



Improving school education: A workbook

Ross M. Woods



Worldwide University
Scottsdale, Arizona



Australian Center for Advanced Studies
Perth, Australia

© Ross M Woods. 2017-22 All rights reserved.
Second ed., second printing.

Contents

1 Introduction.....	3
2 Leadership.....	7
3 Making decisions.....	14
4 Leadership with style.....	16
5 Leading meetings.....	21
6 About your school.....	25
7 Teaching and assessment.....	29
8 Innovation.....	33
9 Become a learning organization.....	41
10 Coaching teachers.....	45
11 Evidence-based practice.....	52
12 Choosing a thesis topic.....	57
13 Literature review.....	62
14 Change management.....	64
15 Policy review.....	73
16 Risk management.....	75
17 Program evaluation.....	77
18 Your proposal: A strategic plan.....	84
19 Implementation and monitoring.....	87
20 Evaluation.....	88
21 Your thesis: The final format.....	90
Case study 1.....	92
Appendix 1 Teaching observation form 1.....	94
Appendix 2 Teaching observation form 2.....	96
Appendix 3 Teaching observation form 3.....	97
Appendix 4 General teaching skills checklist.....	98
Appendix 5 Amsberry Public Elementary School.....	99
Appendix 6 Morgantown High School.....	104
Endnotes.....	108

1

Introduction

Your school can improve and can provide a higher standard of education, even if it is a poorer school and classes are large.¹

Your goal in this course is to plan and establish a program to improve the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment at your school.

You'll be able to take leadership of an aspect of teaching and learning in a whole school. You'll demonstrate creativity, leadership, people skills, planning, problem-solving, and vision. You won't have all the answers yet, but you're willing to learn and to help others do better. An official role is not important. You might be a Principal, Deputy Principal or Head of Department, but could equally be a teacher who is learning to step up and take leadership in an area of opportunity or need.

To achieve this goal, you will:

1. Form a small team and lead it
2. Identify a particular aspect of teaching and student learning that needs improving
3. Lead strategic planning for improvement
4. Generate innovative thinking and develop an innovative idea
5. Set measurable educational targets
6. Research the topic
7. Plan and implement a systematic coaching strategy
8. Get approval
9. Implement the approach and evaluate it
10. Manage change to achieve your goals
11. Establish the program as ongoing, stable, and sustainable.²

A workbook

This is a workbook. If you go through and follow all instructions, the quality of a facet of teaching at your school should improve greatly. It's called a *workbook*, because just reading it probably won't help you much and won't make any difference in your school. You will only learn by actually doing the work. It contains several kinds of activities:

- *Discussion and reflection tasks* for you to consider personal application.
- *Assignments* related to learning and applying the content.
- *Assignments* that will be part of your thesis.
- *A thesis* comprising a major project to improve your school.

The Gillespie model

This approach to improving education is based on Gillespie's review of the quality of school education in international research.³¹

¹ Although results in standardized tests tend to follow socioeconomic groups, schools can do better than the average for their socioeconomic group.

² Description of competent performance.

³ Gillespie considered a range of variables and used results of system-wide standardized tests as the marker of comparative quality. Although the use of test results as a standard appears to reduce teaching to examination preparation, this view both frees the discussion from individual subjective opinion and applies across national boundaries. Based on the evidence, it would also be easy to argue that different models of teaching, done well,

One of the first factors in improving education is the principal's leadership style. It sounds odd, but *less successful* principals tend to follow the transformational view of leadership. They seek to engage and inspire their staff to new levels of performance (p. 156).

The *more successful* principals tend to have an instructional leadership style, and they might not be inspiring visionaries. They focus on the things that improve education, especially the improvement of teaching.

1. They hire good teachers and phase out incompetent teachers.
2. They focus systematically on clear teaching objectives.
3. They set goals and expectations, and have high expectations of teachers and students.
4. They firmly implement and participate in a teacher improvement program. For example, they invest time in coaching teachers, and helping other teachers to coach junior teachers.
5. They closely monitor teacher performance.
6. They maintain peace and order in the school, creating a disruption-free environment. In other words, they have an effective school-wide system for managing student behavior (p. 155 ff.).

Similarly, Gillespie lists the following factors in improving education:

1. Student teachers are rigorously assessed in their teaching skills (p. 84).
2. All teachers, and especially new teachers, keep learning under the tutelage of mentors and master teachers. It includes observing and giving feedback, not just having someone available to answer questions (pp. 83ff, 87)⁴.
3. Master teachers give demonstration lessons (p. 86).
4. Teachers help each other with lesson plans (p. 85).
5. Groups of teachers in the same field keep researching how to improve. This includes observing each other, and can even include writing research articles (p. 84).
6. Good teachers are promoted to master teachers, not administrators.

Then, what does *not* improve education? Smaller class sizes, more contact time in class, or simply spending money might make the teacher's role more pleasant, but they don't necessarily improve education. Making schools bigger or smaller doesn't make any difference, nor does requiring students to do homework (pp. 52ff, 81, 124, 190). It is also doubtful whether increased salaries are an effective incentive for teachers to improve (p. 125).⁵

Some of the most obvious problems

Problems differ widely between schools. In some schools, teachers do not work together as teams and do not support each other; they work as isolated individuals and their staff meetings cover only basic school administration. Unions sometimes prevent the dismissal of incompetent teachers. Some schools have a culture of serious student misbehavior and its causes may vary greatly between schools.

In one network of schools, the most obvious problems were:

1. Teachers only stood in front of their classes and gave oral explanations.
2. Teachers often showed up late, went home early, or didn't show up at all.
3. Teachers often gave students unsupervised tasks so they could skip class.
4. Teachers were unprepared and made up lessons as they went along.
5. Teaching was aimed at memorization without understanding.

produce good results in system-wide standardized tests. However, King notes that some countries seem to have skewed the results of international standardized tests by using biased sampling techniques that favor more capable students. (Rodney King. 2016. *Singapore's Education System: Myth and Reality*. (Perth, Australia: Insight Press), pp. 17-20.

⁴Regardless of what happens in teachers' colleges, student teachers tend to follow the examples of those who taught them. One of the best ways to help them improve is to provide excellent examples to follow.

⁵The value of financial rewards tends to be culture-specific. In some cultures, high salaries are not an incentive but unreasonably low salaries are a disincentive.

6. Teachers didn't encourage creativity or exploration.
7. Teachers didn't recognize students' individual areas of ability or students at risk (gifted/talented, learning disability).
8. The best foreign language teachers had thick accents. Others created a pidgin mixture of their own language and the language they were trying to teach.

Task 1: Evaluate your school

Grade your school; a score of 1 is "Worst" and 10 means "Consistently perfect!"

1. The school has good relationships with parents.
2. The school has good relationships with the local community.
3. Students enjoy school.
4. Students always feel safe while at school.
5. Teachers and principal have good relationships.
6. This school achieves extraordinary results.
7. Students love being at school. School always has a positive atmosphere.
8. Students are very well behaved. They don't disrupt classes.
9. All teachers are experts in teaching effectively.
10. Teachers cooperate and work well together.
11. All teachers are learning to improve their teaching skills.
12. This school meets all external conditions.
13. The local community and students' families support the school.
14. All teachers manage student behavior effectively.
15. Teachers find teaching here is enjoyable and interesting.

Task 2

1. Teachers get help and support when they need it.
2. The rooms and other spaces are used to maximum effectiveness.
3. Learning materials (books, worksheets etc. are used to maximum effectiveness.
4. The library is used to maximum effectiveness.
5. The principal provides clear and helpful leadership in improving the school.
6. The school's policies and procedures are helpful, relevant and up-to-date.
7. The school's curriculum is effective in promoting learning.
8. The curriculum is interpreted effectively for the context of this school.
9. The curriculum is always appropriate to the age of the students.
10. All students have a smooth transitions between grades.
11. Teachers understand the learning characteristics of each of their students.
12. Teachers recognize and remedy individual student learning difficulties.
13. Teachers can consistently identify gifted students.
14. The school uses suitable strategies to teach gifted students.
15. The school uses suitable strategies to teach students with difficulties.

Task 3: Evaluate your school according to the Gillespie model

1. We hire good teachers.	
2. We phase out incompetent teachers.	
3. We focus systematically on clear teaching objectives.	
4. We have high expectations of students.	
5. We have high expectations of teachers.	
6. We maintain a disruption-free environment; we have an effective school-wide system for managing student behavior.	
7. We have an effective teacher improvement program for all teachers.	
8. We rigorously assess the teaching skills of student teachers.	
9. We closely monitor teacher performance.	
10. Groups of teachers in the same field keep researching how to improve.	
11. Teachers help each other with lesson plans.	
12. Teachers observe each other and give feedback.	
13. Master teachers give demonstration lessons.	
14. Good teachers are promoted to master teachers, not administrators.	

2

Leadership

Schools need passionate leadership to improve. This section focuses mainly on your ability to lead, including reflection on how you lead your team when implementing change, and later on, observation during change management. Your goals are to show that you can:

- Improve your own development and your personal leadership style
- Manage yourself
- Apply a leadership style and approach appropriate to others, the outcomes you seek, and your context.

Position

The school leadership, especially the Principal, sets the tone of the whole school. Teachers can more easily maintain high standards if they work within a whole school culture of high standards, with high expectations of behavior and academic performance.² Heads of Departments don't set the tone of whole schools, but in big schools, they have a strong leadership role in their subject areas. They have much more contact with their team of teachers and might do more coaching of teachers. Heads of departments also need similar skills to principals in developing their curricular options, overseeing staff, and instigating improvements.

The Principal's job description is normally very similar to this:

1. Show leadership and initiative
2. Foster a positive school environment and culture, including:
 - a. A culture where the school community seeks to improve and aims at excellence
 - b. A positive environment that supports learning
 - c. A positive approach to school discipline
3. Establish and build community relationships relating to school
4. Oversee compliance and implementation with departmental policies and guidelines including:
 - a. Reporting
 - b. Governance
 - c. Budget and finance
 - d. Curriculum and assessment
 - e. Staff
 - f. Property and equipment
5. Oversee staff both directly and through the heads of departments meeting
6. Ensure teaching staff are suitably skilled
7. Ensure safety of all persons on site and during school activities.

School leaders also need strong people skills. They have to handle upset people and relationships by listening, resolving disputes, and mediating. They respond to grievances from staff, students, and parents, and sometimes between staff.

Principals of non-government schools often develop policy. By contrast, principals of government schools do less, and even less for Heads of Departments.

Principals oversee local research. This might be no more than collecting information, but they need to be able to interpret it and consider its implications for the school.

Principals and Heads of Departments are heavily involved in managing change, for example, in staffing, funding, mandatory curricula, or testing regimes. Even in government schools where many transitions are mandatory, change management can still be difficult.

About your school

In your school, who is responsible for what? For each person or category, what are the limits of their authority and responsibility?

Briefly describe the main roles and what people do.

Reflection: "Where's Mount Everest?"

1. What are the biggest challenges facing school leaders in your school?
2. What are the most difficult aspects of your particular role?

Characteristics of leadership

For all the lists of characteristics, the experts haven't found a perfect definition of leadership and haven't made a list of characteristics that all leaders have. Without a definition, it might only be described as "the personal qualities of a person that make others want to follow them."

Why do people emerge as leaders? First, some appear only because they are needed; they may not want leadership but they're the right people for the role in a time of need. This is especially the case where leaders are in short supply. Second, people need leaders to help them get what they cannot get for themselves. People look to a leader for the next step when they don't know what to do, and want someone to speak on their behalf when they feel powerless. Whatever the kind of leadership, people don't work together very effectively without it.

Third, leaders emerge because they see an opportunity, start heading in the right direction, and others follow. Fourth, when many people are jostling for leadership positions, the winner is the best person (or the toughest or nastiest). In these cases, it's possible that many good leaders are bypassed.

Before going too far, you might have noticed that evil people sometimes become leaders and get others to follow them. Some are simply bullies, and some are shrewd political operators. Some are deceptive, manipulative, or clever. So when I discuss leadership, I mean developing good qualities.

The first step

Thousands of books have been written on leadership, so I won't write them all again here. There is no simple procedure to follow. Except for the first step.

The first step is to learn personal integrity. Integrity, in this sense, is all the personal qualities that people respect. It includes things like your personal example, trustworthiness, credibility, reliability, honesty, willingness to take responsibility, and willingness to work hard. It is the most decisive factor, and nobody will be in long-term leadership without it.

Leadership is first of all about you as a person and your example. It is not primarily about the followers, power, or authority. Leadership is not just what you do. Some cultures give respect on the basis of position, but others expect you to earn respect. Consider these quotes:

- "Leadership is a combination of character and strategy. And if you must be without one, be without strategy."³
- "Respect has to be sought and won every day. It is not a given."⁴
- "Young students come to me and ask, 'People don't respect me as a leader. How do I command more respect?' So I tell them, 'You can't control how much they respect you. But you can set a good example, and respect will follow.'"⁵
- Respect is slow to win but you can lose it in seconds. You can blow away three months of respect-building by losing your temper just once for a moment.

Other qualities of leadership

Everybody has their own pet theory on this, so let's go through the basics. Our current theories of leadership probably reflect our current culture. Some are generally about taking control of one's circumstances, and one view is that leadership is the ability to influence others.

After integrity, there's a daunting list of other leadership qualities. It's not fashionable in leadership studies to make a list, but it can still be helpful. People tend to follow those who:

- Make good decisions quickly
- Build effective teams
- Work to their strengths, and use the strengths of other team members
- Are competent
- Show assertiveness
- Tend to be proactive rather than reactive
- Have foresight and insight
- Have a clear sense of purpose and how to get there
- Are clearly committed to shared goals
- Learn fast and keep learning
- Will stand by them in a difficult situation
- Empower them
- Show resilience in adversity
- Take responsibility
- Care about individuals and their interests
- Work sensitively with subordinates and help them to do better.

No matter what theory of leadership you prefer, you probably need some of them in particular to last as a leader.

Be decisive. You need to be able to make decisions and act quickly. In a tight spot, people look to you to make a decision. You won't be showing leadership if you don't, and the mess will be difficult to fix. Even if it's a decision to wait, that can still be the right decision. That means you need to keep on top of your role, understand what is happening, and see emergent trends.

Gather a team. If nobody follows, you're not a leader. To be a good leader, surround yourself with people who are better at what they do than you are. Draw on their particular insights and skills and help them to complement each other. Rod Thomson wisely pointed out that leadership is not a technique or even a person. It is only defined in relation to a group of followers, a community. You need to be the right person for the people you lead.

Have a clear sense of purpose and how to get there. Here's a simple test: A group of people is sitting around contemplating a problem that is too hard for them. The leader is the first person who knows where to go and how to get there. (It's often the first person to speak, but not always.) The others need him or her.

Meet a need. The leader offers something that people can't get by themselves. In most cases, sadly, it is little more than self-interest (e.g. more money). In non-profit organizations, the leader offers a way to achieve something good that the followers believe in.

Work to your strengths. Nobody does everything well. (A few appear to do so until you look more closely.) Find what you like, do it well, and develop in your area of strength. It is where you will be most valuable and make your best contribution.

Be assertive. Assertiveness is the ability to state your view clearly when necessary. It can be done tactfully and thoughtfully. To be clear, this is what it is not:

- It is not being bossy or pushy to get your own way.
- It is not being afraid to state your view.
- It is not unreasonably compromising your view through fear.

- It is not being thoughtless, manipulative, argumentative, or inconsiderate.

Reflection

1. What other characteristics do you think are essential for *all* leaders?
2. Some sources suggest that leaders should maintain some distance from followers because “familiarity breeds contempt.” Others suggest that leaders should become personally close to followers in order to mentor and coach them. Which view is best? Why?
3. Think about what can you learn from people who have supervised you in the past. What were they good at? What weren’t they? Did each one have a unique personal style?

Common mistakes in leadership

Whether you think of leaders or managers, you can avoid some of the more common mistakes.

Build the organization to reflect your personal strengths and weaknesses. If you are erratic and disorganized, your organization could easily become erratic and disorganized, and attract only people who are similarly erratic and disorganized. You can’t see it, and you like the fit with how you think. The way to avoid it is to listen to constructive criticism so you can think more widely, and deliberately recruit people who think differently from you.

Queen Bee syndrome. The Queen Bee holds absolute power because she believes that all goodness and light flows from her.

Move into reactive mode. If you lose a proactive attitude, you set yourself up to be a victim of circumstances.

Distance. The more physical distance you have from people, the more difficult it is to communicate well and to have effective managerial controls. It is more likely that you will have misunderstandings and misinterpret motives.

Talented people. Some managers present the image that they want to recruit and promote talented, creative people with leadership potential. In reality, however, they feel threatened by upcoming leaders so they hold them back. Many upcoming leaders either give up or become quiet, frustrated, compliant, and uncreative. Others leave and rise through the ranks of another organization.

Volunteers. Some charities use volunteer labor inefficiently. Workflows would change radically if they had to pay full wages.

Too much change. Even when changes are improvements, they can destabilize the organization. They can be so numerous, frequent, or erratic that the energy consumed in change implementation outweighs their benefits.

Poor delegation. The reason for poor delegation, other than deliberately holding people back, is that supervisors don’t ease people into new tasks through ordered stages.

Poor delegation takes two quite different forms. In one form, managers under-supervise. Subordinates don’t learn their job properly, and perform poorly with a higher risk of serious errors. If these subordinates do a bad job, nobody knows until it’s too late. In another form, micromanagers control every aspect of what a subordinate does. In the worst cases, subordinates can’t do their jobs at all. In other cases, they don’t develop a personal style, don’t learn much, and don’t exercise abilities where they could do a better job than the supervisor. They don’t feel free to take initiative, even if the consequences of non-initiative are disastrous. A few people accept their role and lose any creativity and initiative. Good people tend to move on to other organizations as soon as they get an opportunity.

Forcing square pegs into round holes. If a manager has one peg and one hole, it’s convenient to ignore the fact that the peg is square and the hole is round. It’s then tempting to force the square peg into the round hole. Pushing people into roles for which they are clearly unsuited, however, ruins them both; the person is frustrated and the job is done poorly.

In the worst cases, the person gets so frustrated at being sacrificed that they develop a bad attitude and the supervisor forces them out of the organization. The supervisor then justifies him/herself by saying: “Lousy attitude; they had to go.” but doesn’t realize that he/she caused the problem.

Whip a willing horse. The worker is willing to take on a load that is more than their fair share, and carry it for a long time. It can result in the worker eventually burning out and needing to leave. In the worst cases, the person realizes that they are being exploited and becomes bitter. The supervisor forces them out of the organization, with the justification: “Lousy attitude; they had to go.” But, again, the supervisor doesn’t realize that he/she caused the problem.

Contributing weaknesses rather than strengths. In this kind of sick team, everybody contributes their weaknesses rather than their strengths. This has two variations, and your nightmare is to have both occurring together. In the first, everybody in the team is assigned jobs to which they are poorly suited, so they contribute mistakes rather than good performance. In the second, the oppressive atmosphere makes people want to complain, so each person contributes negative attitudes.

In too deep in a mistake. You realize that you have made a mistake in a decision and are now committed to a course of action, but you are now too far down the path to call a halt. How do you get out or change direction? You might fear that backing down would tarnish your reputation, or that the change process would be too difficult to reverse.

Reflection

Express each of the common mistakes in leadership in a positive form that would be good advice to people learning leadership.

Leading people

Your leadership applies to changing your school and to managing your personal relationships with your staff and others in the school community.

It’s a good principle that if you oversee people, then you should be proficient at their jobs. This doesn’t always work for practical reasons but the principle is still helpful.

Show empathy in your personal communications and in your day-to-day leadership role. Empathy is the ability to feel what others are feeling and see situations from their emotional viewpoint. It does not mean that you must give into them and their feelings, but it does mean that you need understand them and respect their individual differences.

This involves being consistent in your leadership. It sets a good example. Put another way, people will lose respect for you if they think you are erratic, unpredictable, or self-contradictory.

As a leader, you need to be in control of your own emotions so you can positively shape interpersonal relationships. Control any of your potentially disruptive emotions and impulses (e.g. anger, insensitive or inappropriate responses in the context, etc.).

Integrate your emotions and your thinking. Facing a challenge affects both how you feel and what you think. For example, you might think through your personal and other team member’s responses to given situations, and you need to have a suitable emotional response as well. The way you think through problems and plans is both emotional and rational.

Collaborative thinking

Be an example of collaborative thinking and cultivate it in others. Make people feel included and valued in the team, and have an appropriate role in making decisions. Especially include new people who are at risk of feeling left out.

Communicate and think together as a team so that you can learn together, and encourage your team to do the same with others in the school. Ask others for their contributions and encourage them to speak.

In your day-to-day decisions, you will need to think through any relevant issues and show good judgement and commonsense. As a Principal, you might need to check for compliance with legislation and regulations, and any other kinds of available information.

Reflection

Explain how to build a team. In your answer, cover at least all the following:

- How to monitor team relationships
- How to build positive relationships
- How to strengthen communication
- How to build trust and confidence between team members.

Reflection

1. What are the main lessons you had to learn in leadership?
2. How do you handle your mistakes?
3. It's lonely at the top. Where or to whom do you go to blow off steam or say what you think when you feel angry or frustrated?

Planning your personal development

1. Describe your personal development goals for the coming year.
2. In your evaluation of the past year, how effective is it? How do you know?
3. Describe your system of planning your personal development. What changes are you contemplating?

Emotional Intelligence: Treating each person uniquely

The best leaders work with the unique characteristics of different people to get the best response from each one. Good leaders can steer a clear path through their different personalities, motivations, attitudes, responses, strengths and weaknesses, to get the support and best performance from each one while minimizing the effects of their weaknesses.

If you have a good idea of the personal temperaments of the people you lead, you can appreciate them all and get the best contribution from each person according to their area of strength. You usually need all (or most) temperaments to make an excellent team. All is not lost if people clash because they have different temperaments; perhaps they could also complement each other.

The current term *emotional intelligence* refers to the way one handles and responds to their emotional predisposition and reactions. Emotional intelligence is the ability to discern the temperaments and feelings of other people and to adjust your approach to get the best response. It involves:

1. increasing your self-awareness,
2. managing your own emotions and showing self-control,
3. identifying the impact of your emotions on others,
4. being socially aware and managing relationships,
5. developing empathy,
6. recognizing and appreciating the emotional strengths and weaknesses of others,
7. encouraging others to improve in emotional intelligence, and
8. using emotional intelligence to maximize team outcomes.

Scenarios

What would each of these people need to learn to show emotional intelligence as a leader?

1. Brad is a chatterbox. In a group, he does most of the talking even when he has nothing in particular to say.
2. Steve focuses on his work. He doesn't like to interact with other people because he thinks that it detracts from getting the job done.
3. Jeff thinks he is always right. Sometimes he listens carefully but he just uses it to get his own way.

Scenarios: What would you do?

How would you respond to each of the following people:

1. A parent of one of your students has come to school to complain that you failed his child in a school subject. He is angry and keeps repeating himself, but he is not listening to you at all. Your class starts in less than five minutes, so you will have to go. What would you do?
2. Jess is very quiet. She has come to school about her daughter and you suspect there is a problem of some kind, but she does not want to say what it is. You don't know why she is reluctant to talk. What would you do?
3. Melanie's husband died last week and she is quite distressed. She has come to school saying she thinks she should pull her children out of school and move back to her parents. It is close to final assessments for the year, and a bad time for children to move. What would you do?

Form a team

You will need to lead a team for some tasks in future weeks. Choose three or four people to make a team. They may be other teachers, but need to be willing to commit time to meet briefly once a week. Some weeks you won't have much to do, and other weeks you'll have a proper meeting.

You are the leader of your team even if your team members are also in this program and are leading their own teams.

