

The Key to Effective Teams in Schools: Emotional Intelligence

I'm going to share one of my greatest discoveries about developing teams. This understanding has led me to take actions that otherwise would never occur to me when working with groups. I also think it might be one of the keys to building effective teams of educators who can collaborate, learn together, and transform our schools. You've probably heard about emotional intelligence (EI) -- the ability to recognize when you're experiencing emotions, to have strategies for managing them, and to recognize other people's emotions and respond appropriately to them. A team leader's EI is extremely important, but there's also such thing as a group's *collective emotional intelligence*. And this, say the researchers, is what sets high-functioning teams apart from average ones.

Why Group Emotional Intelligence Matters

A team's emotional intelligence might be the most important predictor of what it will do together, what conversations will sound like, and how members will feel about going to meetings -- and just because a team is comprised of individuals with strong emotional intelligence doesn't mean that the team itself will have high EI. Groups take on their own character.

Group Emotional Intelligence Examples

Some indicators of low EI in a group:

- Team members don't look at each other when they're talking. A speaker might look at one other member or at the team leader.
- Team members allow themselves to be distracted by technology, each other, and other things.
- Team members interrupt each other in discussions.
- When someone shares an idea or perspective, the first response from another member is a disagreement, skeptical question, or challenge.
- Questions about the processes used in meeting are constantly raised.
- Individuals raise potentially contentious topics that might be important to address but are not relevant or appropriate at that time.
- Team members put each other down or attack each other.
- One person can hijack the meeting because of her opinion, confusion, disagreement, or emotional state.
- There's a lot of blaming others (parents, administration, "the district").
- Conversations often focus on the sphere outside of our control or influence.
- Personal beliefs are espoused as truths. For example, "Our students can't do that."
-

Some indicators of strong EI in a group:

- When a team member is talking, he makes eye contact with all others. Team members paraphrase each other's ideas.
- When a new idea is put on the table, there's curiosity about it.
- You hear comments such as:
 - I've shared a lot already. I'm going to sit back and listen to others on this topic.
 - I'd really like to hear your perspective on this, _____. We haven't heard much from you today.
 - I'm having a hard day and I'm not feeling great this afternoon. I'm working on shifting this and I don't want you to wonder why I'm less engaged today.
- Team members express empathy for each other, as well as for others outside of their team.
- Conversations focus on seeking solutions.
- Team members address when others seem to be having emotions. This can sound like, "I'm wondering what's going on for you right now, _____. You seem upset."
- Team members offer feedback in the moment on their process. This can sound like, "I feel like we might have rushed through that discussion too fast to surface everyone's ideas. Do others feel that way?"
- Team members offer feedback at the end of meetings on their process. This can sound like, "I appreciated our conversation at the start of our meeting. That was really helpful for me to get clarity. I wish we'd had more time to articulate our next steps. Is that something that others would like to spend time on next time?"
- Humor is used appropriately to lighten situations and call awareness to a group or individual's mood.
- People find things to be optimistic about.
- Team members appreciate each other for their contributions to the team and their action.

Further Benefits for the Group

Emotionally intelligent teams have ways of managing the moods that one member is experiencing as well as their moods as a team. This "management" doesn't necessarily come from the leader -- in fact, an indicator of an emotionally intelligent team is that any member accepts authority to address moods, communication dynamics, and interactions between members.

Much of the time, the ways that teammates manage these interactions feel comfortable and appropriate. In an emotionally intelligent team, members welcome insights, observations, and suggestions for improving their work and team dynamics. When one person starts talking too much, another might lightheartedly say, "OK, James! We've got it. You love this idea and hope we start working on it right away. I appreciate your enthusiasm and want to make sure we hear from others, so zip it for a while!" And in an emotionally intelligent team, James would laugh, motion the zipping of his lips, and sit back to listen to others.

The concept that a team has emotional intelligence can significantly affect how we facilitate groups and can help us address myriad challenges in our teams. But the purpose is not just so we feel good.

Teams need to develop emotional intelligence so that members can engage in conversations that push each other's thinking (not each other's buttons), and that include challenging questions, taking personal risks, and acknowledging vulnerability. Building emotionally intelligent teams might just be the most important work that we do as facilitators, department heads, instructional coaches, and leaders. In my next post, I'll share strategies for building a team's emotional intelligence. It can be done

Characteristics of an Effective School Team

Why Does this Matter?

Here's why I think we need to articulate our beliefs and practices about good teams:

Strong teams within a school are essential to retaining and sustaining teachers. In schools with low staff turnover (even in challenging urban contexts), teachers report feeling connected to colleagues and supported by them. They also describe feeling that they belong to a team whose members are fulfilling a mission together. The emotions activated in this context are those which keep us engaged in a difficult endeavor for a long time. Public education is a hard place to be these days -- we need structures (such as strong teams) that cultivate our emotional resilience.

If a team is effective, then people learn from each other. They accomplish far more than would be possible alone. They inspire and challenge each other. An individual's strengths can be exploited, and we don't have to do the stuff we're not so good at. Again, this is an efficient approach to undertaking a huge project (transforming a school, for example), and it feels good.

What Makes a Good Team?

Here are some key characteristics that I believe make a good team:

1. A good team knows why it exists.

It's not enough to say, "We're the 6th grade team of teachers" -- that's simply what defines you (you teach the same grade), not why you exist. A purpose for being is a team might be: "We come together as a team to support each other, learn from each other, and identify ways that we can better meet the needs of our sixth grade students." Call it a purpose or a mission -- it doesn't really matter. What matters is that those who attend never feel like they're just obligated to attend "another meeting." The purpose is relevant, meaningful, and clear.

2. A good team creates a space for learning.

There are many reasons why those of us working in schools might gather in a team -- but I believe that all of those reasons should contain opportunities for learning with and from each other. I have met very few educators who don't want to learn -- we're a curious bunch and there's so much to learn about education. So in an effective team, learning happens within a safe context. We can make mistakes, take risks, and ask every single question we want.

3. In a good team, there's healthy conflict.

This is inevitable and essential if we're learning together and embarked on some kind of project together. We disagree about ideas, there's constructive dialogue and dissent, and our thinking is pushed.

4. Members of a good team trust each other.

This means that when there's the inevitable conflict, it's managed. People know each other. We listen to each other. There are agreements about how we treat each other and engage with each other, and we monitor these agreements. There's also someone such as a facilitator who ensures that this is a safe space. Furthermore, in order for there to be trust, within a strong team we see equitable participation among members and shared decision-making. We don't see a replication of the inequitable patterns and structures of our larger society (such as male dominance of discourse and so on).

5. A good team has a facilitator, leader, or shared leaders.

There's someone -- or a rotation of people -- who steer the ship. This ensures that there's the kind of intentionality, planning, and facilitation in the moment that's essential for a team to be high functioning.

What Next?

This last point is what I've been contemplating for this fall: What does a good team leader do? How exactly does she facilitate? How can leadership rotate or be shared?

10 Truths about Building School Teams

I used these to remind myself of what it would take to build a resilient, high-performing team that worked in challenging contexts. I was hesitant to call them "truths," but these ideas have been tried and tested, and they feel truer to me than anything else when building a team. Here they are:

1. Teams that work in or with schools exist in order to serve the social, emotional, and academic needs of children.

We might have all kinds of things that we do, we may also care for the adults in the mix, but we exist to serve children.

2. Learning is the primary work of all teams.

Whether you're in a leadership team, a data team, or a curriculum design team, your work is to learn. The only way we'll make a dent in the mountain of challenges that we face in schools is if we, the educators, never stop learning.

3. Who you are as a leader has the greatest influence on a team.

Your emotional intelligence as a leader is the key knowledge and skill set from which all others emerge. Leaders must learn to recognize and manage their emotions -- and recognize and manage the emotions of others. We need to make friends with feelings. They exist. The more we battle or avoid feelings, the bigger the mess. When we meet them head on, we can make progress toward building healthy teams and meeting the needs of kids.

4. All teams exist within systems and power structures.

A team has transformational potential only with an understanding of those systems. Teams can do satisfactory work without attending to power -- but if they aspire to be transformational, team members and their leader need to hone their understanding of power and how it manifests in organizations and structures (including the team structure) in order to interrupt inequities. This is a big idea.

5. Teams thrive with trust.

With trust, a team can become a resilient community. This means that team leaders should pay close and careful attention to levels of trust, and should intentionally work to build trust. Trust is a slippery, tricky thing to build and maintain. It goes far beyond a beginning-of-the-year community-building activity. Perhaps the most strategic plan that a leader can design is one that builds trust among adults.

6. Building teams takes time.

Teams need time to develop their what, why, and how as well as to develop relationships. This is another hard truth that we can't get around: How do we find the time for all that it takes to build a team? We cut and prune other things so that we have time for building teams. There is enough time if we prioritize.

7. The health of a meeting reflects the health of the team.

You can take the pulse of a team's overall health by observing ten minutes of any meeting. If you want to strengthen a team you lead, focus on designing engaging, reflective, and meaningful meetings. Make sure that what happens is relevant. Make sure that you get feedback on your leadership. Make sure that people know what they're doing there and why they're meeting. For every hour of meeting time, you should spend two to three hours planning. (Yes, that much planning time -- that's what it takes.)

8. A team's collective emotional intelligence is the key factor in its level of performance.

I wrote about this in a previous post, [The Key to Effective Teams in Schools: Emotional Intelligence](#).

9. Communication between team members is the thread that connects everything.

It always comes down to what we say and how we say it. But teams in schools never seem to pause and discuss the kind of communication that we aspire to have. We complain to each other off line, we bemoan the grumpy colleague or the one who dominates conversations, but we never deal with it head on. It's time. We need to address communication in teams -- down to the granular level of the words that we use with each other.

