development is a key to success but it must match the needs of the school.
9 Understanding change is essential. Know it is inevitable and recognize the characteristics of the change process (help maintain sanity!).
10 The principal is an instructional leader.

Before and immediately after her arrival she and her new vice principal interviewed a range of people connected with the school on their perceptions of its strengths and needs. Through this information and the process of observation she gained insights into the school and its culture. She felt time was needed to build a culture that would initiate and support change leading to improved instruction, student achievement and self-concept.

Getting started

Using the a model of effective schools characteristics developed within Halton as an organizer, results of the interviews were shared with staff and parents. She also worked with staff to analyze results of standardized test scores to determine program strengths and areas for improvement.

The principal focused on several aspects of climate-setting. These included changes to the **physical environment** for adults as well as students; greater opportunities for parental **involvement** through program nights, open assemblies, photos of the Parent Group and their events and, in 1991, a Saturday 'mini conference' on 'Families in the '90s'; increased **teacher involvement** in decision-making, including the hiring of new staff members and the development of a behaviour policy; and **changes to organisational structures**. Early on, a timetable was developed that gave grades 1 to 6 teachers common team planning time, and assigned the principal and vice principal coverage to allow for further team planning. This they treated seriously, and only attended urgent meeting during that time. To allow teachers within divisions (grades 1 to 3, and 4 to 6) time to plan together, half-day events were planned for students in these classes. Division team meetings were also restructured with a chairperson given special responsibilities and supported with four days' attendance at a co-operative group

learning workshop. During this time, the administrative team covered classes. These structural changes were thus oriented towards greater collaboration among staff.

Attention was also paid early on to the promotion of staff collegiality. Recognition and celebration became frequent occurrences. One teacher commented:

> "This is the first school I have been at where there are continuing notes of appreciation, some recognition for the fact that you....have worked hard at something. I find the staff happier than they were."

Other teachers also talked of feeling valued. On one professional development retreat, when the school was let down by an external facilitator, the principal persuaded the staff development committee to organise and run the event themselves. At the retreat time was particularly devoted to team-building activities and getting to know people better.

Action plan focus - an emphasis on learning

During the winter term the principal met with grade teams and specialized teaching staff to review program plans, and jointly to develop a common planning format that teachers were encouraged (but not required) to use. This format identified learning outcomes, strategies, resources, student activities and evaluation techniques.

School-wide themes and co-operative group learning were introduced, and, in an attempt to break down barriers of specialization before secondary school, integrated curriculum was incorporated in grades 7 and 8. This was collaboratively planned by teachers which often proved frustrating, as one noted:

> "...there were six of us ... six people who are real individuals, with very distinctive styles in teaching, and there were a lot of arguments ... and yet at the end of the sessions, we were proud of the results and we weren't afraid of differing opinions."

Support for learning emphasis

Staff were requested to submit needs and suggestions for funding, and together it was decided that a per pupil amount would be allocated to grade teams to purchase instructional materials. The principal sought additional resources in the form of eight student teachers, university professors, training institutes and a mini-grant from the Learning Consortium. Funding was also obtained from the district and was used for teacher release time for collaborative planning or to attend in-service sessions in pairs or triads. The rationale behind this was that more learning was likely to occur and be applied if teachers coached each other.

By summer 1991, 40 per cent of the staff had chosen to attend four-day institutes on co-operative group learning. While there was some direction over staff development choices, when teachers were interviewed they reported that they had the opportunity to meet their individual needs as well as seeing an increasing focus on whole school or group development initiatives. District consultants also worked with individuals, groups and the whole staff and the principal and vice principals worked with teams of

teachers to focus on common goals as part of the district's Co-operative Supervision and Evaluation process. The head also supported teachers working on a whole language project by covering classes while they observed and coached each other as they implemented new program plans and teaching strategies. In addition, staff jointly developed and agreed a set of characteristics of effective teaching that were used by the principal and vice principals during formal observations. Co-operative discussions on curriculum, program and instruction followed each visit. In an interview, the principal reported that she was endeavouring to help staff make connections between everything in which they were involved: the pre-service to in-service continuum; collaboration and its link to instructional strategies; and the importance of the teacher as a learner.