3

Making decisions

Read the decision-making strategies below and compare them. They are all expressed as sets of stages:

The classical model

1. Recognize the need
2. Diagnose the problem
3. Develop alternative solutions
4. Select one or more solutions
5. Implement the selected solution
6. Follow-up and evaluate

The optimization model

1. Recognize the need
2. Identify the criteria for the decision. (What will make it a good decision?)
3. Allocate weights to the criteria (Which criteria are most important?)
4. Develop alternative solutions
5. Evaluate the alternative solutions
6. Select the best alternative
7. Implement the selected solution
8. Follow-up and evaluate

The consensus model

1. Recognize the need
2. Identify the people who should make the decision
3. Build a common understanding of the problem
4. Develop and compare alternative solutions
5. Select a solution and agree on it
6. Delegate the implementation of the solution

The benevolent dictator model

1. Recognize the need
2. Identify the information you need
3. Make a decision
4. Inform subordinates and check they understand
5. Monitor implementation of the solution

The pilot project model

1. Recognize the need
2. Diagnose the problem
3. Decide on a solution
4. Test the selected solution
5. Check whether you interpreted the problem correctly, and modify the solution if necessary.
6. Implement the solution
7. Follow-up and evaluate

The specific situation model

1. Recognize the need
2. Identify the factors comprising the situation (temperaments, group dynamics, location, legalities, risk factors, etc.)
3. Evaluate relevance of current specific procedures.
 - 3.a. If there is a suitable specific policy or procedure, follow it.
 - 3.b. If there isn't a suitable specific policy or procedure, generate a solution that is suitable for the situation.
4. Implement the solution
5. Follow-up and evaluate

The risky information model

1. Recognize the need
2. Gather information
3. Evaluate the information:
 - 3.a. How accurate is it? (Assume some information will probably be inaccurate.)
 - 3.b. How complete is it? (Assume the information is probably incomplete.)
 - 3.c. Do you have time and means to get more information?
 - 3.d. What questions do you need to ask to get the information you need?
4. Generate alternative solutions
5. Risk-assess each solution, comparing benefits to risks
6. Select the best available solution based on what you know now
7. Implement the solution

Reflection: Decision-making models

1. What is similar between the different models?
2. What is different?
3. Which model(s) do you think is/are best? Give reasons for your opinion.
4. Which model(s) do you think is/are least helpful? Give reasons for your opinion.
5. If you were the leader and had to make a decision in a crisis, which elements would be essential?
6. Which model of decision-making *best* suits you and your school? Give reasons for your opinion.
7. Which model *least* suits you and your school? Give reasons for your opinion.
8. Perhaps you could combine the best features of these models into a very complete framework. At what point would a framework become too complicated to be useful?

4

Leadership with style

Leadership research once assumed that leadership was one set of qualities. More recently, attention has turned to the variety of leadership styles. As you develop as a leader, you'll eventually develop your own style.

People are all a little different, and so are leaders. Your temperament affects how you lead, so it's good to know your temperament. To some extent, it reflects your strengths and limitations. You will be a better leader if you know which one you are, and can better appreciate where others can complement you. You will also be a better leader if you develop at least minimal skills in your areas of weakness.

Both the Disc model and the team model of leadership include two basic orientations in temperament. People-oriented leaders tend to want to support and train their personnel, and tend to give lots of consideration to the personal needs of individuals.

You might benefit greatly by looking at your personal leadership style and ways that you might learn how to improve. If you can offer the right kind of leadership for your situation, your staff will be more likely to enjoy following you. In particular, you will need the right skills to lead your school through a period of change and improvement to achieve some strategic results.

The list of leadership styles below is more comprehensive.⁸ Don't think of them as stereotypes, just as tendencies.

The visionary

"I have a strong sense of purpose and progress, and one of my top priorities is to draw people to the vision. That's what makes me enthusiastic. If you can't communicate, you can't do anything."

"I like to see the big picture, and what will happen in the future. I think it's important to look at the future, get around to speak to groups, promote a public image, and keep staff motivated."

"I delegate implementation easily because it's the big picture and purpose that count. I don't need to bother with details, and I only do paperwork when I can't get out of it."

"Paradox is a normal part of reality so I don't worry about being consistent."

Comments from his team members:

- "Not always very good at one-to-one communication."
- "Without him we'd be sunk. He makes us keep our eye on the ball."
- "He's very persuasive."
- "He naturally does very well in the number one position, but needs lots of implementers around to translate vision into reality."
- "Definitely not a details person. Doesn't worry about small mistakes, even when they are important."
- "Leaders like him do well in the limelight so they can appear egotistical, no matter how humble or insecure they really are."
- "Tends to interpret problems as lack of passion for the vision."

The pastoral carer

"Leadership is really about personal relationships. People are individuals and you have to approach each one differently."

"I think it's important to give team members some pastoral care when I see they need it. After all, they are people. Most of the time, I don't have to offer it; they come to me. That's the kind of person I am, I guess."

"Building consensus is really important. I want to know that everybody is supportive when it comes to making a decision."

"I try to be sensitive to the dynamics in the team and I try to build team unity. I might not always succeed, but I am very respectful of people's feelings, even in business and public meetings."

"Our organization's problems are really people's personal problems. Fixing them is sometimes very difficult; it would be easy to create bad feelings in the team. But we've made a lot of progress and I think we have a very good team."

Comments from her team members:

- "She seems to know everyone. She's a good networker. No, an excellent networker, the best we have."
- "She sees people's victories as personal victories."
- "Good at encouraging people. She even nurtures people, especially the young ones coming up or those going through tough times."
- "She interprets problems as people's personal problems."
- "She leads by personal influence."
- "I noticed that she finds our procedures and admin stuff quite easy to follow. Perhaps she focuses on the job and the people, and thinks that rules are a bit of a distraction."
- "She sees the institution's goals as mainly the sum of people's goals. Other than that, she doesn't have a strong institutional vision or a sense of progress. She places the main value on the personal development of team members."
- "She's convinced that money doesn't fix problems."
- "Committed to training. Sees it as a way for people to develop."
- "She has excellent personal skills and many of the staff ask her advice. She's willing to be their personal confidante."
- "Perhaps she estranges some people who don't adjust to the personal style. Cliques could be a problem."
- "I wonder if the emotional tension and pressure get her down sometimes. Perhaps she could burn out easily."

The laissez faire leader

"I just give people the job and let them get on with it. They are all good at what they do. They'll figure out their own style and I don't interfere unless I have to."

"They can still ask me for help if they get stuck; that's what I'm here for. All I need to do is touch base with them and check that they're still okay."

"The organization is the sum of its individual people."

Comments from her team members:

- "She gets on with her job and so do we. Works well."
- "Good at letting us get on with the job."
- "Often doesn't notice if we get stuck."
- "Easy to skip out or pass the buck. But she still makes sure the job gets done."
- "Seldom gives direction. Sometimes I don't know what I'm supposed to do."

The accountant

“The budget is the plan.”

“I usually measure success and failure in terms of money value.”

“When I see problems, I see them as something that will cost money to fix. You can allocate money to fix the problem. Despite all the touchy-feely stuff, you can’t fix problems without resources.”

“Sure, lots of other things are important, but after all, it’s about the money. The goal is to be financially healthy. No matter how good you are, you’re not doing it any more if you go broke.”

Comments from his team members:

- “He tries to use money to motivate people and control the organization.”
- “He’s best when problems are about money.”
- “Tries to solve problems by throwing money at them. Not very good with people’s problems; he gives the impression he doesn’t care.”
- “Looks like we’re expendable when his figures don’t add up.”
- “Everybody resents him when he uses money to control people.”

The publicist

“When people suggest new ideas, my first question is always: ‘What impressions will it give and what will people think?’”

“Our clients are our focus; our resources are simply a means to make them satisfied with what we do. We should look at everything from their viewpoint first.”

Comments from her team members:

- “Very persuasive. Brilliant at putting thoughts together to make people think whatever she wants them to think.”
- “Remarkable ability to predict what clients will think.”
- “Creates a good impression. Not sure that she’s always so strong on substance.”
- “Easy to make promises. Harder to deliver the goods.”
- “Professional spin doctor. Tries too hard to please people when she should stick by her guns.”
- “Doesn’t it matter what we think? Or are clients the only important ones?”

The implementer

“I like to get the details right and make plans work on the ground. I think I’m fairly pragmatic; I like to look at what works. What happens on the ground is what’s important. I work hard to get all the systems working effectively, although my friends say I might be a bit of a perfectionist.”

“The big picture stuff is a bit too vague to be helpful. I think I have a strong sense of purpose, but I don’t think I’m all that good at communicating it.”

Comments from his team members:

- “Carries more than his share of the load when it comes to getting things done.”
- “Brilliant at finding and fixing little mistakes. Saved us from lots of disastrous consequences.”
- “Focuses narrowly on getting the job done at any cost.”
- “Wants to maintain a strict sequence, so isn’t good at tasks needing flexibility.”
- “Doesn’t notice people’s feelings too well. He’s not nasty, he just doesn’t even see them.”
- “Can be a bit technocratic. He values information and ability, and might use it to control what happens.”
- “Doesn’t easily delegate. Tends to see ‘getting things done’ as lots of work for him. And when he delegates, he sometimes micro-manages.”

The autocrat

“All major decisions have to go through me. With our structure, it’s always my head on the chopping block. The current group of staff is very young and inexperienced, so I’ve had to take on a more decisive style.

“Besides, leadership is about making decisions quickly. We’d lose lots of opportunities if we wasted time when making decisions.”

Comments from his team members:

- “Everyone knows where we’re going and what we’re supposed to be doing.”
- “Tends to make clear decisions very quickly.”
- “Best person to have in a crisis.”
- “Wants total authority and expects to make all major decisions. Doesn’t even realize it when he’s undermining a colleague who should be making the decision.”
- “Tends to micromanage rather than delegate.”
- “Frustrates creative employees. Either their creativity dies or they get fed up and leave.”
- “Often lacks empathy. Doesn’t listen all that well.”

The democrat

“I try to listen very carefully to the views of the team, even though I usually make the final decision. I find that team members contribute ideas that I haven’t thought of, so our team meetings are very helpful.”

“Sometimes we even come to decisions that I wouldn’t have originally agreed with, or perhaps even thought of. It really works well when I can get everybody to contribute his or her strengths.”

Comments from her team members:

- “Can’t make decisions quickly. Not very good in a crisis where she must make decisions alone and quickly.”
- “Good at drawing out people’s ideas and strengths.”
- “Everybody in the team is very supportive of our decisions.”
- “Tends to interpret problems as lack of shared understanding.”
- “She’s good at navigating grumpy personalities.”

The administrator

“I’m a details person and I’m a lot like an implementer.”

“My job here is basically to say, ‘Get with the program.’ I just have to follow a set of policies and procedures, and they are already there. I guess I’m not very creative, especially when it comes to handling quirky problems. When a problem comes up, I tend to look for something in the system to guide me.”

Comments from her team members:

- “She’s a bureaucrat, pure and simple. But she makes it work for her specific job; she fits in where she does. She couldn’t do some other jobs. Just doesn’t have it.”
- “She finds safety in the system.”
- “She isn’t very creative, or if she is, it doesn’t show in her role here. I don’t think she has much initiative in handling issues not addressed by the system.”
- “Tends to interpret problems as procedural problems.”
- “Good at details, especially when working with systems.”

Assignment: Leadership

1. Some of the leadership literature differentiates leadership from management, although managers are now generally expected to also show leadership. What is different and similar between them?
2. How does leadership style affect decision-making?
3. Describe the various leadership styles. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each style?
4. A person's leadership tends to be either proactive or reactive. Do the rules control you or are they just boundaries for you to achieve a vision?
5. "Most leaders are best suited to the second-in-charge position, and only a few do their best work in the top role." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
6. If you were training a new person in leadership, what would be the top five principles that you would want them to learn? Explain each of your five principles.
7. Name three instances where you have taken leadership and made decisions that led to positive changes in the workplace.

5

Leading meetings

Holding meetings is a special skill and is often poorly done, and is part of your leadership role. Here are three kinds of meetings: the one-to-one meeting, the committee to get a particular task done, and a decision-making meeting.

The one-to-one business meeting

One of the biggest single factors in business meetings is the use of time, so most of these guidelines are about how to use time.

Setting it up

Make an appointment beforehand if possible. Mention a particular purpose and perhaps propose an agenda. People need to know what the meeting is about, unless it's too confidential to discuss before the meeting. Clarify who needs to be in the meeting and try to indicate how long the meeting will take.

Find the right place for the meeting. Sometimes an office is ideal, and sometimes a coffee shop is better. If your business is confidential, make sure you can't easily be overheard.

If you've planned the meeting a long way ahead, email to confirm the time, just to check they can still do it.

Getting there and starting

Be correctly dressed. Some offices are fairly casual, and some expect a jacket and tie, or female equivalent. Plan to be there ten minutes before the scheduled start. Phone ahead if you're delayed.

Start with introductions if you don't know the person. It's good practice to have at least a business card and preferably also a brochure of your organization. Put the person at ease and manage the tone. How business-like you need to be and how much personal chat you can include will vary greatly depending on the situation.

The meeting

Respect their time. They might have very little available: Keep the meeting moving. However, you need to take more time if you don't know the person but need to feel you can trust them; give the preliminaries a little more time so you can both know each other a little better. And if you are handling sensitive or detailed issues that need careful attention, you may need to take more time.

Stick to the agenda. You might need to chase up unexpected aspects that you hadn't foreseen, but don't digress into time-wasting chat.

Do what you can to prevent interruptions. In particular, don't take phone calls unless you really can't avoid it. If you do, apologize. (Taking a phone in a meeting call gives the other person the message that anybody else is more important.) It's good manners to have your mobile phone switched off, and don't take desk phone calls. You might need to allow emergencies, but even then, most "emergencies" can wait and sort themselves out.

When you discuss matters, seek agreement and identify clearly the decision to be made now, even if it isn't the final step. It's a matter of "Don't discuss and defer. Decide and do." In many cases, one or both sides may need to talk to other people for a final decision to be made, but at least give them something to work with.

Keep notes. You don't achieve much if you have a good meeting but then forget what was decided. You might not be able to take full notes during the meeting itself, so fill in the detail afterwards.

Closing

Try not to go overtime. They might have a scheduled appointment straight afterwards, or be under pressure to meet a deadline.

It can be good to email the person afterwards, thanking them for the meeting. It is highly recommended that you enclose a copy of your notes, for two reasons:

- They serve as a reminder of what was decided. People forget.
- They serve as a record of what was decided. People tend to remember their own biased version, and you can prevent disappointment and frustration by having an accurate record of exactly what was decided. You can usually prevent the discussions that go "But I thought you meant ...", "As I remember it ...", or "But you promised ..."

A committee meeting to get a particular task done

One of the simplest meetings to lead is a committee meeting to get a task done. Get everyone involved and don't waste time.

1. Specify who are the members of the group and who is the leader
2. Describe the expected results (e.g. written proposal, simple event)
3. Explain the objectives to be achieved
4. Determine the strategy steps to achieve the goal
5. Brainstorm ideas
6. Choose the best ideas
7. Arrange the results in the plan
8. Allocates tasks and responsibilities according to the abilities of each person. Some will be specific duties of committee members, while you might need to delegate other tasks to people outside the committee.
9. Write the results in the plan, say who has to do what and what deadlines apply.

A decision-oriented meeting

The point of this kind of meeting is to make decisions to do things. This sounds obvious, but many boards use meetings as discussion forums rather than to make decisions. Discussion without making decisions is a complete waste of time, and the best people eventually leave because they realize that the board is unproductive. Remember: "Decide and do. Don't discuss and defer."

If you are not going to make a decision on something, then you shouldn't be discussing it in this kind of meeting. You should have another venue for those kinds of discussions.

The chairperson's job is to get good decisions made efficiently and effectively. This includes the following:

1. Have an agenda and keep to it. That will prevent the meeting going off track into topics for which you have not prepared and from going too long.
2. Some meetings must process huge amounts of information. Circulate any necessary information or reports beforehand. Done far enough in advance, you can expect people to have read them and can go straight to discussion and decision-making. Try to avoid wasting time with lots of reading in meetings, and if individual members haven't read it, it's their problem.
3. In a very few cases, a person might supplement their paper with a formal presentation, but keep it to the point. These kinds of presentations need to be very well prepared so they keep within the bounds of the meeting.
4. What is the proposed decision?

- 4.a. Identify clearly the decision to be made now. That's the purpose of moving motions. There's a difference between making the perfect decision eventually and the one that can and needs to be made now.
- 4.b. The discussion will sometimes progress to a relevant topic, but no prospective decision is being discussed. If so, either call for either a change of motion or a new motion to sharpen the focus on decision-making.
5. Some decisions naturally need more time than others.
6. Let everybody have a fair say. It is basic fairness and politeness, even for those who are inarticulate, or quiet, or whose opinion is a minority one. For example, the chairperson might ask quiet people for their opinions, or be quite tolerant of those who cannot easily express their ideas. Besides, an opinion group will cause problems if they feel unlistened to.
 - 6.a. Make sure everybody who wants a say gets the opportunity. You will often have to compromise between letting everyone say all that they are thinking, and giving them all enough time to contribute. A few people will want to do all the talking and you can limit their input. Just do it politely.
 - 6.b. You might need to coax quiet people who are reticent to speak. Be patient with people who are naturally inarticulate, nervous, shy, or who tend to repeat themselves. They are there because they have something important to say, and they also have a right to speak. You can stop them when their message is clear or they no longer add new information. You could sum up or ask them questions.
7. Create consensus where possible. Most decisions should be unanimous. In cases where they aren't, the minority voters should accept the decision and maintain group solidarity.
8. Protect people's feelings and prevent embarrassment. Getting people off-side will create distrust and generate unnecessary objections. One of the greatest mistakes is to make an enemy when you could have made a friend.
9. As leader of the meeting, stay as neutral as possible. Your position is compromised if you take sides or set up decisions. Members could feel that you have circumvented their duty to participate in making decisions.
10. Ask questions if a comment need clarification.
11. Terminate unproductive lines of discussion that won't help get decisions made.
 - 11.a. You can close down digressions into redundancies, waffling, personal chatter, obfuscation, and bureaucratic nonsense. You can close down discussion that is unrelated to the decision to be made. You can quickly close down any proposal that would be illegal or unethical. You can also cut off discussions that are overly personal and not necessary to the business of the organization.
12. Delegate difficult issues.
 - 12.a. As a general rule, don't waste meeting time on issues that cannot be quickly decided upon. You cannot do a responsible job of fully exploring complex issues in such a short time, and you should not get sidetracked with details of implementation. These issues are either too complex or attract emotive comment. Discussion can also bog down when the group gets onto implementation.
 - 12.b. Delegate the task to a member (or a small group) to research the topic and bring back a recommendation or proposal for the next meeting. You should then be able to make a decision quickly. In the meantime, you may need an interim decision.
 - 12.c. On some occasions, you need to fully discuss the issue in the meeting (e.g. critical issues for which there is a deadline), but to make it a habit would be a dysfunctional, crisis-to-crisis style. If the matter is urgent (e.g. you face a deadline), then you can authorize someone to approve the proposal within the time limit.
13. If discussion has slowed right down and nothing new is coming up, you can usually wrap it up and ask for a decision on the motion.

Watch your time limit. If necessary, move for an extension.

Reflection

1. What particular aspect of leading meetings do you find easy?
2. What particular aspect do you find most difficult?
3. How could you evaluate your ability to lead meeting?
4. How does leadership style affect the way people lead meetings?

Reflection

1. Lead a routine staff meeting. Have an agenda and keep minutes.
2. Afterwards, evaluate how it went. Include your personal self-assessment and consider comments and feedback from others.

6

About your school

Knowing about your school context and the community that your school serves is essential. You will probably find most of these questions very easy to answer. Your assessor, however, might know very little about your school and will need a sense of context to assess your project.

Assignment 1: Describe your school (1 page)

Describe your school in terms of the following:

1. The levels it teaches (kindergarten, elementary school, high school)
2. How many students it has
3. Its history (why, when, and how it was established, its subsequent development, its current health; its future prospects)
4. Its distinctives and rationale
5. Its facilities
6. Any particular characteristics of its concept of education

You need to know enough about the kind of people in the community that makes up your school's constituency. In all schools (or nearly all), students tend to share particular characteristics or a social grouping.

Assignment 2: Describe the demography of your school (2-3 pages)

Describe your school in terms of the following:

1. Who are the members of your school's community? Define them as follows
 - a. ethnicity
 - b. socioeconomic status
 - c. geographic location (including the kind of community: urban, suburban, rural, mountains, desert, farmland, coastal fishing villages, etc.)
 - d. what the people have in common: their interests, a problem, a need, or a disability.
2. What educational or teaching qualifications do staff have?
3. Include a map of the community.

The environmental scan

An environmental scan is a systematic way of gathering information about an organization and its environment, and interpreting it to identify anything that could affect its performance. Relevant information might be opportunities or threats.

The purpose of an environmental scan is to help management decide on what it should do and its future direction of the organization. The PESTLE scan below is good practice. Some scans also include studies of competitors.

One kind of scan is a PESTLE scan⁹, which gives a bird's eye view of the organization. The scan consists of various factors that affect the organization and that can affect every industry, either directly or indirectly.

Each letter in the acronym PESTLE signifies a set of factors, as follows:

1. *Political factors*: What government decisions (or possible decisions) could affect us? (Change of laws or taxes. What if another party gets elected to government? Are new political parties arising?)
2. *Economic factors*: What economic factors could affect your school? (Inflation, change in employment rates, interest rates, change in personal incomes, boom-bust cycles, credit, currency exchange rates.) Is unemployment high or low? How much disposable income do people have? What priorities do people have for spending money? Are people heavily in debt? Are people generally optimistic about their economic futures?
3. *Social factors*: Change in demographics and social attitudes. Some community attitudes directly affect your school. For example, academic performance tends to be higher in higher socioeconomic groups. Any fees you charge will need to be appropriate for the community, and the culture of the dominant ethnic group will affect the school's relations with its community.
4. *Technological factors*: New technology that might affect the organization.
5. *Legal factors*: specific government regulations and court decisions

Social and cultural context

Social and cultural aspects might be particularly important. Some of these questions will help you identify the effects on and implications for education at the present time and in the foreseeable future. Some of them might not be relevant to your school.

1. What social, political, cultural, historical factors help define the people in this community?
2. How is the community structured? Who makes decisions? Who do they look to for leadership to solve problems?
3. In the community, how is "power" defined?
 - a. Describe the predominant formal power structures.
 - b. Describe the predominant informal power structures.
 - c. Who are the key decision-makers?
4. What networks and social structures are there?
5. What are the major social groupings, according to the people in the community?
6. How do the different groups view each other?
7. How are families structured (nuclear, extended, clan, etc.)?
8. Does this community have any defining practices and values?
9. How diverse is the culture of the community?
10. How do people communicate with each other?
11. What are the major venues where people interact with each other? (E.g. mosque, church, school, market, etc.) How do they work and what do they achieve?
12. What do they consider deviant behavior?
13. How do they define themselves as a community? How do they construct identity?
14. How do the values and structures of the community impact on individuals and groups?
15. What are the current and emerging trends? In particular, what is the effect of popular culture? (e.g. movies, popular TV shows, music, magazines, fads, newspapers)
16. What worldview do they bring to the school? (e.g. animism, secularism, etc.)
17. Describe social circumstances and trends, and examine the implications for your project. These may include demographic shifts (such as aging population), movement from regions to the city, changes in family structures (e.g. from dual to single parent families, from extended to nuclear families, blended families).

Assignment 3: Environmental scan (5-7 pages)

Do an environmental scan of your school's external environment, including social, political, economic and technological developments. Include any significant factors that affect the community, the school system, or your particular school. For each factor, describe its effects on your school and the people in it. (E.g. they could affect school's purpose and strategic objectives, its organizational structure, its budget, kinds of students, or its staffing policies.)

Describe all specific PESTLE factors that affect your school. Some of them might already be affecting you, while others might be a major risk in the foreseeable future.

In some cases, the information will be obvious, especially for the introduction. In other cases, you will need to find appropriate sources of information that is relevant to your school. Some information is freely available in school records, government statistics, or news periodicals. In other cases, you might need to conduct interviews. Collate your information, analyze it, and draw conclusions about major effects.

Write up your environmental scan. It should have a clear purpose, an executive summary, and an easy-to-follow outline.