10. Conflict is natural, normal and can be healthy, but unproductive conflict needs to be managed.

And the final truth: We need to deal with conflict -- another scary elephant in the room where teams meet.



EDUCATION COUNCIL
NEW ZEALAND | Mātaū Aotearoa

The Leadership Strategy for the teaching profession of Aotearoa New Zealand

Enabling every teacher to develop
their leadership capability

Te Rautaki Kaihautū mō te Umanga Whakaakoranga o Aotearoa

Kia āhei ia kaiako ki te whakawhanake
i ōna pūkenga kaihautū



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Minister of Education
Hon Chris Hipkins

I would like to congratulate the Education Council | Mātatu Aotearoa and the teaching profession on their collaborative development of the *Leadership Strategy for the teaching profession of Aotearoa New Zealand*.

This Government values the contribution of teachers and principals and their role as leaders in learning, and we are committed to raising the status of the profession. The Leadership Strategy is unique in the sense that it sees leadership as a system and not a layer. We know that all teachers have a leadership role to play whether it be in their centres, their classrooms or in the wider education community.

The Strategy is intended for teachers in all roles from early childhood, schooling, and other professional settings, across English and Māori medium. It's steeped in international and New Zealand research, and sets out a guiding framework for teachers to develop their leadership capability. This is an opportunity for New Zealand to be world-leading in its approach to leadership in Education.

The companion document, the *Educational Leadership Capability Framework*, goes deeper. It outlines core educational leadership capabilities, and what these capabilities look like in practice in different spheres of leadership influence: organisational leadership, team or middle leadership, and expert teachers and those who take responsibility for an initiative.

High quality teaching and leadership is integral to the Government's vision for education. Research shows that after high quality teaching, strong leadership makes the biggest difference to learner achievement at all levels of the education system. Leaders also need to be learners, and continually adapt their practice to reflect the shifting paradigms of education, as well as respond to changes in technology and society.

Leaders cannot work in isolation – they need to work collaboratively with one another, with and across their setting, and with their whānau, families and communities to meet the learning needs and well-being of their learners. This Strategy provides the platform for a shared understanding of leadership and its importance, promoting collaborative engagement across the whole profession.

This Government is committed to supporting registered teachers in the development of their leadership capability, and in providing opportunities for them to continually grow in their roles. I am sure that the ground-breaking ideas and guidance presented in this Leadership Strategy will be an essential component of their success.

Ngā mihi nui

Hon Chris Hipkins



Chairperson Education Council Barbara Ala'alatoa

**Ki te kahore he whakakitenga ka
ngaro te iwi**
*Without foresight or vision the people
will be lost*

Kīngi Tāwhiao Potatatu Te Wherowhero

I am delighted to deliver the *Leadership Strategy for the teaching profession of Aotearoa New Zealand* and the companion document, the *Educational Leadership Capability Framework*, to you.

The Strategy signals a brand new approach by giving opportunity for the growth and development of leadership capability to all registered teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is relevant to teachers in positional and non-positional roles across all settings. Ultimately, the Strategy aims to make leadership development accessible to everyone.

This Leadership Strategy has been eagerly awaited by the profession, with many of you involved in the conversations that have shaped its development over the past two years. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your input. Your support and commitment have been truly remarkable.

You told us during the consultation on the draft Leadership Strategy that you supported the development of a leadership capability framework. This is important, because it clarifies the capabilities needed for effective leadership across different levels of the profession. We heard you and we commissioned the New

Zealand Council of Educational Research to develop the Educational *Leadership Capability Framework*. This framework gives life to the Leadership Strategy, which is why we wanted to release both documents at the same time.

I firmly believe that effective leadership has the power to transform. It benefits not only our learners, but also the families and whānau of which they are part.

As a teacher and principal, I have been privileged to witness the teaching profession coming together to review evidence, stimulate thinking, and discuss future focused leadership in New Zealand. This Strategy presents a genuinely New Zealand vision of leadership and builds on the foundations of earlier work.

Leadership is a journey and this Strategy will help you to navigate your journey. This, in turn, will help you to strengthen the way you lead in your current role, and to develop your leadership capability and understanding of what leadership in different spheres of influence looks like in practice. It will provide a framework to change and adapt your leadership practice as you move along in your journey; now and in the future.

This strategy is a taonga for the profession.

Ngā mihi nui

Barbara

INTRODUCTION

This Leadership Strategy supports the growth and development of leadership capability for all registered teachers across English medium and Māori medium settings in Aotearoa New Zealand – in both positional and non-positional leadership roles.

The purpose of this strategy is to:

- guide and inform a system-level approach to the development of leadership capability for teaching professionals
- provide a guiding framework for building leadership capability and growing leaders at all levels and across all the mediums of teaching and learning; within kura, early childhood education, primary and secondary schools
- identify priorities for investment in leadership capability development.

VISION

To enable every teacher, regardless of their role or setting, to have the opportunity to develop their own leadership capability

so that

through principled and inspirational leadership, a culturally capable, competent and connected teaching profession achieves educational equity and excellence for all children and young people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This vision captures the responsibility of the teaching profession to ensure more equitable educational outcomes.¹ It also points to the profession's aspirations for a fair and just society that is socially and economically healthy, and to the importance of deliberate and well-informed leadership practices that are designed to achieve greater equity of outcomes for all learners.

The concept of principled and inspirational leadership requires that leaders across the profession will advocate for quality public New Zealand education, promote inclusion and equity, and strengthen their contribution to public debate and decision-making on important educational issues.²

Effective leadership can make a powerful contribution to achieving this vision if it is student-centred,³ and fosters collective engagement in identifying, putting into practice, and sustaining, the changes required.⁴

1 Education Council: Leadership strategy synthesis: Professional forum, August, 2017.

2 For further information about equity-orientated (transformative) leadership see C.M. Shields (2018). *Transformative leadership in education: Equitable change in an uncertain and complex world 2nd ed.* New York: Routledge; Galloway, M.K. & Ishimaru, A.M. (2015). Radical recentering: Equity in educational leadership standards. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 1-37; and McNae, R., Morrison, M. & Notman, R. (eds) (2017). *Educational Leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand: Issues of context and social justice*. Wellington: NZCER Press.

3 Robinson, V.M.J. (2011). *Student-centered leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

4 Robinson, V.M.J. (2018). *Reduce change to increase improvement*. London, UK: Corwin.

KUPU WHAKATAKI

Ko tā tēnei Rautaki Hautū he tautoko i te whanaketanga me te tupuranga o ngā pūmanawa hautū mō ngā kaiako rēhita katoa puta noa i ngā horopaki arareo Ingarihi, arareo Māori hoki i Aotearoa - ahakoa hautū i roto i tētahi tūranga, ahakoa hautū i waho i tētahi tūranga.

Te whāinga matua o tēnei rautaki he:

- ārahi, he āwhina hoki i tētahi takahanga ā-pūnaha ki te whanaketanga o ngā pūmanawa hautū mō te hunga ngaio whakaako
- hora anga ārahi mō te whakapakari pūmanawa hautū, me te whakamārō tuarā mō ngā kaihautū i ngā taumata katoa o te whakaako me te ako; i roto i ngā kura, i ngā pūtahi kōhungahunga, i ngā kura tuatahi, tuarua hoki
- tautohu aronga matua mō te haumi ki te whanaketanga whakapakari kaihautū.

TE MATAKITE

He whakawātea i te ara ki ngā kaiako katoa, ahakoa te tūranga, ahakoa te horopaki whakaako ki te whakapakari i ōna pūmanawa hautū,

kia tino eke ngā tamariki katoa o Aotearoa ki ngā taumata mātauranga kounga tiketike, i runga i te mahi pai o ngā kaihautū o tētahi tira kaiako matatau ā-ahurea, tūhono ki te ao.

Ka mau i tēnei matakite te haepapa o te tira kaiako kia whakapikia te ōritenga o te whiwhinga putanga mātauranga mā te katoa.¹ Ka waitohu hoki ki ngā moemoeā o te tira kaiako ki tētahi ao takatika, tapatahi hoki e noho ana i roto i te hauora ā-pāpori, ā-ōhanga, me te hira o ngā tikanga hautū i āta whiria, i āta rangahaua hoki, i āta hoahoatia kia whakapikia te ōritenga whiwhi putanga mā ngā ākonga katoa.

E tutuki ai tēnei ariā o te hautū i runga i ngā mātāpono papai, whakaoho hoki i te iwi, me mātua whakatū kaihautū huri noa i te tira ka kauwhau tikanga mō te mātauranga tūmatanui tino pai rawa mō Aotearoa, ka whakapai i te haonga i te katoa, i te whiwhinga mō te katoa, ka whakapakari i tā rātou tāpae kōrero ki ngā taukumekume whakaaro me ngā whakataunga take mō ngā pūtake mātauranga nunui.²

Ka taea e te hautūtanga whai hua tēnei matakite te āwhina, mehemea e hāngai ana ki te ākonga,³ e poipoi ana i te whāinga wāhi ngātahi ki te tautohu, ki te whakatinana me te whakaū i ngā huringa e hiahiatia ana.⁴

1 Education Council: Leadership strategy synthesis: Professional forum, August, 2017.

2 For further information about equity-orientated (transformative) leadership see C.M. Shields (2018). *Transformative leadership in education: Equitable change in an uncertain and complex world 2nd ed.* New York: Routledge; Galloway, M.K. & Ishimaru, A.M. (2015). Radical recentring: Equity in educational leadership standards. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 1-37; and McNae, R., Morrison, M. & Notman, R. (eds) (2017). *Educational Leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand: Issues of context and social justice.* Wellington: NZCER Press.

