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ABSTRACT
            The first of six volumes in the "Elementary Principal
Series," this booklet identifies three major components of the
building administrator's role (as chief administrator, operations
manager, and instructional leader) and concentrates on instructional
leadership as the key to educational excellence. Research shows that
principals spend most of their time on administrative or managerial
tasks. Obstacles to exercising instructional leadership may be
overcome by clarifying expectations regarding the knowledge, skills,
and beliefs associated with this concept. Today's knowledge base is
substantial, thanks to research on effective schools, effective
teaching, school improvement, and effective business organizations.
Essential instructional leadership skills include envisioning,
communicating, developing trust, motivating others, decision-making,
planning, and promoting collegiality. Equally important are leaders'
belief systems, especially their self-concept and treatment of
others. The effective principal blends knowledge, skills, and beliefs
when working with teachers and parents to develop an educational
philosophy that shapes decisions regarding the school's goals and
objectives. The principal is also responsible for fostering a high
quality staff development program, a positive school climate, and
active community involvement. Principals' greatest leadership
challenge will be dealing with a newly restructured teaching force
with greater professional autonomy. (13 references) (MLH)

#1 The Principal and Leadership

by Edward G. Buffie

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by
Edward G. Buffie
Professor of Education
Indiana University

Cover design by Victoria Voelker

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What Is Leadership?

Leadership is a an elusive concept. Decades of academic analysis have given us more than 350 definitions of leadership. Despite years of research and numerous volumes written on the topic, there is no consensus as to what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders, what distinguishes effective leaders from ineffective leaders, or what distinguishes effective organizations from ineffective organizations. Still, we have learned a iot over the past decade — particularly fiom the business world — about the characteristics of leaders. The new leader is one who commits peopi to action, who works hard to develop the latent leadership qualities in others, and who converts these new leaders into agents of change. A leader effectively communicates a vision of what might be and mobilizes others to carry out the vision.

If ever there was an opportunity to improve the quality of leadership in our schools, it is now. Bennis and Nanus (1985) capture the mood of the times when they state:

> The need was never so great. A chronic crisis of governance — that is, the pervasive incapacity of organizations to cope with the expectations of their constituents — is now an overwhelming factor worldwide. If there was ever a moment in history when a comprehensive strategic view of leadership was needed, not just by a few leaders in high office but by large numbers of leaders in every job, from the factory floor to the executive suite, from a McDonald's fast-food franchise to a law firm, this is certainly it. (p. 2)

It is estimated that as many as 70% of today's principals will retire in the next 10 years. This provides us with a unique opportunity to reformulate our leadership expectations for principals, which will

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have major implications for professional development activities as well as for formal training programs for principals.

Principals are the key to effective school improvement. Theirs is a far more complex role today than in years past. They must be knowledgeable about the process of change and about the school/community culture in which change takes place. Because the building principal is in the best position to directly influence school improvement efforts, it is imperative that we carefully examine the leadership role of the principal.

Certainly, improving individual teacher performance helps; but that alone is not enough. Recent efforts in developing instructional leadership skills of principals may change this, but not if inservice programs for principals follow the same pattern as those typically used with teachers. Offering principals a smorgasbord of inservice activities that are little more than academic exercises will have little long-range impact. We delude ourselves if we think schools will get better simply because some discussion is taking place, but no one really expects things to be different.

Instructional Leadership: The Key to Excellence

Although there are those who still hold to top-down strategies in effecting change, many are beginning to question the effectiveness of these approaches. The use of administrative edict to mandate action may get things moving quickly but seldom results in sustained change. Mandates may be handed down, regulations modified, or laws passed — all designed to make the organization somehow "better." Someone may write about desired change, talk about it, and even implement some change, and thus assume that things are better. But in reality, what may be happening is that "the more things change, the more they are the same."

We finally are coming to realize that effecting change is much more complex than issuing mandates. We now realize that change must focus first on people, then on organizational structure and policies, and finally on the intended results of change (that is, student achievement). To be effective as a leader in today's schools requires a different perspective on the use of power to change the behavior of others. A principal's energies need to be concentrated on the 95% to 98% of the faculty who have potential for growth. Certainly, we must deal with the incompetents and totally unmotivated; but we must spend

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the largest amount of our time and energy on those who collectively will deliver the payoff in terms of quality education.