Assignment 4: SWOT analysis (maximum 2 pages)

SWOT means Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Do a SWOT analysis of your school:

1. What are the strengths of your school?
2. What are the weaknesses of your school? What are the greatest challenges facing your school? What do you need but don't have? What kinds of things are usually most difficult?
3. What opportunities face your school? What kinds of new things could you do?
4. What are the threats to this school? What could put your school in difficulty (E.g. changes in the environment.)

Legislation

Leadership roles in education normally require familiarity with educational law that affects your role. However, laws vary greatly from place to place.

Assignment 5: Legislation (maximum 5 pages)

Write an orientation guidebook to legislation for new teachers:

1. Include only information that directly affects teachers at your school.
2. Include enough information so that teachers will not break the law if they follow your guidebook.
3. Put contents in summary form and in simple, plain language.
4. Present it neatly and in a layout and order of contents that would be interesting and easy to understand for a new teacher.

Documents (Half page)

Your school keeps all kinds of documents (e.g. staff meeting minutes, lesson plans, curriculum documents, student records, etc.)

1. What kinds of documents are relevant to research?
2. For each kind:
 - 2.a. Where is it kept?
 - 2.b. Who generated it in the first place? (staff, administrators, students)

7

Teaching and assessment

It's now time to evaluate teaching and assessment at your school. The approach used in the observations forms is called *direct explicit instruction* or just *direct instruction*. In short, this means that each lesson should have a specific objective, the lesson should be focussed on enabling all students to achieve it, and, at the end of the lesson, checking whether each student has achieved it. Direct explicit instruction tends to get students to learn very efficiently, but does not particularly encourage student creativity, unless you deliberately plan it.. It specifically discourages teachers from teaching without good planing.

Task 1: Observe teaching

Choose a sample of at least five teachers, but not the best teachers in your school. Choose one of the observation forms in the appendices. Use the observation form to observe them teaching in ordinary lessons. Do not observe lessons where they have had extraordinary time to prepare or to use resources that they don't usually have.

Write a report on the strengths and weaknesses of teaching of the teachers you observed. It is possible that all the teachers you observed were very good. Most, however, have both strengths and weaknesses, so be clear about both.

Very few people enjoy being evaluated, especially those who are aware of their weaknesses. Make sure that teachers do not feel criticized or embarrassed.

Task 2: Check skills

Write another report on teaching at your school based on the following questions.

1. Do all teachers have a semester schedule for each subject?
2. Does they keep a book of teaching plans? Does it cover all their subjects?
3. What percentage of class time is used in active teaching-learning?
4. What percentage of class time is wasted? For example, time can be lost in managing class and individuals, digressions, busywork, poor instructions (students waste time when they don't know what to do), lessons that don't work and need to be re-taught, lessons not appropriate to age group.
5. How much time is used for 'TTT' (teacher talk time)? Especially in language classes, better teachers have less TTT and give more time for students to actively use the target language.
6. Are teachers teaching for understanding, or only for rote or recall memory?
7. Are students motivated? Is motivation intrinsic or extrinsic? Do teachers sustain student motivation?
8. Do teachers have effective systems of control and behavior management?
9. Are lessons age-appropriate?
10. Is teaching ethical? (For example, it is unethical to deliberately humiliate students in front of their peers.)
11. Do teachers have high or low expectations for classroom teaching and expectations of student performance? Do they need to raise their expectations?

Base your findings on actual observations and informal interviews. Some teachers will tell they are very good even when they are struggling. Be clear about any weaknesses, but make sure that teachers do not feel criticized or embarrassed.

Task 3: Teaching-learning process

Evaluate your school's systems for the *whole* teaching-learning process. Keep a full set of field notes on what you did. Write up your evaluation as a formal document of 4-5 pages.

Among other things, the teaching-learning process might include:

1. Curriculum interpretation and application
2. Supporting new teachers
3. Allocation of teachers to classes and topics of instruction,
4. Planning lessons,
5. Assessment records,
6. Moderation records,
7. Feedback from principals, other staff, parents, and students. (If students are young, feedback is mostly gained by observation.)

Task 4: Review your school's assessment system

Check your assessment system. You need to know how good your school's assessment methods and assessment tools are.

Check whether you have enough resources and assessment tools. They should meet your school's needs and any wider requirements, especially mandatory curriculum. If you don't have enough, you should ensure that your school can get them, write them or can modify existing documents. If it is a serious school-wide issue, it could be a good project for you or a colleague.

Moderate (or validate) your school's assessment methods and tools. Check that they are consistent with the school's teaching-learning approach, as well as wider operational needs, such as budget, mandatory curricula, etc.

If you are an experienced teacher, these next tasks will simply test your existing knowledge. If anything is new to you, research it on the Internet or discuss it with your team.

Task 5: Theory of learning

1. Explain briefly the following theories of learning:
 - a. Social constructivism
 - b. Cognitivism
 - c. Experiential learning
 - d. Behaviorism
2. Of those theories, which are relevant to your program?
3. How do you maintain student motivation?
4. Explain these four learning styles:
 - a. Activists
 - b. Reflectors
 - c. Theorists
 - d. Pragmatists
5. Explain how different teaching approaches can suit different learning styles. When might student learning styles be irrelevant?
6. What are the differences between child learning and adult learning?

Task 6: Instructional design principles

Instructional design principles are the principles of designing lessons. Lessons should always have goals, which normally relate to the curriculum statement.

1. Explain the sequence of stages in two of your lesson plans.
2. How do instructional design principles improve teaching-learning practices?
3. Explain each of these teaching-learning strategies:
 - a. Direct explicit instruction
 - b. Project-based learning
 - c. Active learning spaces
 - d. Brainstorming
 - e. Case studies
 - f. Flipped classroom
 - g. Questioning and discussion
 - h. Simulation
4. For each of the above:
 - a. In what circumstances would each one be most suitable?
 - b. Explain a suitable mode of assessment
5. Describe contemporary policy and approaches to vocational learning and assessment.

Task 7: Teaching-learning process

1. What is the role of information and communication technology in learning and teaching?
2. What are the limitations of information and communication technology in learning and teaching?
3. What are the similarities and differences between mentoring and coaching?
4. What are your school's requirements for teaching and assessment strategies?
5. Where can you get resources and materials for teaching and learning?

8

Innovation

You will be better able to improve your school if you create an environment that encourages innovation. That is, you need to take the lead in generating and sustaining innovative thinking and practice.

Innovation is the process of generating new ideas or solutions. A good innovation needs to be useful or a way of improving something.

It can include totally new ideas or inventions. Electronic computers didn't exist once. Someone had to figure out how to use electrical and electronic components to make them.

Innovation can also include finding new uses for old ideas. Everybody knew that electricity could be used for heating. But somebody had to create an electric blanket.

In many cases, innovation is adapting existing ideas to new contexts. For example, it can take extensive testing and adaptation to get an agricultural method to work in a different climate or where there are different pests and nutrient patterns. An innovation in the city might need thorough development for use in rural areas.

Innovation works just as well in a school because it is still a way of addressing needs. For example:

Example problems	Focus of innovation
Difficult finances	Reduce costs or increase income
Short-staffed	Use personnel more efficiently
Complex curricular requirements	Simplify instructional plan
Complex administrative systems	Simplify and streamline procedures

Encouraging innovative ideas⁶

To put together teams that can be effective, they should be heterogeneous rather than homogenous; people do better when they are with others who think quite differently from them. Help teams to become mutually supportive, where people can feel excited and work together. Get them to collaborate and to share information. Discourage cliques, political plays, and power jostling. As they become a team, they will develop a culture where they lose their inhibitions and increasingly free to create and share ideas.

Motivation is obviously essential to gain and sustain their enthusiasm, and here are the basics. First, motivate people through their personal interest and curiosity. Do not use money or extrinsic rewards to motivate them. Second, show them why their work is important. Third, focus their attention by defining the task as a problem to be solved. (You might find, however, that they reframe the question to become something totally different and much better.) Fourth, it is essential that they feel that you are supportive of their efforts. Don't discourage them if some ideas look crazy at first; some of them might turn out to be the best ones.

Match people with tasks that suit their area of expertise. You will need to know your people well enough to do so.

6Amabile, Teresa. The Progress Principle: Using Small Wins to Ignite Joy, Engagement, and Creativity at Work.

Barker, Eric. 6 Ways To Inspire Creative Thinking At Work <http://www.businessinsider.com> Barker, Eric. What are the four principles that will lead you to breakthrough creativity? <http://www.bakadesuyo.com>. Sep. 18, 2013.

Johnson, Steven. The Innovator's Cookbook: Essentials for Inventing What Is Next.

Get your team to try to think outside the box and learn some skills in creative thinking. As your team progresses, let them gather a range of different ideas and perspectives, and let them crash into each other.

Learn to ask the best kinds of questions. Socrates was the master, so look up “Socratic questioning.”

Your team will need to work hard and commit the time, but don’t let it be a grind. They need to keep themselves fresh; some parts of the day usually work better for creativity than others.

Don’t give people too much money but give them enough for what they need. They can’t “buy” ideas but have to think of how to achieve the goal with resources at hand.

Stretch people, not so little that they get bored, but not so much they feel overwhelmed. Set deadlines carefully. Tight deadlines help some people but not everybody; they can overwhelm them, make them feel over-controlled, or cause burnout.

Give people freedom. You can define the goals but give them some autonomy in how to achieve them. Good goals can help people to know what kind of things they might need to achieve.

Lead innovative practices

Your school especially needs your leadership during major changes. Part of your role is to influence and shape an organizational culture where people are more positive and willing to embrace the opportunity for change.

Communicate to your staff a clear, positive concept of your school’s direction and values so that they have a clear sense of where it is heading.

Your leadership style and your approach to people needs to get the best responses to the impacts of change, on people personally as individuals, on the culture of the organization, and on organizational processes. In other words, the first step is to consider your own attitude and. This might require a change in your personal leadership style to be an example of positive innovative thinking and practice.

Probably the best ways to bring about change in staff attitudes to innovation and is to encourage innovation and then welcome ideas when people start to bring them to you.

In practice, you have various ways to ask staff for their ideas. You might start by bringing your ideas and encouraging comment. Alternatively, people might only be willing to give their ideas in one-to-one meetings with you. It is then your role to introduce them in a staff meeting and lead the discussion. A few hints:

- Close down critical discussion. People will withdraw if they perceive comments to be personal criticism.
- Beware of serial complainers who dress up their complaints as ideas. Turn their negative ideas into positive ideas.
- Take staff to visit innovative schools and interview their teachers.
- Put fresh ideas into a staff reading folder.
- Discuss innovative ideas and practices in staff meetings. Let people talk around each idea for long enough to accept a new way of looking at a topic. In the best case scenario, they will literally talk themselves into it.
- Some ideas will represent only a teacher’s viewpoint and might not reflect an overall picture of the whole school.

Most commonly, staff have many ideas and are only waiting to be asked and encouraged. They flood you with all sorts of suggestions, some mundane and some quite brilliant. Your challenge now is to select some that are a good place to start. If your team is quite adventurous, they might want a reasonable change in something they see as a need. If an idea could resolve a major organizational need, it might be worth going through the pain to make the changes sooner rather

than later. On the other hand, it is often easier to generate an idea than to make it work in practice, and they might still find implementation to be challenging.

If people are not accustomed to developing new ideas, their first ideas might be rather unimaginative or impractical. Write them down, consider them, and use them as stepping-stones to better ideas. Foster their ideas so that they can do better. It might also be easy to implement small improvements, and it will get people accustomed to suggesting ideas and implementing change. If your team is very conservative, a few small changes might be as much as they can handle.

If they don't generate innovative ideas, however, there's probably a reason. The reasons vary according to the organization and the personality of the leadership. Consider these:

- Some people are afraid of suggesting new ideas because they believe their ideas will be rejected. In fact, these fears might be justified; some leaders are afraid of new ideas and feel threatened by people who suggest them.
- Some people are accustomed to doing as they are told or to following rigid procedures.
- Some teachers are tired of teaching and put their creative efforts elsewhere.
- Some teachers don't read to acquire new ideas.
- Some teachers believe it is the principal's role to come up with new ideas.
- Some teachers feel that the accreditation, curriculum, and examination authorities do not allow creativity.

Shaping a culture

After the first wave of fresh thinking, your role is to make improvement and innovation a sustainable part of the culture of the school. This means that you need to follow it up after the first wave of ideas, so that people become accustomed to improvement and innovation.

You will need a strategy. The simplest way is to make it a part of the regular staff meeting. It should not be too difficult if teachers are focussed on improving the school. As principal, your role is to keep it on track over the longer term, because most people naturally move into a maintenance phase where they focus on maintaining existing systems. You don't need to generate new ideas every week; most of your discussion will probably be tracking implementation and solving any problems.

Beware of several problems. In a school, the main resources you need for innovation are creative people. Time is often a factor, and you might need to invest some time at the beginning to implement a timesaving system. As for other resources, you will need hardware, software and technical support if you have a computerized administration system or if your instruction depends on a technology component. It might be more difficult to computerize an existing administration system. If the system is right for your needs and free of glitches, your main consideration is whether it is intuitive. That is, it needs minimal training and adjustment for people to use it.

As you go, you will need to be able to generate ideas, solve complex problems, and handle anything that doesn't go to plan. You will need to help people to communicate better and learn what they need to know.

Innovation in six stages

The innovation process tends to follow these simple stages. They are no substitute for inspired creativity, but the stages are a helpful guide.

Stage 1. Find a need

Start by finding a need for innovation. What could be done better?

I once met a man who had noticed that wringing mops by hand was slow, messy work. So he invented the first mop bucket. He used a pedal connected to rollers, so the operator could squeeze the mop without bending over or getting wet hands. He patented his invention and put it into worldwide production. It sounds obvious now, but back then, everybody was used to the messy work.

Of your own initiative, you might recognize the need or see an opportunity for innovation.

How could you link two unrelated things together to create something better? A course in Teaching Language to speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is usually a stand-alone. But it mostly overlaps with the general teaching qualification. So it is an obvious innovation to offer the two courses in an integrated package. It makes both courses less expensive for both the college and the student, and it equips the student much better for teaching in the sector.

One good way to identify opportunities for innovation is to challenge assumptions. Let's look at our examples: Once everybody assumed that wringing a mop meant bending over and getting wet hands. Students can do a TESOL stand-alone course, and they assumed that they had to take the teaching qualification separately.

Another way is to find the frontier, so you can look at where innovation is happening rather than look at things that have already been done. The current trend is still to address unique training and administrative needs with computer programs that save time and money.

Project possible future contexts and environments for the innovation. Look at the end user requirements. How will it be used? By whom? What do they want? What ideas are you competing against? You might think your idea is excellent, but your users might not be easily convinced. What kinds of outcomes do you expect from innovation?

Users might think about what they need or possible uses. Is it a better way of doing something? Is it simple? Is it efficient—does it save time or money? Is it convenient? Does it look good?

Does your school have knowledge of this kind of thing, somebody whom you can ask? The folklore is that the inventors of the Walkman, the first miniature tape player for personal use, found that good headphones were too large. But someone else at Sony had worked on miniature lightweight headphones. Their innovation was only useful when their supervisor linked them to good information somewhere else in the organization.

Stage 2. Generate a range of ideas

Get some ideas. This works best as a team that meets together so that you get synergies from each other's ideas. Let people become enthusiastic; things will start to become possible when they think that they are. Enthusiasm and synergy will encourage ideas that never would have happened otherwise.

Creative geniuses might work well alone, but they can always benefit from a different slant on an idea. Be sure to generate a climate where people will feel that their ideas are welcomed and accepted. Don't let people feel put people down for stupid ideas.

Brainstorming is still a good idea, and is more effective over a longer period of time when people can process ideas better.

Some people prefer to visualize an ideal scenario, then see if they can turn it into reality. You can make associations, making links between things that were never before linked. Try a range of ideas; you could easily get stuck if you only use one.

Whichever way you do it, so you'll probably get better ideas if you compound them; that is, let one idea lead to create others. It's like multiplication. It's usually helpful to seek out information that will stimulate you innovate. Besides an Internet search, check the library, ask your colleagues (including those from different work areas), talk with your friends, or try workshops and networks.

At this stage, you really need to put your energy into developing lots of good ideas rather than evaluating them. It's usually a mistake to address constraints too early because they dampen ideas.

Write down every idea that comes up. Of course, you will develop some of them quite soon. Some might be useful as individual projects. Some won't be useful, but some are just premature. If a few years time, you might revisit the list and find good ideas for which the time is ripe.

Stage 3: Explore your ideas

Okay, so now you have a bunch of ideas. Go back to the information you used to stimulate your ideas and explore the range of approaches that you have generated. Let it fill out to become something more practical and better thought out.

Identify simple ideas. Many of the best ideas are simple. Imagine inventing the widget. Good idea. Looks like it'd work well. Everybody would want one. But you'd need to simplify the idea so widgets cost much less to produce.

Identify the main idea and try to express it clearly and simply in ten words or less. (Trust me; that's probably much more difficult than it sounds, because it is really a form of analysis.)

A well-known billionaire uses his dyslexia to his advantage. As he has difficulty reading, he makes his executives present their ideas to him clearly in oral language. The executives are then forced to identify simple central principles and explain them clearly. As a result, they must produce better and more creative ideas, because they can't hide hackneyed ideas behind huge amounts of written detail.

Collaborate in developing your ideas. You now really need help; there's a limit to what you can do by yourself. Pull together a network of your peers to develop the idea further. These may be other participants in forums and workshops, or members of a network.

Seek their feedback. Watch your attitude; accepting feedback for your idea might not be easy if it seems to be critical.

In a school, it's usually better to get feedback informally from other teachers, and write it down as you get it so you don't forget it.

In a larger project, you'd use a more structured way of getting feedback from more people, like a survey, planned interviews, focus groups, or an appointed panel that results in a formal review. Your school will probably ask you to be quite structured if it allocates funds for development of your idea. That way, your Board can monitor your progress and you have accountability.

Evaluate the feedback. Some will be very helpful and some will not. Then modify your idea according to the feedback that you received.

Reflect. Your own personal thoughts are part of idea development. Structured reflection means that you develop lists of:

- questions for which you still need answers
- criteria that your idea should meet
- implications of your idea
- barriers to implementation and strategies to overcome them
- advantages and disadvantages, and
- different perspectives that others will bring to your idea.

Capture your reflections; this will usually mean carrying a notebook around and writing thoughts as they come to you. Then, one day, you collate the notes, put your thoughts in a pile and see if they produce more than you'd thought.

You will need to allow time for your idea to develop in your own mind and for you to analyze it. Then use reflections to improve your idea.

Stage 4: Evaluate your ideas and select the best ones

You have probably started throwing out less promising ideas as you understand them better. But now it's time to get realistic and evaluate. Which ones are most usable?

Before you go further, you may find it helpful to ask what is the central idea and can you simplify it?

Evaluate your idea. You are free to choose any method that is appropriate for the kind of idea and your school's requirements. For example, you may choose:

- Checklists based on existing requirements
- Checklists based on requirements that you developed

- Discussing the process with colleagues or supervisors
- Writing a report of the outcomes.

Your evaluation results might require you to modify the idea before you can progress to the next stage. At this point, you should not be preoccupied with implementation because the point is the go/no go decision, although it will help your case if people can see how it could be implemented. Consider the following:

- Your school is part of an education system. What restraints does that put on the idea? Could your innovation become part of the continuous improvement process?
- Who has authorization to approve it? Within what bounds?
- What resources would be required? E.g. time, funds, etc.
- Does it meet the client or end user needs?
- Is it efficient and effective?
- What transition plans would need to be put in place? Consider targets, timeframes, measures, and communication plans. Will you need contingency plans if things don't go as planned?
- Does it represent best practice?
- Are there synergies? Can you join this idea to another idea that you're working on?
- What could go wrong? What are the risk factors?
- Do you need to research functionality, workplace health and safety issues, or ethical considerations?
- What about equipment and technology (and training on how to use them)?
- What about ownership of intellectual property?
- Do you need to get people to sign confidentiality statements?
- What legislation, codes of practice and national standards apply to your innovation?
- What technical, job and industry knowledge is needed?
- How will you and your innovation respond to organizational culture? What strategies need to be in place to be effective?
- What social, environmental and work culture impacts do you anticipate?

Consider your people:

- How will you communicate the costs and benefits of the innovation to people? How will you address the impact of change on them?
- Do you have the right personnel?
- Will it fit into your organizational culture?
- Will you need to provide training, mentoring or coaching to introduce the innovation?

Stage 5. Take reasonable risks

What could go wrong? Most innovations have risks, such as running over budget, unexpected extra work, system glitches, disturbances to workflow, unintended and unforeseeable consequences, staff or parent dissatisfaction, confusion or loss of confidence, and time delays. Some really good ideas simply don't work, and it might take a while to find it out.

First, be willing to take reasonable risks; it's a sign of good leadership. It is easy to rationalize all kinds of fears, but you need to realize when fear is a controlling factor.

Second, assess any planned innovation before you start. A few innovations are quite risk-free. For each innovation, you can ask several simple questions:

- What could go wrong?
- For each thing that could go wrong, what is the probability of it actually occurring?
- If it occurred, how much harm would it cause?

- If it is fairly probable and could cause harm, what will you do if it eventuates? (If it probably won't happen or won't cause any harm, you don't need to do anything about it.)

Stage 6. Present the idea for approval

Who are the decision-makers who can approve your idea? You can make the decision yourself if the change is purely procedural. Other kinds of change normally need Board approval, such as changes of overall strategy or those requiring extra budget allocations.

If you can't make the decision yourself, select an appropriate communication method for your presentation. You might simply be able to discuss it in an interview. In more formal situations, you might need to make an appointment to meet with a Board member and get invited to a Board meeting to give a presentation and answer questions. They might also want a formal written proposal. Try to include a visual presentation, such as a diagram, model, prototype, photograph or video footage.

Then present your idea. You will probably have a limited time, so you need to be very clear. You will need to actively listen to what they say and answer their questions.

Reflection and discussion

1. What are the trends that shape your school's *current* thinking and practice? How will they probably affect your school in the *future*?
2. Write an analysis and evaluation of innovation performance at your school. (Two pages.) In your answer, make sure you cover the following questions:
 - a. What innovations has your school worked on?
 - b. How innovative has your school been?
 - c. What are the major needs that could be addressed by innovation?
 - d. What were the drivers to innovation?
 - e. What were the barriers to innovation?
 - f. What have been the effects of the overall context?
 - g. Does your school encourage individual and collective thinking and creativity?
 - h. Has your school been successful in innovation? Why did you come to that conclusion?
3. What would improve innovation performance at your school?

Assignment 1

1. What is incremental innovation? Give three examples. How could it be measured?
2. What is disruptive innovation? Give three examples. How could it be measured?
3. What is innovation of business models? Give one example. How could it be measured?
4. Give an example of innovation that is caused by needing to adapt to a different context. How could it be measured?
5. What is digitization? Give three examples. How could it be measured?
6. Below are three current and past views of innovation. Compare and contrast them:
 - 6.a. 19th c. machine age: Create machines to do the work
 - 6.b. 20-21 century: Digital age: Create computers to do the work
7. What is the hype cycle? What are the stages of the hype cycle?
8. Explain how theory and thinking on innovation and creativity can contribute to applied practice.
9. What effect does leadership style have on innovation in organization?
 - 9.a. What specific leadership approaches encourage innovation?
 - 9.b. What specific leadership approaches inhibit innovation?
10. Context
 - 10.a. What effect does your school's context have on innovation?
 - 10.b. What effect does the context of education industry have on innovation?
 - 10.c. What conditions or factors internal to your school that affect innovation? What causes them?
 - 10.d. What conditions or factors external to your school that affect innovation? What causes them?
11. What kinds of things drive innovation in an organization? Name three and give an example of each.
12. *Innovation enablers* are factors that make innovation easier in an organization. Name three kinds and give an example of each.
13. List and describe two systems or processes that can support innovative practices in schools.
14. What are the typical barriers to innovation in an organization? What are the best ways to overcome them?

Task

1. What different techniques did you use to stimulate people to think creatively or innovatively?
2. Research three current trends in thinking and practices relevant to your school's current approach to teaching and assessment. Evaluate each one, giving their strong and weak points. Your evaluation must be based on analysis, so need to be more than just giving a personal opinion.