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4 Robinson, V.M.J. (2018). *Reduce change to increase improvement.* London, UK: Corwin.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Four guiding principles provide the foundation for this strategy:⁵

- **Principle 1:** To present a clear vision for educational leadership in the Aotearoa New Zealand context that will enhance the learning and well-being of all children and young people and contribute to a more equitable society.
- **Principle 2:** To support leadership development across the teaching profession, and the policy and provision that will enable this to occur.
- **Principle 3:** To enable increased clarity about the leadership capabilities required for a future-orientated teaching profession; a future-orientated profession is one that learns from the past and takes account of the present, thereby preparing the profession for the anticipated future.
- **Principle 4:** To promote evidence-based practices in the context of a research and development programme based in Aotearoa New Zealand, enabling collaborative work within and between research, practice, and policy settings, and contributing to the ongoing development of the leadership knowledge base.

OUR COMMITMENT TO TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

We recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a founding document of our nation.

Signed in 1840 by leaders of hapū and the Crown, Te Tiriti o Waitangi affirmed Māori rights as tangata whenua and provided a place and a shape of governance for Pākehā in Aotearoa.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi provided a basis for ongoing, peaceful power-sharing relationships between the first peoples and all others who would come in later years.

Today Te Tiriti o Waitangi is seen as a commitment under which Māori and all other New Zealanders may live together in the spirit of honourable relationships, with the promise to take the best possible care of each other. This requires the injustices caused by colonisation to be addressed and all New Zealanders to engage in creating a positive future that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

New Zealand is an increasingly multicultural nation, and Te Tiriti o Waitangi is inclusive of today's new settlers. As with earlier immigrants, their 'place to stand' comes with an expectation that they will live here in a way that respects the commitments of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the position of Māori as tangata whenua.

As teachers, we are committed to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and we understand this has implications in all of our practice.

⁵ See Leadership strategy synthesis: Academic Forum, August 2017.

TŌ TĀTOU NGĀKAUNUI KI TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

E whakaae ana tatou ki Te Tiriti o Waitangi, te tuhinga whakapumau o to- tatou whenua.

I hainatia i te tau kotahi mano, waru rau, whā tekau e ngā rangatira o ngā hapū me te Karauna, ā, i whakatauhia e Te Tiriti o Waitangi te mana motuhake o te iwi Māori, ko ia te tangata whenua, ā, me te whakarato i tētahi wāhanga me tētahi hanganga mō te Pākehā i roto i te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa. Nā Te Tiriti o Waitangi i horapa te whāriki whakawhanaungatanga i runga o te rangimārie me te whai mana o ngā iwi taketake me ērā atu ka tae mai ki konei. I tēnei rā, ko Te Tiriti o Waitangi e whakapūmau ana i te noho tahi o te iwi Māori me te katoa o ngā iwi e noho ana i Aotearoa, i runga o te whanaungatanga whai mana, me te whakapono kia tino manaaki, kia tino tiaki tētahi i tētahi. He mea nui kia whakatutukihia ngā tūkinotanga o te tāmitanga, ā, kia whai wāhi te katoa o ngā iwi o Aotearoa ki te waihanganga i tētahi huarahi haere whakamua tōtika, e whakamana ana i Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Kei te nui haere te iwi kākano tini o Aotearoa, ka mutu, ka whai wāhi Te Tiriti o Waitangi ki ngā iwi whai whenua o nāianeī. He rite anō ki ngā iwi manene o mua, ko tō rātou ‘tūrangawaewae’ ka whai tonu i te tikanga ka noho mai rātou i tēnei whenua i runga o te whakaaro nui ki ngā paihere o Te Tiriti o Waitangi me te mana tangata whenua o te iwi Māori. Ko tātou ngā kaiako e ngākaunui ana ki te whakamana i Te Tiriti o Waitangi, ā, me tō tātou mārama ki te whai pānga o tēnei ki te katoa o ā tātou mahi.

NGĀ MĀTĀPONO HEI WHAKAMAUNGA IHU WAKA

E whā ngā mātāpono taketake hei tūāpapa mō tēnei rautaki:⁵

- **Mātāpono 1:** Kia horaina he matakite mārama tonu mō te hautūtanga mātauranga mō te horopaki o Aotearoa e piki ake ai te akoranga me te hauora o ngā tamariki me ngā taiohi katoa, me kore e piki ake te ōrite o te oranga mō te pāpori katoa.
- **Mātāpono 2:** Kia tautokona te whanaketanga kaihautū puta noa i te tira kaiako katoa, me ngā kaupapa here, tahua hoki e tika ana hei whakatinana.
- **Mātāpono 3:** He whakawātea i te mārama nui ake ki ngā pūmanawa kaihautū e hiahia ana mō tētahi tira kaiako aro whakamua, tētahi tira hoki e ako ana i ngā āhuatanga o ngā tūpuna me te aro anō hoki ki ngā tikanga o nāianeī, e whakamārōtia ai te tuarā o te tira kaiako mō ngā rā e heke mai nei.
- **Mātāpono 4:** He whakanui i ngā tikanga mahi i tautokona ki ngā taunakaitanga pai ake, i roto i tētahi kaupapa rangahau, whanaketanga i roto tonu i Aotearoa, e haere tonu ai he mahi paheko i roto i waenga hoki i ngā horopaki rangahau, tikanga mahi, kaupapa here hoki, me te āwhina i te whakatinanatanga o te mātauranga e pā ana ki te hautūtanga.

⁵ See Leadership strategy synthesis: Academic Forum, August 2017.

Leadership is about influence with purpose. It is about taking people and ideas to new places. It is the practice of mobilising people to tackle tough challenges and thrive. It involves establishing and maintaining a culture that enables people to adapt, thrive and undertake collective work that has a positive impact in terms of an agreed vision and purpose.⁶

Educational leadership is the practice of supporting others to make a positive difference to children's and young people's learning. It involves creating and sustaining the conditions known to enhance their learning.⁷ It requires the capability to work effectively with colleagues and other adults to support learning and to create new solutions and knowledge together. For those in positional leadership roles it also involves building and sustaining thriving teams and institutions that support ongoing professional learning.⁸

Leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand is unique as the ethos of the education sector distinguishes it from other education sectors around the world. Our education professionals are regarded by our colleagues in other countries as relationally and culturally adept and committed to diversity and social justice. This ethos has ensured that our education professionals lead with purpose. They are adaptable, and responsive to innovative policies and practices that support equity and excellence for all learners. This purpose driven approach must be preserved as we seek to further enhance leadership capability across the profession.

Educational leaders in Aotearoa New Zealand need to be aware and responsive to the nature of the relationship between Māori and government. They must be culturally knowledgeable and adept to lead successfully in the bicultural landscape of our country.

This strategy acknowledges the relevance and value of the cultural distinctiveness of leadership in Māori medium and bilingual educational settings. It also recognises the ways in which leadership in English medium settings can be enriched by an understanding of leadership in te ao Māori. It also acknowledges our diverse multicultural community, where the individual identities of all learners are recognised and valued, and where educational leaders can foster the growth of an inclusive and respectful national community.

A commitment to the development of these distinctive elements of leadership, derived from indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being, will enable leaders and communities to respond to the leadership challenges they face as part of this strategy.

⁶ See for example: Garvey Berger, J. & Johnston, K. (2015). *Simple habits for complex times: Powerful practices for leaders*. California: Stanford University Press ; Hieftz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers*

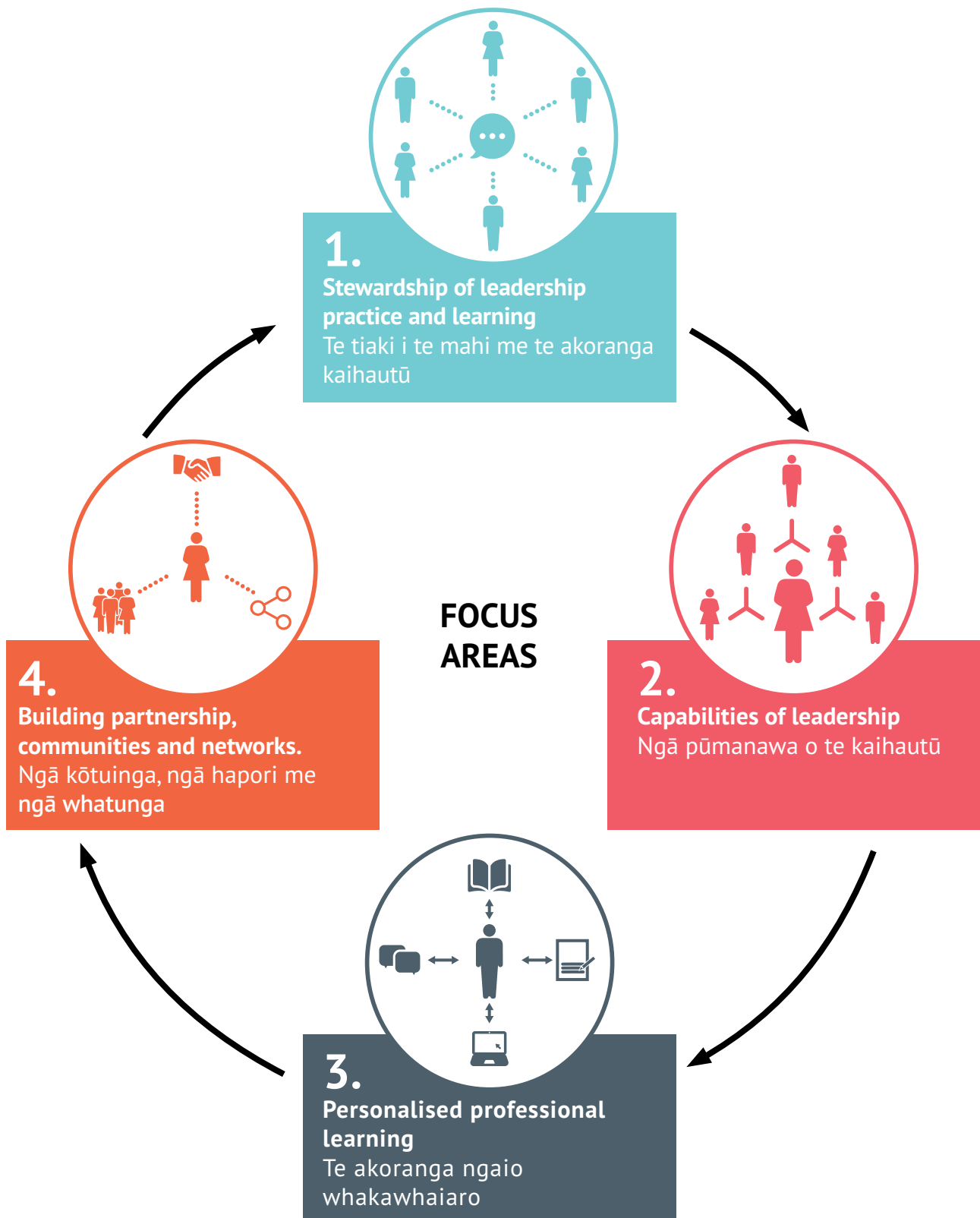
⁷ Robinson, V., Hohepa, M., & Lloyd, C. (2009). *School leadership and student outcomes: Identifying what works and why: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