Broadening involvement

In 1990, a School Growth Plan Team was established. Volunteers from each of the divisions, the special education team and principal formed this new committee. Their first task was to organize a two day session during which staff would begin to clarify values and beliefs, and to develop a vision of the school in 5 years. A focus statement, 'Together: Learning and Caring' evolved as a result of the workshop, and a goal-setting process was initiated. Input to this was also received from the parent community, following a presentation on Effective Schools.

The Growth Plan Team reviewed the statement and goals with staff to ensure they were supported by everyone. Action plans were then developed by staff, priorities were established, and staff volunteered to work on various committees to implement the plan. Keeping staff informed of the progress of each committee sometimes presented problems. Each goal area sought the input of staff and incorporated their ideas but committees learned that staff often did not become involved until the results impacted their work in the classrooms. Committees, therefore, not only sought input but asked teachers to predict implications and plan solutions for potential road blocks.

Conflicts arose when teams worked closely together. The more they knew each other, the more comfortable they felt in expressing opinions or disagreements. Conflict resolution skills were required not only by administrators but also by teachers. Several staff attended district-sponsored series on conflict resolution and then shared new skills with team partners. Teachers began to feel that conflict could be healthy and productive if managed properly.

By 1991 the staff reduced key goal areas to two: 'academics', which incorporated 'a program that meets students' needs.' Co-operative group learning, integrated curriculum and school-wide themes were seen as a means to achieve this. Also included was student acceptance of responsibility for their learning, involvement in decision-making and recognition of learning, correlates from school effectiveness research. The second area was 'school community', which included staff cohesiveness, student discipline and the environment, also school effectiveness characteristics.

Learning outcomes and corresponding evaluation strategies were incorporated into the units. Grade teams reviewed each unit and analyzed strategies for improvement. By 1992, co-operative group learning strategies were routinely used in all classes.

Evaluation

This evaluation looks at student achievement scores and teacher and parent survey results in 1991 and 1992. These were used by Frontenac to focus further work, and student assessment and teacher survey data collected in 1994 demonstrates continued growth. By 1992 improvements were demonstrated in standardized scores in all curriculum areas, and class averages were now average for the district. Improvements continued, and by 1994 grade scores for standardized mathematics were above the district's norm in 13 out of 17 classes.

In 1991, Effective Schools survey was given to all staff and a sample of 100 parents. Results reflected a positive and collaborative culture within the school. Staff and parents viewed the focus on learning and the development of a positive self concept for students as the prime purposes of the school. Of 60 per cent of parental surveys returned in 1991, 100 per cent felt that the staff worked to improve the school, 92 per cent believed there was a positive feeling throughout the school, 90 per cent thought the principal and vice principals were accessible to discuss curriculum and instructional matters, 87 per cent agreed that Frontenac teachers believed all students can learn and be successful, and 85 per cent thought that Frontenac students were encouraged to think for themselves. A comparison between Frontenac teachers and Halton elementary teachers in general showed that more Frontenac teachers felt that:

- there were high levels of trust and mutual respect in their school (85%, compared with 69%)
- teachers liked working in the school (94%, compared with 82%);
- the school had developed clear goals (97%, compared with 84%);
- the principal and vice principals used the Co-operative Supervision and Evaluation process to assist in the improvement of instruction (97% compared with 84 %); and
- that the principal communicated a clear vision (91% compared with 83%).

An interview with seven randomly selected teachers in the same year also demonstrated that the principal was viewed as being knowledgeable about curriculum and instruction, had high expectations and was supportive:

> *'She is up-to-date on all the curriculum. She encourages us to try new curriculum, communicating with people and letting me as a teacher know what she thinks about what I am doing.'*
>
> *'She empowers us to do what we have to do to make it work.'*
>
> *'She shows that she cares about her staff and the commitment and effort and time that is put into our teaching. I have never worked for anyone like her and I think she is terrific. She really makes you feel that what you do is important.'*
>
> *'She ... gets everyone to produce ... gets them to meet potential. She takes and interest in everyone.'*

In 1991, however, staff did not feel totally involved in decision-making. Only two-thirds (67%) agreed that they participated in shared decision making compared with 82 per

cent of Halton elementary teachers. By 1994, however, 89 per cent felt they participated. Furthermore, whereas in 1991 82 per cent of teachers believed that 'people in this school work together as a team,' 100 per cent believed this by 1994. Changes were also evident in teachers' perceptions of student assessment. While in 1991 only 58 per cent of Frontenac teachers reported that assessment results were used to plan appropriate instruction and curriculum priorities, in 1994 77 per cent reported this to be the case.