Become a learning organization

Your project should include goals and staff coaching that act as an *Organizational Learning System*.

Organizational learning is the process of creating, retaining, and transferring knowledge within an organization. The organization improves over time as it learns from experience. For example, a team takes on a major project, and then it reviews the project to see what it can learn. As new people join the team, they learn from senior staff members. Eventually, the organization builds capacity so it can take on bigger or more complex projects.

Knowledge can be created at four different units. First, the *individual* gains expertise. Second, a *group* of people learn together and share what they know. Third, an *organization* can create and organize knowledge relating to their functions and culture. Fourth, at *inter-organizational* level, organizations work together, share knowledge, and learn from each other.¹⁰

An *Organizational Learning Strategy* (OLS) is a deliberate plan to use organizational learning to build *organizational capacity*, which is an organization's ability to perform tasks. For example, an organization with low capacity can only take on small tasks, while an organization with high capacity can perform much more difficult tasks or perform the same tasks better. Organizational capacity comprises the abilities of its people, its physical resources, its financial resources, its information resources and its intellectual property.¹¹

Professional Development

Your change management needs to involve Professional Development (PD), which can include almost any intentional activity that helps to improve an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise, and professionalism. Many PD activities are free, but they all require considerable personal commitment. They can be either formal or informal. Depending on the kind of activity, staff can often do PD on their own without any help from supervisors.

In some organizations, PD has a bad name because it refers to boring lectures of policy updates and announcements. Although it falls into PD, it only keeps people up to date and doesn't really foster improvement. Most people feel they are a waste of time.

Examples of PD include:

- informal training programs,
- specialized reading projects, such as a deliberate program of reading books and periodicals (Pass around a reading file. Everybody has to read it, date and initial the cover sheet, and pass it on. It leaves a paperwork trail and is simple, time-efficient, and cost-effective.)
- research groups and research projects,
- writing projects, such as textbooks and articles,
- PD days, short courses, workshops, training sessions, seminars, and conferences,
- meetings with visiting experts or practitioners,
- field visits,
- network meetings with professionals within and beyond one's own practice area,
- teaching a new school subject or a college course for the first time; research and reparation can be very challenging and time-consuming,
- study toward higher qualifications,
- formal assessment of skills,
- give orientation and induction,

- participate in moderation or validation,
- participate in professional associations or other learning networks,
- participate in on-line forums and MOOCs,
- take skill coaching or mentoring on the job.

Professional Development plans

As a manager, you should take the initiative. You should have an overall PD plan in place to encourage staff to attend training courses and to take up other development opportunities. You should give staff opportunities for focussed PD.

Under normal circumstances, you should make sure all your staff have an individual written PD plan and are accountable to achieve its goals. You must also take the initiative to develop your own PD plan.

Do an individualized performance review for each staff member. Identify gaps in skills and expertise, and work with them to make a personal PD plan with a list of relevant development activities. Get agreement on it and implement it.

Start your planning by identifying your main goals and deciding how long the plan should go. Then consider possible options for activities that suit the highest priority needs. (You would be wise to start by asking other professionals in your professional network for their advice and ideas and about available activities.)

PD also involves attitude: getting them to *want* to learn and improve, and to apply what they learn in the workplace. PD is related to continual improvement, currency of staff skills, and staff performance reviews. But the point is not that you should do it because the rules say so. The point is that you need to ask, “What do our people need to learn to do their jobs better?”

Many kinds of PD are free; in some places so many good activities are free or nearly free that there is not enough time for any others. In your role, you should evaluate any prospective PD activity and ask, “Will the improvements be worth the costs in time and/or money? Will they build our organizational capacity?” Then go with those that give the most benefit for the cost.

Write your plan and keep accountable to someone for reaching your goals. Your PD must be able to sustain your own professional effectiveness. Put what you learn into practice and ask whether it works. Then frequently review your PD plan and make changes if it doesn’t work. Besides, in some organizations, the quality assurance people might want to see it and ask how effective it is.

A PD plan needs enough details for you to evaluate whether or not it is effective. The outline is usually as follows:

1. Your name
2. The dates it commences and concludes
3. A statement of your main goals or career objectives
4. An implementation plan with specific activities that will help you reach your goals and maintain your professional well being
5. Any strategies to improve coherence and manage areas of conflict.

Your staff meetings

When done well, staff meetings are the simplest means of PD and perhaps one of the most effective. Lead discussions on difficult cases that have come up, how they were responded to, the options for improvement, and how to do better. Then follow up your team to make sure that they actually improve.

You already know that good skills in leading staff meetings are essential to your role. You’ll need to lead discussions and navigate people’s emotions and reactions. You’ll set the topics and might provide information, but it’s normal for staff to also learn from each other.

New or student teachers often need to learn when to ask questions and when to listen, and how to view the strengths and limitations of others.

Staff meetings are always used to manage the regular business matters that keep the school going. You can use regular staff meetings as part of your staff PD strategy, using structured discussions to help staff to learn from their experiences, with purposes and benefits broadly as follows:

1. Staff improve their skills and increase their confidence.
2. Staff have personal and emotional support, including the opportunity to debrief stress.
3. Check that teaching and other school activities are effective, ethical, safe, evidence-based, and appropriate.
4. Ensure compliance with professional, curriculum, and organizational standards.
5. Diagnose and treat the most difficult cases of student problems, essentially becoming a kind of case conference.
6. Reflect on and evaluate practice, both at individual and program level.
7. Set goals and solve problems.

The decision-making strategies in an earlier chapter will help you in collaborative problem-solving. For tips on leading meetings, see the relevant chapter.

Assignment 1: Review your school's learning and development system

A learning and development system is an organization's system to increase its capacity.

1. Review your school's learning and development system. It is effective? Where are its strengths and weaknesses?
2. What are the local and international trends for your level of school (elementary, middle, high)? How does your school compare?
3. What is international best practice for your level of school? How does your school compare?

Continual improvement

Continual improvement is a system of having continual or regular reviews so that you can propose and implement improvements. It assumes that organizations never become perfect and can always improve.

1. Develop an approach: identify purposes, develop policy, and make concrete plans
2. Implement the program.
3. Review the program: Use the program data to review what was done, or to look for the highest risks.
4. List improvements: Plan what you need to do to improve, then go back to step one.

Continual improvements tends to follow a cycle. New programs need lots of improvements. Mature programs need less improvement, but eventually get out of date and need total revision. The cycle then starts again.

E-learning and compliance

A *learning management system* (LMS) is a software application for administering and delivering on-line educational courses, called e-learning.

LMSs provide a range of learning and assessment activities, a student database, and a way of tracking and reporting on student progress. Some of them include a full assessment system for online education.

LMSs generally follow policy-based software principles. "Policy-based software" is the idea that software is written to allow people only to do the right thing. Staff use software that automatically follows the policy, and they can't do anything wrong because the software won't allow it. What the policy says is the same as what people may do. For example:

- The software follows the structure of an organization, with each level having a different level of authority.
- People can see only what they're authorized to see, and can do only what they're authorized to do.
- How the software works is the also the policy and the quality system.
- If a required field on a form is not filled in, the software won't accept the form.
- The software only allows permitted responses. People cannot make unauthorized "adjustments" of information submitted by other people.
- The stages in performing tasks are clearly defined in what is to be done and who is to do it.

Assignment 2

1. What technology and systems requirements are useful to support an Organizational Learning Strategy?
2. Blackboard and Moodle are international LMSs that can be used to monitor compliance. Make a list of their features and compare them.
<https://moodle.org/>
<http://www.blackboard.com/learning-management-system/index.aspx>

10

Coaching teachers

This approach to improving teaching depends heavily on an effective system of coaching, so your plan needs to work in your situation and meet your school's strategic goals. You will need to plan a systematic coaching strategy and monitor its implementation in your school so that it improves individual and organizational capabilities.

Your plan needs to provide a way for all teachers, and especially new teachers, to keep learning under the tutelage of mentors and master teachers.

For present purposes, coaching is "a defined relationship designed to improve performance in a specific area." It is usually for a defined period and may be documented in a personal learning and development plan. It requires good interpersonal relations. Coaches need to monitor performance, maintain confidentiality, provide learning opportunities, and give constructive feedback.

You will need to follow these requirements in a way that works in your school's context and meets its needs, including responding to any changed circumstances and priorities your school might have in the future.

You can limit the burden in two ways. First, don't make a complicated extra system that works differently from how you do everything else. Second, it does *not* include *you* giving coaching. Your task is to match coaches with those in need of coaching, and to supervise the relationship so that the coaching is effective.

You might be able to find suitable coaches from among your staff. Finding master teachers, however, will probably be much more difficult, and you might have to resort to guests or to videos of lessons. Even so, each has normally specialized in a particular field or age group, and has developed a distinctly personal style.

You might want to start by selecting some staff to coach others, and identifying those most in need of help. Alternatively, you could also start with a more collaborative approach where each one self-assesses, then team members assess each other, and then you identify coaches. Either way, you will need to plan for regular meetings, regular teaching observations, and a way to match coaches with others.

Decide what kind of support you need to give your staff. For example, I prefer to meet with coaches individually and get their opinions. Then I meet separately with individuals being coached, again individually, and get their opinions. If both sides report that the process is going well, I monitor less often. If either or both parties report difficulties, I explore further to resolve any problems and then seek feedback more often.

Make a list of expectations for the plan. You can include competencies from relevant college courses or follow non-accredited external professional teaching standards. If teachers are to be formally assessed for academic or professional recognition, the records need to be good enough to be used as assessment evidence.

Teacher observation

Teacher observation is a system for teachers to observe other teachers and learn from them. Motivators for creating such a program come in various kinds. Consider the following:

- The school wants to reach a particular goal e.g. a standardized test score, a university admission rate, a specific end-of-school pass rate.
- A small group of teachers who are doing well but feel the need to improve.
- An unsatisfactory result from a school inspection or evaluation.
- A new group of first year teachers who need help.

- A group of teachers who did unsatisfactorily in a performance review.
- The instigation of a “master teacher” program.

Overcoming fears

At the beginning of a teacher observation program, teachers tend to be apprehensive about being observed by other teachers; they fear being judged or that others are checking up on you. A solution is to start by carefully selecting the teachers who will be observed; make it voluntary, and ask those least likely to feel threatened.

Give the impression of learning, not judging. You can give various assurances: It’s about the data, not about you as a person. It is not about passing judgement and is non-evaluative. Its purpose is to broaden teachers' viewpoints peer-to-peer.

If you make the initial experience purposeful, positive, and productive for observers and the observed, it will be easier to build it into an ongoing strategy. The longer term goal is to build a culture where teachers normally collaborate to help each other improve by reflecting on the practice of others, and getting feedback on their own practices. In such an environment, being observed is a normal part of the teachers’ role. Later on, teachers will feel better when they are accustomed to being observed, and it will be easier to get other teachers to be observed.

The essentials⁷

The first step in any approach is for people to meet and discuss the purpose. For example, a group of observers might want to solve a particular problem of practice. Discuss how and why they do what they do and their need. Each individual might set goals for aspects of teaching in which they feel a need to improve, although some people need a coach to help them identify their needs.

Then make a plan. What method will you use to allay fears? Who will you observe? Which lessons will you observe? How many lessons? Will you incorporate any of the variations below? How will you handle debriefings?

Observation

An individual or a group goes to observe a lesson and collect observational data. Observers are quiet, non-intrusive, and take notes; they do not interrupt the class in any way. Their notes might include answers to questions such as What did I learn? How could I apply what I learned? In other cases, especially where students are adults, observers might be more like participant observers; the teacher may ask observers to lead discussion groups or help in other ways.

Debrief

Observation requires a debriefing to be beneficial. If observers are a group, each person shares their observations and then group members compare them, looking for themes and patterns. Group members might pose questions to prompt further development, or reflect on their own practices. The attitude is essential; people need to share their experiences, not report them.

The next part of the debriefing is to plan improvements. The group might look for different ways of doing something and consider new ideas and strategies. Then make recommendations for future work.

Variations

No feedback. In a school where teachers are afraid of being observed, just observe and don’t give feedback. Observers learn through their own reflection.

Individuals. An individual observer does the planning and debriefing in on-to-one meetings with a coach.

⁷ Adapted from <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/lead-develop/develop-others/classroom-observation/classroom-observation-strategies>.

Groups of observers. A small group of observers observes a teacher.

A series of observations. Plan a series of observations addressing the same purpose. Immediately after each observation, the group does a short debrief on what they've seen. Continue observations until the schedule of observations is complete. The group does a final debrief and gives feedback to specific participants.

A specific lesson. Teachers first decide the purpose of the lesson and what's going to be in it. They then work together to write a lesson.

A teacher teaches the lesson, and the others observe. The group discusses their observations based on the data they have recorded. In the second observation; another teacher teaches the lesson. Finally they discuss the lessons. What changes were made from first to second lesson? What did teacher learn and how did they improve? Then generate ideas for your own teaching.

Video. A video camera is unobtrusive and picks up things that are usually difficult to observe. Student reactions are also visible if the camera has a wide-angle lens. First, a group meets and set goals with a coordinator, usually someone in a leadership position. They record the class, and the group watches the video recordings, making any observations and discussing any strengths or weaknesses with the coordinator. Each group member plans improved teaching practices based on what he/she has learnt through observation and discussion.

The whole school. The group gives a generalized report to the whole school in reference to school improvement.

Ongoing implementation. Good intentions are easily lost. Does the school have way to systematically coach and monitor teachers to implement their intended improvements?

About observation forms

The appendices contain several kinds of observation forms. Even though they can be quite helpful for evaluation, but might need to be used very carefully in coaching:

1. You might want to target particular skills that your teachers need to develop. The forms are very generic.
2. The forms imply that you are evaluating teachers, not coaching them.
3. The forms imply that each skill item is a yes/no decision, although in practice the response might be better expressed as a decision between not demonstrated, weak or inconsistent, still developing, excellent.

Coaching and implementation

It should be easy to implement your coaching strategy if you've consulted with people along the way and already have people on side. As planned, start by promoting your coaching program and recruiting people to be your coaches and enrolling your teachers. Then give a session where you induct and match coaches and teachers.

Monitor the coaching strategy and give people any support they need.

1. Are coaches and teachers
 - a. consistent in meeting?
 - b. effective in achieving goals?
 - c. efficient in using time?
 - d. following your school's policies and procedures?
2. Does the coaching strategy work with the school's schedule?
3. How much support do coaches need from each other? From you?
4. If coaches need access to any PD on coaching, how will you give access to it? (You might have to give it yourself.)

You also need to take a hands-on approach yourself. Observe teachers' styles and assess how well they fit in with your schools' current educational strategies. For example, if they only know "talk'n'chalk," then you will probably need to coax them into better teaching habits.

Look at how your students currently learn, their personal interests, and their characteristics. What do you need to do to improve teaching practices? You should also consider your experience of what works and what doesn't?

Match teachers with the right coaches in terms of personality, temperament, and teaching area.

Coaches should make a formal written agreement with teachers, and it should include goal-setting, timeframes and deadlines. It should say when, where, and how long sessions will go, and what will happen in them.

Each teacher should have a set of individual goals. They can be either immediate felt needs or needs identified through an assessment. Clearly, they need to support the goals for the whole school.

Teachers should expect to prepare for meetings, and you can expect them to keep records of their professional growth and learning, such as observation and reflective notes on cases, a reading journal, writing projects, or a journal of questions and ideas. It is normally helpful to put what you learn into writing.

Use coaching to evaluate practices and techniques and find ways to improve. While coaches take the lead, staff can also initiate opportunities to learn.

Some sessions take a more academic tone. Coaches can use sessions to discuss current literature, professional research, and program evaluations on the topics teachers most need. For it to be useful, coaches need to reflect on how to apply it in real situations. Some topics have specific legal and ethical implication that you should explore.

Most sessions, however, are given to discussing the difficult aspects of existing cases, analyzing oneself, and evaluating responses to students. Then teachers can put what they learn into practice, evaluate how it went, and bring it back to meetings for discussion.

Coaches can give feedback, but keep it positive and helpful. Teachers can find it difficult to respond to comments appropriately if they don't like them, but it is better that they accept them and think about them. Consider these possible reactions:

- They find some positive comments very encouraging.
- They might give them thought then discard them; they were a mistake.
- They might dislike some comments, but find them very helpful after thought.
- Some comments might fire their imaginations into new ways of thinking and new avenues of inquiry.

Assignment 1

Describe your school's quality management system. What compliance requirements does it make of organizational learning?

Questions & tasks

1. At your school, what would be the most effective way to allay teacher's fears of being observed?
2. Does your school have a set of teaching effectiveness goals?
 - a. If so, how effective are they?
 - b. If not, what should they look like?
3. How many of your teachers are inexperienced and need to improve?
4. How do you handle people who don't want to improve?
5. Look at the variation kinds of of teacher observation.
 - a. Which are *most* appropriate for your school? Why?
 - b. Which are *least* appropriate for your school? Why?
6. Should observers use a form with specific questions or not?
7. You have been asked to write an observation form for observers. What would you put in it? Why?

You have been asked to lead a team of observers ...

1. Prepare a plan for leading a *planning* session. Include a list of discussion questions.
2. Prepare a plan for leading a *debriefing* session. Include a list of discussion questions.
3. An untrained person has come onto your teaching staff. What do you do?
4. In the debriefing session, you see that several teachers are overly opinionated with ideas that you think are of dubious value. What should you do?
5. In the debriefing session, some teachers tend to notice only weaknesses in the teachers they have observed, while others tend to notice only strengths and ignore weaknesses. What should you do?

Assignment 2: Your coaching plan (Organizational Learning System)

It's time to lead your team to write an OLS for your topic.

Write a coaching plan that suits your school and your teachers. Your coaching plan needs to be written in prose, but you will find it helpful if you answer these questions first:

1. What results you expect for teaching-learning and assessment? Describe them as Performance Indicators.
2. Will you need outside help?
3. Selection of coaches:
 - a. What are your standards for coaches?
 - b. How will you select them?
 - c. How will you give coaches induction?
 - d. How will you check that coaches and teachers have compatible personalities?
4. Selection of master teachers:
 - a. What are your standards for master teachers?
 - b. How will you select them?
 - c. What induction will they need?
 - d. What induction will you give them?
5. Selection of teachers:
 - a. Which teachers will be involved?
 - b. How will you induct or admit teachers into the coaching program?
6. Coaching activities
 - a. What will coaches actually do? (E.g. face to face, individual or group sessions, watch teaching, review lesson plans.)
 - b. How often should they meet?
 - c. How will they sequence the introduction of new elements?
 - d. Describe their role and responsibilities.
 - e. What support might they need from you?
 - f. Describe a typical week's activities.
7. What will master teachers actually do?
8. Coaching relationships
 - a. How will you monitor the coaching relationships to know if they are effective?
 - b. How will you resolve differences and problems in coaching relationships?
9. What data will you collect on the effectiveness of the program? (Data collection needs to be simple and appropriate to your school's context and needs.)
10. How will you keep improving it in future?
11. Compliance
 - a. Schools normally have a mandatory curriculum statement. How will your coaching strategy address the curriculum?
 - b. What other compliance requirements does your school face? How will your coaching strategy address them?
12. Write a timeline for implementing the strategy.
13. Design or gather a set of suitable tools and resources for coaches and teachers

Assignment 3: Evaluate your processes

1. What approaches to learning and workplace training did you consider? How well do they fit your schools strategic requirements? Explain your answer.
2. How will your OLS make your school more competitive? Do your stakeholders agree?
3. What were your options for quality policies and processes in your OLS? Why did you choose the approach you did?
4. How will your OLS support the strategic and policy requirements of your school?
5. What technology and systems will you need? How will you use them?
6. Are your current staff a good fit with your OLS, learning requirements, and plans?

Assignment 4

1. What are the components of a coaching strategy? Describe each one.
2. Explain the basic steps in how to coach someone. What particular techniques are most helpful?
3. Explain the principles you used on designing your coaching program.
4. How would you design a coaching program for your staff members? Who would you know whether it was working or not?
5. What are the main things that can go wrong in a coaching program?
6. What is different in coaching people of different ages? What would you do differently for an 18 year old, a 40 year old, and a 60 year old?
7. How do resource requirements vary according to the coaching program model used?
8. What methods did you use to match coaches and trainees?
9. What methods did you use to match and manage coaches and trainees?
10. What kinds of differences between coaches and trainees have?
11. Explain how to resolve differences between coaches and trainees.
12. What legislation, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines relate to workplace coaching (e.g. confidentiality and privacy).
13. Describe how to collect coaching program data. What other methods can be used? Why did you choose the method you did?
14. Describe how to store coaching program data.
15. Outline your methods for evaluating the coaching program. Why did you choose the method you did? What other methods could be used?
16. Outline methods for reporting on coaching programs. What other methods can be used? Why did you choose the method you did?

11

Evidence-based practice

When you recommend any teaching practice, you are ethically responsible to be able to give some evidence that shows that it will be effective. This is evidence-based practice (EBP). This principle is clearer in the negative. Imagine how students feel when they realize that they are rats in a failed experiment.

Demonstrating effectiveness, however, is much more difficult than it looks. First, evidence is not just an attractive rationale and a collection of persuasive anecdotes. (Everybody has them, no matter how ineffective they are.) Second, what is “effectiveness”? It would be unrealistic to expect that 100% of students will score 100% on a test, so what percentage is “effective”, and how do you define it?

The purpose of EBP is to make the best possible decision for a particular practice in a particular set of circumstances. EBP is used in various professional fields, including medicine, nursing, psychology, and allied health. It is also being used in teaching and social work, and now more generally in the social services sector.

In its simplest form, EBP comprises three main elements: (1) the students’ values, culture and preferences, (2) research evidence, and (3) professional expertise, including experience, education, and skills.

Evidence-based practice has several variations, but they often incorporate the following elements:

1. Start with the client’s question or symptom, and rephrase it as a well-built question for applied research.
2. Consider the research evidence. What evidence is available? How good is it? What firm conclusions have been reached in the research literature? How well does it suit the case? How do we incorporate it into practice?
3. Consider a range of case-specific factors in making a decision, because individual cases often have other complicating factors, for example:
 - 3.a. “What are the specific characteristics of this case?”
 - 3.b. “What is the history of this student, class, or school?”
 - 3.c. “What do we know about the context, such as social relationships?”
 - 3.d. “What are the students’ personal preferences?”
 - 3.e. “What is the students’ cultural background?”
 - 3.f. “How do we put scientific evidence into practice in this particular case?”
4. Make a decision based on professional expertise and judgment, including experience, education, and skills. It is actually based on an informed opinion rather than a statement of fact.
5. Review. What was the outcome?
6. Cycle: How can we use what we learned in future?

Some practitioners conduct research using evidence to test aspects of treatment approaches. They usually express elements of the philosophy, rationale or methods as hypotheses and then use established methodologies to gather evidence to show whether or not their hypotheses are true.

Compared to policy-based decision-making

By definition, EBP is different from policy-based decision-making, in which organizations make a policy statement based on a review of evidence, effectively making the decision beforehand.

Individuals must simply comply with organizational policy. This pre-empts individual decisions on specific cases using professional judgment.

Compared to practice-based expertise

EBP is quite different from practice-based expertise, in which staff can develop their expertise by analyzing individual cases, and by continually improving their policies and practices.

These, however, are only informed hypotheses: “I’ve had lots of experience with this. The problem is usually ... and the outcome is often” An accumulation of personal experiences and anecdotes does not necessarily comprise “evidence.”

Teachers can easily maintain a philosophy of teaching without objectively demonstrating its effectiveness. They can argue passionately for a set of values, rationales, and methods. They can sound very logical and can use their rationale to justify their successes and explain their failures. They offer anecdotes and persuasive stories as “evidence,” and they can appeal to common sense and their experience.⁸

However, they find objectivity quite difficult. They have little or no unbiased evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of their approaches, and the views of the school or the educational system might only reflect the opinions of strong leaders, or the organizational culture and its in-house “mythology.”

Limitations of EBP

Evidence-based does not mean “absolutely proven.” One study alone is not particularly conclusive; researchers normally want a variety of studies to build up a stronger case for any conclusions.