Principals have other responsibilities than those directly associated with instructional leadership. To put the principal's instructional leadership role in perspective, let us look first at the totality of the principal's role. In a *Research Brief* (Educational Research Service 1984), the authors identified three major components of the building-level administrator's role. These are: 1) chief administrator, 2) operations manager, and 3) educational or instructional leader of the school. As chief administrator, the principal represents the school system management and has responsibility for implementing district-level decisions and school board policy. As operations manager, the principal is responsible for supervising the continuing operations of the school. As instructional leader, the principal is ultimately responsible for the quality of the instructional program in the school.

The research clearly shows that principals spend most of their time on administrative or managerial tasks. Although most consider instructional leadership to be one of their most important responsibilities, they do not devote as much time and energy to this role as they would like. If our schools are to improve, we must redefine the principal's role and move instructional leadership to the forefront. And we must provide principals with the skills and knowledge needed to carry out this role. If we expect schools to change and move toward excellence, then we should heed the words of Vince Lombardi, legendary coach of the Green Bay Packers, who said, "Perfection isn't attainable, but if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence."

Why don't principals exercise more instructional leadership? There are several reasons: 1) they tend to allocate their time according to the priorities established by the central office administration; 2) while they may accept the importance of instructional leadership, they often do not really understand what is expected of them and do not know how to proceed; 3) neither their professional preparation nor inservice programs have been oriented toward developing instructional leadership skills; 4) demands of administrative-managerial tasks consume almost all of their time and attention; and 5) it is much easier to be an administrator/manager than it is to be an instructional leader.

How might we overcome these barriers to instructional leadership? In the next chapter we look at a conceptualization of instructional leadership and how it might be implemented.

Instructional Leadership: A Conceptualization

There is no one way, or even a best way, to conceptualize instructional leadership. For our purposes, what is needed is to lay out a set of expectations regarding the knowledge, skills, and beliefs associated with instructional leadership. With a clear set of expectations, we then have some basis for deciding how to expend our energies.

Knowledge, skills, and beliefs are all important components in developing instructional leadership. Knowledge, whether it be specific bits of information or broad generalizations, is the key to effective decision making. Knowledge is power; it provides the foundation for the development of skills needed to carry out our goals. But it is our attitudes or beliefs that perhaps are the most important, because they are what move us to action.

The Role of Knowledge

Effective leaders recognize the role of knowledge in the change process. They recognize when additional data are needed; they know where to find it; and they know how to interpret it and see its relationship to the task at hand. Our knowledge base today is substantial; and its quality has steadily improved since the mid-1970s as a result of research, particularly in the following areas: 1) research on effective schools, 2) research on effective teaching, 3) the literature on school improvement, and 4) the research on effective business organizations.

The Role of Skills

Although research is important to establish a knowledge base it does not matter how much research is done or how conclusive the

findings are if the knowledge is not put to use, turned into action. To turn knowledge into action requires certain skills. Following are brief descriptions of skills needed for instructional leadership. These will be expanded on in the next chapter.

Visioning. Leaders need vision – a sense of what might be. This is a universal principle of leadership whether one is an orchestra conductor, an army general, a football coach, a corporate officer, or a building principal.

Communicating. The ability to communicate – the management of meaning – is everything. As Bennis and Nanus (1985) observe:

> what we mean by "meaning" goes far beyond what is usually meant by "communication." For one thing, it has very little to do with "facts" or even "knowing." Facts and knowing have to do with technique, with methodology, with "knowing how to do things." That's useful, even necessary, and undeniably occupies a useful place in today's scheme of things. But thinking is emphatically closer to what we mean by "meaning" than knowing is. Thinking prepares one for what is to be done, what ought to be done. Thinking, though it may be unsettling and dangerous to the established order, is constructive: it challenges old conventions by suggesting new directions, new visions. To depend on facts without thinking may seem safe and secure, but in the long run it is dangerously unconstructive because it has nothing to say about directions. The distinctive role of leadership is the quest for "know-why" ahead of "know-how." (p. 40)

Also essential to effective communication are finely honed listening skills. Good communicators are good listeners. Unfortunately, this is a skill that many in positions of authority fail to develop.