By 1994 teachers also appear very committed to the school growth planning process, most seeing planning as a collaborative process (84%, compared with 77% in 1991); feeling parents, students and community members have input (82%, compared with 70% in 1991); believing that activities throughout the school support and reinforce the goals (94%, compared with 88%); and that goals are reviewed (72% compared with 53%) and evaluated (72% compared with 48%).

Values and beliefs 1994

Three years have passed. This year the staff as a whole have revisited their values and beliefs and have come up with the following:

> "All students are unique
> Students learn in different ways.
> Every student is gifted.
> High expectations bear fruit.
> Students should feel safe.
> Students should feel safe to take risks.
> Students should see the relevance of what they are being taught.
> Teachers should teach for the future.
> Changes should take place to accommodate growth.
> Caring is crucial; everyone has the ability and worth.
> Co-operative and collaborative efforts to promote a social, emotional and academic environment.
> Expectations (conduct, academic performance) of staff, students and administration should be clear, concise and consistent.
> We learn through trial and error; individuals are responsible for the choices they make.
> Assessment/evaluation is a collaborative process involving all areas of growth."

In interviews two teachers have summed up the feelings about Frontenac expressed by and many staff members:

> *'...people want to stay ... not because of staying stagnant, because we are working very hard to change things ... but because they enjoy being here ... team-work -it's here and it hasn't been asked for.'*

> *'..it is an extremely caring group of people, and that is why nobody has left ... out of more than 40 staff, to not have one person leave in a year, that is unbelievable! It is because they all recognise that there is something special happening here ... I am part of something that is not usual.'*

Good Seeds Grow in Strong Cultures

JON SAPHIER AND MATTHEW KING

Regardless of the focus of particular change efforts, schools need to nurture and build on the cultural norms that contribute to growth.

School improvement emerges from the confluence of four elements: the strengthening of teachers' skills, the systematic renovation of curriculum, the improvement of the organization, and the involvement of parents and citizens in responsible school-community partnerships. Underlying all four strands, however, is a school culture that either energizes or undermines them. Essentially, the culture of the school is the foundation for school improvement, a view summarized by Purkey and Smith (1982):

> We have argued that an academically effective school is distinguished by its culture: a structure, process, and climate of values and norms that channel staff and students in the direction of successful teaching and learning. . . .The logic of the cultural model is such that it points to increasing the organizational effectiveness of a school building and is neither grade-level nor curriculum specific (p. 68).

If certain norms of school culture are strong, improvements in instruction will be significant, continuous, and widespread; if these norms are weak, improvements will be at best infrequent, random, and slow. They will then depend on the unsupported energies of hungry self-starters and be confined to individual classrooms over short periods of time. The best workshops or ideas brought in from the outside will have little effect. In short, good seeds will not grow in weak cultures.

Giving shape and direction to a school's culture should be a clear, articulated vision of what the school stands for, a vision that embodies core values and purposes. Examples of core values might be community building, problem-solving skills, or effective communication. These value commitments vary from community to community; what is important for school leaders to know is the role of values as the fuel of school improvement. If core values are the fuel, then school culture is the engine.

The 12 Norms of School Culture

The cultural norms listed in Figure 1 can be supported where they exist and built where they do not by leaders and staff. The degree to which these norms

Figure 1. The Cultural Norms That Affect School Improvement.

1. Collegiality
2. Experimentation
3. High expectations
4. Trust and confidence
5. Tangible support
6. Reaching out to the knowledge bases
7. Appreciation and recognition
8. Caring, celebration, and humor
9. Involvement in decision making
10. Protection of what's important
11. Traditions
12. Honest, open communication

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are strong makes a huge difference in the ability of school improvement activities to have a lasting, or even any, effect. Building these norms depends equally on teachers' will and commitment since good leadership alone cannot make them strong; but without such leadership, culture cannot begin to grow or be expected to endure.

While we discuss these norms from the teacher's point of view, because teachers are culture shapers, it is important to bear in mind that there is a student culture as well. The same 12 norms apply to the culture of the school for students, but they are a direct reflection of what adults are capable of modeling among themselves.

Wherever these norms exist, they reside in teachers' and administrators' beliefs and show up in their actions. The following are hypothetical statements that represent what teachers believe and how they behave—not idle words in philosophy documents, but real actions rooted in beliefs of most of the faculty in a school with a strong culture.