Evidence-based research has weaknesses. It is seldom conclusive; researchers tend to divide into groups with different theories and views. Some good ideas go out of fashion in academia when they no longer generate research topics. It is also not as objective as it intends to be. Researchers are influenced by their social networks of researchers in the way they think about their topics and generate hypotheses. Researchers can easily prefer research topics that support their own viewpoints and can import their personal assumptions.

On the other hand, it has great strengths. It can produce results that are counterintuitive; some notions appear to be clearly true but are shown to be false or simplistic. Methodologies are themselves open to examination, so the effects of any imported assumptions and errors are open to critique. Any community of researchers needs to keep exploring and evaluating the assumptions that it brings to its research.

One way to generate hypotheses

Interview experienced staff on “Things I have learnt from experience.” Express each item as a declarative statement that relates two or more variables. Define any terms that might be unclear. (If you like, write the contradictory i.e. put “not” after the finite verb of each one.)

Here’s what you will probably get. All the statements will appear to be true, whether or not they are. Most will appeal to common sense or anecdotal evidence for justification.

Some will represent a theoretical viewpoint, a set of values, or a particular model of teaching.

A few might be tautologous. (A tautology is a statement that is true by virtue of only the meanings of its words. Tautologous statements are useless.) A few might be so jumbled that they actually don’t make much sense when analyzed.

Upon testing experimentally, you will find that some true-looking statements will not be true; that is, the truth is counter-intuitive. Some will be true, and some might only be true in certain circumstances.

⁸ Experience-based hypotheses can be worth testing with evidence and a suitable research methodology.

Reflection 1: What would you do?

You are looking for some research on a particular topic. What would you do in each of these situations?

1. You find a very solid study but it was based on a population of students with different characteristics to yours.
2. You find a very well done study but it is quite old. You wonder if subsequent research might have come up with different conclusions.
3. You find several studies, but they are based on particular assumptions that you think are quite suspect.
4. You find several studies but you believe that their methodologies are flawed.
5. You find several very well done studies but they are descriptive. You realize that description does not directly transfer into prescriptive action. How useful are they?

Assignment 1: Evaluate your school's ability to incorporate EBP

1. How well suited to EBP are your current staff?
 - 1.a. Could they get interested in reading and discussing research results?
 - 1.b. How many have the academic skills to read and evaluate research?
2. How accessible is research to school leaders and teachers?
3. How much current research is directly helpful to school leaders and teachers?
4. Design a suitable EBP system for your school so that teachers will build up their knowledge of useful research evidence and keep it up to date. Keep it simple so that it could actually work.

Kinds of research methods

In education, evidence-based research uses two main kinds of methods.

Qualitative research methods are suited to exploring viewpoints, values, and perceptions. Some qualitative methods are not particularly objective, and are better characterized as intersubjective. Ethnographers seek to understand and describe the culture of people in a particular community. By gaining insight into their viewpoint and values, they understand aspects of life that do not make sense to outsiders. Researchers can also use interviews with relatively small numbers of interviewees in a defined population. Questionnaires comprise mostly open-ended questions and allow for spontaneous follow-up questions.

Although the results do not necessarily represent norms in the larger population, they are usually very insightful. They can forecast tendencies in long term outcomes if not intervened, especially if they have statistical information.

Descriptive studies, however, offer little help in treatment; they tend to describe problems rather than to guide in formulating solutions or to give evidence on how effective it will be. That is, they are not prescriptive. In the worst cases, it is like standing at the bottom of the cliff keeping accurate records of people falling onto the rocks below without trying to build a fence at the top of the cliff.

Positivist methods. Researchers compare two or more populations where the only difference is the variable to be tested. This is sometimes referred to as the “scientific method,” although it is only one of many methods used across the sciences. Nevertheless, it is still essential to some fields, and is especially valuable in education.

Projects. A project is a task that demonstrates expertise that significantly contributes to professional practice. It needs to be ambitious enough to match the degree level. Projects always have an beginning and an end, even if the “end” is to bring it to stability so that it can continue on

afterwards. An evaluation is essential. In education, projects might be the establishment of an innovative new program or the planning and teaching of a new subject.

Ethics in research

Research has various ethical requirements, and many associations have their own codes of conduct. These are normally:

1. If you use human subjects, get their written permission beforehand.
2. Do not put anybody at risk of harm. For example, a researcher cannot try a teaching and assessment approach with a high risk of failure or that endanges teachers or students.
3. Do not disadvantage anybody. For example, if a researcher has both control and test groups of students, a researcher cannot deliberately give one group inferior teaching or assessment.
4. Stay with one's expertise. For example, if researcher uses research assistants, he/she must give them enough orientation for them to know what to do.
5. Do not use fictitious or dishonest data.
6. Keep personal data confidential and safe. However, statistical data of groups may be released if individuals cannot be identified. (In many places, confidentiality is usually a legal requirement.) Otherwise, legal requirements probably don't affect you very much.

How to write a research proposal

Use the outline below to write your proposal:

1. Propose a specific research question or hypothesis. In this case, it will probably be "Is innovation X effective in raising the quality of teaching and assessment in aspect Y?"
2. Significance. Answer the "So what?" question. Report how the research addresses the needs of the target group.
3. Include the literature review that you have already done.
4. Include your description of the social, cultural and demographic context of your school. (Already done.)
5. Describe the methodology. (In your case, you will be running a project.) Include:
 - 5.a. Valid population or sample size.
 - 5.b. Methods of data collection and analysis that will ensure valid and reliable findings.
 - 5.c. Factors affecting the reliability and validity of data.
 - 5.d. Any tools you will use, including how you will test them. (E.g. feedback systems, observation checklists, questionnaires)
 - 5.e. If you need to use specific technology for collecting and analyzing data, describe how it will be used.
 - 5.f. If you will be using teachers as research assistants, describe the orientation or training you will give them.
 - 5.g. Address ethical and legal requirements, including any relevant codes of conduct.
6. Give the delimitations of the research design including the reliability and validity of data.
7. Indicate how you will present research findings, including any recommendations for further research. (In this case, it will be a thesis.)
8. Indicate how you obtained approval for the project (i.e. the Board would normally give any approvals.)
9. Clarify any other resources you will need.

The quality of your data and analysis should have such integrity that the research will get optimum relevance. Although you do not need to write an extra section on it, your proposal needs to show that the method is theoretically appropriate to the needs you are addressing and the kind of data you are collecting.

Assignment: Proposal (See instructions above)

1. Propose the specific research question or hypothesis.
2. Significance. Answer the “So what?” question. Report how the research addresses the needs of the target group.
3. Write a literature review.
4. Describe the social, cultural and demographic context of your school.
5. Describe the methodology, including:
 - a. Valid population or sample size.
 - b. Methods of data collection and analysis that will ensure valid and reliable findings.
 - c. Factors affecting the reliability and validity of data.
 - d. Any tools you will use, including how you will test them.
 - e. If you need to use specific technology for collecting and analyzing data, describe how it will be used.
 - f. If you will be using teachers as research assistants, describe the orientation or training you will give them.
6. Address ethical and legal requirements, including any relevant codes of conduct.
7. Give the delimitations of the research design including the reliability and validity of data.
8. Indicate how you will present research findings, including any recommendations for further research.
9. Indicate how you obtained approval for the project (i.e. the Board would normally give any approvals.)
10. Clarify any other resources you will need.

Choosing a thesis topic

Many senior undergraduates and most Masters students need to do a thesis or major project. It means taking on a major challenge, reviewing current best practice, planning what you will do, implementing it, and evaluating it. It is usually the culminating work in a professional degree. The purpose of this kind of thesis is not primarily to build theory, so it is different from a research thesis or dissertation.

Choosing a topic

Choosing a thesis topic is not always as easy as it looks. Your role is to take leadership in creating a strategic plan for improving teaching and assessment at your school and submitting it to your Board for approval.

Choose an area of your school learning program where you can plan and implement improvements. Your topic will vary according to your role. Principals can work on whole-of-school strategies. A head of department or study area might tend to choose a topic for the department or study area. Teachers can choose an aspect of the school's program where they will be able to take leadership.

Projects really need to be based on your special interest.

First, start with your vision for the future of what you want the school to become. Is it a vision that others can support?

Second, form an innovation team of at least four people. They can be other teachers who are students in this program, as long as their projects are different from yours.

Third, in your team, look again at chapter one and the Gillespie model.

Fourth, list as many possible topics as you can. Talk to people and look for good ideas. Be adventurous and creative. Remember what we said about innovation. Ask other people and evaluate what they say. When you have a list of ideas, narrow it down to one.

Fifth, go through the list and ask these questions: Is it a big enough challenge? Is it feasible in the time available? Will it allow you to show strategic leadership? How much will it cost? (Except for some photocopying, you will probably not need any extra funding, as long as your school's general operations are already adequately funded.)

Sixth, write a purpose statement of what you want to do. Try to keep it to ten words or less, so you can focus as clearly as possible.

Seven, write a set of overall goals for a one-year improvement program for your whole school. They need to be challenging enough to get the best results possible in the situation, and they need to be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely.

An ongoing system

Your goal must be to establish a system that will continue on after your project ends, even though your board will probably only approve the period of the thesis project. In other words, don't aim to close the project at the end, but to stabilize it so that it can continue. To be sustainable, it cannot exhaust the school with a burden or extra work or financial expenditure. It also needs to be able to maintain a whole-of-school commitment. Your best approach is to make it part of the culture of how the whole school runs, so that students and staff all think that it is the "normal way we do things here."

Major improvements

The point is to make major improvements in teaching at your school. Projects can be relatively simple, and implemented very well. Beware of these mistakes:

1. Projects asked to teachers do unsustainable huge amounts of extra work, especially preparation. Eventually teachers thought the results weren't worth the effort and went back to their old ways.
2. Teachers added much more sophisticated information and learning activities, but didn't teach the core principles and basic concepts very effectively. However, this backfired because students didn't understand topics well, and simply tried to memorize all the information. This created a heavy workload with unsatisfactory learning outcomes.
3. Teachers thought that students should have more practice using the skills related to learning outcomes. However, most practice activities were busywork. Although students spent more time "studying," their learning outcomes did not improve.
4. Teachers made their projects very complex but did not provide commensurate benefit, so they hit the law of diminishing returns. They put in more and more effort, but did not achieve better results.
5. To get students to succeed in significant examinations, teachers spent less time on teaching and as much time as possible on practice tests. Although this tended to get students through the examinations, it created heavy workloads for students, who had to figure out for themselves what the teacher should have taught them.

Examples of specific goals for a school with basic skill levels

- "Fifty percent of our students will score 70% or above on the National School Test of Basic Competencies, with 90% of students scoring above 50%."
- "All our teachers will pass the licensing assessment of teaching proficiency."
- "Our school will be granted accredited status for the next five years."
- "All teachers will teach from well-written lesson plans with no more than 10% time wastage."
- "Teachers whose degree is not in education will demonstrate all basic teaching skills in their core subjects."
- "Teachers will facilitate suitable programs for gifted and talented students."
- "Teachers will respond appropriately to students with learning disabilities."
- "Teachers will not lose class time due to disruptive student behavior."
- "Teachers will foster creativity, initiative, and curiosity in their teaching styles."
- "Teachers will teach appropriately for different stages of development, especially earlier grades: Physical, emotional and psychological, social, aesthetic, language, attention spans."
- "Our school will increase its student retention rate to 80% per year."
- "The school will implement a duty of care and child protection system."

Examples of elite school goals

- "Seventy percent of our students will score 70% or above on the National School Test of Basic Competencies, with 90% of students scoring above 60%."
- "Sixty per cent of our graduating students will qualify for university admission."
- "Our school will qualify for Category 1 funding as a magnet school."
- "Our school will increase its student retention rate to 95% per year."
- "Ninety percent of middle school graduates will be gain admission to elite high schools with highly competitive admission practices."
- "The school will be ranked in the top ten private schools in this state."

Examples of capacity-building goals

- “Accept 30% more students.”
- “Add an extra grade each year in high school.”
- “Provide assistance for gifted and talented students.”
- “Provide assistance for students with learning difficulties.”
- “Add a university admission program.”
- “Offer advanced chemistry and physics” (Offer curriculum subjects requiring specialist expertise and equipment)
- “Offer an interschool football program.” (Offer extra-curriculum subjects.)

Specific school needs

1. In schools where teachers tend to have weak teaching skills, the first two priorities are to ensure that all teachers are competent in using basic teaching skills and that all core academic subjects are taught well. This usually involves developing checklists and observing teaching.
2. You might need to give orientation to school teaching if a high proportion of teachers have other qualifications, but no school-teaching qualifications. Base your program on teaching competency standards, licensing criteria, or teachers’ college curricula.
3. If you have enough teachers who teach in specialist areas for which they have not been trained, you can give orientation to those fields (e.g. reading, mathematics, science, language teaching).
4. Elite schools have a need to get students through highly competitive examinations to continue education. They might look at overlearning, extended curricular offerings, and specialized test skills.

General teaching skills

1. Theory of learning (e.g. social constructivism, experiential learning, cognitivism, behaviorism)
2. Developing higher level thinking skills
3. Questioning skills
4. Role of praxis
5. Deductive and inductive teaching
6. Fostering creativity, curiosity, creative problem solving, initiative
7. Fostering intrinsic motivation
8. Behavior management and ethics, classroom management
9. Improving proficiency in foreign languages
10. Examination preparation skills

Students with special needs

How to identify special needs students and what to do:

1. Gifted and talented
2. Physical: deafness, eyesight, effects of physical disabilities, high functioning cerebral palsy
3. Learning: dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalcula, ADD, ADHD, mental health, other reading difficulties, Aspergers, autism, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Age appropriateness

Readiness for learning and age appropriate teaching for different stages of development, especially earlier grades:

1. Emotional and psychological
2. Social
3. Physical
4. Spiritual
5. Aesthetics
6. Spoken language

7. Language arts
8. Writing
9. Reading
10. Mathematics
11. Music
12. Cognitive (including attention spans)

Other possibilities

1. Transition to work
2. Program management and preparation for accreditation
 - 2.a. Quality system
 - 2.b. Curriculum integration
 - 2.c. Measurement of student achievement
3. Design and implementation of a school-based research system
 - 3.a. Identify best cost-benefit for effective teaching and assessment
 - 3.b. Identify kinds of research (topics, methods)
 - 3.c. Consider publication strategy
4. Design and implement a performance management system
5. Develop a resource system for teachers
6. Develop an effective system of model teaching
7. Initiate collaborative relations with other schools (teacher exchange, teacher observations, Professional Development)

Some worthy goals are outside the scope of this program, especially school-based community services:

- Provide a literacy program for parents.
- Provide a dental and general health program for students (and perhaps parents).
- Provide an anti-bullying program.
- Train staff in child protection procedures for abused children.
- Provide a life-skills program for neglected children.
- Provide a breakfast and/or lunch program for neglected children.
- Develop staff career paths and aspirations.
- Provide a system of college and career advising for high school students.

Consultation

Will the school Board support an improvement plan? Consult your decision-makers for comment early in the process. However, do not waste their time or get them to plan the project plan for you. If you have done your consultation wisely, there should be no major surprises later on.

What consultation should you do with parents, teachers and the wider community? You also have to consider whether they will support an improvement plan. If possible, do early planning with your whole team to ensure that you have maximum lead time. You may need it to support those most likely to be affected by change, and to produce thoughtful, proactive responses. At this, neither you nor they should decide on a particular topic, so do not promise to commit to a particular topic.

Task 1: Possible topics

Submit a list of five thesis topics that you and your team think would be suitable. Give enough detail for your supervisor to comment on them.

What different techniques did you use to stimulate your team to think creatively or innovatively?

Task 2: Consultation

Consult your decision-makers for their comments on your ideas:

1. Ask them for their views on priorities for change
2. Report their comments
3. Say what you learnt from consultation. (One page)

Task 3: Decide on one particular topic

In consultation with your team, decide on one topic.

Propose your topic, describe your vision, and give your reasons. (1 page)

13

Literature review

You now need to do a study of international current best practice in your topic. It is a way of getting ahead start by learning as much as you can from what has already been written. That way, your project will build on the work of others rather than repeat it. The best way to do this is to write an annotated bibliography. An annotated bibliography is a good way to prepare to write a literature review. Instead of immediately trying to write a literature review, it is a much easier to write an annotated bibliography first.

An annotated bibliography is a set of organized notes from a reading project on a particular topic or issue:

1. A *bibliography* is a list of references to books, articles, and documents.
2. An *annotation* is like a book review. It contains a brief description of the source, says what it's about (and perhaps gives an outline or list of most important points), and your evaluation of its value and relevance. For example, you might say why it's relevant and important, what's unique about it, and give a brief critique. Annotations don't have a strict word limit, so let them be as long as will be useful.
3. An *annotated bibliography* is a list of references, with an annotation immediately after each one.

How to write an annotated bibliography

The *preliminaries* are simple: A title, your name, the date of submission, and your tutor's name.

Write a brief *introduction* explaining your purpose, which will be to describe current best practice on your topic.

Your *content* comprises your comments on sources relating to your topic. For this kind of topic, a website search is adequate, so you will not need a library. However, you should be careful to use only reputable sources. Several kinds of organizations have standards, such as associations of teachers and of schools, and teacher certification boards.

Put sources in the same order as a bibliography, that is, by alphabetical order of the author. Then, for each source:

1. Give the publication details (Title, reference author)
2. Say why it's relevant, important, and/or unique.
3. Clearly report its main points or ideas.
4. Write a critique. (This does not necessarily mean "find fault"; you might find that some sources are excellent.) Identify any of the following that are helpful:
 - 4.a. strengths,
 - 4.b. weaknesses,
 - 4.c. assumptions,
 - 4.d. major implications, and,
 - 4.e. usefulness in your school.

At the end, write a *conclusion* so your readers know what you concluded. You should mention general patterns, trends, or themes that you found. Present your conclusions in an advanced a state as you can justify from the literature. The conclusion should show that you have achieved the purpose that you stated in the introduction.

The presentation is typed according to the guidelines for layout, typing grammar, and language style.

Annotated bibliography

Write an annotated bibliography of best practice related to your project topic. Do not exceed 1,500 words.

From annotated bibliography to literature review

When your supervisor has approved your annotated bibliography, you can edit it into a literature review. The process is quite simple.

1. The introduction and conclusion will probably be the same.
2. In the text, identify each source, and put the full references in a bibliography at the end. Edit your annotations into English that flows well.
3. Give a structure that suits the content, not just the alphabetical order of authors. How you do it is up to you.
4. Edit the language so that it is accurate and easy to read. Delete any verbiage.

Literature review

Edit your annotated bibliography into a literature review with a separate bibliography. You can include any new relevant items that you have found since you first wrote it. The literature review will be included in your proposal, and, ultimately, will be the basis of the literature review in the final thesis. Do not exceed 2000 words.

Change management

Fostering and implementing change is often challenging, even when it is constructive and beneficial. Change usually causes key people considerable pain, even if you can save most people from most of it.

An assignment below asks you to describe current best practice in change management. You will need to follow it effectively to get sustained positive results. Even if you follow it carefully, you will probably find that it looks different when translated into a real situation.

Some factors outside your control will foster improvement. You will probably be more successful if your teaching staff are younger and know they need help or if the school is already changing rapidly. Change might also be easier if the school's future depends on improvement. For example, you might have a license review in the near future, or a lobby group demanding improvements.

The calendar can work either for you or against you; it is easier to introduce any major changes in behavior management at the beginning of the school year.

Have a plan

Organizational change management should begin with a systematic diagnosis of the current situation in order to determine both the need for change and the ability to change. The objectives, content, and process of change should all be specified as part of a change management plan.

When a change is approved

When a change is approved, you can integrate the improvement agenda into existing practices, structures, and decision making. This can include, for example, employment policies such as recruitment, contracts, induction, professional development, performance reviews, and promotions. It can also include the way in which regular staff meetings are run. Some changes involve the whole school schedule.

Maximum benefit: Minimum stress

The challenge is to get maximum benefit while minimizing negative effects. In a few cases, you might be able to make large changes that feel small, simple, and easy-to-accept to those who will implement them, but still make all the changes you need to make. Usually, however, major changes will require major change management.

You should seek to maximize the benefit from the change. In some cases, it might be better that benefits be hidden, but it is usually better to get maximum public relations value. This might be in the form of public awards, or articles in a newspaper, newsletter or website that present a positive, progressive image.

At the same time, you should minimize any detrimental effects, especially those that are unintended and unforeseeable, and personal stress on individuals. You should also seek to minimize stress on the organization, such as difficulty in getting approvals for new systems, changing compliance arrangements, applying for expenditure, organizing training, and managing flow-on effects.

Levels of resistance

One of the major factors that hinders change is people's natural tendency for inertia. Just as in Newton's first law of motion, people are resistant to change in organizations because it can be uncomfortable. The notion of doing things this way, because "This is the way we have always done

them,” can be particularly hard to overcome. Furthermore, in cases where a company has seen declining fortunes, for a manager or executive to view themselves as a key part of the problem can be very humbling. This issue can be exacerbated in countries where saving face plays a large role in interpersonal relations.

You can change behavior fairly easily. Changing attitudes, however, is very difficult and people naturally tend to resist change. Most people don’t find it easy to accept new ideas. At first, they think that new ideas don’t make sense and go against their traditional, familiar logic. They often water down new ideas to make them like old ideas (“same system, new terminology”)⁹ Others think “We’re already good enough and don’t need to improve.”

Here’s a marketing concept: an eighty-twenty principle. In an average group of people:

- 10% adopt new ideas very quickly and want change now, mainly because they enjoy it. They are the first to buy new gadgets and are called *early adopters*.
- 80% will accept change if it is well managed. They will adopt afterwards and think changes through carefully.
- 10% will resist change at any cost.

Having said that, the 10-80-10 proportions vary between organizations. Some whole organizations resist any kind of change and will probably die. Other organizations are innovative risk-takers that want to lead the way with new changes.

If your decision-making team has people who resist change at any cost, you’ll probably have to treat them as individuals with their own limitations and to a large extent work around them.

When a change is introduced, people tend to go through several stages of emotions. Here they are with the kinds of comments that people give:¹²

- *Deny*: “This can’t really be happening. What’s the need? It doesn’t make sense. Why would they do this? It’ll never happen.”
- *Resist*: “There are lots of reasons why it shouldn’t happen. We’re good enough already. We can’t do it in our situation. We need to go slow. Nobody’s happy.”
- *Explore*: “How will we do this? What if we tried that? We need a good explanation. I need to learn more about this.”
- *Integrate*: “I’ve got an idea on how we can do this. We understand the situation much better. It turned out to be a good thing. We’re confident that the new system works. We encouraged other people to try it.”

Giving people time

Except in a crisis, when people accept radical change very quickly, you will need to give people time to process a new idea. Even when they’ve accepted the change, it usually takes considerable time for people to understand it, implement it, and get everybody comfortable and confident with the new way of doing things.

Good decision-makers process the whole proposal and make a decision as quickly as possible, which might still be slower than you’d like. If your staff are good and think more widely than you, they will probably bring up new aspects and implications straight away. Most people, however, want to take more time and to think through a new idea at their own pace. If you push them to make a decision prematurely, they tend to reject the proposed change.

The consequences of giving people extra time are various. You don’t get a decision right away and you might not be able to see the reason for the delay. (People are thinking through things that you don’t see or don’t understand.) It is also probable that the outcome will be at least a little different from what you anticipate. In the worst cases, you might be unable to get their support in the future.

⁹ To be fair, bureaucrats sometimes deliberately keep the same system but change the terminology in order to be seen to be initiating improvements.

Managing the change process

If teachers have difficulties with the changes, it is your role to give them support and leadership. Help them to deal with ambiguity and to be creative and innovative. During the changes, monitor the effects on your school's culture, its outcomes, and feedback from teachers, parents, and students. Take notice of positive achievements and celebrate them.

Be positive. People can change and, at the end of the change process, you will probably be able to anticipate the next wave of changes.