⁸ Ibid

FOCUS AREAS

NGĀ WĀHANGA MATUA

Four focus areas have been identified to guide the implementation of the strategy – each with specific actions and outcomes:



1. STEWARDSHIP OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICE AND LEARNING

TE TIAKI I TE MAHI ME TE AKORANGA KAIHAUTŪ

Overview

Tirohanga Whanui

- Ensuring oversight for the co-ordination of leadership development.
- Developing a shared understanding of leadership.
- Creating an open leadership system.

He waka eke noa

A canoe that we are all in with no exception

Purpose

Pūtake

To ensure collective work between the profession and government that guides the leadership development decisions that will grow and support the profession for the future.

Actions	Key outcomes
<p>Establish Māori medium and English medium stewardship groups to oversee the effective implementation of the strategy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop a shared understanding and philosophy of leadership in a bicultural landscape• facilitate engagement between, and collaborative work by education leaders on issues related to the learning and wellbeing of all learners• promote and support leadership excellence.	<p>Steady progress is evident in the implementation of this strategy.</p> <p>Teaching professionals report that they see evidence of systematic, coherent progress in the development of culturally capable, competent and connected leadership practices that advance the learning and well-being of children and young people in Aotearoa New Zealand.</p>

Why is this important?

He aha tēnei i hira ai?

Teachers should be involved in decisions affecting their profession. Oversight of the strategy's implementation by a trusted group of professionals in English and Māori medium will give the profession confidence in the strategy itself and ensure the consistency of key messages about educational leadership and leadership learning.

What does it look like in practice?

He pēhea te āhua o tēnei, i roto i ngā mahi?

The stewardship groups will work in partnership with one another, and the Centre for Leadership Excellence (or any future leadership body that replaces it), and provide advice to:

- develop a robust theory of action and use this to drive the effective implementation of the strategy and the developmental evaluation of the effectiveness of the process of implementation
- build a shared understanding and philosophy of leadership and of the capabilities necessary for effective leadership in the profession and among key stakeholders

- ensure that coherent professional leadership learning opportunities are increasingly accessible to all teaching professionals
- commission, seek, and use research and development that informs professional knowledge and practice about leadership and leadership learning within the Aotearoa New Zealand context.

The stewardship groups would include individuals with proven ability to work collaboratively,⁹ who collectively have diverse and relevant expertise and experience including:

- positional educational leadership
- understanding of leadership theory and practice in either Māori medium or English medium contexts
- knowledge of, and experience, in leadership learning.

The groups would be supported by fit-for-purpose structures and processes that enable collaborative work.¹⁰ Both groups would involve key stakeholders in the synthesis of new knowledge.

What will success look like?

Ka pēhea te āhua o te angitu?

- Leaders in specific settings—Māori medium; English medium; dual medium, and early childhood education, will have confidence in the wisdom and advice of the stewardship groups.
- The profession has confidence in the decisions made by the Centre for Leadership Excellence (or any future leadership body that replaces it).
- Teaching professionals and relevant stakeholders see themselves as engaged in the implementation process, and progress is evident.
- There is evidence that education leaders are more engaged in professional networks and are vocal and influential in community-related issues associated with the learning and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Innovation and quality practices are shared among teaching professionals and are seen to inform the design of leadership practice and leadership learning opportunities.
- There is evidence of a dynamic approach, evaluative thinking, and new research informing the on-going programme of work designed to realise the intent of the leadership strategy.

System-wide change has to come from within the system, not from “top down: initiatives designed to produce specific kinds of change, thought to be knowable in advance. We need within-system initiatives designed to produce more—and deeper—interactions between the system’s elements—people (teachers, students, school leaders, parents, policy makers, researchers, and so on) and their physical and intellectual environments.

Jane Gilbert, Education Council, 5 Think Pieces, 2015



⁹ Refer to: O’Leary, R. (2014). *Collaborative governance in New Zealand: Important choices ahead*. Wellington: Fulbright New Zealand

¹⁰ One model that has the potential to meet this requirement is a Collective Impact approach. Refer Collective Impact Framework, <http://www.collaborationforimpact.com/collective-impact/>; and Kania & Framer, Winter 2011, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact.

2. CAPABILITIES OF LEADERSHIP

NGĀ PŪMANAWA O TE KAIHAUTŪ

Overview

Tirohanga Whanui

- Establishing a view of leadership as a broader function not restricted by title or position.
- Clarifying the capabilities needed for effective educational leadership across different spheres of the teaching profession.
- Embedding the need for teachers to demonstrate leadership capabilities in order to effectively engage with learners, whānau, communities, colleagues, teams, boards, and others.
- Transforming the knowledge and practice of leadership.

Mā te rongo ka mōhio, mā te mōhio ka mārama, mā te mārama ka mātau;
Mā te mātau ka ora

*Through resonance comes cognisance, through cognisance comes understanding,
through understanding comes knowledge, through knowledge comes life and well-being*

Purpose

Pūtake

- Teachers - to determine their current expertise and build an understanding of what their development needs might be within their current areas of responsibilities and the leadership pathway/s they might pursue.
- Leadership teams - to make informed decisions related to recruitment, retention and succession planning, and to inform the design of ongoing professional learning within work and more formal development programmes.
- Governance bodies - to inform decision-making in relation to investing in their people and programmes.
- Government - to make informed decisions about its funding of professional learning for teaching professionals in leadership specifically, and within the context of curriculum and pedagogy.

Actions	Key outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a leadership capability framework that includes and encapsulates distinctive mātauranga Māori contexts.	Teaching professionals have confidence in a leadership capability framework and use it to foster depth and breadth in leadership capacity building at different stages, in different contexts and in various spheres of influence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define, review, exemplify and sustain leadership capabilities for different settings, contexts and spheres of influence.	The agreed capabilities guide professional learning, career planning and leadership qualifications.

Why is this important?

He aha tēnei i hira ai?

Teaching professionals are looking for more coherence in the sphere of educational leadership. There is a need to build and foster shared understanding that powerful educational leadership maximises the talents and abilities of all learners, and it needs to be exercised across a wide range of formal and informal roles and responsibilities.

The leadership capability framework will support the intention of the Leadership Strategy to advance educational leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand.

What does it look like in practice?

He pēhea te āhua o tēnei, i roto i ngā mahi?

The leadership capabilities will enable a common language and shared understanding of leadership. The framework outlines high level guidelines for leadership development, and an understanding of what these leadership capabilities look like in practice in kura, schools, and early childhood education services, and in three different spheres namely; expert teachers; team and middle leaders; and those who lead organisations.

Our unique Aotearoa New Zealand environment is embedded within the framework. It reflects the leadership capabilities and responsibilities that are responsive to our bicultural landscape within the context of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Leadership Capabilities: Ngā Pūmanawa Kaihautū:

1. Building and sustaining high trust relationships
2. Ensuring culturally responsive practice and understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural heritage, using Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundation
3. Building and sustaining collective leadership and professional community
4. Strategically thinking and planning
5. Evaluating practices in relation to outcomes
6. Adept management of resources to achieve vision and goals
7. Attending to their own learning as leaders and their own wellbeing
8. Embodying the organisation's values and showing moral purpose, optimism, agency, and resilience
9. Contributing to the development and wellbeing of education beyond their organisation

Existing frameworks, relevant research and contextual factors inform the leadership capability framework. This includes existing guidance in educational leadership such as *Tū Rangatira*,¹¹ the Education Council *Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession*,¹² and the Education Review Office leadership indicators and dimensions.¹³

The capabilities should be used to shape and critically reflect on programmes, individual pathways and overall practice, organisational strengths and needs, and to make decisions about priorities for new learning. They include the capabilities that should be addressed in any professional learning and development, whether it is focused specifically on leadership, or on curriculum or pedagogy, so that the leadership capacity in our educational organisations can keep growing.

¹¹ As well as Ministry of Education (2010). *Kiwi leadership for principals: Principals as educational leaders*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

¹² Education Council Matatū Aotearoa (2017). *Our Code, Our Standards: Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession*. Wellington: Education Council Matatū Aotearoa

¹³ Education Review Office (2016). *School Evaluation Indicators: Effective practice for improvement and learner success*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

What will success look like?

