

Leadership Through Empowerment Quadrant D Leadership Practices



International Center

for Leadership in Education

Acknowledgments

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conversation with all parties, including the community in which the organization resides. This can be a long process, but once it is complete — at least for the particular stage the organization is in — then individuals can proceed with a common interest. Their work will be aligned with the vision and, therefore, with each other's actions.

Leadership is not a fixed thing, but an ever-evolving and developing process that belongs to everyone in an organization. What is consistent is the belief system. Good leadership involves the many factors discussed above. This kit supports school leaders in helping their schools develop a set of beliefs that will inform good leadership. It provides numerous tools and strategies for developing and disseminating these beliefs and also offers a number of strategies for implementing leadership actions. Finally, the kit offers many tools and strategies for collecting data, analyzing data collaboratively, and developing strategies for transformation using data.

Everyone in the organization will need to check in constantly, so that there is alignment between the belief system and leadership activity. If leaders act without knowing who they are, being transparent in their actions, collecting and using good data, and being true to the commonly held beliefs, then they will not be effective. While leadership may appear to be a moving target, the core that drives it should be constant.

This kit seeks to address the following questions:

- Why are some leaders successful while others are not?
- How do successful leaders build a common cause?
- How do successful leaders communicate?
- How do successful leaders deal with conflict?
- How do successful leaders build resolution?

About this Kit

- How do successful leaders move beyond “that’s not the way we do things around here” thinking?
- What is the role of courage in successful leadership?
- How do successful leaders support the human resources in their schools?
- What is the difference between empowerment and license?
- When should leaders act, and when should they just sit with an issue?
- Is reflective leadership the same as just thinking on one’s feet?

Each chapter considers an aspect of leadership and empowerment through these lenses of inquiry, including these topics:

- the International Center’s model of leadership
- self-knowledge, philosophy, mission, and vision
- climate and relationships
- professional development
- courage to do the right thing
- conflict resolution and decision making
- the school and the school community

Overview of Contents

Chapter 1. Leadership and Empowerment defines leadership and introduces the essential factors that contribute to a leader’s ability to empower staff and students in order to create leadership density within the organization. Overviews of the Components of School Excellence, the Rigor/Relevance Framework, and Quadrant D Leadership, also known as adaptive leadership, are provided.

Refine Process on an Ongoing Basis

When everyone in the community is empowered, everyone is a leader, and everyone is responsible.

As schools implement the first seven Components of School Excellence, they must be sure to consider that these elements, along with the needs of staff, students, and the school community, will change over time. The systems and processes that are created when the components are incorporated as part of the school's culture should be critiqued frequently by all of its members. Individuals have the power to bring attention to issues, to work on those issues, and often to solve challenges that arise. In a system that empowers its membership, members are constantly monitoring what is occurring with respect to vision, efficiency, and success. Everyone is a leader. Everyone is responsible.

Quadrant D Leadership

A more detailed discussion about the Quadrant D Leadership Framework appears in the Appendix.

Quadrant D Leadership is the collaborative responsibility for taking action to reach future-oriented goals while meeting the intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of each student.

Quadrant D Leadership is the International Center's framework for school leaders. It is an effective blending of vision and empowerment that involves an adaptive process by which leaders, staff, and students take action to improve teaching and learning in their school.

Defining Quadrant D Leadership

Leadership is not a position but a disposition for taking action. When leadership is considered a position, the leader is judged by the decisions he or she makes. When leadership is considered a disposition, leadership is judged by the actions taken in the school community. One role of the individual school leader is to broaden the definition of leadership to include staff and students as leaders who share a common vision.

Quadrant D Leadership is the collaborative responsibility for taking action to reach future-oriented goals while meeting the intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of each student.