Part of your role is to raise expectations. Teachers might have low expectations due to the socioeconomic group or historical background of the school or of the school system. Parents with low educational achievement tend to have low aspirations for their children. Change management processes should include creative marketing to enable communication between changing audiences, as well as deep social understanding about leadership styles and group dynamics. As a visible track on transformation projects, organizational change management aligns groups' expectations, integrates teams, and manages employee-training.

Change management involves collaboration between all levels of staff, from entry-level to top management. In all models of organizational change, it is essential that the organization wins the buy-in of its employees on the change. Effectively managing organizational change is a four-step process:

1. Recognize the changes in the broader business environment.
2. Develop the necessary adjustments for their company's needs.
3. Train employees on the appropriate changes.
4. Win the support of the employees with the persuasiveness of the appropriate adjustments.

Motivation and incentives

Staff will be more accepting if they see change as helpful rather than the imposition of an extra burden, and that they are assigned to roles where they will do best and best suits their personal attributes and abilities. If it makes teaching easier, they might even see it as reducing their workloads. Take a positive attitude: "We're here to help, not to punish."

What will motivate your staff to invest time and effort into improving? Your plan needs a way of getting teachers' participation. Inform them what changes you will make, how you want to do it, and get their support. This is potentially the most difficult aspect and will take some patience and tact. The benefits are usually obvious and huge. For the school, better teaching will result in higher scores in standardized tests, and more students, especially those who will pay higher fees.

Unfortunately, you will find cases of staff who do not want to improve. It's your job to discuss issues with them and develop a plan for improvement. You will find it relatively easy to fix problems caused by a lack of training or organizational glitches, but attitudinal problems are more complex. Some of them are solved by listening and encouraging, and some are solved by clarifying boundaries. Some, however, can only be solved by letting people go.

Nobody likes being assessed or evaluated, especially if they feel they might fall short. They might feel that it will be a lot of extra work and that they might lose their jobs if they don't meet a higher set of expectations. You will need to eliminate the impression that the process is not invasive or threatening.

You will, however, need to incentivize the improvement process for teachers. Ideally you can tap into intrinsic motivations, that is, their desire to improve. Some possible extrinsic incentives are public recognition (e.g. "teacher of the year" awards) promotion (e.g. model teacher, teaching coach, better jobs in other schools) or to gain higher qualifications.

Building positive attitudes about taking initiative

It takes time for people to change their thinking. The main factors for instilling positive, initiative-taking attitudes are:

- Talk about it and keep it on the front burner. Look at cases of initiative-taking so that people keep thinking about it.

- Put people with those who model initiative.
- Provide a supportive environment that gives them freedom to experiment and make mistakes. Some very good ideas simply don't work for unforeseeable reasons.
- Use mistakes as learning experiences.
- Build their confidence by affirming and rewarding good attempts.

Factors in successful change management

A change strategy is more likely to succeed if it includes the following:

1. Define measurable stakeholder aims and create a business case for their achievement. Then keep it continuously updated.
2. Monitor assumptions, risks, dependencies, costs, return on investment, and cultural issues.
3. Maximize benefits and public relations value
4. Communicate effectively to inform various stakeholders of the reasons for the change (why?), the benefits of successful implementation (what is in it for us, and for you?) as well as the details of the change (when? where? who is involved? how much will it cost? etc.)
5. You can reduce change stress by making large changes that feel small to those who implement them
6. Minimize harm, detrimental effects, and unintended consequences.
7. Devise an effective education, training and/or skills upgrading scheme.
8. Counter resistance from the employees of companies and provide suitable incentives. Align them to the overall strategic direction of the organization.
9. Provide personal counseling (if required) to alleviate any change-related fears.
10. Monitor the implementation and fine-tune it as required. Managing change over time, referred to as *navigation*, requires continuous adaptation in a changing context, which can range from inter-organizational factors to marketplace volatility.
11. In bureaucratic organizations, keep a balance between top-down and bottom-up management, ensuring employee empowerment and flexibility.
12. Don't ignore the structural and technical components of change. Get people with different skills to work together to align and integrate strategic, social, and technical components.
13. Don't impose more change than people can take. People can tire of change, and people tend to have a limit to how much they can absorb.
14. Avoid taking on several large change projects at once unless you have no choice.
15. People need to see real benefit from change. Don't have change for change sake. This is actually quite difficult because people naturally adjust to "how we do things now" and only compare current and past effectiveness if the changes are quite dramatic.

Reflection

What kind of changes probably face your school in the foreseeable future? It might be helpful to ask others such as senior staff, the association of schools, and your own network of teachers.

Models of change management

A number of models have been developed to help identify organizational readiness for change and the steps through which organizations could move.

ADKAR

ADKAR is an acronym that stands for a series of stages: awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement. Whichever is the first stage that does not apply to an individual, team, or organization is the first step to complete in helping them change.

- **Awareness of the need for change**
 - Change managers should communicate why a change is necessary, how it will affect people, its potential benefits, the main challenges it brings for each person, and the benefits of overcoming those challenges.
 - This stage includes diagnosis of resistance to proposed change
- **Desire to participate in the change and make it happen.** It includes interpreting the most effective motivations of individuals.
- **Knowledge about how to make the change and giving people the necessary skills.**
- **Ability to implement new skills and behaviors**
- **Reinforcement to maintain the change after it has been made**

8-Step Process for Leading Change:

John Kotter created this model:

1. Establish a sense of urgency
2. Create the guiding coalition
3. Develop a vision and strategy
4. Communicate the change vision
5. Empower employees for broad-based action
6. Generate short-term wins
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture

Change Management Foundation Model

This model is shaped like a pyramid with project management managing technical aspects, people implementing change at the base, and leadership setting the direction at the top. It consists of four stages:

1. Determine need for change
2. Prepare and plan for change
3. Implement the change
4. Sustain the change

Cycle of Plan-Do-Check-Act

This model, created by W. Edwards Deming, is a method of continuously improving processes and products. It consists of four stages:

1. Plan: establish objectives and processes
2. Do: implement the plan, execute the process, make the product
3. Check: study actual results and compare against the expected results
4. Act: enact new standards

Reflection 1: What would you do?

You have been appointed principal of a Mountain View public school.

The previous principal made all decisions. He micromanaged all staff, giving them detailed oral instructions for each task. Staff simply did their jobs as they were told, and did not do any more.

In fact, everything was done orally, and no systems or procedures were ever written down and procedures were whatever he thought they were at the time. There was no business or strategic plan for the school, and no strategic goals.

He seldom held staff meetings, because he thought that everyone knew their jobs. The few times that he did, he never kept minutes of decisions.

The Principal made all reports to the District Board, and Board members simply believed everything he said.

1. What kinds of problems do you think this school has? What are the causes?
2. Now that you are Principal, what changes do you want to make?
3. What is your strategy to make those changes?

Reflection 2: What would you do?

You have been appointed principal of the Oakvale Elementary School, a private school in a middle class suburb.

The previous principal did not monitor staff performance and let them all get on with their jobs. Several teachers are struggling but don't ask for help. They believe that they must work alone and solve their own problems. The school has a high turnover of staff, and staff are often absent.

Student numbers are in decline although the school spends more to recruit students than it did several years ago

Staff meetings are long discussions that seldom make decisions. When they do, the meeting does not hold anyone accountable for implementation.

Parents have the same kind of attitude; they accept the status quo and do not get involved in the school in any way.

1. What kinds of problems do you think this school has? What are the causes?
2. Now that you are Principal, what changes do you want to make?
3. What is your strategy to make those changes?

Assignment 1: Change management

1. What is similar between the models of change management?
2. What is different between them?
3. What effects can the attitudes of people in the school have on change strategies?
4. What effects can the the external environment have on change strategies?
5. List five potential barriers to change in a school and explain possible strategies to address them.

Assignment 2: Motivation

You can't presume that teachers naturally want to improve. How could you tap into *intrinsic* motivation? What kinds of *extrinsic* motivations might also be helpful?

Assignment 3: Your change management plan

Write a change management plan for your project. Change will be easier if you consider any transitions and check that your proposal is consistent with the current situation of your school. The plan should cover the following topics:

1. Strategic review of the organizational culture in your school
 - a. How open is it to change?
 - b. The likelihood of change for the school
2. Set of stages with goals for each stage
3. Cost-benefit analysis
4. A way of motivating staff
5. A feasible teacher schedule and workload
6. A method of monitoring to keep it on track
7. Show how your plan supports your school's current strategic direction
8. How well does your plan fit your school's policy framework (e.g. policies for staff, curriculum, assessment, and program quality)?
 - a. Any anticipated changes to policies and procedures
 - b. Embed change management into school policies, procedures and practices including recruitment, training, procurement, and resourcing
9. What technological and systems requirements will your strategy require? What is your plan for using them?
10. How well does your plan fit your current team and your students' learning requirements?

Schedule and workload

You need to plan implementation before you start, including the transition from present to future arrangements. Your implementation plan needs to be written in prose, but you will find it helpful if you answer these questions first:

1. How will it work with your schedule and workload?
2. How will you tell people of the results?
3. Can your teaching staff attend a regular meeting above their normal schedule? How long and how often will depend on its need. In some cases, it will need individual meetings between staff, but other schools should plan for teachers to meet each week for at least an hour. If your staff meet for improvement, define how it will relate to the regular staff meeting.
4. Do teachers work together well as a team?
5. How much extra work will teachers be required to do?
6. Can your school schedule be adjusted to allow teaching staff to spend one period each week to observe other teachers?
7. What will you do to guide staff on how to deal with ambiguous roles, functions, school priorities or structures?

Assignment 4: Your communication plan

During implementation, you will need a system for consulting and communicating with people to support and encourage them. You will also need to give input into the design, implementation, review and improvement of your coaching system. This can include planning any changes in your school's administration system and use of technology. You should seek to create in-built flexibility for reviewing your schools overall priorities and perhaps changing them if necessary.

Check you have a procedure for systematic liaison with stakeholders: school leaders, teachers, students, parents, and others. Use it to monitor how well learning strategies and learning resources are achieving your school's learning targets.

As you go, monitor national policy and system changes, and incorporate them into your OLS and your practices. If necessary, modify or design your OLS and learning resources to improve learning policies and procedures.

Propose a way of informing school stakeholders of the results of the project. Parents and staff simply want a brief, positive, easy-to-read summary. Some Board members and senior staff will need access to the full text.

At our school, we put a short, carefully edited summary in the newsletter, gave a full copy of the report to the Board, and made another full copy available to any staff who wanted to read it.

15

Policy review

In the course of your project, you will need to examine the policy and procedures of your school. Your project could result in suggestions to change policy or procedures. Presumably, you are not in a position to make those decisions yourself, but at least you should be able to suggest beneficial changes that will help your school to improve.

About policy

Schools, in fact all organizations, must have a policy basis for a number of reasons:

1. Policies help people to make difficult decisions quickly and easily.
2. Policies give staff organizational protection from individual liability.
3. Policies cover all normal incidents and responsibilities so that they are handled properly and consistently.
4. When policies comply with legal requirements, they make sure that staff comply with the law.
5. Policies assign responsibility.
6. Policies provide for review of practice.
7. Policies save board members and employees from seeking case-by-case approvals from the board.
8. Policies help protect your school if someone wants to sue it:
 - 8.a. Courts may interpret the lack of policy in key areas to be negligence.
 - 8.b. You can use it to show that you follow responsible best practice. If your policies don't follow current best practice, you are still vulnerable because you can be accused of having low standards.
9. Policies help protect your organization in an insurance claim. Insurance won't cover your school for negligence in matters that can be reasonably expected of it. So if your school hasn't bothered to put adequate policies in place, it can jeopardize your insurance cover.

Having said that, policies only have legal value if the school can show that they are up-to-date and that people actually follow them.

About procedures

You might often hear the phrase “policies and procedures.” In a small organization, they need not be separated. In a larger organization, they can be quite different.

A procedure is a set of step-by-step instructions. It's a little different from a policy in that it's not really a broad statement that guides decision-making. Procedures for low-risk tasks are usually set by the person in charge, and do not usually need approval from a board or committee.

A procedure can offer most of the kinds of protections that a policy can (freedom from liability, consistency, responsibility, etc.).

Procedures often have other purposes. They reduce risk when a replacement worker does a task if the ordinary worker is on leave or away. They are used in training new staff. They act as a quality control system, so that work is done to a consistent standard, and can be changed if necessary. They also act as a coordination system, so that people who do different parts of a task can do their part correctly even when they can't easily communicate with the others.

Task: Review your school's policies and procedures

Check that your school's policies and procedures are still relevant and that they work for your program of teaching and assessment. In your review, include the behavior management policy for both staff and students.

Make a written proposal of any necessary revisions. If you are systematic in applying the improvement program, you should notice any gaps that arise. As you go, suggest additions and updates to policy and procedures.

1. Are the policies and procedures up-to-date?
 - a. Board meetings often change policies and record changes only in minutes.
 - b. Staff meetings often change procedures and record changes only in minutes.
2. Do people actually read the policies and procedures?
3. Do people actually follow them?
4. Do they define what needs to be done (or what must not be done)?
5. Are they easy to read and understand?
 - a. Would you use them to check the right way to do things?
 - b. Do they have a minimum of legal jargon?
6. Are they clear, or could they be misinterpreted?
7. Do they cover all anticipated circumstances, or are there circumstances where they would not work? (E.g. exceptions, difficult cases.) If so, are those other cases important enough to put in?
8. Are they useful for training new staff in what to do?
9. Do they set a clear standard for good enough vs. not good enough performance?
10. Do they set the standard at the right level?
11. Are systems simple and easy to reproduce if our organization grows?

16

Risk management

Change involves risk; things could go wrong. Risk management is the process of identifying what could go wrong and planning responses.

Stage 1: Identify risks

You can use a variety of methods to identify risks.

1. Internet search. Check your search words to get better quality hits.
2. Look through your school's systems for the weak points.
3. Meet with people. Brainstorm with people who know your school or about education. Get people on-side by showing that you are listening to them and that you are really trying to do a good job and prevent possible problems.
 - 3.a. Ask what kinds of problems are already starting to happen.
 - 3.b. Ask what things could go wrong inside your school (e.g. miscommunication, missed timing).
 - 3.c. Ask what things could go wrong external to your school, i.e. caused by other parties.
 - 3.d. Ask about previous cases, including earlier versions of similar programs.

Some of the main risks in a school are:

1. Change in government policy.
2. Events that damage your school's reputation.
3. Miscommunication.
4. Scheduling problems.
5. Changes in school funding or financial systems (e.g. unexpected loss of income).
6. Unexpected financial outlay.
7. A new, strong competitor.
8. Upset or disillusioned parents, teachers, or board members.
9. Change of key personnel (e.g. Principal, Board members).
10. Dishonesty (misreporting, embezzlement).
11. Teacher resignations.
12. Decline in student numbers.
13. Unexpected drain on school facilities (e.g. need more rooms than anticipated, takes more teacher time than planned).

Stage 2: Assess the risk

"Assessing risk" means determining how serious it is. If you do a good risk assessment, you will identify most kinds of incidents you need to be prepared for.

First, ask: "How did this issue arise? Why does this item needs addressing? Who does it affect? How does it affect them?"

Depending on the project, people vary in their sensitivity to glitches in a new system. In some cases, it will be easy to make corrections. In other cases, however, even small errors will be disproportionately serious. For example, they could compromise safety, break a law or regulation, create a risk of system failure, or generate adverse publicity. You might need to ask how sensitive will people be to glitches in a new system, what failsafe systems will you need, and in what situations will people

blame the system even though the fault is theirs? (For example, they might not follow instructions.)

Assess risk in terms of probability of it happening, and how much harm it would cause if it happened. (As a formula, Risk = Probability x Harm). You can create a table and plot each risk. In this example, a risk is assessed as very probable, and would cause medium harm if it occurred:

Probability	Very probable		X	
	Medium			
	Improbable			
		Minimal harm	Medium harm	Serious harm
How much harm				

Stage 3: Control the risk

You will need to plan what you will do if a risk occurs. If it is very improbable and causes no harm, you can ignore it. On the other hand, a very high risk (very probable, serious harm) might mean that a planned course of action is not feasible.

In most cases, you simply need a plan of what you will do if it occurs and prevent negative consequences. Check that your risk control will solve the problem. In many cases, this means identifying how much risk is acceptable. Be sure that a controlled risk is not unacceptably high.

Discussion Unintended consequences

One of the great problems in change management is unintended consequences. It is normal to be unable to foresee *all* results of a change, some of which will be undesirable. How can a change management approach account for unintended consequences?

Assignment: Risk management plan

Write risk management plan for your project.

Program evaluation

This chapter contains various ways to evaluate programs. Evaluation modes fit into four different categories. First, the list of criteria approach is a simple assessment based on a list of written criteria. Second is a series of evaluation models that depend on a group of people to come to a consensus. The third is the product (means-ends) approach, which depends on an organization to set goals and then try to meet them. Last, the CIPP model is a combination of other models.

The “list of criteria” approach

This system is very simple and auditors usually use it. You have already used it in the tasks at the end of Chapter 1.

1. Start with a list of criteria that define the standard.
2. Ask about the purposes, context and main activities of the program.
3. Identify the stakeholder groups.
4. Inspect the physical facility.
5. Interview key people from all stakeholder groups.
6. Examine the program records.
7. Draw conclusions on whether the program meets the criteria in the list.

It has various weaknesses, and here are only three of them. First, a list of criteria cannot cover all possible weaknesses, and evaluators must interpret criteria for real situations. Consequently, evaluators must sometimes either agree to a program that they know is weak, or make up rules to respond to particular weaknesses not anticipated in the criteria. Moreover, some lists of criteria are not very good. They might be based on poor assumptions (for example, that the number of books in a library means that students will learn from them), or that a set of academic criteria are good for a vocational or professional training program.

Goal-free evaluation

Scriven, a leader in program evaluation theory, thought that knowing a program’s goals creates a bias because the evaluator interprets his/her observations according to program goals. Almost by definition, the evaluator cannot be someone in the program who knows its objectives.

The evaluator observes what happens in the program to find actual product and effects. Rather than asking about the goals of the program, he must infer the actual goals from his observations. He might also be able to infer the reasons why the program exists and why it uses the approaches it does. The evaluator’s inferences should resemble those that were formulated if the program reality matches the formulation and suits its consumers. Scriven did not present a methodology, but the basic steps seem to be:

1. identify the program,
2. observe the processes,
3. question participants on what they are doing (but not why),
4. find out their personal responses to the program,
5. infer real effects and actual goals, and
6. prepare a report for use in a product evaluation.

The central assumption and chief advantage of this model is that intended and actual results can differ greatly. What a program is really doing and achieving might be very different from its

written goals. This model also responds to side-effects, which can be more important than intended results.

Expert evaluation

In this view, a team of experts inspect the program and come to conclusions based on their expertise. It presumes the group will come to a consensus.

Interactive evaluation¹³

This approach is summarized in six leading questions:

1. What context was assumed during planning?
2. What learning activities were intended?
3. What outcomes were intended?
4. What was the actual context of the program?
5. What learning activities were actually used?
6. What were the actual outcomes?

This model differentiates between what was intended and what actually happened, which implies a feedback evaluation of program goals. It looks at both processes and outcomes.

The evaluation activities are summarized below, and can be done in almost any order:

1. Observe the program and draw conclusions about its scope and processes,
2. Talk with program participants,
3. Locate and conceptualize emerging issues,
4. Discover purposes and concerns,
5. Prepare portrayals,
6. Select observers, judges and instruments, and
7. Assemble reports.

Stakeholder evaluation¹⁴

An obvious way to evaluate a program is simply to ask the people in it what they think. The evaluator can get many opinions on its problems and many ideas on how to improve it, although the technique is more complex than that. In this view, the consensus group includes all the school's interest groups: students, teachers, experts, administrators, funders, employer groups, representatives of practicing professionals, and graduates, in fact anybody who "holds a stake" in the success of the institution.

A good stakeholder evaluation encourages openness, honesty, and willingness to solve problems. Each group can raise issues from their unique perspectives, presumably counterbalancing each other in the way they interact to protect their partisan interests. Using multiple perspectives naturally leads to the use of various tools.

Stakeholderism makes several assumptions. As each school is presumably unique, stakeholderism uses an internal consistency criterion, although some stakeholders might want to copy other schools. Using their different views of the program as starting points, stakeholder groups seek consensus on appropriate ways to improve their program. Consequently, negotiation plays a prominent role in finding emergent truth about the program. It is almost true to say that stakeholders must negotiate their own evaluation results with each other, and the negotiation aspect of curriculum becomes very illuminative.

By avoiding questions that predetermine answers, the evaluator does not decide what is good education. He is a facilitator whose questions help stakeholders to articulate their thoughts and observations.

The steps in stakeholder evaluation

The following steps are a summary. Evaluators may be individuals or teams.

1. The evaluator identifies stakeholders.

2. The evaluator helps each stakeholder group to:
 - 2.a. interpret their role in the school.
 - 2.b. identify concerns and issues that they feel need to be resolved if the school is to improve, and
 - 2.c. suggest solutions.
3. The evaluator:
 - 3.a. clarifies the purpose of the school,
 - 3.b. describes how it operates,
 - 3.c. identifies factors influencing the development of the school,
 - 3.d. discusses evidence on the effectiveness of the school,
 - 3.e. sorts out which issues have already been resolved,
 - 3.f. prioritizes unresolved issues,
 - 3.g. determines what information will be necessary to resolve them,
 - 3.h. delegates information collection on unresolved issues and/or collects that information.
4. The evaluator:
 - 4.a. negotiates solutions,
 - 4.b. identifies any still unresolved issues,
 - 4.c. suggests improvements, and
 - 4.d. compiles an evaluation report.

Product-based evaluation

In a “means-ends” rationale, program developers start by forming goals, then formulating ways to achieve them. The original analogy was to a factory; manufacturing processes (means) contribute to making a product (end). The same program rationale can be used for evaluating existing programs.

The goals (results or “ends”) may also be called “objectives” or “outcomes.” For simplicity and consistency, let’s just call them “goals”. They need to be as objective as possible and written down. The acronym for the current approach is current is SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely. That is, they need to not only be the right goals for the organization, they be good enough for evaluators to know whether or not the program has achieved them.

The question is then, “Did the program meet its goals?”

Inputs and processes

If a program achieves its goals, it might still have a quality problem if it is poorly organized, wastes its resources, costs more than can be realistically afforded, or costs too much for what it produces.

1. Were the means actually effective in reaching the goals? Would other means have been as effective?
2. What inputs and resources were required? What alternative strategies could have been used?
3. Was the process with the institution’s capabilities?
4. Were design practicalities done well?
5. Were processes appropriate and efficient?
6. Was the planning procedure appropriate?
7. How much did it cost, and was it cost-effective?
8. What was the cost in terms of lost alternatives?
9. Do the actions suit the goals? (Organizations easily busy themselves with activities that do not support their goals.)

Evaluate implementation

By attempting to meet real needs, programs normally run quite differently from the plan. Completely static programs simply don’t exist; evaluation and modification start when implementation begins, and sometimes even before then. Programs don’t actually produce exactly what they

intended, and this is not necessarily bad. Altered goals and side-effects can be more important and desirable than intended products. On the negative side, program implementers tend to water down any major innovations, making them more like past programs in which they have experience.

1. What were the agreed-upon goals?
2. Did different stakeholders have different perceptions of the goals?
3. Did the goals change during implementation? If so, which goals and how did they change? (Note that changes might not have been written down, and real changes might be perceived to be “interpretations”.)
4. How well did program implementation go?
5. What side-effects did the program produce?
6. Were staff roles appropriate?
7. What feedback was given to staff? Was it helpful?
8. What suggestions for improvement come from the implementation process?
9. How well did we document the program?

Evaluate achievements

1. Did you reach the goals? How did you measure? Would other kinds of measurement give you the same answer?
2. What was achieved at the end of the program? For example, a high school might look at the caliber of its students at graduation when they have been through the program. They might look at a culminating result, such as percentage of successful university applications. In a university program, the culminating might be a final thesis or practicum, employment statistics, or an eventual career outcome. How will you measure?
3. What was achieved in the long-term strategy? For example, schools might ask what students eventually do after graduation or their subsequent career paths.
4. Were the goals the right ones?
5. Was the target population correctly identified?
6. Were their needs and underlying problems correctly identified and appropriated addressed?
7. How could you express program goals more clearly? Were they too wordy or too brief?
8. Was this project appropriate for an organization like us? (Did it match our goals? Was it within our capabilities?)

