# What 21st Century Leadership in Career and Technical Education Should Look Like

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## ABSTRACT

*When speaking of educational leadership today there are many characteristics of leadership that are needed that perhaps were not necessary five, ten, or fifteen years ago. Technology's impact on how students learn and how teachers teach has had educational leadership think about more innovative ways in which to prepare, deliver, and assess curriculum. It is necessary now to empower our teachers as they are in the trenches and to lead in a way that that reflects unconditional positive regard through relationships. Trust and love take the place of power and fear in order for employees to buy into educational reform and it's important for them to know that they are in the forefront of change and are key agents of change. It is equally as imperative for today's CTE leaders to stay abreast of current and future trends in business and industry and to encourage technical educators to stay current in their professional and trade areas as well as in pedagogy.*

> With the greatest leader above them,
> People barely know one exists.
> Next comes one whom they love and praise.
> Next comes one whom they fear.
> Next comes one whom they despise and defy.
> When a leader trusts no one, no one trusts him.
> The great leader speaks little. He never speaks carelessly.
> He works without self-interest and leaves no trace.
> When all is finished, the people say, "We did it ourselves."

(Dyer, 2007, p. 76) quoting Lau-tsu in the Tao Te Ching

This 25 century old philosophy holds true of the best leaders of today. A leader brings out the best leadership in everyone that he or she leads and does so with relative invisibility. This approach means that you need to suspend your desire to be seen as a strong authority figure, and take more of a role as a benign despot; the invisible force behind the power.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) list the top four characteristics of admired leaders as: honest, forward looking, inspiring, and competent (p.30, Table 2.1). These are the values and personal traits that have been selected from over seventy-five thousand people from business and industry all over the world. This is found to be true of educational leadership as well. In today's Career and Technical Education (CTE), teachers, staff, parents, students, and all other stakeholders expect these traits from their CTE leaders. Trust is earned through the development of the character and leadership skills of supervisors and their ability to be honest, regardless of consequences, to always be looking at current initiatives and trends in education, to coach, inspire, instill enthusiasm, and of course demonstrate proficiency and skill in leadership.

CTE principals and supervisors of today should be leaders more than managers.  A manager controls people and initiatives but a leader inspires and encourages a collaborative approach.  A leader empowers teachers and fosters self-governance (Blase & Blase, 2001, Chapter 1).  All should share a common vision for their school and all should feel comfortable, free, and safe enough to question leadership and management in an appropriate manner. Teachers should be given freedom to think and leaders should recognize the value in this. Teachers should be able to express confidence in independent thought, have opportunities to implement their ideas, and leaders should encourage the sharing, discussion, and debate of all of their input (Blase & Blase, 2001, Chapter 1).  My experiences show that by creating committees and planning teams, you create an ownership environment.  This is particularly true for a professional development committee.   When they see their ideas being disseminated throughout in-services and faculty meetings, it's an overwhelming feeling of accomplishment.  A good leader instills leadership in others.  There are times when principals are leaders and teachers are followers, and others where teachers are leaders and principals are followers.  A strong leader can be invisible, yet at the same time impose influence on teachers enough that it appears that the teachers accomplished the tasks on their own.  This is also true with the teacher-student relationship.  I often tell teachers that their presence is best felt when the teacher is absent. Students are aware that the teacher is not physically in the classroom, but perform just as well for a substitute because of the strong presence and influence of the regular teacher.

Hoyle, (2002) in his book, Leadership and the Force of Love, defines love for the purposes of his book as "an unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another" (page 2).  If we want our students to succeed, our teachers must succeed, and they can flourish better in an environment filled with unconditional positive regard.  They need to know that they can make mistakes with relative impunity, that they can lash out in a moment of turmoil or mayhem and be forgiven, can express creative ideas and have them listened to, and can be empowered to make decisions that they feel can benefit all.  They need to know that they have leaders that not only hold them accountable, but are compassionate, and live in harmony with fairness, justice, honesty, trustworthiness, and loyalty.  Strong leaders must convey these attributes even in the midst of those whom they perceive to be the unlovable, or undeserving of kindness.  "When we allow seething anger to control our emotions and verbally attack unlovable people, we lose." (Hoyle, 2002, p. 6)

"If self-awareness is the foundation of social intelligence, awareness of others is the complimentary capability that marks a leader" (Smith & Piele, 2006, p. 63).  Goleman, (2005) states that effective leaders are highly sensitive to the social relationships that surround them. These leaders have empathy and organizational awareness, and a service orientation.

> These relationship skills may be especially important in school settings, where teachers operate as semiautonomous professionals who often resent administrative intrusion into their classrooms, and sometimes do not have a strong habit of collaboration with peers.  Building social consensus in schools is seldom a matter of logical persuasion: dialogue, support, and encouragement are generally more effective tools. (Smith & Piele, 2006, p. 63)

Emotional intelligence is crucial in effective educational leadership and can often be more valuable than intellectual or managerial leadership in forming relationships with teachers and other reports. In effect, the purpose of this type of leadership should help organizations move forward, rather than just using the disposition of friendliness for personal social purposes.