Ka pēhea te āhua o te angitu?

- The teaching profession has access to tools and resources to support their leadership capability and a shared understanding of the leadership capabilities relevant to different roles and responsibilities.
- The leadership capability framework is well used by the teaching profession and those who work with them to develop leadership.
- There is compelling evidence that the leadership capability framework is supporting the development of leadership expertise across the profession, and is used in the development of formal leadership programmes and qualifications.
- Teaching professionals use the leadership capability framework to design their own learning in order to undertake new roles.

In practice, leaders need to be able to make meaning in a particular context—such as early childhood, primary, secondary—have culturally-infused professional practices, and be mindful of personal well-being.

Professional Conference, August 2017

The leadership of adults requires leaders to be team-builders and to enable collaboration and risk-taking. To do this well requires careful listening and relational trust.

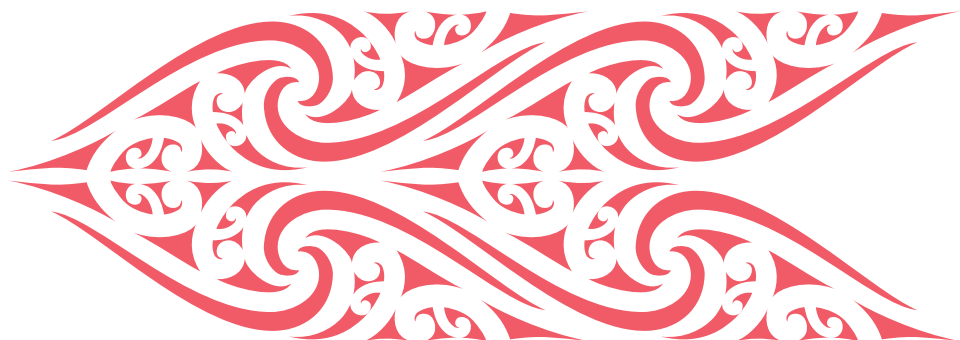
Professional Conference, August 2017

The importance of stress testing the responsiveness of *Tū Rangatira* in practice with communities, whānau and learners was also emphasised. Further to this, the forum promoted the value of collecting stories and exemplars that describe *Tū Rangatira* in practice.

Leadership strategy: Synthesis of views from the Māori leadership forum. July 2017.

Great educational leaders make connections between the learner, their interests and their peers and become trusted guides on the learner's educational and social journey.

Insights from Young People Think Piece (September 2017)



3. PERSONALISED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

TE AKORANGA NGAIO WHAKAWHAIARO

Overview

Tirohanga Whanui

- Ensuring all teachers have equitable access to leadership development offerings and learning pathways that support their growth and development.
- Facilitating blended learning opportunities which cater to different learning styles (including customised support, tools and resources).

Hāpaitia te ara tika pūmau ai
te rangatiratanga mō ngā uri
whakatipu
*Foster the pathway of knowledge
to strength, independence and
growth for future generations*

Purpose

Pūtake

In conjunction with the leadership capability framework, to identify the key skills and attributes required for different leadership responsibilities, as well as targeted learning opportunities under each capability area.

Actions	Key outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As part of the system, trial leadership self-evaluation and mapping, for example using digital tools, to support leaders in identifying their own next steps for professional growth.	<p>Teaching professionals have accessible, shared evidence-based leadership learning opportunities that guide their engagement in learning, are responsive to their aspirations and needs, and support the ongoing development of their leadership capabilities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design a comprehensive, coherent and flexible professional learning system, consistent with the leadership capability framework, that will enable educational leaders in a wide range of roles and contexts to personalise their leadership learning.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the design process, review existing evidence-based leadership frameworks and tools and programmes (e.g. those offered to new principals), for potential further development and integration into the learning system.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the value of a shared database of experts, organisations and institutions offering leadership learning that is aligned with the strategy and the system.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work in partnership with experienced principals and early childhood professional leaders in promoting and enabling leadership learning opportunities.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop an implementation plan for professional learning that initially prioritises middle leaders, leaders in early childhood settings, leaders in Māori medium settings, and leaders in rural communities.	

Why is this important?

He aha tēnei i hira ai?

In our diverse national context, educational leaders have an important role to play in nation building. We need more members of the profession to understand that they are leaders and seek to develop and exercise effective leadership.

Learning about leadership is an ongoing developmental process and the leadership capabilities teachers need are dependent on the demands of their role and its context. Teaching professionals need to be able to individually identify, source, and access relevant leadership learning opportunities, including purposeful, timely learning and development opportunities in preparation for new roles.

What does it look like in practice?

He pēhea te āhua o tēnei, i roto i ngā mahi?

Integrating the leadership capabilities

Te haumi i ngā pūmanawa kaihautū

An important element of a more personalised approach to leadership learning will be working with early childhood professional leaders and principals to ensure an in-depth shared understanding of the capabilities required to lead, and to build a culture of leadership learning within their organisations. The framework of leadership capabilities will outline key skills and attributes required for different leadership roles and responsibilities within the teaching profession. Alongside the capability framework, targeted learning opportunities will be identified for each capability area.

Personalising leadership mapping and support

Te whakamahere me te tautoko i te kaihautū whakawhaiaro

Professional learning will support all forms of leadership across the professional pathway, from initial education through to induction and mentoring, leadership within a range of teaching roles, and specific leadership roles.

Using the range of resources available, teaching professionals at all levels, in schools and in early childhood settings, should be able to self-assess against the framework of leadership capabilities, to identify areas of focus that match their needs and aspirations, frame professional development conversations with peers, coaches, mentors or appraisers, and create a personalised development plan.

Leadership learning opportunities

Ngā whāinga wāhi akoranga kaihautū

A purposeful mix of blended learning opportunities, including face to face workshops, targeted and tailored leadership programmes, online learning tools, resources and professional learning groups, need to be offered to support leadership development across the sector. A broad range of resources will offer opportunities for personal and customised development activities, as well as ongoing networking and peer-supported learning. These opportunities need take account of what are known to be powerful elements for leadership learning. As well as fostering reflection and self-regulation, leadership development should also offer cognitive challenge, build the capability for professional inquiry, and involve both individual and collaborative learning, in a network of leaders.¹⁴

¹⁴ See for example: . Robinson, V. (2018). *Reduce change to increase improvement*. Corwin Impact Leadership Series. California: Corwin; Robertson, J. (2016). *Coaching leadership: Building educational leadership capacity through partnership*; 2nd ed. Wellington: NZCER Press; Thornton, K. & Cherrington, S. (2014). Leadership in professional learning communities. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, Vol 39 (3), 94-102; Thornton, K. (2014). Mentors as educational leaders and change agents. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, 3(1), 18-31.

Initial strategic priorities

Ngā mahi rautaki matua tuatahi

Leadership development opportunities have previously focused largely on beginning principals, or those aspiring to be principals, and school/kura-based principals, while there has been very little leadership development opportunities in recent years for experienced principals. These professionals must continue to be well-served, and a review of current programmes based on current research and practice evidence, will explore the potential integration of the best of these programmes into the new system.

At the same time there is a need to address areas of leadership development that have been underserved, especially leaders in early childhood education, Māori medium settings, rural areas, and middle leaders in schools. Experienced school leaders have also had little systematic support. It is important that their needs are also considered, and their potential as mentors and coaches within and beyond their own organisations should be fully explored.

What will success look like?

Ka pēhea te āhua o te angitu?

- Professional learning that supports leadership in all spheres, across English and Māori medium schools and early childhood places of learning, are guided by a coherent, cohesive system that is well-understood by teaching professionals and seen as responsive to their needs and aspirations.
- Relevant leadership learning opportunities in both Māori and English mediums, both face-to-face and on-line, are accessible to teaching professionals in all spheres of leadership, and access to them is supported by the provision of tools for personalising leadership learning.
- More teaching professionals are preparing for and seeking new roles and responsibilities that both draw on and extend their leadership capabilities.
- Principals and early childhood professional leaders are well supported to take responsibility for building leadership capacity in their respective settings, in terms of both depth and breadth.
- Opportunities for team and middle leaders, leaders in early childhood settings, leaders in Māori medium, and leaders in rural communities to develop their leadership have increased.

“Leadership learning opportunities need to be systematic, available across all settings, and promote continual learning at all stages of a professional career”

Professional Conference (August 2017).



4. PARTNERSHIPS, COMMUNITIES AND NETWORKS

NGĀ KŌTUINGA, NGĀ HAPORI ME NGĀ WHATUNGA

Overview

Tirohanga Whanui

- Enabling leaders to engage others in collaborative problem solving.
- Ensuring leaders are well-connected to leadership opportunities and networks.
- Encouraging leaders to act increasingly as community leaders.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi Engari i te toa takatini

My success is not mine alone: it was not individual success but the success of a collective

Purpose

Pūtake

To encourage and support individuals to actively plan and action effective relationships within and across their learning environments.

Actions	Key outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate leadership networking across all levels of leadership (such as forums, conferences and learning events).	Leaders have the opportunity to work, learn and share with others, in practice, policy and research settings, and in the wider community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the ongoing development of leadership within networks (such as the Kāhui Ako leadership network).	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scope and implement a digital engagement platform for networked leadership.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek opportunities to learn from leadership outside education.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage and support leaders to build relationship across their communities.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support initiatives and projects that bring together researchers and practitioners in learning partnerships.	

Why is this important?

He aha tēnei i hira ai?

To be successful leaders of change, and to improve the ways in which learning organisations meet the needs of learners, leaders must work through others and with others. Leaders are also increasingly required to act as system and community leaders because resolving problems in these contexts requires consultation and collaboration. Future-focused leaders therefore need to be able to establish, cultivate and sustain positive relationships with others, within collaborative and relational teams and networks.