The CIPP model

The CIPP (Context, Input, Processes and Product) model is another major model of program evaluation. It can be used to evaluate a program at any stage from planning to implementation.

As its name suggests, CIPP implies that evaluation comprises four loci, which largely reflect the time sequence in developing a program:

Context refers to program justification. This includes defining the target population and their needs and underlying problems, as well as the institutional context.

Input refers to the prescription of a program, especially in terms of alternative strategies, institutional capability, and design practicalities.

Process refers to a check on the implementation of the plan. The process check aims to provide feedback to staff, guide program improvement, assess whether staff roles are appropriate, and document the program.

Product evaluation is the measurement and judgment of the program’s achievements and side-effects, especially in terms of whether needs are met. Stufflebeam also mentions input from a wide variety of program participants and the use quantitative evaluation. (Stufflebeam, 1983.)

Cause and effect

Be cautious when attributing any kind of success or failure to a program. It might not be a direct cause-effect relationship:

- People naturally change and mature over time anyway, so good outcomes might not be the result of the program.
- The school might have made mistakes in admitting some students who should not have been admitted.
- Some students might have improved despite flaws in the program.
- Some students might have done badly no matter how good your program is.
- The program might have changed during the evaluation. Consequently, good or bad outcomes might not represent the program as it is now.
- Some schools accept high-risk students and have very effective programs. However, they appear ineffective when compared to assessment results of schools that accept predominantly low-risk or high-performing students.
- Successes might not be the result of the school's strategy but of external tutoring services or parental support.
- It can be difficult to see a big picture in a smaller program; one gets only a picture of a small number of individuals.
- Two factors can drive each other in a "vicious cycle". Both are causes and both are effects. In some societies, for example, crime and poverty seem to cause each other. Vicious cycles are hard to break and can result in downward spirals where the problem gets increasingly worse.
- People who know they are being evaluated behave artificially to make the program a success. This can warp the evaluation of outcomes. (Called the Hawthorne Effect.)

How to evaluate a school

Start your planning by deciding on a system of program evaluation. In other words, you need to process the strengths and weaknesses of the above models and produce something simple enough to be workable.

Then investigate your current educational effectiveness and document it. Do some research. What hard evidence shows that your school really needs to improve the quality of its teaching and education?

A simple way to get information on all students is to look through your existing records. It's probably all in the files if you keep good written records, especially of standardized tests. By collating the information, you should be able to see a clear pattern emerge, a summary of which is your conclusion.

It is a little more difficult to analyze and confirm the competence of your teaching staff. The results of students' standardized tests are by analogy a guide to teaching effectiveness. Your regular records of performance reviews, staff absenteeism, and complaints might also be helpful. On the other hand, do not use teachers' qualifications; higher qualifications do not reliably indicate better teaching. (Gillespie, pp. 137f.)

Assessing their capacity is quite another matter. Consider their intellectual and emotional capacity, and their ability to fit improvements into their schedule. Some older teachers might be set in their ways or approaching retirement, and thus be reluctant to accept anything new.

Some of your findings will probably be quite controversial. If so, discuss them with your supervisor so that your evaluation will make a positive contribution to your school.

Assignment 1

Each of the evaluation models above has its own weaknesses or limitations, and its own strengths. Write an evaluation of each model.

What is current best practice?

Qualitative and quantitative research

Quantitative knowledge is that which can be expressed in numbers and statistics. It often refers to the testing of an hypothesis in an experiment to produce statistical data. It starts with an hypothesis, gathers data relevant to the hypothesis, reduces data to statistical information, and confirms whether or not the hypothesis is true. Academics tend to prefer this kind of information where possible, and actively seek ways to get it. We don't recommend it here unless you have specific training in experimental procedures and statistics.

Qualitative information is that which is not represented in numerical or statistical form. Cultural description is one of the best examples. The difference between quantitative and qualitative research is often a topic of interest in the humanities.

Statistical and non-statistical research methods result in research conclusions that are epistemologically different. For many decades, the kind of research was considered very important, but with the fall of positivism, several weaknesses became obvious and they are now a little more similar.

Qualitative research is focused on natural knowledge, that is, it reflects knowledge as it is known by the people who are research subjects. The researcher does not try to change it through statistics. Qualitative research tends to reflect wholes rather than single hypotheses, and can reflect a vary of different thought patterns that arise when the population of research subjects are not homogenous. In turn, the open ended nature of the research makes possible to do much more further research later on, and not of its conclusions are absolute.

Researchers can use questionnaires with open-ended questions where respondents can freely give their own answers. The interviewer doesn't even have to follow a questionnaire that was written beforehand; they can freely ask questions according to what appears significant and relevant. This is because the researcher as a person is often the primary research instrument and is given training in free interviewing.

In this kind of research, the essence of the problem is often accurately understood only halfway through the research. Put another way, understanding the problem accurately is often a major part of the research. In some cases, the data is inadequate and the researcher goes again through the cycle getting new information. In other cases, the researcher needs to move into a new topic or field of knowledge if he/she finds it relevant to the research problem. Besides, the kind of conclusion is different from those that derive from statistics. It is often difficult to forecast what kind of conclusion one will arrive at, but it will be some kind of meaning or value, and it will often be expressed as a patten or theme that is based on descriptive evidence. Consequently, it is tends to be based on inductive logic.

Assignment 2

1. What is the difference between qualitative and quantitative kinds of program evaluation?
2. What kinds of programs are best suited for *qualitative* program evaluation?
3. What kinds of programs are best suited for *quantitative* program evaluation?

Assignment 3

Write a plan for evaluating your project. Make sure it relates to the effectiveness of teaching and assessment for the students of your school.

Your proposal: A strategic plan

You now need to write your strategy as a project proposal to improve the standard of teaching at your school. It must directly support your school's ethos and longer term aspirations.

How to increase your proposal's chances of acceptance

First, it will be easier if the right people have been in the loop all along and your idea shows promise.

Second, people too often simply ask what's in it for them, although they might not say it. You probably won't get past first base with them if you can't give a clear, simple answer.

Third, although hard-nosed decision-makers probably won't waste time socializing, they will be more sympathetic if you are friendly and they feel they can trust you.

Fourth, while you really need substance (that is, facts), they will probably appreciate your enthusiasm, commitment, and vision. You can't fake it, but they will see it if you practice your presentation thoroughly so that you communicate better.

Instructions: Write a full project proposal

To make things easier, you have already written some parts of your proposal as assignments in earlier chapters. You might want to give them an extra edit, and add any transitions between sections. Write it up as a formal document with good spelling, grammar, layout, and style. Later on, use any comments or insights from feedback to improve your plan.

Most of this has already been done in previous assignment, so you can simply copy it in.

1. Describe the school (500-1,000 words). The document should explain itself, because some of your readers might know nothing about your school.
 - a. Purpose and goals
 - b. Any unique features
 - c. Demography
 - d. Organizational culture
 - e. Resourcing
 - f. Assessment system
 - g. Competitive position
2. Your topic (300-500 words)
 - a. A clear, simple, compelling definition of the need or opportunity. It may be based on your evaluation if it is helpful.
 - b. A clear, simple, compelling statement of your solution or response.
 - c. A statement of scope. State what is included and what is excluded.
3. Results of consultations with significant stakeholders (300-1,000 words).
4. A literature review or annotated bibliography of current best practice to show that your approach is theoretically and practically sound. If it gets too long, put it in an appendix. (1,000-3,000 words)
5. An assessment of significant risks. (300-1,000 words)
6. A convincing cost-benefit business case with a clear dollar value. Your Board will need to approve your project, including any expenditure. (If you need to apply for extra funds, check first with the school's accountant.) (200-500 words)
7. An operational plan for your project that:
 - a. shows that your idea is feasible.

- b. includes a detailed financial plan with firm estimates of costs.
- c. describes how your staff will be coached.
- d. proposes a realistic timeline for implementation. (500-2,000 words)
- 8. A Organizational Learning System in the form of a plan for coaching staff (See below). (300-1000 words)
- 9. A change management plan. (See below.) (1,000-2,000 words)
- 10. A communication plan, including a method of informing stakeholders about results (See below). (300-1000 words)
- 11. A method for evaluating the project. (300-500 words)

In Appendix Five, you will find two draft strategic plans. Both are fictitious. Compare them the instructions and use these questions to analyze them:

- 1. Which elements are missing? Is that good or bad?
- 2. Which parts are extra? Are they good or bad?
- 3. Which parts are done well and would be good examples to follow?
- 4. Which parts are done badly and would be examples of things to avoid?
- 5. What changes would need to be made for a different context?

Reflection

Analyze the Amsberry School plan.

Reflection

Analyze the Morgantown High School plan.

Task: Write your own strategic plan according to the instructions.

You may add to the instructions if you found additions in the draft strategic plans that are helpful.

Develop your presentation with the decision-maker in mind

To a considerable extent, you are seeking to educate and inform. Make the main points very clear. Present information in a way that is easy to read and understand for non-specialists. Some very literate decision-makers might have no previous knowledge of your specific topic.

To be convincing, you must have your facts right. Advantages must be based on more than just your enthusiasm. Don't exaggerate the advantages because this makes your whole strategy less credible.

Be careful with details. Too much detail and the main point gets lost. If you present no details, it sounds like you haven't thought it through. Decision-makers will almost certainly want to ask you questions on details that you omitted, but at least you've already thought them through. The simple solution is to make the oral presentation clear and simple, and put details into the written proposal.

Admit to any weaknesses in your idea and say how you'd overcome them. You will be much more convincing if you have anticipated any problems.

Pragmatists will want to get a picture of exactly how it will work. Have a concrete operational strategy that is the best fit for everybody. The strategy could easily lose focus and fall apart if it is an

ad hoc arrangement that lets you make it up as you go along or if it depends on unreasonable compromises. (Some teachers might try to negotiate a deal that, in essence, gets them out of trying to improve.) While you should normally make allowances for some people, (e.g. mothers with small children), your program will come apart quickly if you make separate compromises for individual teachers.

Be aware that people might have heard your idea before, not understand it, or foresee problems. They might also identify ways in which your idea still needs to be modified.

The Board will probably not accept your idea immediately at the presentation, and will have to consider other management factors of which you are not aware. Just accept its opinion at the time.

Finally, you will be accountable for meeting key performance indicators if the proposal is accepted. If you make promises, you will be asked to keep them.

The decision

Your Board will normally discuss the proposal among themselves and make a decision. They might agree completely or send it back to you to solve specific problems, answer specific questions, or consider their suggestions for extra improvements. They could also completely disagree, but this is unlikely if you have prepared well.

Task: Oral presentation

Give a half-hour presentation to gain approval for your plan from key decision-makers, especially Board members and perhaps your college professors. You might also need to give a similar presentation to your staff and your leadership team.

- Engage your listeners and speak persuasively.
- Be tactful about existing weaknesses.
- State clearly and simply what the project is.
- State clearly and simply its proposed benefits.
- Close with a clear challenge to accept your project.
- After your presentation, answer any questions.
- Other tips:
 - Use suitable visual aids.
 - Good diagrams might be more helpful than lots of text.
 - If you want to use handouts, keep them to only one or two pages.
 - Do not use gimmicks.

Implementation and monitoring

After approval, it is time to make your plan a reality. Implement and monitor change management in a continuous improvement cycle. As you go, keep written records of what you do and what you learn.

Communicate in a way that will keep people on side. Identify the advantages of change and keep promoting them to stakeholders by communicating, setting an example, and celebrating successes. As you go, recognize and acknowledge the positive contribution that individuals make to coaching and to improve the whole school.

You will probably need to adjust the plan on the way, because the operating context might change or you might encounter factors that you could not have anticipated during planning. This doesn't mean that your plan has failed. It usually means that you have learned something new and need to make adjustments or run another research cycle to achieve your goal. Make changes to the project, and get approval as necessary.

If you feel you need to change the project during the implementation stage, you face a tension between too much and too little adjustment. Some students feel that circumstances have changed and too easily abandon their original plan. Others too rigidly persist with their original plans when circumstances have made it unrealistic.

Your program supervisor will monitor your progress during the project. In some cases, this will involve solving any problems as they arise. Your supervisor will expect regular reports, usually every week.

Expect questions such as:

1. What did you do this week?
2. Did you follow your goals for this stage?
3. Did you meet your goal?
4. Did you make progress?
5. What is most difficult for you at this stage?
6. Is the plan still working well or do you think you might to make adjustments?

20

Evaluation

At the end of the implementation period, you need to review and evaluate the project. If your project isn't finished by the end of the allotted time, you should be able to apply for an extension. You will have to make a convincing case, showing that the project is making sound progress and is worth any extra investment of time and resources.

For your evaluation, you need to collect and analyze data on the results of coaching at individual or group level. This could be fairly easy to do if coaching was based on a written list of achievable objectives that can be observed and assessed in teaching. Your evaluation report must include your actual data. Include a financial report, although expenses should have been quite minimal.

Your report must also identify and recommend ongoing opportunities for coaching. It needs to be written in prose, but you will find it helpful if you first answer these questions thoroughly:

1. How well did the implementation work from beginning to end?
 - a. What went well and what didn't?
 - b. How did you solve problems on the way?
 - c. How well did people perform their roles?
 - d. Was the program satisfactorily resourced?
2. What kinds of feedback did you get, both negative and positive?
3. Did the program achieve the goals set in the original proposal? This will probably not be a simple "yes" or "no" answer. It is likely that you also had some major successes, but some things probably didn't work perfectly, and you had to make adjustments on the way.
4. Did the change management strategy work? Document your findings and present your recommendations for improvement.
5. Did the coaching strategy work? Document your findings and present your recommendations for improvement. They need to fit the needs of your individual teachers as well as your school's context and needs.
6. If you had to plan such a program again, what would you do differently? Write and present a plan for improving your way of developing the system.
7. What evidence do you have that the program is now stable and sustainable, and that it has become part of the organizational culture?

Outline of an evaluation report

1. Achievement of goals.
2. Give your analysis of the results of coaching, including your data. Include your conclusions on implementation of the project in general and the coaching program in particular, with an explanation of how you reached those conclusions.
3. A plan for improving your way of developing the system.
4. Ongoing opportunities and recommendations for improvements.
5. Appendix: A financial report.

Reflection

What did you learn about yourself? Write a personal reflection (1 page).

Outline of an evaluation report

1. Did you reach your planned goals? Why or why not? How do you know?
2. Your analysis of results of coaching, including your data. Include your conclusions on implementation of the project in general and the coaching program in particular, with an explanation of how you reached those conclusions.
3. A plan for improving your way of developing the system.
4. A personal reflection on what you learned about yourself.
5. Ongoing opportunities for coaching and improvements with recommendations.
6. Appendix: A financial report.

Your thesis: The final format

A formal written report is a reasonable expectation, especially at graduate level. It needs to be clear enough to demonstrate what you tried to do and why, and what you learned from it.

A written report has various advantages. First, the process of writing helps you develop your thoughts, especially the details. Second, your report might be essential to getting approval. Third, it can be useful elsewhere in your organization. Fourth, it can be a stepping stone for future students to develop good projects too. Finally, it is evidence of what you have learnt, so it can be helpful if you choose to continue your education.

If you are doing it as a graduate project, your institution might have a specified length, so check with your supervisor. Your institution will specify the number of copies to be submitted. You will almost certainly need at least three: One for your college or university, one for the senior management of the school where you did the project, and one for yourself.

Outline

Your report need not be an unreasonable amount of extra work. The instructions below will guide you to present your project like a formal graduate project.

The introduction and methodology sections will be a tidied-up version of your proposal and routine reporting, including any adjustments during implementation. If you have followed instructions so far, you already have most of a first draft; the full strategy statement becomes chapters 1 and 2, and the evaluation becomes chapter 3.

Preliminaries

The preliminaries are written last of all and comprise the title page and table of contents. They can also include a Preface and Acknowledgements, but they should not be necessary in this case.

Include an Abstract. For this kind of thesis, it is simply a summary and should not exceed 200 words.

Any lists of tables, maps, graphs, diagrams or abbreviations. If you have more than one list and they are short enough, you can put them on the same page.

Main body of text

Chapter 1: Introduction	Explain the need for the project, the purpose or problem, assumptions, definitions, etc. Keep it fairly brief.
Chapter 2: Context	Give the details of your demography and environmental scan.
Chapter 3: Literature review	Your literature review.
Chapter 4: Methodology	Give the details of your plan and describe the implementation. As a rule of thumb, it needs to be clear and complete enough for someone else to copy your project.
Chapter 5: Evaluation	State what the project achieved and give your evaluation of the approach. It is your opportunity to state any specific learning.

Chapter 6. Conclusion	The conclusion states briefly what you have done, what you have found, and its general implications.
-----------------------	--

Most projects don't have enough wider implications for a separate chapter. In few cases, however, they do, so you can put them in a separate chapter between the evaluation of outcomes and the conclusion. It might be the most important part of all, especially in a large organization. Some implications may act as recommendations for future action. Make them clear and positive, and check that they are based on actual research, not your personal opinion.

Final materials

Appendices. An appendix is the place for anything unexciting that you need to include but would distract your readers if put into the text. Appendices are placed before the bibliography, because they might include references to sources that are listed in the bibliography. Appendices are optional because they are not always necessary. In your case, however, you must include a financial report if you spent school money on the project. If you needed an official letter of approval or authorization for your project, put a copy in an appendix.

Bibliography. You'll need a bibliography for details of any books, journal articles, formal interviews, website materials, and unpublished materials.

If you developed new materials

If you developed new materials for your project, put them either into the appendix or into your methodology chapter. Put them into an appendix if they are quite long and might break up the flow of the whole thesis. If the materials are essential to understanding the methodology chapter and are not too long, you can include them in the methodology chapter.

Case study 1

Jensonville Elementary School is one of only a handful of schools in history to receive the state's accolade of an exemplary performance certificate. It is even more unusual that a small, remote, public school achieves the elite status of a top-tier school. Although "Jensonville Elementary School" is a pseudonym, this report is condensed and adapted from the actual Performance Inquiry Report of the expert review committee appointed by the state's department of education.¹⁰

About Jensonville Elementary School

The school is in a farming area about 300 miles from the nearest major city and 150 miles from the nearest big town. Most of its 44 children come from local farming families and travel in by bus. The school was opened in 1935, and its current buildings are a little over 15 years old. It has two classrooms, an activity room, an office, a computer room, a separate early childhood building, and a playground. It uses various county facilities, such as the local library, sports fields, and community hall.

Leadership

The Principal's leadership style blends relational styles with an inclusive and instructional approach. Her approachability, accessibility and welcoming demeanor ensures that staff, students and community members are well aware of school policies, procedures, and operations.

The Principal clearly articulates high expectations and all staff embrace them. Every parent and teacher commented effusively on the alignment of her personal style with that of community members. Her openness to others, and her willingness to reach out to parents, teachers and students in promoting the modeled expectation of high standards, have helped to cultivate a climate of trust, awareness and respect across the community.

The community

The school plays an important role in the community and this is reflected in the pride seen in students and their families. The PTA, school council, and the local Progress Association support the school by funding projects and providing a grassed sports field for the school to use, a difficult task in an arid climate.

The community strongly believes that "it takes a whole village to raise a child". Judging by the beliefs and actions of the staff and community members, everybody really cares about what happens to every student.

The local community has a strong sense of ownership in the school. Genuine relationships between parents and the school have been built on trust and mutual respect. Staff and community members have multi-faceted roles and interrelationships, which is evident in their faith in people to do their jobs in the interests of student development.

10 "Lake King Primary School: Performance Enquiry Report." May 2015, WA Department of Education. Used with permission.

The staff

The school identifies, recognizes and develops the strengths and talents of staff, and this gets the best results in school and student performance.

Staff share a unifying vision and a set of beliefs about child development, which guide both the strategic and daily operations of the school. The staff team collectively focuses on the development of the whole child. When they face any educational opportunity, they first look closely at its strategic benefit.

The Principal individually knows and values each staff member. This respectful and united environment attempts to include everyone, including former staff, engendering a sense of professional and community connectedness. With this kind of connectedness, teachers are confident to pursue their craft with the assurance that they will get any support they need.

Throughout the inquiry, it was apparent that all staff enjoyed coming to work each day. They express genuine satisfaction in their work and in the positive working relationships that have been developed.

We saw high levels of passion, honesty, trust, sincerity and loyalty, founded on the essential elements of shared vision, common beliefs, and transparent decision making. These conditions are developed through strong interpersonal relationships and are evident in the purposeful and predictable conduct of staff and students. These actions define the character and mission of the school.

The satisfaction associated with high levels of student achievement and professional fulfillment further builds staff confidence.

The Principal has high levels of trust in staff and, in return, is staff implicitly trust her. This results in a “can-do” approach and the removal of any obstacles in the path of students.

For the students

Compliance with regulations is not a reason in itself for anything that happens at Jensonville Elementary School. We were left in no doubt that the development of its students was the staff's main motivation and focus of their work.

Each classroom is an inviting, student-centered space where appropriate tools of technology have enhanced learning and engagement. The computer room has supplemented this by offering online lessons from other schools, such as foreign languages and the Extend and Challenge program.

Staff provide the support to give every student the opportunity to reach high standards of achievement. The learning experiences are academically robust, authentic and have the right amount of built-in challenge to ensure success and a sense of pride in achievement.

Appendix 1

Teaching observation form 1¹¹

Name of observer:	
Name of school:	
Description of class or group:	
What was the aim or purpose of the lesson? ²	
What teaching techniques were used? ¹²	

Criteria	Comments
----------	----------

Planning

1. Prepares suitable lesson plan	
2. Begins with clear purpose statement	
3. Focuses on critical content	
4. Effectively chunks content	
5. Reviews prior skills and knowledge	
6. Sequences content logically	
7. Uses suitable resources and materials	
8. Addresses curriculum requirements	

Classroom management and organization

9. Knows individual students' characteristics & needs	
10. Treats all students equitably	
11. Manages behavior effectively	
12. Uses classroom space effectively	
13. Maximizes lesson time for teaching; minimizes dead time ¹³	
14. Creates a safe, welcoming classroom environment that fosters learning	

Teaching

15. Positive attitude, relates well to students	
16. Engages and motivates students	
17. Follows plan to cover all learning objectives	

¹¹ Some criteria were developed with reference to the research of Anita Archer and Charles Hughes (taroomss.eq.edu.au) and the advice of Dr. Terry Parsons.

¹² E.g. Talk 'n' chalk, discussion, games, individual activities, group activities, questioning.

¹³ *Dead time*: time wasted on avoidable activities that are not teaching/learning such as starting late, organizing the classroom, or managing behavior.

18. Uses instruction approaches that suit the field ¹⁴	
19. Lesson and communication style is age-appropriate	
20. Paces lesson well to improve learning; pace is brisk	
21. Communicates effectively; language is concise and easily understood	
22. Asks effective questions	
23. Give enough examples and non-examples	
24. Frequently requires responses	
25. Gives immediate feedback (affirming or correcting)	
26. Uses both inductive and deductive methods	
27. Fosters creativity	
28. Fosters curiosity	
29. Gives adequate distributed practice	
30. Gives enough cumulative practice	
31. Gives coaching to help learning	
32. Helps students organize and enstructure knowledge	

Review and follow-up

33. Checks that all students learn effectively; monitors students' progress and outcomes	
34. Reviews relationship with students and adjusts to suit their needs	
35. Reflects on own performance, and plans improvement strategies	
36. Maintains, stores and secures student records	

Please give your view of the teaching based on what you have observed:

<input type="checkbox"/> Not recommended	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly recommended
<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/> Could coach other teachers

Please give more comments or general observations to support your responses:

Date:	Signed:

¹⁴ Different fields have different approaches to instruction.

Appendix 2

Teaching observation form 2

Instructions

Comment on each criterion e.g. satisfactory, problematical, excellent, etc.