1. Collegiality.

"In this school the professional staff help each other. We have similar challenges and needs and different talents and knowledge. When I was having problems with cliquishness among the girls, I brought it up at lunch and got some excellent ideas from the other teachers. I wasn't afraid to bring it up because I know people here are on my side. If someone thinks they hear a strange noise coming from my room, they'll stop to check it out. It isn't everyone for themselves and just mind your own business.

"I think these people are darn good at what they do. I know I can learn from them and believe I have things to offer in return. Sometimes we evaluate and develop curriculum and plan special projects together, like Esther, Lorrie, and Allen doing the one-week SCIS workshop for all of us this summer. Teaching each other sometimes requires more time to plan than 'expert-led' workshops, but it allows us to work together on a significant project. Similarly our study groups—organized around topics such as cooperative learning, thinking skills, and involving senior citizens—allow us to exchange ideas. In this school we resist the notion that teaching is our 'second most private activity.'"

2. Experimentation

"Teaching is an intellectually exciting activity. Around here we are encouraged by administrators and colleagues to experiment with new ideas and techniques because that is how teachers and schools improve. And we can drop experiments that do not work and be rewarded for having tried. We are always looking for more effective ways of teaching. Just last year we published 'Opening Classroom Doors,' a booklet with short descriptions of new ideas tried in classrooms. One teacher, for example, shared how she used jigsaw activities to do cooperative learning in social studies."

3. High Expectations

"In this school the teachers and administrators are held accountable for high performance through regular evaluations. We are specifically expected to practice collegiality and to experiment with new ideas. We are rewarded when we do and sanctioned if we don't. Our continued professional development is highly valued by the school community. While we often feel under pressure to excel, we thrive on being part of a dynamic organization."

4. Trust and Confidence

"Administrators and parents trust my professional judgment and commitment to improvement—no matter how effective I already am—and show confidence in my ability to carry out my professional development and to design instructional activities. We are encouraged to bring new ideas into our classes and given discretion with budgets for instructional materials."

5. Tangible Support

"When I need help to improve my instruction, people extend themselves to help me with both time and resources. Indeed, when resources become scarce, professional development remains a priority. Around here people believe the professional knowledge and skills of teachers are so important to good schooling that developing human resources is a high and continued commitment. Despite financial constraints we still have sabbaticals, summer curriculum workshops, and funds to attend professional conferences."

Reaching Out to the Knowledge Base

"Cultures are built through the everyday business of school life. It is the way business is handled that both forms and reflects the culture."

These first five norms have complicated and dependent relationships with one another. Little (1981) has written at length about the first three norms in her studies of "good schools." In these schools, leaders have high expectations that teachers will be collegial and experiment in their teaching. Rather than being dependent on fortuitous chemistry in a group (though it helps), collegiality is an expectation that is explicitly stated by the leader, rewarded when it happens, and sanctioned when it doesn't. Barth (1984) goes so far as to argue that "the nature of the relationships among the adults who inhabit a school has more to do with the school's quality and character, and with the accomplishment of its pupils, than any other factor." The importance of leaders being explicit about what they want and pressing for it is supported by recent work on school change (Loucks, 1983). While leaders need to be direct about what they expect, excellent leaders allow people plenty of latitude in choosing how they realize it:

> My interpretation of the school effectiveness literature leads me to believe that these schools are both tightly coupled and loosely coupled, an observation noted as well by Peters and Waterman in their studies of America's best run corporations. There exists in excellent schools a strong culture and clear sense of purpose, which defines the general thrust and nature of life for their inhabitants. At the same time, a great deal of freedom is given to teachers and others as to how these essential core values are to be honored and realized. This combination of tight structure around clear and explicit themes, which represent the core of the school's culture, and of autonomy for people to pursue these themes in ways that make sense to them, may well be a key reason for their success (Sergiovanni, 1984, p. 13).

Thus, leaders might require teachers to work on expanding their repertoires of teaching skills but leave the choice of how and what up to them. Simultaneously, though, these leaders would offer tangible support—for example, one release afternoon a month—and provide a menu of options such as in-house study groups, outside speakers, tuition for attending workshops or courses, or support for individual projects.

6. Reaching Out to the Knowledge Base

"There are generic knowledge bases about teaching skills and how students learn; about teaching methods in particular areas; about young people's cognitive and affective development; and about each of the academic disciplines. These knowledge bases are practical, accessible, and very large. Teachers and supervisors are continually reaching out to them to improve their teaching and supervision."