What does it look like in practice?

He pēhea te āhua o tēnei, i roto i ngā mahi?

Collaborative problem solving

Te mahi hīraurau hopanga paheko

Leaders working both in their own organisations and in network settings have highlighted the leadership expertise needed to realise the collective goal of improving learning. Not only is collaboration with teachers required to ensure the goal is strongly supported, but engagement and collaboration with families and whānau, professional colleagues, and the wider community are also important.

The role of leaders in building relational trust is fundamental to building cohesive, purposeful partnerships, communities and networks. In the implementation of this strategy, effective ways to support the ongoing development of sustainable leadership networks will be explored and supported.

Responsive leadership in communities

Te kaihautū rongō i roto i ngā hapori

Educational leaders have a responsibility under Te Tiriti o Waitangi to establish culturally responsive conditions for learning, enabling Māori learners to enjoy and achieve educational success as Māori. It is critical that teaching professionals can build meaningful relationships with Māori communities, engage with them about their aspirations, and work alongside communities beyond the school and centre gate. In the same way, professional leaders must engage respectfully with the wide range of ethnic and cultural communities represented in most places of learning, and ensure the identities of learners are known and understood by their teachers.

“Collaborative leadership recognises the power of collective impact.... Collaboration with leaders from other sectors and from a range of different disciplines is as important as collaboration with leaders in the whole education sector”.

Durie, M. (2015) Educational Leadership for Tomorrow. *Leadership for Communities of Learning: Five think pieces*, 29-32. Wellington: Education Council

Education has become more focused on a holistic view of learners as future citizens, as is evident in the values and competencies that are part of the *New Zealand Curriculum, Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *Te Whāriki*. Engagement with the wider community is more common in schools and early childhood education than it used to be. Whānau Ora, social workers and health workers in

schools signal a greater role for kura/centres/schools as places of learning and wellbeing. These are all trends that will require culturally responsive and connected leaders with the ability to establish relationships, collaborate and work alongside community members and professionals beyond the sector.

At regional and national levels experienced leaders have an important role in advocacy and policy development. The vision of this leadership strategy reflects the fact that entrenched system-wide inequities are a significant challenge for education. This is one area in which educational leaders could both advocate and work with others on solutions.

Increased connectedness through digital technologies

Te pikinga o te tūhono mā ngā hangarau matihiko

Technology can be used to address the issues of scale we experience, both in terms of the number of teaching professionals, and the number of places of learning. Using digital tools, participants can build communities, share quality practices, and receive continual guidance from mentors and peers.

The online networks for both aspiring and beginning principals are working well. The intention is to build on this good work by using existing online networks, identifying gaps where leaders' needs are not being met, and on developing new online forums/spaces that will foster relationship building, learning and sharing of quality practice.

In earlier times, leaders exerted influence through centralised control of resources. Today, however, power lies in networks, not nodes. A small group of passionate enthusiasts can connect to others that are like-minded, who in turn can recruit still others to the cause. Networked leadership is relational, collective, and emergent. It is both distributed and democratic.

Derek Wenmoth, Education Council, 5 Think Pieces 2015).

Professional networking events

Ngā takahanga whatunga ngaio

Experienced leaders need opportunities to share their knowledge and practice with teaching professionals, and to be challenged, particularly those seeking positional leadership roles or new to these roles.

Professional events need to be held where effective educational leadership is celebrated and shared across the profession. These may include leadership conferences, networking events, and leadership development in larger groups.

What will success look like?

Ka pēhea te āhua o te angitu?

- Education organisations and local iwi, community groups and other relevant stakeholders are working collaboratively to improve learning and well-being of children and young people.
- Locally, teaching professionals understand and fulfil their roles as collaborative community leaders.
- At regional and national levels, educational leaders are engaged in work to address significant issues such as inequality, advocating and participating in problem solving, including the development of policy.
- Leaders can easily find and participate in a range of networks (including digital networks) that are relevant to their leadership learning needs and goals.
- New knowledge about effective leadership is built through partnerships between leaders and researchers can be used to improve leadership.
- Network leadership is enhanced by more leaders working across a range of educational settings.
- Leadership is celebrated in a way that is meaningful to the teaching profession and their communities.
- Stories are shared about the kind of leadership we respect and aspire to.



APPENDIX 1: STRATEGY BUILT ON A COLLABORATIVE FOUNDATION

TĀPIRI 1: HE RAUTAKI I HANGAIA I TE TŪĀPAPA PAHEKO

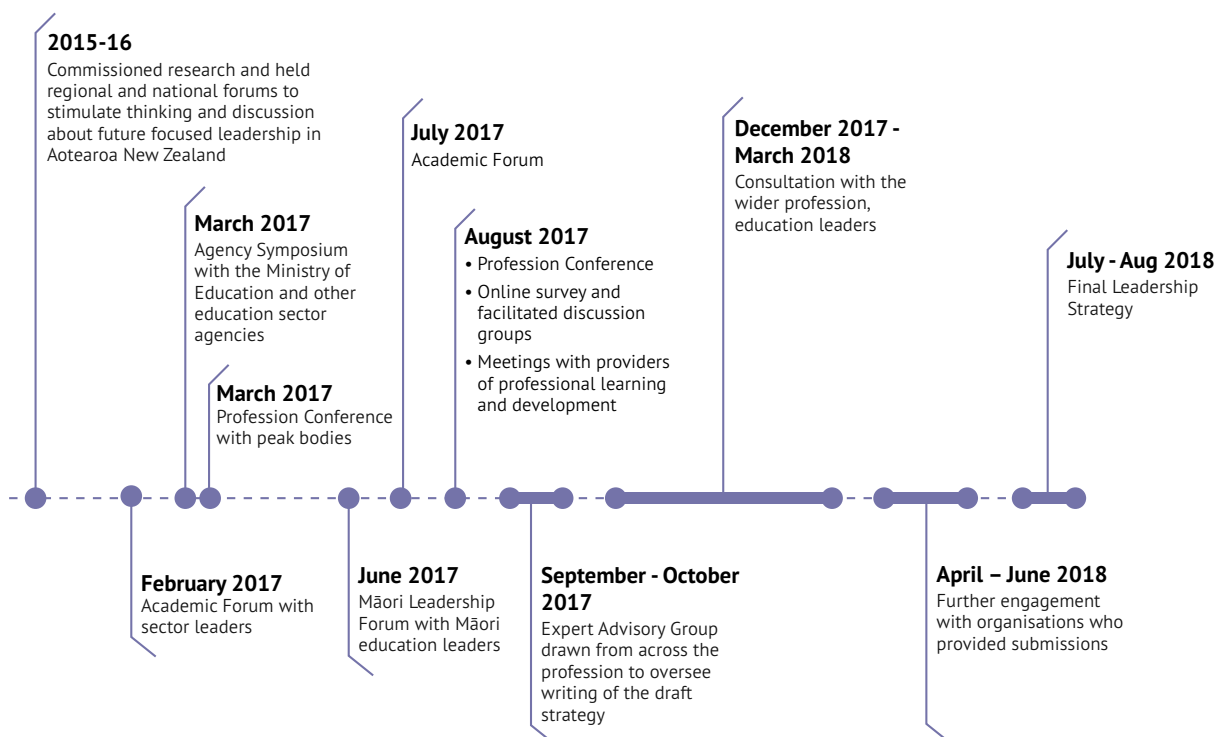
This leadership strategy was developed by the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand I Mātatu Aotearoa on behalf of the teaching profession. Like the *Code of Professional Responsibility* and the *Standards for the Teaching Profession*, the strategy's development builds on a long period of engagement with the teaching profession.

During 2017 the Education Council worked collaboratively with teachers, leaders, academics and representatives of the teaching profession to review evidence and stimulate thinking and discussion about future focused leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand. The development process was iterative, with multiple opportunities to meet and to critique each other's work.

The draft strategy that was released for consultation in December 2017 was received positively by the profession, with many respondents welcoming the strategy and commenting on its timeliness. The Education Council received 191 submissions from the profession during the consultation period, with a similar proportion of responses from early childhood education (36%), primary (34%) and secondary (29%) settings.

The feedback the Education Council received from the profession has enabled the strategy to be shaped and re-shaped as it responds to emerging trends and the conceptual understanding that underpins our unique Aotearoa New Zealand landscape.

Developing the leadership strategy with the profession Te whakawhanake i te rautaki kaihautū i te tira ngaio



APPENDIX 2: THE PROFESSION'S VOICE:

KEY CONCEPTS TO ENABLE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

TĀPIRI 2: TE REO O TE TIRA NGAIO:

NGĀ ARIĀ MATUA E TAEA AI TE RAUTAKI TE ĀTA WHAKATINANA

During consultation on the draft leadership strategy, a number of key concepts related to the effective implementation of the strategy emerged from the profession. These concepts would inform the stewardship groups work programme. For example:

The importance of the design and practice of developmental evaluation.

Te hira o te hoahoa me te mahinga i te aromātai whanaketanga.

Systematically chronicling progress and capturing insights and feedback during the implementation of the strategy will ensure ongoing learning, and the ability to adapt, is built into the implementation process.^{15 16}

The importance of building relationships and a shared understanding of the strategy's blueprint for leadership

Te hira o te whakapakari hononga me te māramatanga torowhānui o te mahere o te rautaki mō tēnei mea te kaihautū

Purposeful conversations to build shared understandings among teaching professionals and between teaching professionals and groups outside education should be part of the process of implementing the strategy. An important aspect of this work would be the sharing and celebration of examples of leadership excellence. These purposeful conversations and relationships will also help educational leaders to engage with issues in the wider community that are relevant to the learning and wellbeing of children and

young people, and to use their influence in the best interests of children and young people. Leadership networks can help to facilitate these conversations, including through digital platforms.