Preparation

	1. Plans and documents approach and intended outcomes
	2. Chooses presentation strategies, format and delivery methods that are appropriate for the student group and available resources
	3. Selects aids, materials and techniques that suit helps students understand of key concepts

Introduction

	1. Has clear purpose
	2. Explains and discusses purpose with students
	3. Gives a motivational hook

Attitude

	1. Knows the subject well
	2. Shows enthusiasm for the topic
	3. Builds rapport with students
	4. Listens well, open to student opinions

Delivery

	1. Uses clear presentation, easy to understand
	2. Has effective sequencing
	3. Uses visual aids and examples to help students grasp key concepts
	4. Monitors students' non-verbal & verbal communication
	5. Uses persuasive communication to get student interest
	6. Gives opportunity to ask questions on central ideas
	7. Adjusts presentation to meet students' needs and preferences
	8. Summarizes key concepts at strategic points

Speaking skills

	1. Body language is appropriate and effective.
	2. Gestures go outside the torso square
	3. No distracting behaviors ("um ...", swaying, clothing/jewelry)
	4. Good intonation (not monotone)
	5. Adjusts language to suit students
	6. Reacts well to the unexpected (interruptions, student answers, etc.)

Review

	1. Reviews effectiveness of teaching
	2. Uses feedback to change the way central ideas are presented

Appendix 3

Teaching observation form 3¹⁵

Guide to scale values:

1 = Very unlikely / Very low / Never
 2 = Not good / Low / Rare
 3 = Normal / Enough / Sometimes

4 = Good / High / Often
 5 = Very good / Very high / Always

Section A: Teaching skills

1. Is well prepared to give lessons	1 2 3 4 5
2. Is well organized in giving lessons	1 2 3 4 5
3. Brings class atmosphere to life	1 2 3 4 5
4. Communicates content clearly	1 2 3 4 5
5. Answers students' questions clearly	1 2 3 4 5
6. Uses media and learning technology	1 2 3 4 5
7. Uses various ways to measure learning outcomes	1 2 3 4 5
8. Gives students feedback on their work	1 2 3 4 5
9. Exams and tasks are well-suited to the purpose of the course	1 2 3 4 5
10. Assessment results match learning outcomes	1 2 3 4 5
Score section A	

Section B: Professional skills

11. Clearly and accurately explains each point	1 2 3 4 5
12. Gives examples that are relevant to the topic	1 2 3 4 5
13. Explains relationships between the topic being taught and other topics	1 2 3 4 5
14. Explains relationships between topic being taught and life contexts	1 2 3 4 5
15. Shows mastery of current issues in the field being taught	1 2 3 4 5
16. Uses research results to improve teaching	1 2 3 4 5
17. Uses communications technology	1 2 3 4 5
Score section C	

Section C: Personal skills

18. Has respect as teacher	1 2 3 4 5
19. Makes decisions wisely	1 2 3 4 5
20. Sets an example in attitude and behavior	1 2 3 4 5
21. Words are consistent with actions	1 2 3 4 5
22. Shows self-control in various situations and conditions	1 2 3 4 5
23. Treats students fairly	1 2 3 4 5
Score section C	

Section D: Social skills

24. Can express an opinion	1 2 3 4 5
25. Accepts criticism, suggestions, and opinions from others	1 2 3 4 5
26. Maintains good rapport with students	1 2 3 4 5
27. Relates well to colleagues, employees, and students	1 2 3 4 5
28. Tolerant to diversity among students	1 2 3 4 5
Score section D	
Total score	

Appendix 4

General teaching skills checklist

The general skills below apply to the evaluation of teachers, but they are not particularly suited to classroom observation.

Competency	Assessor's comment
1. Applies curriculum or competency framework:	
1.a. Achieves curriculum goals	
1.b. Contributes to instructional policy and program team meetings	
2. Identifies students with difficulties and takes appropriate action ¹⁵	
3. Participates effectively in the institution/school environment	
3.a. Complies with legislation at all times; maintains the legal and ethical standards of the teaching profession (e.g. inclusive, equitable, duty of care, confidentiality)	
3.b. Maintains standards of appearance, behavior, ethics, attendance, punctuality, and interpersonal relationships appropriate to a professional teacher	
3.c. Operates within the school's ethos and philosophy	
3.d. Helps school to maintain positive relationships with the wider community	
3.e. Develops supportive, non-dependent relationships with supervisors and peers	
3.f. Performs duties other than teaching (e.g. assist in whole-of-school and out-of-school activities, parent liaison)	
3.g. Helps implement school's administrative and educational changes	
3.h. Values the benefits associated with a diverse school community, and treats all individuals equitably.	
4. Maintains professional development	
4.a. Sets high standards of excellence and strives to achieve them	
4.b. Demonstrates a positive approach to learning and encourages it in others	
4.c. Evaluates own teaching, and draws conclusions about improvements	
4.d. Updates knowledge of current teaching practice	

¹⁵ Difficulties may be physical, social, emotional, behavioral, learning, etc. Appropriate actions include contributing to a team approach for remediation, advocating for the student, and referring to other assistance.

Appendix 5

Amsberry Public Elementary School

This is the first of two plans for fictitious schools, being an elementary school in a lower socioeconomic suburb.

Draft strategic plan: Improving literacy in Amsberry Public Elementary School **Submitted to the Board by the Staff Steering Committee, February 30, 2018**

The students at Amsberry Public Elementary School (APES) generally reflect the social context of the local community. APES is located in a lower socioeconomic area where 56% of the workforce is unemployed, and 15% have never been employed. The standard of education is low except for an enclave of recent immigrants, who will probably move to a more prestigious suburb when they can afford to do so. The dropout rates in the local high school are high, and only 10% of the population outside the immigrant enclave have finished high school or its equivalent. The crime rate is one of the highest in the state. Of the children, only 30% have both parents living with them at home, and mobility is high, with 50% of students moving addresses at least once each year.

The staff

The teaching staff are all qualified and they are generally “doing their best.” Turnover is high, with teachers staying for an average 2.5 years. About 70% of teachers came straight from teacher’s college and are still in their first three years of teaching.

The plan

This goal is to improve the literacy standard in Amsberry Elementary School. Achievement will be measured through the BGRT test, which is a standardized test applied at first, third, and sixth grades.

The immediate target is to increase both writing and reading comprehension scores by an average of 15 points on the BGRT scale in the first to third grades within one year of introduction of this program. This goal represents the minimum score for elementary school literacy in the state education plan.

The longer term target is to increase both writing and reading comprehension scores by an average of 15 points on the BGRT scale in all grades and simplify the transition to middle school.

This targeted average does not include students with identified learning difficulties, who will be diverted to a separate program.

Implementation

The strategy follows the Jones-Gilbert literacy model, which follows a general phonics approach but includes a substantial component of language arts.

As an elementary school, students in the lower to middle grades have a closely controlled environment, the plan will start with first to third grade at the beginning of the next school year. It can then be incrementally added to grades four through six.

The teachers for these grades have all indicated willingness to implement the proposed program.

First grade goals

Reading

Appreciation of stories and rhymes being read by the teacher. The purpose is to engage children in book-based stories that convey colorful characters and simple emotions, to relate book-reading to enjoyment, interpret pictures in books, and to teach children how to value and use books. Students will be able to:

1. Describe the major characters in each story, recount the major events, and articulate what they liked most in the story (and why).
2. Sing the rhythm in a group when the story is a short rhyme.
3. Based on teacher prompts as they go, individual create a simple story (approx. 100 words) and tell it to the teacher.
4. Sound all letters of the alphabet prescribed in the Jones-Gilbert model
5. Read (and sound out) three-letter words that meet single-letter phonic rules in simple sentences and say what the sentences mean.
6. Read (and sound out) five-word meaningful sentences comprising three-phoneme words according to phonic rules.

Writing

Students will be able to:

1. Hold a pencil correctly
2. Copy the Jones-Gilbert series of basic geometric shapes
3. Write all letters of the alphabet prescribed in the Jones-Gilbert model
4. Write three-letter words that meet single-letter phonic rules.
5. Write five-word meaningful sentences comprising three-letter words that meet single-letter phonic rules.

Second grade goals

...

Third grade goals

...

Critical success factors

1. Age-appropriate story-books that engage students
2. Teachers' skills in class management
3. Teachers' skills in questioning and prompting skills
4. Teachers' skills in identifying learning difficulties
5. Public relations

Culture change

The language arts program should give students greater enjoyment of school. While this is not currently a problem, the parents' attitude that "Study is not enjoyable" tends to influence students.

In the lower grades, behavior management is not usually a serious problem, although the school has had a few individual cases of very bad behavior that could not be managed through normal procedures. The disruption they caused affected the whole class and increased teacher stress and frustration. At present, we are considering a policy that such children should be diverted from regular classes into a small-group diagnostic and remedial program.

All work will be done in class, and students will not be given homework. Parents, although supportive, have often not monitored homework. This is especially understandable in one-parent homes where the parent has full-time employment.

Absenteeism is sometimes a serious problem, and usually results from poorly disciplined parents. As a school, we can only make the school a welcoming safe environment. In some schools in this kind of context, a proportion of students deliberately come early and go home late because they dislike being at home.

Some students need a food program and personal hygiene support. As a public school, this is outside our permitted scope of operations and we recommend a separate committee be established to consider a relationship with InnerCity inc., which specializes in such programs.

Staff orientation and coaching

It is proposed to give all staff a one-day induction to the Jones-Gilbert model and then implement a professional development program as follows:

1. Select model teachers who can easily adapt their current teaching style to the Jones-Gilbert model
2. All other teachers shall observe model teachers
3. Observers will conduct brief debriefs and reviews after each observation
4. Teachers will be paired with another teacher to help them improve their lesson plans. This should improve teaching and reduce staff stress.
5. The whole staff group will review progress in regular staff meetings.
6. Monitor progress of all teachers involved, including:
 - 6.a. Adaptations in our context
 - 6.b. Improvement of all teaching staff
 - 6.c. Improved engagement of students
 - 6.d. Improved engagement of parents
7. Conduct BGRT tests according to the State testing schedule.

Staff incentives

We expect that teachers will want to stay and staff retention will improve. We also expect that teachers will improve their employment prospects. Their CVs will be better grounds for promotion.

Parent incentives

This program will probably not have significant consequences for parents. Most parents will simply accept it as a school policy decision. The possibility of improvement, however, should be attractive to parents.

Risk management

Teaching is no more than test preparation

We risk reducing teaching to test preparation. If we did we would ignore:

1. other aspects of education, especially those related to personal development.
2. a focus on excellence rather than minimum standards
3. the diagnostic and formative value of testing.

This is really a matter of management. We should monitor other aspects of learning and not overemphasize test-passing either to students or to parents.

Change in government policy

As a public school, APES is vulnerable to policy changes. However, the overall competencies are within the current mandatory curriculum and assessment framework.

Events causing reputational damage

We do not anticipate a high public profile other than as a regular school program.

Miscommunication

The Committee consulted the Chairman of the Board and the local District Superintendent during development.

If approved, the normal school communication systems should ensure good communication such as staff meetings, the school bulletin, and parent-teacher conferences, Principal's report at Board meetings, and District Superintendent visits.

Scheduling problems

The program will fit into current schedules.

Changes in funding or financial systems

The program will follow the current school funding system with a relatively small initial investment.

Unexpected financial outlay

The program will work within the current school allowance for contingencies.

A new, strong competitor

As a public school in this demographic, we see no competitors.

Disillusioned parents, teachers, or board members

The consultation and communication discussed above should prevent any disillusionment.

Change of key personnel (e.g. Principal, Board members)

Especially in the early stages of implementation, the highest personnel risk is loss of key teaching staff with expertise in literacy development. Consequently, we plan to train most staff in the early stages and to provide support materials.

Otherwise, high staff turnover at EPES has been normal, and one of the indirect goals of the program is to improve staff retention.

Once approved and implemented, the committee expects that new senior personnel (Principal, board members) will support existing programs of the school. We anticipate that the review at the end of the first semester and the first year will suggest improvements, but the Principal and board members should not interpret the review results as a failure that would justify abandoning the program.

Decline in student numbers

As a public school, numbers of students has been fairly stable for the last ten years.

Unexpected demands on staff time

We cannot rule out this risk because it is by definition unexpected. In particular, we realize that inexperienced teachers will take more time to plan lessons. On the other hand, assistance in planning lessons will reduce stress and improve teaching effectiveness.

Public relations (PR)

The audience of our PR efforts will be the parents and guardians of students. PR will take the following forms:

1. A flyer introducing the program.

2. On open meeting for parents, explaining the program, its goals, and its advantages over the current system.
3. A brief section in the monthly school bulletin.
4. Student work taken home (e.g. printouts of stories they created).
5. Reviews in regular parent-teacher meetings.
6. Celebrate improvements in BGRT tests.

Budget

Teaching observation can be arranged within the current schedule at no extra expense.

We do not anticipate much extra expenditure for reading materials in the immediate future. Our current materials are underused, we do not use our current book allowance, and we also have access to the Amsberry Public Library. However, we expect to need a small number of new books and have made allowances as below.

In the longer term, we hope that students come to enjoy reading. It is likely that at least some students at about ten years of age will start reading for pleasure and we will probably have difficulty providing enough well-written and age-appropriate literature. At that age, students can easily read one new book each week. If this eventuates, we should review whether Amsberry Public Library can meet all our needs or whether we should purchase our own books.

The current budget is as follows:

First grade new books: \$100

Second grade new books: \$100

Third grade new books: \$100

Teacher overtime for a one-day induction: \$1000.00

Appendix 6

Morgantown High School

This is the second of two plans for fictitious schools, this being a high school in an upper middle class suburb.

Draft strategic plan: Improving university admission in Morgantown High School Submitted to the Board by the Curriculum Committee, February 30, 2018

The Morgantown High School (MHS) is private school in an upper middle class area of Rock City. Almost all parents of MHS students have at least a college education and work in professional roles. The remainder have either worked their way up in major corporations or own their own businesses. Unemployment is rare, and temporary. The local divorce rate is high, but not much more than the national average.

Parents enroll their children at MHS expecting that children will gain entry to the university of their choice. However, this is not feasible for some students due to their individual temperaments and ability levels.

The staff

Competition for teaching positions at MHS is very tight and staff members are all elite qualified teachers. Many of them also teach in local colleges as adjunct faculty members. MHS usually loses staff when they are promoted to more senior roles at other schools or through retirement. Most of them commute from outlying suburbs.

The proposal

This overall goal is to improve the university admission rate at MHS by implementing an Advanced Placement (AP) program in collaboration with Rock City University (RCU).

RCU is a very suitable partner. It is local, has a reputation of being easy to work with, and is academically well-regarded.

The characteristics of the proposed AP program are as follows:

1. Students who have satisfactory results in the AP program will gain automatic admission to RCU with at least one semester of credit.
2. As far as possible, it will be part of our normal school activity. It will follow the normal school year, with the admission process commencing during the previous semester.
3. MHS will offer RCU units that are parallel to high school units (called an upstairs-downstairs program), with MHS learning outcomes on RCU learning outcome statements. This includes the RCU unit on college writing and study skills.
4. MHS will moderate assessment with RCU professors.

Specific immediate target

The immediate target is to run a one-year pilot of a new AP program. The maximum number of students in the pilot will be 20% of twelfth grade, selected only on academic merit. It is important to have an early success, and we can minimize any teething problems by accepting only lower risk students. However, this pilot cohort will not be a representative sample of the whole target population.

Eventual target

After the pilot program, the AP program will be open to all students who achieve a minimum B grade for all core academic subjects at the end of grade 11. With a wider group of higher-risk students, we will probably encounter other kinds of difficulties later that were not anticipated in the pilot.

Planning considerations

The RCU freshman year is a general academic program. It is not specialized and requires no specialized equipment. The main inds of transition for students in an AP program are writing skills, standard of behavior, schedule and the role of homework and independent study.

No students will have reduced access to college. Students not accepted into the AP program may still gain college admission by achieving a satisfactory score on the state's standard university admission test, called the JKLY (known as the Jackly test). AP students who do not achieve a grade of C- in an AP unit might still achieve a passing grade for the parallel high school unit.

We cannot yet ascertain whether the AP program will have a trickle down positive effect to other students and on JKLY scores. However, we should be proactive during implementation to seek opportunities to create that effect.

We considered teaching both streams together in the same class but assessing them differently. The teachers thought that this would not be feasible. The accreditation rules at RCU discourage it, and the programs will have some differences in schedules, unit objectives, and teaching-learning methods.

We considered that, in the longer term future, we should consider the feasibility of separate AP streams to prepare students for the most highly competitive RCU courses, especially pre-medicine and pre-law.

We expect to write and test a college readiness evaluation during the pilot year, but cannot forecast its effects for future years. We hypothesize that grades are not an exclusive test of academic ability, but are also a test of maturation. In other words, some otherwise capable students might not be developmentally ready for an AP program if they demonstrate some of the following characteristics:

- Unwilling or unready to commit to any longer term goals.
- Difficulty with empathy.
- Difficulty with self-discipline.
- Difficulty acting and learning independently; still requires direct accountability.
- Difficulty interpreting a range of opinions.
- Difficulty being pragmatic and realistic; idealistic or "black-and-white" thinking.

Staff orientation

The current teachers of grade 12 were consulted and all have indicated willingness to implement the proposed program.

RCU must approve staff, this involves a recommendation from MHS, a meeting with RCU staff, provision of a Curriculum Vitae and copies of qualifications, and completion of RCU on-line induction, which is mainly familiarization with RCU policies and procedures.

It is proposed also to give all staff a one-day induction to clarify the difference in generic requirements between high school and university studies, and between specific requirements of the current MHS curriculum and the parallel RCU units. It would also establish suitable teaching and assessment modes for AP.

Staff coaching

It is then proposed to implement a professional development program as follows:

1. Select model teachers who can easily adapt their current teaching style to the RCU requirements or are already accomplished college instructors

2. All other teachers will observe model teachers. They will conduct brief reviews after each observation.
3. Conduct full reviews in regular staff meetings
4. Monitor progress of all teachers involved, including:
 - 4.a. Adaptations in our context
 - 4.b. Improvement of all teaching staff
 - 4.c. Improved engagement of students
 - 4.d. Improved engagement of parents

Anticipated change resistance

Teachers' adjustment. Some high school teachers might not want to adjust to college teaching styles. This is a low risk, because many teachers already have adjunct teaching roles in local colleges.

Some students and parents might prefer universities other than RCU. Students who do well in the AP program will have a good opportunity to make the MHS honor roll and to be accepted into other colleges, even when admission is highly competitive. They could also finish the freshman year at RCU and transfer to another college of their choice.

Parent reaction and animosity between AP and non-AP. Some parents might react negatively if they perceive their child might not succeed according to their aspirations.

For example, some parents will probably react negatively if their children narrowly miss AP admission or if the student population is perceived to be divided into groups labeled “smart kids” and “dumb kids.” If it creates animosity between students or parents, the atmosphere will become difficult to remedy.

It is a minimal risk, as the current program is already streamed, with some classes taking courses with more academic challenge. We do not need to exaggerate the difference. We can also minimize the risk of negative reactions to narrowly missing admission by having clear selection criteria in place beforehand with clear cut-off points. When teachers use qualitative criteria to grade student work, the normal MHS moderation procedure will eliminate ambiguity.

Staff and parent incentives

This AP program addresses parents' current aspirations for better college access. Staff will also improve their employment prospects as their CVs will be better grounds for promotion.

As the only AP high school in the western suburbs, both staff and parents will probably want MHS to draw students from a wider area and become a magnet school for the academically elite students of the western suburbs.

Risks

Change in government policy. This is a negligible risk to MHS as a private school.

Events that damage MHS's reputation. We do not envisage any events that might damage the reputation of MHS.

Miscommunication. Communication with RCU needs to be fairly continual as both parties have different interests to protect. Joint RCU-MHS planning and moderation meetings should prevent most problems of miscommunication.

If approved, the normal school communication systems should ensure good communication such as staff meetings, the school bulletin, parent-teacher conferences, and Principal's report at Board meetings.

Scheduling problems. A college-like schedule should not be problematical as the proportion of face-to-face class time is less than high school.

Changes in school funding or financial systems (e.g. unexpected loss of income). The program will follow the current school funding system with a relatively small initial investment.

Unexpected financial outlay. The program will work within the current school allowance for contingencies.

A new, strong competitor. No other high school in the western suburbs currently has an AP program. Our proposed contract with RCU would not be exclusive, and the city has several other major universities. It is quite possible that another competing AP program would start in the central or western part of the city. It need not pose a danger if the MHS program is successful.

Change in RCU accreditation rules. RCU's accreditation requirements could change and disallow AP programs in any form useful to MHS. This risk of negative effects, however, is negligible if the program is relatively small and is already running well.

Cost of college textbooks. Textbooks are prohibitively expensive. Although this will not pose a serious problem for the current socioeconomic group, we should prepare by offering e-books and software versions, some of which are free and open source. If necessary, we could also maintain multiple hard-copy sets in the library on short reserve.

RCU discontinuation. For RCU, the AP program is a strategy to recruit fee-paying students, so its future depends on enough of our students going to RCU. If it does not attract students, there is a high risk that RCU will terminate the AP program.

Loss of key staff. If successful, MHS will lose key staff because they will be more likely to get promotions to leadership positions in other schools. This potential turnover of staff is not necessarily bad. It suggests that this school will find it easier to recruit teaching staff and will be able to be more selective as to whom it accepts.

High dropout rate in AP. It is unlikely that increased numbers of students will completely drop out of high school, and the worst case scenario for most AP students is to do very well at high school level.

Unanticipated need for extra student support. AP students might need more support and tutoring in study skills than is normal at RCU. The first line of approach is to include the RCU unit on college writing. Other than that, the immediate solution is to provide the same kinds of support that RCU provides to freshman students. If this is still found to be a significant problem, we should consider selection criteria other than only academic achievement.

Teacher fatigue over time. Teachers might find that college teaching is not as attractive as they thought and might want to revert to high school teaching.

Public relations (PR)

The audience of our PR efforts will be the parents and guardians of students. PR will take the following forms:

1. A flyer introducing the program.
2. On open meeting for parents, explaining the program, its goals, and its advantages, and introducing a representative from RCU.
3. A brief ongoing section in the monthly school bulletin.
4. Reviews in regular parent-teacher meetings.

Budget

1. Teacher overtime for induction: \$10,000.00
2. First year library budget: \$5,000
3. Second year library budget: \$5,000
4. Third year library budget: \$5,000

Notes:

1. The negotiation with RCU so far has been on a win-win basis where no money changes hands. MHS gets simpler college admission, and RCU gets increased student enrollments.
2. Teaching observation can be arranged within the current schedule at no extra expense.
3. We expect to acquire a number of new library items and have made allowance.

Endnotes

-
- 1 David Gillespie. *Free schools: How to get a great education for your kids without spending a fortune* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan Australia, 2014).
 - 2 Gillespie, 2014, pp. 96ff, 153ff.
 - 3 Attributed to Gen. Norman Schwartzkopf.
 - 4 Gen. Peter Cosgrove, ABC radio interview, 2006.
 - 5 Jeff Gulleon. Not dated.
 - 6 *The Management of Organizations: Strategy Structure Behavior* Jay B. Barney, Ricky W. (Boston, MS: Griffin, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992), pp. 150-54.
 - 7 *Organisational Behaviour: Concepts, Controversies and Applications* Stehen P. Robbins, Terry Waters-Marsh, Ron Cacioppe (Sydney: Prentice Hall, 1994), pp. 176-79.
 - 8 Based on those given by Stewart Dinnen of WEC International.
 - 9 Based on <http://pestleanalysis.com/what-is-environmental-analysis/>.
 - 10 Based on Wikipedia.
 - 11 Based on www.businessdictionary.com/definition/organizational-capability.html.
 - 12 With thanks to Nick Randall, and based on the well-known Kübler-Ross cycle, published in Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. *On Death and Dying* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970).
 - 13 Cronbach, Stake (1967, p. 297f), Plueddemann (1987:59).
 - 14 Solmon, 1981:13; Brenninkmeijer et al., 1985; House, 1982:10, 11; HEC, 1992:5.
 - 15 Respati Adjipurwo, SETTTA, East Java. 2017.