There are two features of this norm we would like to highlight. The first is its aggressively curious nature. There is always more to learn, and we can respond to that understanding with energy and reach out beyond our classes or our buildings, sharing journals, attending workshops, visiting each other and other sites. A principal could model this by inviting several teachers to visit another school with him or her. Such an activity might build collegiality by bringing together teachers who don't normally work together. Indeed, as much may happen during the ride together and over lunch as happens during the visit itself.

The second feature of this norm is the reality and usefulness of these knowledge bases. The erroneous belief that there is no knowledge base about teaching limits any vision of teacher improvement. It is also isolating because in the absence of knowledge, good teaching must be intuitive: if "goodness" is inborn and intuitive, then having problems is a sign of inadequacy or too little of the "right stuff." This syndrome discourages talking about one's teaching, especially one's problems. Furthermore, if good teaching is intuitive and there's no knowledge base, what's the good of working on improvement?

But the knowledge base on teaching is very real and expanding all the time. It tells us that there are certain things that all teachers do, regardless of age group, grade, or subject. It tells us the situations or missions that all teachers have to deal with in one way or another. It also tells us what our options are for dealing with each area of teaching, and that matching behaviors and techniques to specific students is the name of the game. In some cases, it even gives us guidelines for how to go about the matching.

Teachers make decisions and act to deal with numerous aspects of their instruction and relationships with students. For example, experts agree that there are dozens of ways to gain and maintain attention, several kinds of objectives (Saphier and Gower, 1982), and over 20 models of teaching (Joyce and Weil, 1980). Because there are many ways to deal with each of the myriad of teaching tasks, skillful teaching involves continually broadening one's repertoire in each area and picking from it appropriately to match particular students and curriculums. The knowledge base about teaching is the available repertoire of moves and patterns of action in any area, available for anyone to learn, to refine, and to do skillfully.

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Caring, Celebration, and Humor

Consider another knowledge base. Each subject has, in addition to the formal knowledge of its discipline, a how-to knowledge base of teaching methods and materials. Where it is the norm to consult the knowledge bases, teachers are reaching to learn new methods and examine the latest materials and not to find the single best ones, because there are no best ones. They seek to expand their repertoires so as to expand their capacity to reach students with appropriate instruction.

This particular norm, reaching out to the knowledge bases, is one of the least understood and most neglected. It is also one of the most powerful for rejuvenating an ailing school culture. In schools where the knowledge bases are cultivated, a common language for talking about instruction emerges. This language reduces the isolation commonly experienced by teachers (Lortie, 1972).

7. Appreciation and Recognition

"Good teaching is honored in this school and community. The other day I found a short note from the principal in my mailbox: When Todd and Charley were rough-housing in the hall you spoke to them promptly and firmly yet treated them maturely by explaining the whys of your intervention. It really makes our grown-up talk about respect mean something when teachers take responsibility for all kids the way you do.' He just observed that incident for a minute, yet took the time to give me feedback. (Somehow it had more impact in writing, too.) Things like that make me feel there is a real value placed on what I do with students. I am recognized for my efforts and achievements in the classroom and the school."

There are many ways this message can be sent: teacher recognition as a regular feature of school committee meetings; PTA luncheons at the beginning and end of the year for faculty and staff; short notes in teachers' mailboxes from a principal who notes something praiseworthy during a walk around the building; perhaps even superior service awards written up each year in local newspapers with stipends given annually to a few teachers. Of course, underlying these efforts should be a pay scale that is at least competitive with neighboring districts.

8. Caring, Celebration, and Humor

"There are quite a number of occasions when we show our caring for each other and awareness of significant events in each others' lives, as well as celebrating benchmarks in the life of the school. Estelle, for example, somehow arranges a 15-minute party with some goody for every faculty member's birthday in her building. We often have these short but satisfying little gatherings in the teacher's room before the kids come in. There is a lot of humor and laughing together in this school."

9. Involvement in Decision Making

"I am included in certain meaningful decision-making processes in this school, especially when they directly affect me or my kids. That doesn't mean I am consulted on all policies or decisions; but to tell you the truth, I don't want to be—I'd never get all of my own work done. But when I am consulted, it's not a phony gesture; my input is taken seriously. And there are mechanisms open for me to raise issues. Last spring I asked the faculty advisory council to look at how kids were treating each other in the halls. That led to a faculty brainstorming session on the topic of school climate. I don't always get people to buy into my issues, or even ask them to. But when I do, the issues are treated seriously, and I am esteemed for bringing them up even if my solutions do not carry the day."