Developing trust. Trust is essential for developing positive human relationships. It is the emotional glue that binds followers and leaders together. It is a basic ingredient in all effective organizations.

Motivating others. Leadership is nothing more than motivating other people. To motivate, one must first know and understand others. As Lee Iacocca, chairman of the Chrysler Corporation, notes:

> I've always felt that a manager has achieved a great deal when he is able to motivate one person. When it comes to making a place run, *motivation is everything*. You might be able to do the work of two people but you can't be two people. Instead, you have to inspire the next guy down the line and get him to inspire *his* people. (1984, p. 56)

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Decision making. Effective leaders are constantly involved in decision making. They act when they have *most* of the information needed. If leaders waited until they had all the information, they would never get anything done. Leaders have that special capacity to synthesize data and relate it to the big picture. Their decisions are always in sync with organizational goals, with the the goals of the people in the organization, with research knowledge, and with the particular belief system of the organization.

Planning. Planning needs to be simultaneously tight and loose. Planning must take into account the people being served, the goals being sought, and the outcomes desired. On the other hand, planning can not be so detailed, so rigid, or so committed to a hard and fast timetable as to allow no flexibility. Effective planning requires flexibility in terms of pacing and sequencing of activities. There must be provision for spin-offs that may not have been anticipated when the plans originally were conceived. As planning is implemented, new ideas begin to evolve. Success often results from unplanned actions that occur within the context of reality.

Excessive and detailed planning can, and often does, stifle creativity. It also can suppress or delay action. Sometimes the obsession for developing the plan becomes more important than getting on with it. Thoughtful planning and targeting of actions are necessary, but it is important to move forward rapidly to tests, trials, experiments, and pilot projects. Changing human behavior is complex enough. Do not make it more so by trying to map out each step of the way beforehand.

Promoting collegiality. Managing groups to work together productively cannot be assumed. Effective leaders are skillful in helping groups work collaboratively. They know that far more is gained through cooperation than competition. Collegiality prevails when visioning, communicating, motivating, and trust all have been paid their proper due.

The Role of Beliefs

The knowledge and skills possessed by leaders can only be used within a context of a set of beliefs or values. Leaders often must make decisions quickly, often instantaneously. What governs the nature of their decision is first their beliefs and, to a lesser extent, their knowledge. It is their belief system that undergirds their actions.

Years ago, in an unpublished paper titled "The Human Aspect of Administration," Arthur Combs reported on his longitudinal research

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of people in the helping professions and identified several components of their belief systems. More recently, the research on effective business organizations has substantiated his observations.

Effective leaders are empathetic. They approach improvement efforts and problems from the perspective of how things look to the other guy. Most failures in communication result from not understanding how others view things. Effective leaders are concerned first and foremost with people; ineffective leaders are concerned with things: facilities, regulations, and procedures.

Lee Iacocca (1984) tells an interesting story of how he convinced Congress to guarantee a loan to Chrysler when that company almost went under some years ago. The federal government, of course, is not in the practice of bailing out a private company, because such action would be inconsistent with the "make it or break it" spirit of our free enterprise system. How to convince Congress otherwise was his challenge.

> if Chrysler collapsed, it would cost the country $2.7 billion during the first year alone in unemployment insurance and welfare payments due to all the layoffs (to say nothing of the costs to individual states and the psychological trauma suffered by individuals).
>
> I said to Congress: "You guys have a choice. Do you want to spend $2.7 billion now, or do you want to guarantee loans of half that amount with a good chance of getting it all back? You can pay now or pay later."
>
> . . . always think in terms of the other person's interests. I guess that's my Dale Carnegie training, and it's served me well. (p. 208)

Effective leaders see people as able rather than unable, dependable rather than undependable, friendly rather than unfriendly, worthy rather than unworthy. They believe that people want to be good at what they do. They believe that people will work hard to improve performance if meaningful opportunities are made available to them.