Particular attention needs to be paid to developing a better understanding of the needs of leaders in different regions of Aotearoa New Zealand, especially those working in isolated, rural communities. Formal and informal networks of regional educational leaders, regional providers, organisations, and Ministry officials should all be able to contribute to shaping an understanding of regional needs.

The need for accessible, quality, fit-for purpose professional learning opportunities

Te hiahia kia rato he whāinga wāhi akonga ngaio wātea, kouna nui, hāngai hoki ki te kaupapa

The stewardship groups should champion the value of professional learning and be proactive in improving the availability and relevance of leadership related learning for the profession. In the implementation of the strategy, leadership knowledge and practice should be shared as freely and openly as possible and in different ways. Teaching professionals need to be able to access face-to-face leadership support and engagement, alongside online self-directed resources and tools.

¹⁵ Earl, L. and H. Timperley (2015), Evaluative thinking for successful educational innovation, OECD Education Working Papers, No. 122, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jrxtk1jtdwf-en>.

¹⁶ The Teaching and School Practices tool, developed and hosted by NZCER and funded by the Ministry of Education is one existing source of system-level information that could provide evidence of progress with leadership practices in English-medium schools. See <http://www.nzcer.org.nz/tests/teaching-and-school-practices-survey-tool>

The need for responsive, evidence-based innovation

Te hiahia kia puta ngā auahatanga urupare, i hangaia i runga i ngā taunakitanga

Bringing research, policy and practice together to build knowledge about leadership practices and capabilities is a key principle of the strategy and an important role for the stewardship groups. This growing body of knowledge will be used to inform conversations about leadership and guide investment in leadership learning.

The Stewardship Groups should promote innovation in design and delivery of learning. Innovation involves evaluating lessons learnt and gains made through current leadership frameworks, and through ideas and practices. An example of this is *Tū Rangatira*, which has been influential in both Māori medium and English medium contexts. Opportunities to prototype and test new initiatives should be pursued.

Existing online spaces and networks should be used to share productive practices and emerging thinking. Where there is a need for a new online space not currently offered, the profession will be involved in a co-design process to ensure it meets their needs.

The stewardship groups will collaborate with providers of leadership learning to identify learning solutions that are well-aligned with the new leadership capabilities and could enable personalised leadership learning. Providers could assist with piloting professional development opportunities, both on-line and face-to-face, and help to design the process for accessing these opportunities. In addition, experienced leaders will be included in considering the design of professional learning solutions to develop the capabilities of emerging leaders, such as middle leaders.





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Leading school improvement - it's difficult isn't it? Robert Marshall

There appears to be a disconnect between the intent of school leaders and reality.

Being the leader of a school is a demanding and complex enterprise. A critical agenda for any school leader is improving the learning of students.

Why can it be so hard to generate improvement that is sustainable? If the solution was straightforward, all schools would be on a trajectory towards strong academic achievement. A characteristic of high performing schools is strong and effective leadership; but what is it about leadership (at all levels in a school) that can move a school towards improvement and transformation?

Our work at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) has revealed that there can often be a disconnect between the intent of school leaders and classroom reality. Having a commitment and desire to improve student outcomes is one thing but putting together an explicit plan and communicating that to staff and the school community is the difficult part.

For the past two years, a team of ACER school improvement consultants has conducted reviews across the country. The team observes school practices and provides an evaluation of teaching and learning against each of the nine domains of the National School Improvement Tool (NSIT). We then work with the school leadership team to develop a school improvement plan based on the findings.

Some common findings

From our experience, the tool helps in setting a baseline of current practice on which to build capacity for improvement, wherever that baseline may be. Given the variety of contexts and settings it's interesting to note some common findings.

One area in particular where schools routinely need further development is *Domain 1: An explicit improvement agenda*. Across this domain, in 88.8 per cent of schools ACER reviewers determined the following statement to be true: 'The school leadership team is clearly committed to finding ways to improve on current student outcomes. This is reflected in an eagerness to learn from research evidence, international experience and from other schools that have achieved significant improvements.'

In order for this to be considered true in a school, the review team needed to be convinced by evidence that this statement is true in almost all areas of a school. It demonstrates the sincerity and commitment demonstrated by leaders in almost every school ACER reviewed. This comes as no surprise. Almost without exception, every school leader I meet is passionate and committed to their work.

However, the fourth most frequent statement observed (at 55.5 per cent) was: 'The Principal and other school leaders articulate a shared commitment to improvement, but limited attention has been given to specifying detail or to developing a school-wide approach (e.g. plans for improvement may lack coherence, be short-term or without a whole-school focus).'

Further, the reviewers also observed in 53.3 per cent of schools the following statement: 'Plans for improvement do not appear to have been clearly communicated, widely implemented or to have impacted significantly on teachers' day-to-day work. Targets for improvement are not specific (e.g. not accompanied by timelines).'

Disconnect between intent and reality

These findings suggest there appears to be a disconnect between the intent of school leaders and what is actually happening at the teacher level in classrooms.

Almost universally, leaders express their desire that the school leadership team is clearly committed to finding ways to improve on current student outcomes. At the same time, the evidence demonstrates this commitment is not articulated or communicated well to staff.

Commentary from teachers in schools ACER has reviewed often reflects the significant rapid change agenda that exists within schools and education systems across Australia. Teachers routinely comment that they are either confused or overloaded - neither of which contributes to the likelihood for 'new' plans and ideas of leaders being carried out effectively by teachers.

Michael Fullan (Fullan and Quinn, 2016) lists the following as commonplace when teachers experience a level of disconnect:

- Initiative fatigue.
- Ad hoc projects.
- Arbitrary top-down policies.
- Compliance-oriented bureaucratisation.
- Silos and fiefdoms everywhere.
- Confusion.
- Distrust and demoralisation.

Learning from what we don't see

Sometimes, what isn't seen in schools can be as revealing as what is seen in schools. Let's look at two statements from the 'outstanding' rating in Domain 1 of the NSIT.

'This agenda is expressed in terms of specific improvements sought in student performances, is aligned with national and/or system-wide improvement priorities and includes clear targets with accompanying timelines which are rigorously actioned.'

'... Teachers take responsibility for changes in practice required to achieve school targets and are using data on a regular basis to monitor the effectiveness of their own efforts to meet those targets.'

Neither statement was observed as existing in a single school ACER reviewed over the last two years - there was zero per cent occurrence.

This may seem remarkable, but probably isn't. While there were instances in isolated pockets in schools where these statements were true, examples of this behaviour as a common and routine practice of teachers was not evident in a single school.

In light of the highest frequency of statements mentioned earlier, this should not be a surprising result. Leaders were observed as not being explicit and/or clear in communicating a specific improvement agenda in their school. The importance of Principals focusing on the things which matter in schools, such as developing an explicit improvement agenda, cannot be overestimated.

Implications for leaders at all levels

In light of our findings, whatever your role is within a school:

- Be explicit in your communication and follow up.
- Implement initiatives with clear accountability measures.
- Effective schools have clear goals, with specific targets accompanied by achievable timelines and high levels of accountability in regard to achieving the goals and targets.
- If you expect staff to do something, then inspect it. It is essential that school leaders ensure there is follow up and follow through.

ACER CEO Professor Geoff Masters AO has identified that rapidly improving schools, and schools that produce unusually good outcomes given their student intakes and circumstances, tend to have a number of features in common: 'They pursue an explicit improvement agenda – they know what they want to see improve and they know how they will monitor success.'

Our observations in schools confirm these two characteristics to be essential for ongoing and sustained improvement.

References

Fullan, M., and Quinn, J. (2016). *Coherence, The Right Drivers in Action for Schools, Districts and Systems*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin.

Does your school have an improvement plan?

Does your strategic plan have specific priorities, targets and timelines?

As a leader, how are you communicating these details to staff and the wider community?

Critical Competencies for Leadership Kirtman, L & Fullan, M.
Leaders Who Lead. Solution Tree.

1. Challenges the status quo
 - Delegates compliance tasks to other staff
 - Challenges common practices and traditions if they are blocking improvements
 - Willing to take risks
 - Looks for innovations to get results
 - Does not let rules and regulations block results and slow down action
2. Builds trust through clear communications and expectations
 - Is direct and honest about performance expectations
 - Follows through with actions on all commitments
 - Makes sure there is a clear understanding based on written and verbal communications
 - Is comfortable dealing with conflict
3. Creates a commonly owned plan for success
 - Creates written plans with input of stakeholders
 - Ensures that people buy into the plan
 - Monitors implementation of the plan
 - Adjusts the plan based on new data and communicates changes clearly
 - Develops clear measurement for each goal in the plan
 - Creates short and long-term plans
4. Focuses on team over self
 - Hires the best people for the team
 - Commits to the on-going development of a high-performance leadership team
 - Builds a team environment
 - Seeks critical feedback
 - Empowers staff to make decisions and get results
 - Supports the professional development of all staff
5. Has a high sense of urgency for change and sustainable results in improving student achievement.
 - Is able to move initiatives ahead quickly
 - Can be very decisive
 - Uses instructional data to support needed change
 - Builds systemic strategies to insure sustainability of change
 - Sets a clear direction for the organization
 - Is able to deal with and manage change effectively
6. Commitment to continuous improvement for self and organization
 - High sense of curiosity for new ways to get results
 - Willingness to change current practices for themselves and others
 - Listens to all team members to change practices to obtain results
 - Takes responsibility for their own actions — no excuses
 - Strong self-management and self-reflection skills
7. Builds external networks/partnerships
 - Sees their role as a leader on a broad base manner outside the work environment and community walls
 - Understands their role as being a part of a variety of external networks for change and improvement
 - Strong ability to engage people inside and outside in two-way partnerships
 - Uses technology to expand and manage a network of resource people.