It is the responsibility of front line leadership to mentor, evaluate, coach, and professionally-develop all teachers so that they can foster all that a teacher should know and be able to do in the 21st century CTE. What should a CTE leader expect an educator to know and be able to do? According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (2012), there are 13 standards of accomplished practices for CTE teachers. The standards are listed below along with how administrators should help teachers implement these standards:

I. Knowledge of students
   o CTE administrators are committed to advancing the learning and well-being of all of our students. They will encourage teachers to use learning style inventories to help teach students in a manner that they are accustomed to learning.
II. Knowledge of subject matter
   o Strong administrators make sure that CTE teachers command a core body of knowledge about their profession and about pedagogy and they draw upon this knowledge to design instruction, facilitate student learning, and assess student progress.
III. Learning environment
   o We, as supervisors, encourage teachers to effectively manage their classroom and laboratory environments in a way that fosters democratic values, risk taking, and love of learning. This can be done through frequent walkthroughs and informal observations.
IV. Embracing diversity
   o Administrators encourage a teaching environment that reflects equal treatment, fairness, and respect for diversity is modeled and taught.
V. Advancing knowledge of CTE subject matter
   o In order to ensure a high percentages of students who receive proficient or better on the state standardized tests from the (Pennsylvania Department of Education: Standard Aligned Systems [SAS], 2012, p. 1), and the (National Occupational Competency Testing Institute [NOCTI], 2012, p. 1) assessments, CTE leadership makes sure teachers foster a learning environment rich in differentiated instruction, conceptual learning, experiential learning, performance based learning, and one which includes rigorous academic integration.
VI. Assessment
   o CTE teachers are prompted by leadership to use a variety of assessment strategies to meet the needs of all students. Supervisors check often for a variety of formative and summative evaluation of student work.
VII. Workplace readiness
   o CTE supervisors inspire teachers to promote citizenship and employability skills by using standardized instruction in personal and professional

behavioral-designed curriculum and students are graded for such. The Professional Development Program (PDPs) student workbooks are a great resource for teaching such skills.

VIII. Managing and balancing multiple life roles
- o Leaders model for CTE teachers' development in student's self-awareness, character, leadership, and civic values and ethics, along with teaching socially acceptable behavior.

IX. Social development
- o As administrators develop in teachers confidence, character, self-confidence, leadership and sound personal, social, and civic values, supervisors look for teachers to pass these traits onto their students.

X. Reflective practice
- o We look to find and help develop in teachers the art of reflecting on their teaching, either with colleagues or with administration, and are always looking to analyze and evaluate their teaching practice.

XI. Collaborative partnerships
- o All CTE leaders require teachers to establish collaborative partnerships with local business and industry as well as post-secondary institutions to enrich learning opportunities for our students and to ease transition into the workplace and college.

XII. Contributions to the educational process
- o Leaders as role models should encourage all of our teachers to contribute at least locally to the educational process by staying current with new teaching initiatives for advancement in their field and the field of pedagogy.

XIII. Family and community partnerships
- o Leaders inspire CTE teachers to sustain family contact to achieve common goals for their students (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards website, n.d.). (p.7)

It is crucial for supervisors of Career and Technical Centers (CTCs) to be aware of the current trends in business and industry as well as future trends. In 2009, the Executive Office of the President's Council of Economic Advisors constructed a report that examined the workforce for the next 10 years (The White House: Preparing the workforce of today for the jobs of tomorrow, n.d.). There were seven major findings that would be of concern to CTE supervisors and educational leaders in general.

- Healthcare is forecasted to remain a large source of job growth in the labor market.
  - o O*NET Online (2010) projects a bright outlook for the next ten years in anesthesiologist assistants, cardiovascular technologists, dental assistants and hygienists, home health aids, medical assistants, pharmacy aids, and veterinary technologists (p.1).
  - o The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook (2012-2013) forecasts higher than average growth in the following:
    - Cardiovascular Technologists- 29 percent
    - Dental Assistant – 31 percent
    - Home Health Care Workers- 70 percent

- The construction industry is projected to eventually recover and add jobs in the coming decade.
  - O*NET Online (2010) projects a bright outlook for the next ten years in brick masons, cement masons, glaziers, HVAC technicians, and helpers for carpenters, electricians, and plumbers.
  - The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook (2012-2013) forecasts higher than average growth in the following:
    - Carpenters-20 percent
    - Electricians-23 percent
    - Glaziers-42 percent
    - Plumbers-26 percent
  - Conversely, it is necessary for leaders to look closely at occupations that may not show significant growth both in industry and in career and technical centers.
    - O*NET Online (2010) projects an outlook for the next ten years for machinists as being slower than average at three to nine percent
    - The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook (2012-2013) forecasts growth in the machinists industry is seven percent slower than average

- Employers value workers who can think critically and solve problems
- Occupations that employ large shares of workers with postsecondary education and training are growing faster than others
- The U.S. post-high school education and training system provides valuable skills to those who complete programs in high-growth fields
- The need is crucial for more effective systems in: a solid early childhood, elementary, and secondary education system that ensures students have strong basic skills; institutions and programs that have goals that are aligned and curricula that are cumulative; close collaboration between training providers and employers to ensure that curricula are aligned with workforce needs; flexible scheduling; appropriate curricula, and financial aid designed to meet the needs of students; incentives for institutions and programs to continually improve and innovate; and accountability for results).

Becoming familiar with the aforementioned information will help guide program and curriculum decisions in CTE for the next 10 years Career and Technical Education (CTE) is on track to help fill voids in local industries. Most Health Occupations and Health Sciences programs enrollments are maximized. Building Maintenance programs have sturdy enrollment and curriculum as well all other areas of construction. CTE teachers teach our students to be analytical and problem solvers. Approximately 80 percent of CTE students are going on to some postsecondary experience and our teachers are forerunners in academic integration and stress the importance of numeracy and literacy skills in today's workforce.

Among all the riches a nation may possess, its people—its human resources, its human capital—is the most important. The value of this human resource depends not on size, however, but on the occupational and intellectual skills its members

possess. At least in this regard, history is clear: A large "unskilled" population is a detriment to economic national growth and to a high standard of living. (Gray & Herr, 1998, p. 41)

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