Peters and Waterman in *In Search of Excellence* (1982) observed:

> Treat people as adults. Treat them as partners; treat them with dignity; treat them with respect. Treat them . . . as the primary source of productivity gains. These are the fundamental lessons from the excellent companies research. (p. 238)

Two examples, taken from videotaped interviews conducted by Thomas Peters (1988), illustrate the values and beliefs that are im-

portant for successful leaders. Both leaders in these interviews dramatically increased the productivity of their plants.

Pat Kerrigan became plant manager of the 70-year-old GM Bay City Components Plant at a time when it was failing because of low productivity and labor problems. With a 20-year background in the Michigan public schools, Kerrigan strongly believed in cooperative efforts and using teams for extensive decision making. When asked by Peters how her background in education prepared her for making automobile parts, Kerrigan explained:

> I've never made a part in my life and don't have plans to make one. That's not my job. My job is to create an environment where the people who do make parts can make them right, make them right the first time, make them at a competitive cost, and can do so with a sense of responsibility and pride in what they are doing.

Ralph Sare, owner of Johnsonville Foods, a successful sausage plant, also increased productivity at his plant. Like Kerrigan, Sare believes in cooperative efforts and team decision making. In the interview, he told Peters that he believes it is immoral to be a manager and not allow people to fully develop their talents. Sare described his role as manager:

> I'm in charge of philosophy; I'm in charge of setting standards . . . making sure that we are headed on the right track. . . .
> The basic change is an understanding that people really want to be great; they really need that. It is a change in your view of what people are all about. . . . you understand that everyone wants to excel; it's important in their lives, psychologically, important to be that way.

Effective leaders do not allow human potential to be wasted by the grinding-down process of bureaucracy. They are more concerned with setting people free rather than controlling them, with helping them become all that they are capable of becoming.

Another major component of leaders' belief systems is their self-perception. As you might guess, effective leaders see themselves in very positive ways: liked, respected, able, worthy, confident. Without self-acceptance, it is difficult to accept others. Effective leaders do not see themselves as having all the answers but rather as continually growing and learning.

A leader's belief system undergirds all his or her actions. In the case of principals, when they begin to work with their faculties to develop and clarify organizational goals, things begin to happen. Once a school staff knows what it believes and values, change can begin.

Instructional Leadership:
Blending Knowledge, Skills, and Beliefs

From the research on effective schools, it is clear that the focus for change must be on the individual school and that the leadership role of the principal is a critical factor in effecting change. In this chapter we shall examine in greater detail how the principal blends knowledge, skills, and beliefs to provide instructional leadership for school improvement.

Instructional leadership. As instructional leader, the principal works with teachers and parents in developing a set of beliefs — an educational philosophy, if you will — that can be used in shaping decisions regarding the school's goals and objectives. Clarifying and affirming one's values or beliefs is the basis for the vision of what a school might become. Specifically, the principal:

- Works with teachers and parents to establish the priority goals for the school.
- Develops a solid database on the characteristics of the students and families served by the school.
- Carefully monitors student progress on both affective and cognitive outcomes.
- Establishes high expectations and performance standards for both students and their teachers.
- Works with teachers and parents in developing curriculum and provides professional development opportunities for teachers to improve student performance.

Staff development. A school's human resources are its most valuable asset. But if a school's faculty is to achieve its full potential, continuous staff development will be necessary. In carrying out the staff development functions, the principal:

- Sets high, but always reasonable and achievable, expectations for each teacher and noncertified staff member.
- Assesses performance in light of those expectations.
- Works cooperatively with staff in developing school improvement plans.
- Monitors improvement efforts and revises plans as needed.
- Uses various incentives to stimulate professional development and to sustain those efforts.
- Uses the leadership potential of the faculty whenever and wherever appropriate.

Some of the principal's roles described above might be construed as teacher evaluation and supervision. Although these roles are certainly necessary, they are distinct from staff development, where the emphasis is on professional growth and developing staff potential.

Positive school climate. The principal occupies a strategic position for developing and maintaining a school climate conducive to learning. A positive learning environment, good teacher morale, and high student achievement go hand-in-hand. A positive school climate is directly related to student achievement and teacher productivity. In developing a positive school climate, a principal:

- Has a vision of what a positive school climate is and involves others in realizing that vision.
- Works with others in identifying the factors or conditions that inhibit the development of a positive school climate.
- Works with others to develop strategies to overcome or correct those conditions that inhibit a positive school climate.

