

*Fostering Effective
Relationships – The Key to
Surviving Year One.*



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New: Principal Leadership Quality Standard: “New” competencies are white. 2012 standards are red/green. Traditional role is green. What does that say about the changing role?

- 1. Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning**
- 2. Fostering Effective Relationships**
- 3. Embodying Visionary Leadership**
- 4. Leading a Learning Community**
- 5. Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit**
- 6. Providing Instructional Leadership**
- 7. Developing Leadership Capacity**
- 8. Managing School Operations and Resources**
- 9. Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context**

(a) I act with fairness, respect and integrity

(b) I demonstrate empathy and a genuine concern for others

(c) I create a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment

(d) I create opportunities for parents/guardians, as partners in education, to take an active role in their children's education

(e) I establish relationships based on mutual trust with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents/guardians, Elders/knowledge keepers, local leaders and community members

(f) I demonstrate a commitment to the health and well-being of all students in the school and act in their best interests

e) I model and promote open, collaborative dialogue

f) I communicate, facilitate and solve problems effectively

g) I implement processes for improving working relationships and dealing with conflict within the school community

*Reality: You have 3 roles
(Robinson, 2014)*

- Maintaining Business as Usual.
- Dealing With Crisis and Surprise
- Pursuing Priority Goals – the improvement imperative, leading learning and instructional leadership.
- The difference between a manager and a leader is the attention given to #3... which is also most of the competencies of the PQS.

Reflection is the First Step...go slow to go fast...

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your school?
 - Note: this takes time.
 - Focus on “input mechanisms” for all stakeholder groups.
- Be honest about your strengths and weaknesses. Address the schools weaknesses with your strengths. (template)
- Decide what you are all about - values. It will help on every decision that you make, every conversation that you have...creating vision.....
- Del: 1) Education. 2) Safety (Relationships).

Focus on “the Kids.”

- Your ability to work with students effectively was a major factor in getting the job.
- You can contribute right away while learning the other stuff.
- Visibility....not just sports, but other activities – balance... *Walkthroughs, Rounds, Microslicing...have a purpose...shared with staff.*
- Special Needs/inclusion programs/difficult kids – show interest...you send powerful messages to all on how you treat marginalized kids.

Discipline

- Firm, friendly and fair...
- Can undermine credibility very quickly...key is communication and “closing the loop.”
- Be clear with your expectations to staff...do not allow them to simply send kids to the office...school teachers....don’t take “their monkey”.
- You have possible three roles:
 - Counselling
 - Prevention
 - Consequences
- All of these roles require input at the front end and “closing of the loop” at the end – but have very different strategies...you can’t rely only on student information!

Todd Whittaker



- “Great teachers want the problem solved; poor teachers want punishment.”
- You will gain some insights into your staff...

Negotiate Your New Role on Staff

- Things have changed...just by your arrival or promotion. You may have a supervisory responsibility over your friends or an unsuccessful candidate...Be professional with any “unsuccessful” candidates.
- “In relationships, the little things are the big things.”
 - Keep your promises; keep your word. Be genuine.
 - “If it turns out differently, it’s because I’m wrong, not because I lied.”
- Staff are not checkers; they are chess pieces.
(Buckingham)

Staff con't

- Try to avoid inner groups and outer groups.
 - Information is power; don't tell one teacher what you wouldn't tell them all.
 - Email...assume that you are telling everyone – even if that is not your intent! Eg. Jokes, discipline, sensitive subjects....it's all public.
- Email is a potential killer; use it appropriately....social media: Facebook....google search...
 - Email is also “sticky”. Be strategic WHEN you use it.

First Impressions...



- 1st staff mtg. (grabbing kids)
- You never get a second chance to make a first impression...
 - What do you want them to say? They need to have hope!

Respect the School Culture.



- You can't replace your predecessor so do not try.
- Be your own person; that's who they hired.

Address performance issues...

- Credibility is lost in ignoring the obvious.
- “Intervening in a non-threatening, supportive manner, but intervening nevertheless” – Fullan
- Progressive: start with support....
- If it’s not in writing, it didn’t happen.
- ATA and DO involvement...