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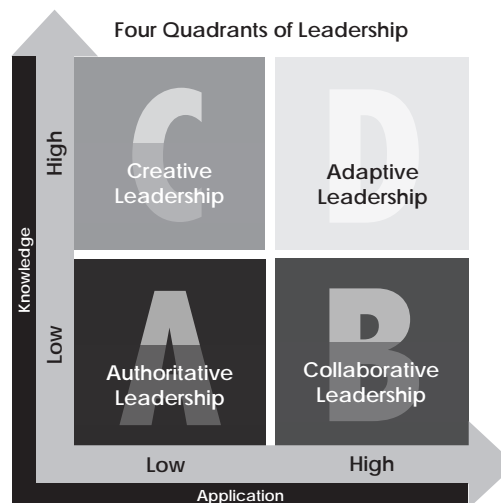
Quadrant D leaders are:

- flexible to adapt to the school environment
- able to analyze the leadership characteristics of their school
- knowledgeable about where a school community is and where it needs to move to
- able to develop a vision about the future needs of students and deliver a coherent message so stakeholders can speak the same language about leadership in the school
- able to work with people in a manner that ignites their passions, talents, and desire to attain the shared vision

The Quadrant D Leadership Framework

Like the Rigor/Relevance Framework, the leadership framework is divided into four quadrants and labeled along a vertical knowledge continuum and a horizontal application continuum.

Knowledge involves raising the level of thinking about what is important in a school. At a low level of knowledge, leaders acquire understanding of school practices and the management of day-to-day tasks. Moving to higher-level thinking inspires leaders to imagine and anticipate the future.



Implementing the Philosophy

Implementing the philosophy can be difficult. For individuals to say that they accept a set of beliefs is one thing, but for them to actually live, work, and act by those beliefs is another. Incumbent on the administration at first — and eventually on everyone — is monitoring the philosophy's implementation. Every idea, proposal, or action must be tested against the philosophy to check for alignment. For example, if the philosophy states that education is the best response to misbehavior, then punishment should not be the first response to misbehavior. All members of the community must live the philosophy.

The implementation process will run up against some well established habits. It can be difficult for people to break out of the ways they have been doing things. Someone has to call out violations of the belief system and then ensure that whatever behavior or program is misaligned becomes aligned.

It is easy to understand why the implementation of a philosophy can be a long and messy process. Often, under stress, school leaders grasp at short-term solutions rather than exhibiting the courage to accept the fact that enduring change takes time, nurturing, and commitment.

The Implementation Dip

An implementation dip refers to the way in which a new idea that starts out working well inevitably begins to lose momentum and effectiveness early in its history. This is typical, as there usually are unanticipated consequences and complexities when introducing something new. But setbacks should not be seen as excuses to abandon a philosophy. Rather, challenges demand patience and can be seen as opportunities to evaluate progress and identify areas where more work is needed. When issues arise, people in the system need to make adjustments to the program or in their own thinking. Anything that moves from an idea to reality will have to be adjusted due to unforeseen conditions and circumstances.

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Zebra New Tech High School

Zebra New Tech High School, in Rochester, Indiana, operates from a clear set of guiding principles. The school's mission, goals, and belief statements are predominant in printed materials and posters throughout the school and on the website. While academic competence is a key goal, so, too, are characteristics involving personal and social responsibility, cultural and global understanding, effective communication skills, and critical and creative thinking skills.

Zebra New Tech firmly believes that given time, support, and opportunities, all students can learn. Furthermore, the school is committed to:

- making decisions for continuous improvement based on data
- setting high expectations for students and staff
- maintaining an emotionally and physically safe learning environment
- implementing successful practices based on research
- learning in a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement
- aligning instructional operations and goals
- providing focused and aligned professional development opportunities
- partnering with the larger community
- modeling lifelong learning and admirable character
- connecting an engaging learning environment to students' unique qualities

The environment at Zebra New Tech is safe, orderly, respectful, and supportive. The school staff fosters a sense of responsibility for appropriate behavior. Adults serve as excellent role models for students and believe that relationships are an important prerequisite to student success in and outside the classroom. The school looks for opportunities to highlight and reinforce positive student behavior. Students are treated with respect and teachers value students' opinions.