10. Protection of What's Important

"Administrators protect my instruction and planning time by keeping meetings and paperwork to a minimum. In fact, we don't even have faculty meetings in the usual sense . . .certainly not just for business and announcements. Those needs get covered by memos and word-of-mouth contact with the principal. When we do meet, it is for curriculum and instruction purposes, often in small groups like the study group on learning styles I was in last spring."

11. Traditions

"There is always something special to look forward to as I scan the calendar. Be it a fair, a trip, or a science Olympiad, there are events coming up that students and teachers alike see as refreshing or challenging and a definite change of pace. Some of these traditions are rooted in ceremony, others in activity. They exist both in the curriculum as grade-level projects or activities, and as recurrent events within the life of the school."

12. Honest, Open Communication

"I take responsibility for sending my own messages. I can speak to my

colleagues and administrators directly and tactfully when I have a concern or a beef without fear of losing their esteem or damaging our relationship. Around here people can disagree and discuss, confront and resolve matters in a constructive manner and still be supportive of each other. And I can listen to criticism as an opportunity for self-improvement without feeling threatened."

Robert Hinton captures these qualities when describing changing relationships in a Chinese village during the revolution:

> One had to cultivate the courage to voice sincerely held opinions regardless of the views held by others, while at the same time showing a willingness to listen to others and to change one's own opinion when honestly convinced of error. To bow with the wind, to go along with the crowd was an irresponsible attitude that could never lead to anything but trouble. . . .The reverse of this, to be arrogant and unbending, was just as bad (Hinton, 1966, p. 395).

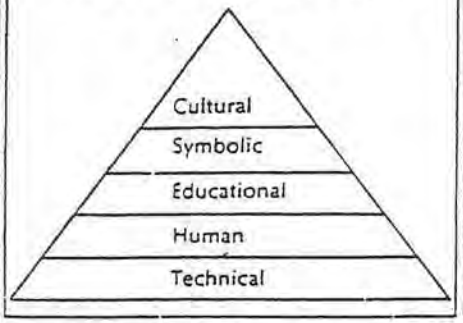
This type of communication is supported by several of the cultural norms. Difficult issues and criticism require an inner conviction that one is all right and respected by others. Appreciation and Recognition, Involvement in Decision Making, and Reaching Out to the Knowledge Bases support this kind of mutual respect.

How to Build the Norms of School Culture

Sergiovanni (1984) describes five leadership forces where actions make a difference in building good schools (see Figure 2). Effective leaders have skills with which to apply each force.

Technical skills pertain to such managerial matters as scheduling and delegating; human skills include listening,

Figure 2. Sergiovanni's Leadership Forces that Build Good Schools.