School-community involvement. A school is not an island unto itself. It is part of a community and can be better served through school-community linkages. Every community has a huge reservoir of expertise and creativity that can be tapped to enhance the instructional program. To use the resources of the community, a principal:

- Seeks ways to develop school-community esprit de corps.
- Explores various ways of bringing the community into the school in both active and passive roles.
- Explores various ways of taking the school into the community — taking from and contributing to community life.
- Promotes the leadership potential of parents and other community members.

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Key Skills for Instructional Leaders

To provide leadership in the four areas discussed above, principals must use a variety of skills. These skills were mentioned briefly in the previous chapter. Let us now examine them in greater detail.

Visioning. Both business and education leaders recognize the need for visioning when undertaking any improvement effort. Visioning is that capacity to conceptualize and communicate a desired situation or state of affairs, which induces commitment and enthusiasm in others. The vision provides the agenda, sets the expectations, and gives a sense of direction for achieving the desired outcomes. One of the most compelling examples of visioning was the Rev. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech delivered from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963.

Visioning is the first step in introducing change. Visioning can be conceived as a four-step process: 1) Visualize the desired situation. 2) Identify the barriers to realizing the vision. 3) Figure out how to overcome the barriers. 4) Embark on the changes needed to achieve the vision.

Visioning can be a straightforward cognitive activity in a group discussion. But there are other techniques. When Robert Redford was directing his first film, *Ordinary People*, he was concerned about capturing the placid suburban ambiance in which the story is set. He took aside his cinematographers and played for them Pachelbel's Canon in D, the hauntingly beautiful music used at the beginning of the film. Redford said, "I want you to listen to this, and I want you to think about what a suburban scene would look like if it corresponded to the music." Another technique, used by the human development resource personnel at Cummins Engine Corporation, a manufacturer of diesel engines in Indiana, is to work with employees to create a visual representation of what they would like to see their huge production plant become.

Communication. Communication is never easy, never to be taken for granted. What we try to express may not be understood in the way we intended. Communication is a two-way avenue. We write, we speak, we draw to express something to others. We read, we listen, we observe to draw meaning from others. Communication occurs only when meanings are shared; and shared meanings provide a common view of reality.

Although we spend 70% to 80% of our waking hours communicating with others in some form, about half of that time we spend listen-

ing. We may want to improve our communication, but how much attention do we give to improving our listening skills? At best, most of us only remember about a fourth of what we hear. And we may not really understand what we do remember.

Experts in communications rate poor listening as the number-one problem in human relationships. And the closer the relationship (husband/wife, parent/child, boss/employee) the more likely listening is a problem. It is also a problem in organizations of all types. Peters and Waterman (1982) point out that the best companies are also the best listeners — they listen to their customers and they listen to their employees. Education leaders must do the same.

Since oral-auditory interaction makes up so much of our communication in schools, we must give more attention to our listening skills. Such skills involve: 1) making listening an intentional act; 2) concentrating fully on what is said; 3) controlling your emotions so that they do not interfere with the message being delivered (for example, if the message is of a critical nature, it may trigger an emotional reaction that cuts off further listening); 4) checking for understanding by paraphrasing what you have heard; and 5) using memory aids to help you recall what was said.

Developing trust. Organizational integrity is maintained only through trust. Although trust is difficult to define, we know when it is present and when it is not. An essential element of trust is predictability. Trust exists when we can predict another person's behavior with a high degree of probability. As Bennis and Nanus observe: "Leaders are reliable and tirelessly persistent. . . . Ultimately, it is this relentless dedication that engages trust." Leaders trust other people. They accept that they are not the source of all wisdom. They trust others even when the risk of failure seems great.

Motivating others. Motivation is the art of challenging others to pursue certain goals. An effective leader must be an inveterate motivator. Motivation, or the lack of it, is a problem that has intrigued leaders, industrial psychologists, and personnel researchers for many years. How serious is this problem? What can be done about it?

A few years ago, the Public Agenda Foundation (Yankelovich et al. 1983) undertook a major survey of the American nonmanagerial work force. Among its findings were that:

- Fewer than 25% of the work force feel they are currently working near their potential.
- About 50% put forth only minimal effort — just enough to hold on to their jobs.