Six Steps to Hosting More Meaningful Conversations.

A Simple Model for Making a Difference in your School by Karen Schmidt.

ARE YOU MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR OPPORTUNITIES?

The school day is packed full of situations where managers have the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with their staff. These conversations can help to improve not only the lives of the people involved in them, but also people in the wider school community. Yet most managers do not maximise these conversational opportunities. In fact, sometimes they do the exact opposite! This is not, in general, due to a lack of interest in doing so but rather a lack of skill and understanding in what it takes to host a meaningful conversation.

Managers need to be able to diagnose workplace issues by examining all the circumstances surrounding the issue and getting input from a variety of people.

How to tell if your conversation skills need improving. Take this quick quiz to help you identify if you have an issue with your conversations

1. Do your staff find excuses to avoid having conversations with you or keep them very short?
2. Do you put off having important conversations because you don't know where to start or you fear the response from staff?
3. During the conversation do you avoid discussing the real issues and only deal with easy to discuss topics?
4. Does the conversation become a one-way interaction?
5. Does anyone involved feel they need an independent witness to the conversation?
6. Do people lose their temper or say things they later regret?
7. After having a conversation do you feel confused, frustrated or angry?
8. Do you later hear on the grapevine that the other party to the conversation is feeling the same way?
9. Is the other party saying things to others that they should have said during your conversation?
10. Are you having the same conversations again and again but appear to be getting nowhere?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, don't panic ... help is at hand!

HAVING THE RIGHT TYPE OF CONVERSATION

Conversational opportunities come in many shapes and sizes and can serve a number of purposes. One of the first steps to having more meaningful conversations is being clear on the type of conversation you intend to have before you begin. There are three primary types of conversations to consider:

Explorative

This conversation might take place prior to a change program or to elicit teacher input on methods for improving existing systems and processes. You are not necessarily looking for precise answers or workable solutions but rather a range of options that can be considered.

The danger with the explorative conversation is that the other party can misinterpret your interest in their suggestion as an indication that you are going to implement the idea and this can lead to frustration or disappointment later on.

Equally, a suggestion made by you could be taken to be a "done deal", leaving the other party to worry about the implications to their role when in fact nothing has been decided.

Diagnostic

This conversation is designed to help you define an issue. Just like a doctor needs to diagnose a patient's condition based on a range of symptoms, managers need to be able to diagnose workplace issues by examining all the circumstances surrounding the issue and getting input from a variety of people.

For example, if you are finding that teachers are not submitting required documents on time you need to find out if it is because they don't understand the requirements, they see them as a low priority or that they are simply having trouble accomplishing the task.

Curative

This conversation takes place in response to a diagnosed issue and should focus on how to fix the problem. It could be a problem involving interpersonal communication, policies or systems. It could be a major issue or what you consider to be a trivial situation but to the people involved all issues matter. It is important that all parties involved in this conversation feel that their concerns have been heard and that the solution agreed to is one that will be fair and reasonable to everyone concerned. If it isn't the problem may appear to be resolved but could easily resurface later in the same guise or worse still be disguised as another issue where the process must begin again, with added layers of complication, in order to repair and realign the original issue.

BENEFITS OF HAVING MORE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS

- Reduced stress for all parties because everyone involved feels comfortable having the conversation.
- Improved time management as an effective conversation is usually a quicker conversation because you are able to get to the point.
- Develop more creative solutions because you can quickly move from identifying the issue to discussing the options.
- Prevent problems arising as they can be addressed before they become big issues. • Develop a culture of effective conversations that become expected practice and are reciprocally modelled throughout the organisation.

A TRIED AND TESTED MODEL FOR HAVING MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS

Meaningful conversations are the result of careful planning and execution. In order to achieve the best possible outcome, you need a format to follow, otherwise your conversation is in danger of becoming a friendly chat that goes nowhere or a heated exchange that can have ongoing implications.

This is where you can borrow an idea from an industry that has been working on having meaningful conversations for a long time -journalism. Whether in print, on the radio or face to-face, journalists make their living having meaningful conversations and then relaying the results to their readers, listeners or viewers.

The "5Ws and IH" is a concept used in journalism for getting the full story on something. The idea is that in order for a report to be considered complete it must answer a checklist of six questions:

1. Who was involved?
2. What happened?
3. When did it take place?
4. Where did it take place?
5. Why did it happen?
6. How did it happen?

Meaningful conversations are the result of careful planning and execution "

The principle underlying the formula is that each question should elicit a factual answer as facts are considered vital to ensure that the report is complete. Importantly, none of these questions can be answered with a simple "Yes" or "no" so there is also the opportunity to go beyond the facts into the thoughts and opinions of the interview subject.

DID you KNOW ...

The 5Ws and IH were immortalised by Rudyard Kipling in his "Just So Stories" in which a poem accompanying the tale of "The Elephant's Child" opens with:

I keep six honest serving men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.

"A meaningful conversation is a structured conversation. "

APPLYING THE STEPS IN A SCHOOL CONTEXT

As any good teacher will tell you, presenting your students with a model is one thing but getting them to apply it is another. Assuming that a manager can simply take this model and immediately apply it in their next conversation is likely to create mixed results. So, let's take some time to look at the most effective way to apply the 5Ws and IH model to the type of conversational situations you may find yourself in at school.

Who?

Start by identifying all the parties who need to be involved in the conversation. Don't forget to include people who may only be affected by the outcome of the conversation in a minor way because they may still want some input. This is particularly important when dealing with support staff who can often complain of feeling left out of important conversations.

Equally important, don't involve people who don't really need to be involved. Remember, even the principal doesn't need to be at every meeting. Sometimes an initial brief before or after the event is all that is needed, after which any further involvement can be decided upon the basis of this new information. Initially in some cases, not having the principal present can actually result in a more open and honest discussion.

Next, decide how to involve the various people in the conversation. It could be that you involve them all at once, one at a time, face-to-face or electronically. In doing so you need to take into account a range of factors including time, space and cost. Simply having a standing policy of always meeting face-to-face or never meeting during school hours is not flexible enough to deal with every situation.

What?

Let the other parties know in advance what will be discussed so they can come prepared. A meaningful conversation can only occur when everyone feels they can be open and honest. So, start as you intend to go on by letting people know in advance what will be discussed. This also avoids the conversation being steered off course into unrelated side issues because others have not had the chance to think the issues through.

Your focus should be on the quality of the conversation not the quantity of subjects addressed, so try to limit your conversations to one main issue. The most meaningful conversations are those where people can focus on an issue rather than jumping around between unrelated topics.

A meaningful conversation is a structured conversation. It should have an opening (where you set the scene and build rapport); a body (where you work through the key points allowing each party to have their say) and a conclusion (where you discuss what happens next including who is going to do what and by when).

When?

The when or the timing of your conversation needs to take into account two aspects: the macro and the micro.

From a macro point of view - consider the timing of the conversation in the decision-making process. For example, don't have the conversation too early in case you don't have enough information to answer questions but also don't have it too late so that the decision has already been made and the parties can't have their input considered.

From a micro perspective - consider the time of day, time of week and time of term in which to have the conversation. Also think about the impact of other events on the conversation so that you don't have it too soon after something major has happened (and people are still distracted by that) or too long after an important event that needs to be discussed.

Where?

Whilst it might seem like a minor consideration, choosing the right location to conduct your conversation is vitally important to your success.

You need to provide the right amount of privacy and to consider the physical comfort of the individuals. This means not only providing reasonable seating but having an environment where they feel psychologically comfortable. Sometimes the principal's office is not the right place and neither is the canteen, even if it is during class time.

Finally, you need to provide any necessary resources so that people are not running off to find pens or other supplies part way through and risk missing out on vital information.

Why?

We have already discussed the three types of conversations (explorative, diagnostic and curative) but within each of these types you also need to have a specific goal. You need to make that goal clear to everyone involved so that you avoid going off on tangents or being distracted by side issues. Don't be over ambitious with your goal. It is not necessary to achieve resolution in one conversation and, in fact, sometimes it is better to let people go away and think about what's been said before continuing. Remember, a conversation is meaningful if it achieves an outcome, not if it finishes on time or, worse still, is done simply so you can say you did it to meet a reporting requirement. If that is your real goal! then don't bother having the conversation!

Meaningful conversations are also not the forum to catch people off guard. If you get a reputation for putting people on the spot or pretending a conversation is going to be about one topic and then switch it to something else half way through, you will find that people don't want to have conversations with you or will employ similar tactics themselves.

How?

The most meaningful conversations occur when you approach them with the attitude of a "host rather than the mindset of a "hijacked. A host is someone who acts as a welcoming leader of an exchange, helping the various parties to work through the issues. On the other hand, a hijacker conjures up images of someone who takes hostages, someone who attempts to take over the conversation and steer it in the direction they want it to go without any consideration of the other parties involved.

The author, Susan Scott, in her book *Fierce Conversations: achieving success in work and in life, one conversation at a time* (2002), describes the ideal conversations as those when people are being "real". This means we are waiting to reveal our true selves, to discuss what she calls the "undiscussables" and to ask the tough questions. This ability to say what everyone is really thinking is more important than creating prescriptive lists of the right questions to ask if we want to have truly meaningful conversations.

REFERENCE

Scott, S. (2002). *Fierce Conversations: achieving success in work and in life, one conversation at a time*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karen Schmidt from Lets Growl is the re-engagement expert Her mission is to help you refresh, reignite and re-engage your team for success.