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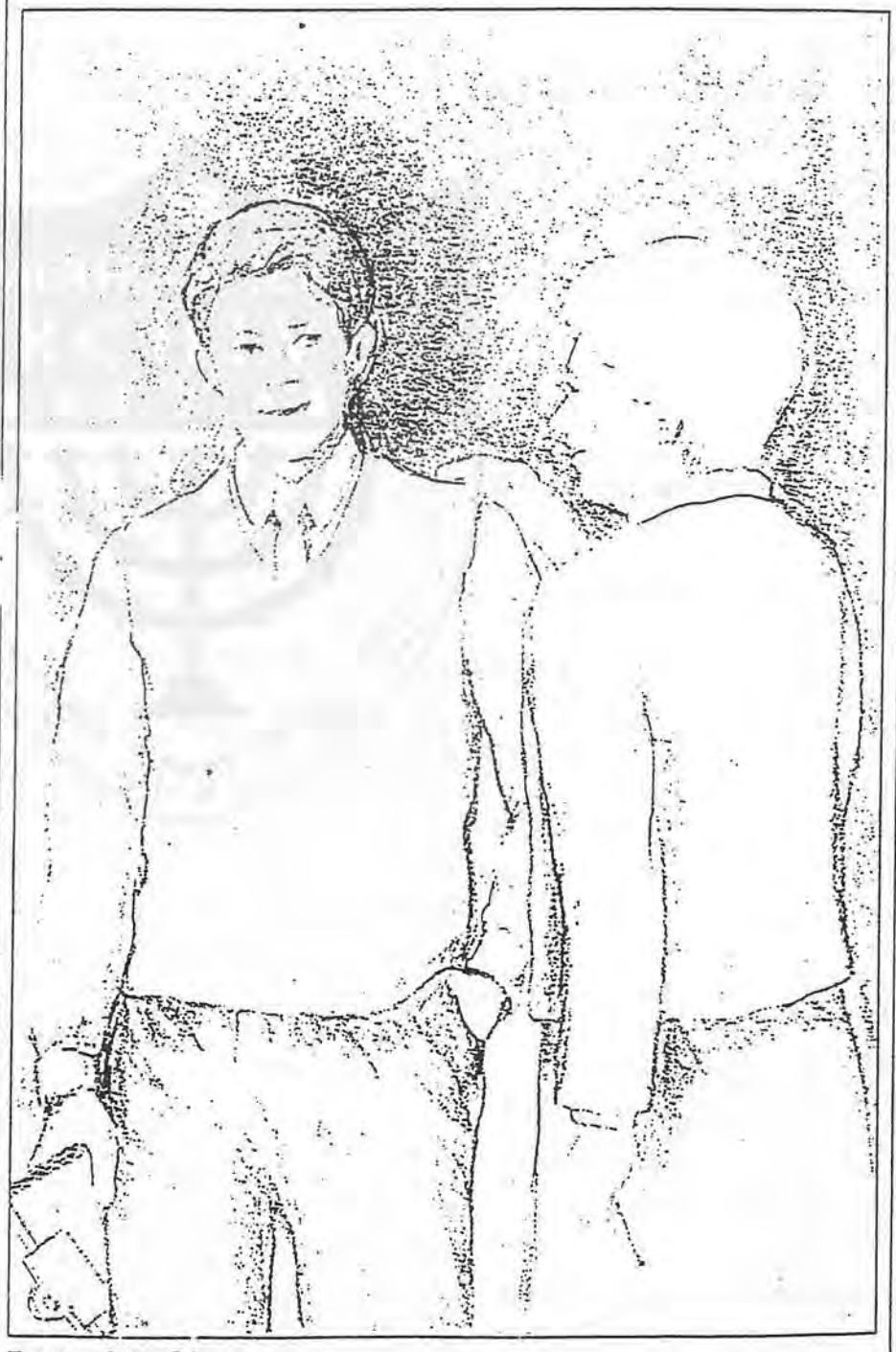
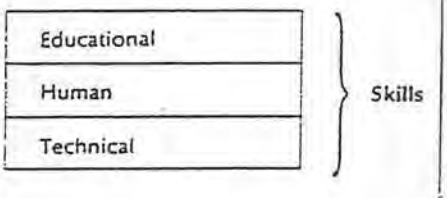


Trust and Confidence

group dynamics, and conflict resolution. Educational skills include knowledge about teaching and learning; symbolic skills include knowledge of and commitment to core institutional values and ways of articulating and representing them. And the cultural arena involves building norms such as the 12 discussed here. But if we are to understand what leaders do to build and maintain excellence in schools, the relationship among these five forces and arenas for action needs expansion.

Leaders show their technical, human, and educational skills through activities that call them forth rather directly. A parents' night must be organized (technical and human); difficult meetings chaired (human); and conferences held after classroom observations (human and educational). We offer the proposition that leaders show their symbolic and culture-building skills through those same activities and not in separate activities that are exclusively symbolic or cultural (with exceptions like opening-of-school speeches that are symbolic occasions). From this perspective Sergiovanni's diagram might be redrawn as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Cultural and Symbolic Skills.



Cultures are built through the everyday business of school life. It is the way business is handled that both forms and reflects the culture. Leaders with culture-building on their minds bring an ever-present awareness of these cultural norms to their daily interactions, decisions, and plans, thus shaping the way events take place. Because of this dynamic, culture-building occurs simultaneously and through the way school people use their educational, human, and technical skills in handling daily events or establishing regular practices.

For example, suppose there is interest in a revised curriculum planning procedure. What would a culture-builder do in a leadership position? A sure way to prevent the crisis-management of curriculum—where small numbers of parents can successfully pressure a school board, superintendent, or principal to "look into" a curriculum area such as science—is to maintain a planning process that systematically and routinely evaluates and renovates all curriculum areas. Such a system might ask parent-teacher committees to assess the existing curriculum by reviewing literature, consulting experts, and interviewing parents. Having estabished a curriculum's strengths and weaknesses, the committee could write a statement of philosophy to guide the next phase—the identification of new curriculums, texts, and activities—recognizing that the review process might well validate existing programs.