Hiring



- Evidence based approaches vs. interviews...
- Hire based on talent (Whittaker) not convenience...be relentless in your pursuit of the best candidate.

First Year Teachers or teachers new to your school...

- Analogous to an infant...a good parent does not neglect the child.
- Wrap them with support.
 - Arrange mentorship...
 - Visit regularly...
 - Assume that they know very little...
- D-day...honestly project them 20 years down the road...Do I want this person teaching my grandchildren?
 - If they have “low will” – that likely won’t change...

Build a Positive Relationship with your Principal/Assistant Principal

- It's not a competition; you are a team. I'm sure you will discover, things have changed; you are the administration - conversations will stop in the staff room... Negotiate your role. Communicate x 3.
- Disagreements take place in private...decisions must have public support...
- Find time to meet and COMMUNICATE!
- There is no such thing as a “dumb question.”
- This includes other “team members”: Instructional Coaches, Learning Coaches...

Don't forget your support staff.

- Often they are key community connections.
- The secretary represents the first impression of your school. You cannot overestimate her importance.
- The secretary is also a great resource for knowing the staff and community. She hears all and knows all...

Reach out for allies in the community, especially parents.

- Good news calls early in the year build both trust and relationships. Deposit: Emotional Bank Account – Covey.
- When appropriate, ask for support rather than relaying your decision.
- Be preemptive - Communicate: Warn them that the crisis is coming, not when the crisis has arrived. “Beat the kid home...”

Listen, No REALLY LISTEN!!!!!!



- Research indicates that most people listen in order to formulate their response in discussion or to rehearse what they are going to say. Seek to understand...then to be understood.
- You can't make great music without silence.

In Crisis.

- Reflect on your philosophy. Focus on “Doing the right thing, not doing things right.” Flood... decisive...communicate...
- Decide whether the decision needs to be made immediately. If it doesn't, you can make the decision when emotions subside and focusing on the rational not the emotional.
- Ask for help from your support network...Withdrawal: emotional bank account (Covey) It's not weak; it's smart!
 - Senior Admin, experienced principals, mentors....

When the out of control parent phones/appears ...Listen...

- They have rehearsed for days; they know exactly what they are going to say. It may even be written down - the entire history. Get through the rehearsal to the discussion.
- Try to maintain your emotions; conflict and anger are energizing...gas on the fire.
 - Types of fighters: 1.) silent treatment, 2.) gunnysackers, 3.) crazymakers, 4.) bullies....3 of 4 want to be heard....the other one isn't calling...
- Personally, I hate fighting with someone who is prepared.
- If appropriate, pass the monkey.

Seek Win/Win

- Ultimately in decisions, you want everyone “on board” ...Our 3 steps to success...
- #1 You need to show “caring” for the kid...this is common ground for all...parent, teacher and student.
- #2 Be solutions focused. They will want to focus on the problem...
- #3 Timely Follow-up...Close the loop!

Be Aware of Data...

- What constitutes success? What are your dashboard indicators? (Hulley)
- Data does not imply anything...people do...
- Be prepared to confront the “brutal realities.” Ultimately, you are an agent of change...
- Data does not make decisions...people do!
- High performing schools rarely exist separate from excellent leadership.

Central Office???

- We believe in stewardship (service), not governance and administration. Our role is to assist you (despite the evaluation component) in helping students succeed.
- Be preemptive - Communicate: Warn them that the crisis is coming, not when the crisis has arrived.
- Sucking-up vs. complete disregard...continuum.

Be humble: Avoid the Royalty trap..



- Royalty – sense of entitlement. Think Redford...
- Your staff is watching...do the rules apply to you?
 - What do you order for supper? Who pays?
 - Where do you stay?
 - How (and where) do you travel?
 - Where do you park?

*Saying “I’m sorry” does not
make you weak...*



- ... it makes you human...
 - Legally: sorry for the situation; sorry it turned out this way; sorry you feel that way

*Share success...accept
blame...not take success – fix
blame...*

- Mirror vs. window.
- Fullan – “You can’t be a great leader without humility.”
- Collins: Level 5 leaders - humility and work ethic