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- More than 75% feel they could be significantly more effective.
- A strong majority (60%) say they do not work as hard as they once did.

That's the scene in the general work force. What about in the schools, particularly high schools? In John Goodlad's major research project (*A Place Called School*, 1984), he found that *boredom* was the word most often used by students to describe their school experience. A study of student council leaders in the states of Indiana and Virginia revealed that student apathy (and teacher apathy) was a more serious problem in their schools than discipline, drugs, alcohol, or sex-related concerns (McQ .₄g 1985). In the annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, poor motivation (lack of interest on the part of both teachers and students) is cited as a major problem in the schools. The pattern is pervasive. The profession does not have a positive self-image. Teachers feel unappreciated at best, alienated at worst. What causes this? Why do teachers feel alienated from their work? Why is there so little sense of "ownership?" We are not without some clues.

In 1982 the American Association of School Administrators conducted a study to determine the sources of teacher dissatisfaction (Brodinsky 1982). The study revealed the following as the major sources of teacher dissatisfaction:

> low status of teaching, inadequate salary, poorly motivated pupils, too much paperwork, pupils' attitudes toward work, lack of time for pupils, high amount of frustration, pupils' lack of interest, schools' failure to maintain values/standards, and parents' lack of interest. Intertwined with these was always the low quality of teacher relationships with their principals and other administrators. Out of these conditions stemmed confusion about teacher responsibilities and feelings that there was a lack of positive reinforcement, little consideration of teacher opinion, and lack of concern for teachers' problems.
>
> Teachers said they suffered from the conflict between what the principal or front office demanded and the needs of pupils. They said their morale was affected by lack of feedback regarding their performance and by feelings of being helpless to influence the decisions of the supervisors in matters that directly affected them, such as changes in curriculum.

Given the causes of poor motivation in teachers, what can be done about it? *Share the power, that's what*. To motivate others, an effec-

tive leader must view power as reciprocal. The dictionary defines *reciprocal* as "given in return; shared equally; mutual; based on a princ' 'e of mutual obligation; of equal weight or significance." Empowering individuals or groups to come up with creative solutions to problems gives them the impetus to translate intention into reality. It is this kind of commitment to share — not authoritative directives — that produces results. We are talking here not about leaders giving up power, but broadening it, using it as a bellows to fan the flame of others. We contend that power/control should be viewed as a unit of exchange.

When a leader sees power as a reciprocal arrangement, major attitude changes occur among those led. Bennis and Nanus describe these attitudes as: 1) significance, 2) competence, 3) community, and 4) enjoyment. Significance means that people in the organization feel that they are "making a difference." They feel that they are at the center of an activity and are dealing with serious decisions. Competence means having opportunities for development and learning on the job, which results in a sense of mastery. With feelings of significance and competence, people become committed to achieving organizational goals. Joined in common purpose, people feel a sense of ownership, a sense of community. They find greater satisfaction in their work, and work becomes an enjoyable experience. They are motivated.

If we accept that teachers are capable of sharing the powers traditionally reserved to administrators, then it is incumbent on us to provide professional growth experiences to help them exercise this power wisely. Teachers do not necessarily see themselves as the major power brokers for effecting change. They do, however, want very much to be a part of the decision-making process when it comes time for planning and implementing change. Teachers are the ones most affected by change, and they are in the best position to identify obstacles and design strategies for dealing with change.

Decision making. Leaders must be skilled in the art of inviting participation in the decision-making process. In describing "participative management," Naisbitt (1982) observes:

> In the re-invented corporation, we are shifting from "manager as order giver" to "manager as facilitator." In the 80s, we are moving from the manager who is supposed to have all the answers and tells everyone what to do, to the manager whose role is to create a nourishing environment for personal growth.

We have to increasingly think about the manager as teacher, as mentor, or resource, as developer of human potential.

Participative management is an idea whose time has come. In companies where commitment to shared management is high, productivity has increased, absenteeism has decreased, and both managers and employees express an overall sense of well-being.