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provided. And hopefully, within the process of dreaming and imagining a just community, students [or staff] will take an active role to become agents for change in their own lives.

A leader cannot change anyone or force someone to do something he or she does not want to do. However, a leader can change how he or she treats others, and a leader can develop a climate that will encourage and maximize the ease with which people can become empowered. Building the right climate for empowerment is absolutely crucial for success.

There is a self-perpetuating quality to a positive, empowering school climate. People who are empowered are likely to feel more positive about themselves and their organization, thus contributing to the positive climate, which can lead to greater satisfaction, higher productivity, and longer length of service.

Communications, Relationships, and Climate

A positive school climate is associated with fewer emotional and behavioral problems among students and increases in the academic success of high risk populations in urban schools. Some research indicates that, because it supports healthy development and avoidance of antisocial behaviors, a positive climate may be particularly helpful for male students and high risk students.

Another benefit appears to be increased job satisfaction for employees. This results when teachers perceive that their interactions with school leaders are positive and based on such factors as effective communication, advocacy, inclusive decision making, and fair evaluations.

A leader must pay attention to how he or she communicates with staff and faculty. It is equally important for a leader to develop an understanding of how faculty and staff perceive of his or her

Marshall, Megan L.
"Examining School
Climate: Defining
Factors and Educational
Influences"

communication style and effectiveness. One tool for achieving this perspective is the *We Lead – Whole Staff Survey*. Part of the *We Survey Suite*, which is discussed in more detail later in this chapter, the *We Lead* survey elicits feedback from staff and faculty about their perceptions of factors related to school climate and the school community, including communication between and among colleagues and leadership. The qualitative data gathered using the survey offers leaders insight about their school's and their own strengths and weaknesses. As of June 2010, 35,000 educators had taken the survey.

Empowerment and a positive climate are something of a chicken-and-egg phenomenon, each contributing to the success of the other.

Empowerment and a positive climate are something of a chicken-and-egg phenomenon, each contributing to the success of the other. The influence that a principal's leadership qualities have on school climate cannot be understated, but, again, imagine how much greater the influence on climate is when an entire community is empowered.

When a school leader is able to envision what teachers need, he or she is able to provide the appropriate tools and support to empower them to act confidently and independently, trusting them to do the right thing without close supervision and as part of the decision-making process. Empowering others involves ensuring that people have the information they need and treating them as competent individuals whose ideas and contributions have value.

Most educators would agree that encouraging students to be active members of their communities, through political or social activities, helps form habits of caring, involvement, curiosity, and commitment. Supporting students in such endeavors involves forging and nurturing relationships with others. The International Center studied schools that were successful despite confronting challenges such as poverty, high student mobility, and diversity. The study showed that relationships were an important factor in the positive movement in these schools:

Classroom Visitation Rubric

Learner Engagement		Low	Below Average	Average	Above Average	High
Intensity	Positive body language, consistent focus, verbal participation, student confidence, and excitement	Few students exhibit positive body language, are focused on what is being taught, are eager to answer questions, or appear to be excited to learn	Fewer than half of the students exhibit positive body language, are focused on what is being taught, are eager to answer questions, or appear to be excited to learn	Half of the students exhibit positive body language, are focused on what is being taught, are eager to answer questions, or appear to be excited to learn	More than half of the students exhibit positive body language, are focused on what is being taught, are eager to answer questions, or appear to be excited to learn	Most students exhibit positive body language, are focused on what is being taught, are eager to answer questions, or appear to be excited to learn
Breadth	Degree to which all students are engaged	Few students are fully engaged in classroom instruction and activity	Fewer than half of the students are fully engaged in classroom instruction and activity	Half of the students are fully engaged in classroom instruction and activity	More than half of the students are fully engaged in classroom instruction and activity	Most students are fully engaged in classroom instruction and activity
Consistency	Consistency of engagement through time observed	Learner engagement is inconsistent throughout the duration of instruction	Fewer than half of the students are consistently engaged in instruction	Half of the students are consistently engaged in instruction	More than half of the students are consistently engaged in instruction	Most students are consistently engaged in instruction
Evidence of Rigor		Low	Below Average	Average	Above Average	High
Thinking	Students are expected to reflect, research, analyze, or summarize	Students are not required to use higher order thinking skills, such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis, to answer questions and solve problems	Students seldom use higher order thinking skills, such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis, to answer questions and solve problems	Students occasionally use higher order thinking skills, such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis, to answer some questions and solve some problems	Students use higher order thinking skills, such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis, to answer more than half of the questions and solve problems	Students frequently use higher order thinking skills, such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis to answer most questions and solve problems
Verbal Responses	Students are expected to give thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding	Students' verbal responses demonstrate simple recall and basic understanding of knowledge as evidenced by single word responses or recital of fact	Students' verbal responses demonstrate comprehension through explanation of knowledge	Students' verbal responses demonstrate ability to extend and refine acquired knowledge	Students' verbal responses demonstrate ability to extend and refine acquired knowledge automatically and routinely to analyze and solve problems and create unique solutions	Students' verbal responses demonstrate competence to think in complex ways and apply knowledge and skills when confronted with perplexing unknowns

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In both of these cases, the teachers benefitted from having a colleague with whom to share ideas and strategies.

One generally unavoidable issue with traditional supervision and evaluation models is that the observer is in an administrative position. This can cloud the supervision process. Teachers may not have sufficient trust to try something new in front of their evaluator. Peer supervision is an extraordinary empowerment tool that avoids this dilemma.

Peer supervision can operate in several ways. The basic concept is for one teacher to observe another's class. Before the observation, however, the teacher who is being observed sets the parameters for what will be observed, how it will be observed, and how the observer will record the observations. All of the information remains confidential. Sometimes nothing is written other than a record indicating that the peer observation took place. There is only a conversation, or post-conference, between the two peers after the observation occurs.

For example, Ms. Jones wants to know if she is favoring the girls in her class. She asks Mr. Frank to do a peer observation. Before the observation, Ms. Jones explains what she wants Mr. Frank to do, and he asks clarifying questions, such as, "What do you mean by favoring?" "What does favoring look like?" "At what point does paying extra attention to a particular group become favoring?"

These questions ensure that both parties are on the same page. Then Ms. Jones explains what she would like Mr. Frank to do. For example, she might ask him to count the number of times she calls on girls and the number of times she calls on boys. Mr. Frank could keep a checklist to give to Ms. Jones at the end of the class, and the process could end right there. Or, Ms. Jones may request a post-observation conference with Mr. Frank to discuss what he saw in her classroom.

Peer Supervision

When an evaluator is also an administrator, a teacher may not have sufficient trust to try something new. Peer supervision is an empowerment tool that avoids this dilemma.



Chapter 5

The Courage to Do the Right Thing

Good Versus Great

The difference between being a good leader and a great leader is courage, and the greatest courage is moral courage. Leaders must know who they are, what they are, and what they believe. Self-knowledge forms the foundation upon which a leader builds a system that is based on a common set of beliefs. Up until this point, this kit has been about creating this system, which allows courage through empowerment.

An act of courage is not an act of reckless abandon. For many people, the word courage conjures an image of the person who, without a moment's thought, runs into a burning building to save a child. Such a person is considered a hero, an individual of great courage. To be sure, this is one type of courage in action, and it is to be admired.

The courage discussed in this chapter, however, is a more thoughtful and less instinctive type of bravery. A leader with moral courage can do the right thing even if it potentially means the end of a professional career. This kind of courage may result in there being a winner and a loser. The courageous leader knows that he or she may very well be the loser by doing the right thing, but then does it anyway. So, if the hero who ran into the burning building to save the child was conscious of the fact that he or she had a far greater chance of dying than living, and an even smaller chance of saving the child, and yet chose to go ahead with this selfless act, he or she has shown the highest level of courage.