With the first phase of planning complete, the parents leave the committee and turn the actual development of new curriculum over to the faculty and administration. Over the next several years programs and activities are piloted and implemented, leading back to the evaluation phase in approximately five years. In this way

"Our district distributes $6,000 service awards for recognizing teachers' contributions in a variety of areas."

". . . collegiality is an expectation that is explicitly stated by the leader, rewarded when it happens, and sanctioned when it doesn't."

all curriculum areas can be located on the planning cycle. While this approach to curriculum planning can be done by whole school systems, the process is especially powerful when conducted in individual schools.

A planning process such as this is itself an opportunity for infusing the cultural norms into a school. A good place to start is with a leader offering to parents and teachers Lightfoot's (1983) notion of a "consciousness of imperfection," a perspective in which we assume that any school has areas of strength and weakness and that the "good" school is distinguished by its openness to dealing with its imperfections. The school leader could use this opportunity to point out how improvements emerge from a culture that embodies norms such as our 12. She or he can then outline a process that demands experimentation by piloting new curriculum and encourage collegiality by asking teachers to work together on evaluation and design. Central to the planning is a commitment to involve stakeholders in decision making while being clear about the limits of their influence.

After completing the review, the administrator must ensure that teachers receive support to carry out their plans. For example, if a science committee recommends integrating microcomputers into science laboratories, funds need to be budgeted for purchasing equipment and training teachers. While providing support, the principal needs to emphasize the high expectations she or he has for their work. Building specific goals into teachers' formal evaluation—which should take place no less than every three years—is a useful way of making the connection between support and high expectations. Down the road a principal will want to recognize teachers' efforts by reporting to the superintendent and school board and perhaps even attaching rewards for their efforts. Our district distributes six thousand dollar service awards for recognizing teachers' contributions in a variety of areas.

The culture builders in any school bring an ever-present awareness of the 12 norms to everything they do in the conduct of daily business. It is this awareness and commitment to culture building that is more important than any single activity or structure in the school organization. Once we are clear about what the important norms of a strong culture are, the activities and forms through which we build them are legion.

If we are serious about school improvement and about attracting and retaining talented people to school careers, then our highest priority should be to maintain reward structures that nurture adult growth and sustain the school as an attractive workplace. A strong culture is crucial to making schools attractive workplaces. If the norms we have outlined are strong, the school will not only be attractive, it will be energized and constantly improving.□

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Translating Vision into Practice

Monday, March 18, 7:45 - 9:00 PM

Gail Dorph and Ellen Goldring

Overview:

Participants will work in small groups to address the implementation of Brinker's idea in a real institutional setting. Each group will consider one aspect of implementation, for example, staff development, choosing curricula, hiring/firing teachers, etc. This activity will illustrate how a vision can pervade all aspects of an institution.

Institute on Vision and Leadership for Jewish Education

Monday Evening - March 18

Translating Vision into Practice
Small Group Work

EXERCISE 2: Brinker assumes that it is necessary for the student to encounter a diverse range of Jews in one's every day life in order to experience the reality and attraction of Jewish society. Suppose a group of trustees has decided to open a new Brinker school and has asked you to suggest a recruitment and admissions policy for both student population and the hiring of staff. Put together a series of policy recommendations in light of this request:

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What is the portrait of the ideal student population of this school?
- What kinds of diversity ought to be sought and in which proportion would it be wise to accept each kind of consitutuency within the Jewish community?
- Is the diversity defined in terms of religious affiliations, teaching styles, or some other criteria?
- Could a non-Jew be hired to teach Judaica?
- Does this approach demand team teaching or alternative teachings of similar subject matter?
- If so, what kinds of team teaching and training for teachers would be necessary and how would teachers be trained to apply them in the classroom?
- How could one evaluate whether the diversity of the teaching staff would indeed lead a perception of the plurality of the Jewish people and to a more exciting curriculum. How could such a diverse population be recruited?
- What could one suggest if it turned out that no Orthodox Jew was willing to send their children to this school?
- Who would not be recruited or accepted to this school?
- How should one present and justify this portrait to the students of this school?
- What is the portrait of the ideal teaching staff for this school?