Organizations use many decision-making models. One that we find particularly useful in education is the creative problem-solving approach associated with the Quality Circles movement (Buffie 1988). This particular model is very structured, but it ensures widespread participation, minimizes domination by the few, maximizes creative idea generation, and results in specific recommendations for improvement. It is not a free-wheeling exercise without structure or product.

The QSL (Quality of School Life) Circles we shall be discussing here are an adaptation of the Quality Circle concept used so successfully in Japanese businesses and more recently in the United States. It has been estimated that 70% of the Fortune 500 companies are using this management strategy in some form or another, because they know it increases productivity and worker satisfaction.

Success stories regarding the use of Quality Circle management techniques in business and industry continue to flow in. In the spring of 1986, California newspapers reported the amazing changes taking place in the GM-Toyota cooperative venture after Japanese management took over a plant previously operated by GM. With essentially the same labor force, employee grievances were reduced from 500 to 2, and absenteeism dropped from 20% to 1% in less than a year. The Quality Circle techniques used by the Japanese were credited for effecting such changes.

The QSL Circles approach uses a creative problem-solving process designed to promote school effectiveness and excellence as measured by student outcomes and to improve the quality of the school environment in which students, certified staff, and noncertified staff live and work. Central to the Quality Circles approach is the conviction that a wealth of untapped creative ideas and talent exists in organizations, and that current organizational structures do not allow such talent to surface. Put another way, the human resources in most organizations (including schools) are grossly underutilized.

QSL Circles are an attempt to promote participative problem solving and decision making so that change can be initiated, nurtured, and sustained in America's schools. The QSL process typically involves

four steps: 1) problem selection, 2) problem analysis, 3) solution selection, and 4) management presentation. To this we would add an additional step, which would occur at the very beginning before focusing on problem selection. This step is visioning — ideas on what we might become.

By starting with visioning, you establish a positive framework for what is to follow. Before embarking on problem selection and strategies for dealing with problems, there should be some consensus on the ideal, the vision of what you want to become. This is not to imply that at the outset we must draw up some grand and detailed master plan. Rather, it is a recognition that to make a positive start, we must have some sense of mission, some goals to strive for. Only then is it time to address the next four steps.

A technique commonly used in the problem selection or identification step in the QSL process is brainstorming. This technique has three stages. In stage one, the task is to generate as many different ideas as possible. In stage two, attempts are made to narrow the range of choices through clarification and synthesis of ideas expressed earlier. As ideas are clarified, it becomes evident that many of them are similar or can be lumped together. The narrowing process continues as participants discuss the pros and cons of the ideas presented. Because there is a tendency in brainstorming to get caught up in the process and lose sight of the larger purpose, it is important at this stage for the discussion to relate back to the visioning step, where goal priorities and educational values and beliefs were articulated. In stage three, voting occurs and a priority list is established.

The data collection and analysis steps in the QSL process are important for developing a better understanding of those problems selected in the brainstorming sessions. The data and analysis then serve as the basis for proposing solutions. Questions the Quality Circle might address at this point are: Under the best of circumstances, what would we like our school to look like in the year 2000? What prevents us from achieving what we envision? Given the problem or problems we have identified, what should we attend to first?

The impact of the Quality Circle can be extended through the use of pyramid groups. These are informal networks of three to four colleagues who are not members of the Quality Circle. Although we use the term "group," these colleagues do not necessarily meet as a group. Rather, they are persons with whom Quality Circle members have regular contact and easy access. For staff, the pyramid

group might be other faculty. For parents in the Quality Circle, it would be other parents.

The purpose of pyramid groups is twofold: 1) to keep peers informed about the deliberations of the Quality Circle and 2) to receive input from peers that may contribute to the planning and recommendations of the Quality Circle.

The use of pyramid groups extends the intellectual power of a staff and increases the likelihood of faculty and community support for the recommendations and solutions that ultimately will be forthcoming from the circle. This creative problem-solving approach is slow at first, but the long-range payoff is school improvement and change in human behavior. The Quality Circle approach is not for those looking for a quick fix.

Planning. Any school improvement effort requires planning. In fact, there is a high correlation between the quality of planning that goes into an effort and its ultimate success. This is common sense; yet many educators often are not effective planners. As a profession we have a tendency to look for the quick fix, to jump on the bandwagon for fear we might be left behind. Perhaps this explains why most educational innovations last only a few years and why teachers are skeptical about highly touted innovations that reputedly will work miracles in their classrooms.