Moral Courage in Schools

Moral courage is a necessity in effective leadership. Throughout history, there have been many periods during which school leaders' moral courage has been exercised particularly strenuously, such as during school integration. Some of the issues that have challenged leaders' moral courage in the past persist today. At the same time, new challenges have emerged.

Some Basics of Meaningful Conversation

Conversations are more successful when a group's rules and roles are clarified at the outset.

Short, Paula M. and Johnson, Patsy E. "Exploring the Links Among Teacher Empowerment, Leader Power, and Conflict"

CD

For a conversation to be clear, productive, and empowering, all participants, including the group leader, must:

- listen to everyone carefully and thoroughly
- ask questions
- seek advice
- gather information
- consider various opinions

The Rules

Conversations are more successful when a group's rules and roles are clarified at the outset. The group should outline the process for decision making for the situation under discussion. Participants must know how their group fits into the larger picture. Is the group intended to generate ideas, offer advice, or make decisions, or is there more than one purpose for the group's work? If a group is intended to be advisory, but the members think they have the power to make decisions, trouble lies ahead. It cannot be overstated: Be clear about roles and purpose from the start!

When a committee is formed and meets but participants' ideas are not used, it damages relationships and the chances for empowering others now and in the future. "Destructive consequences occur when [team] members feel powerless, alienated, and oppressed and become passive and combative."

As a leader, think about the teams you create to aid in decision making. How do teachers and students figure into these committees? What authority are committees given?

- Do hiring committees give advice or make the decision?
- Do textbook adoption committees give advice or make the selection decision?

Think about how a leader could change the following meeting agenda items into discussion starters:

- Should the school have a half-day the day before Thanksgiving?
- Should effort grades be added to report cards?
- How should the school set limits on the number of students using the library during study hall?
- Would faculty like to create common rubrics for evaluating assignments in all classes?

A Constructivist Use of Data

Principal Robert Stock of Sam Rayburn High School, in Pasadena, Texas, has developed a unique approach to working with data in faculty meetings. In the first step of the process, he distributes data packages, but asks teachers to refrain from examining the information. Teachers may ask questions about the data, such as sample size and collection methods. This takes about five minutes.

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Data Discussion Process: Step #1

Activity

Clarifying Questions (5 minutes max)

Purpose

Help group understand the data set, including information about source, format, statistical analysis, sample size, time interval, etc.

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chapter, the *We Support – Community Survey*, which is designed to give voice to families and the general community, is an excellent tool for identifying community outreach needs.

Parents comprise the largest directly influential group of the school community. They have hopes and dreams for their children, and they expect the school to support them and their children in reaching those goals. Parents can be demanding, but schools cannot overlook this powerful constituency.

Charles Amodeo, a veteran teacher and school administrator whose credentials include teaching a number of professional development courses on community and parent involvement, and Suomi Amodeo, an experienced educator with a background in working with socioeconomically disadvantaged urban populations as well as alternative education programs, point to requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act* as increasing schools' urgency to ensure parent involvement. As schools seek to increase this involvement, it is essential for them to remember that parent involvement extends beyond the school itself. It also occurs in the home, and school personnel should be prepared to help educate parents about what they can do in their homes to help their children — empower them — to succeed in their educations.

There are many strategies schools can use to encourage family involvement. What mechanisms — e-newsletters, website, notices sent home with students, community bulletin boards, etc. — does the school use to notify families about opportunities? What forums — individual parent workshops, series of parent workshops, teacher-parent conferences, grade level meetings for parents, etc. — are used to educate families about important topics?

Empowering Parents

Amodeo, Charles
J. and Amodeo,
Suomi Erin.
*Reaching the
Hard-to-Involve
Parents: Powerful
Partnerships
Under NCLB
and Parent
Involvement
Action Packets for
K-12 Schools*