Planning must be for the long haul. We must be doing long-range planning based on our goals, our beliefs, our visions. Our plans also should take into account what is known about effective schools and the process of change. They should be checked and double-checked for internal consistency as to our beliefs and our knowledge base. When we can incorporate all this together with a concern for outcomes, then we are off to a good start.

A word of caution: Many a good paper plan has gone astray during implementation because of rigid adherence to specific details and particularly to a specific timetable. It is impossible to predict everything that will happen when a plan is implemented. A plan should be viewed as a road map subject to occasional detours, which might require changing directions. Being flexible makes it possible to seize opportunities not anticipated when designing the original plan.

Another caution is to avoid overplanning. Some leaders become so obsessed with having every detail of a plan in place that it never gets off the ground. All concern for the larger purposes and outcomes of the plan gets lost in the pursuit of one more bit of information

or procedural detail to complete the plan. As long as we keep our goals and our beliefs in the forefront, we do not have to wait until all the data is in before acting. To maintain momentum and the support of those involved, we need to move with dispatch into experimental or pilot projects. which provide the real test of the validity of the plan.

Collegiality. This is a term that is hard to pronounce, harder to define, and hardest to establish in a school. Until recently, the relationship of collegiality to organizational effectiveness has received little attention; yet a convincing argument can be made that collegiality has more to do with the character and quality of a school than any other factor.

The fact remains that in many schools teaching is an isolated activity. University professors, for example, have been described as a group of isolated individuals connected by a common heating system! John Goodlad, in *A Place Called School,* notes:

> The classroom cells in which teachers spend much of their
> time appear to be symbolic and predictive of their relative iso-
> lation from one another and from sources of ideas beyond their
> own background of experience. (p. 186)

How does one achieve collegiality in a school staff? You provide frequent opportunities, both formal and informal, for staff to talk about the practice of teaching and learning in concrete terms. You encourage staff to observe each other teaching. Out of these observations comes the content to reflect on and talk about. You involve staff cooperatively in planning, designing, and evaluating curriculum. Through this involvement the staff teach each other what they know about teaching and learning.

When a spirit of collegiality prevails, students will benefit, because their teachers share their best ideas, cooperate on projects, and assist one another's intellectual and professional growth. However, if we are to foster collegiality, we must structure our schools so that collaborative efforts are the rule, not the exception. This calls for a new style of leadership, one that uses the knowledge and skills discussed in this booklet.

The Leadership Challenge for Principals

With the retirement of up to 70% of school administrators in the next decade, a void will occur in the leadership of the schools in this country — a void that must be filled with new leaders capable of responding to the critical problems facing public education. The problems are most visible in our large urban centers, where the schools are rapidly becoming "pauper schools" enrolling mostly children of poverty with special needs. But the problems extend to a wider arena than our inner cities. As Mary Hatwood Futrell, president of the National Education Association, points out:

> In 1980, 103,000 teachers were assigned to subject areas for which they were neither prepared nor trained. In 1982, emergency teaching certificates — certificates issued to men and women without professional teacher training — represented 10 to 20 percent of all certificates issued in seven of the nation's largest states: California, Colorado, Florida, New Jersey, Ohio, Texas, and Pennsylvania. . . . State legislatures are diluting standards for beginning teachers with an abandon that threatens to make a mockery of the education reform movement. Some 35 states are currently lowering (or considering lowering) standards for entry into the profession. . . . Sadly, state legislatures have made hiring people "off the street" to work as teachers easy — and alluring. In 41 states, a school district can hire an untrained and uncertified person by merely filing a statement of need.

Still another challenge to leadership arises from the recommendations by the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession for restructuring the teaching force (*A Nation Prepared*, 1986). Among

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the recommendatons is a call for a system of lead teachers with a great deal of professional autonomy. Already we are seeing efforts in some school systems to restructure roles and responsibilities of teachers and administrators in which power is shared. This, too, will require new and different styles of leadership.

Now is the time to forge a new leadership force through both preparation and inservice programs that are responsive to the challenges facing education today and in the near future. We invite you to join in the effort.

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