

# ON-DEMAND PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SERIES



## EPISODE 7

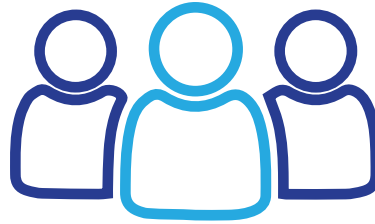
### Recruiting, Interviewing, Selecting, and Developing Staff



## EPISODE 7: Recruiting, Interviewing, Selecting, and Developing Staff

doodles and notes

Education is a people business. Between 80%-90% of total budget outlays for schools provide for the salaries and benefits of staff. Of all the variables that affect student learning, the one with the highest effect size is the skill and abilities of teachers (Haycock, 1998). The variable with the second highest effect size is the skill and abilities of school leaders (Fink, 2012). In both cases... people.



Education leaders do well to recognize the outsized importance and effect of the people who work in schools. The pipeline that provides excellent schools with the ongoing supply of human resources needed for high-performance can be designed and optimized for peak effect.

The leadership skillsets involved in optimizing the HR pipeline are well known and best practice strategies abound. Here is a starter list of areas where top HR leaders excel:

- Recruiting- creating a quality pool for selection
- Selection- understanding and recognizing elements of teacher quality
- Selection- interviewing skills and non-interview methods of performance prediction
- Induction and onboarding of new staff
- Recognizing employees in meaningful and motivational ways
- Work design
- Creating authentic and meaningful work
- Community building as a method of attracting and retaining talent
- Creating school cultures that attract and retain talent
- Talent identification and development
- Coaching peak performers
- Developing marginal performers
- Designing ceremonies to mark employee milestones and accomplishments
- Out-counseling / removal of incompetent performers
- Employee assessment and evaluation
- Professional learning
- Team development
- Identifying leadership potential among staff / increasing leadership density
- Retention of key staff
- Coaching for performance improvement
- Mentoring for career optimization

As the above list is considered, it is helpful to assess each participant's level of awareness and skill in each of the mentioned HR skillsets. To personalize this assessment, it is helpful to delineate which of the HR leadership functions are the domain of central administration, which are the responsibility of building level leadership, and which are shared. No matter who is ultimately responsible, each school's future accomplishments are mightily shaped by leaders' abilities to attract, select, develop, retain, and optimize the performance of people.

*“True happiness involves the full use of one's power and talents.”*

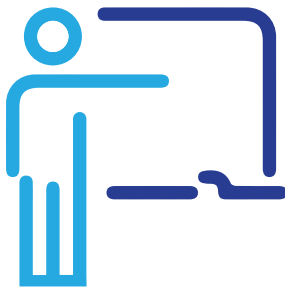
**John W. Gardner**

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doodles and notes

One pervasive organizational trend observed over the past twenty-five years is the emphasis that creative, innovative enterprises place on attracting and retaining top talent (Lawler, 2008). Today's creative class workers, including in the education sector, express a different set of needs when describing an ideal job setting than typical employees of a generation ago. Key attractors include the opportunity to work on a high-performing team, to do meaningful work that makes a difference, to have professional and collegial relationships with peers and supervisors, to personally identify with the purpose and aims of the organization, and to enjoy a measure of trust, autonomy, and deep ownership in the organization's work (Rigoni & Adkins, 2016).

It is important to realize that exceptionally skillful teachers have other employment options (Feng, 2014). They are highly prized both inside and outside the field of education. It is not surprising that, given their impressive skillsets, excellent teachers annually have job opportunities not only at schools near and far, but also with non-educational enterprises (Goldhaber, Grout, Holden, & Brown, 2014). It is also important to realize that, because extra-skillful teachers have more options, more opportunities, and more potential employers, they are potentially more mobile. Talent is a powerful attractor of other talent (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Therefore, in an environment of mobility, exceptionally talented teachers tend to congregate, rather than separate.



School leaders are often asked to select teachers based on little more than an application and an interview. Interview responses are often poor predictors of future job performance. These 12 questions, however, can shed light on a dependable predictor of job success and student achievement—a teacher's sense of efficacy. Teacher efficacy can be thought of as having three complementary components: content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and compelling nature.

Below are questions and answers aimed at revealing a teacher candidate's level of development in each of the three components of teacher efficacy. Four questions for each of the three elements = 12 Good Questions.

### EFFICACY COMPONENT 1: CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

**Question 1:** Can you identify a curriculum goal or standard that students find especially difficult to master? How might you go about teaching this standard differently?

Listen for... speed and ease of recall. Skillful teachers know which areas of the curriculum are more problematic and adjust accordingly.

**Question 2:** Describe a portion of curriculum where the sequencing of the learning is crucial.

Listen for...specific examples of dependent curriculum sequences. Skillful teachers know what parts of the curriculum require a specific order of instruction.

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**Question 3:** Is there any curriculum you'd like to teach if there was more time in the school year?

Listen for...speed and ease of recall. Skillful teachers teach only a fraction, perhaps 20%, of what they know from the curriculum. It should be easy to give examples from the other 80%.

**Question 4:** As you think about a future episode of teaching, talk about specific learning goals that are most important to you

Listen for...clear and assessable verbs such as diagram, solve, create, and discuss. Be wary of fuzzy verbs such as understand, know, appreciate, and experience.

### EFFICACY COMPONENT 2: PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS

**Question 5:** Describe some strategies you've found effective in increasing students' ability to remember what they have learned. Follow-up with: How do you think that strategy works? or, Why is that approach so successful?

Listen for...specific instructional approaches. Skillful teachers teach according to principles of learning that enhance memory and can describe how the principles of learning operate.

**Question 6:** Are there strategies that you've found successful in accelerating learning, causing students to learn faster?

Listen for...specific instructional approaches. Skillful teachers teach according to principles of learning that accelerate learning and can describe how the principles of learning operate.

**Question 7:** Describe a time that the classroom environment either helped or hindered the learning in your classroom.

Listen for...a specific element of the physical or social/emotional classroom environment and the teacher's understanding of environment cause and effect.

**Question 8:** Can you describe any other principles of effective teaching that you rely on for successful learning?

Listen for...specific conceptual or theoretical instructional approaches. Excellent teachers don't follow recipes. Rather, they teach according to scientific principles such as mental models, personal relevance, locale memory, etc.

*“Talent is like electricity. We don't understand electricity. We use it.”*

Maya Angelou

### EFFICACY COMPONENT 3: COMPELLING NATURE

**Question 9:** For you personally, what is the most fulfilling and satisfying thing about teaching?

Listen for...genuineness and sincerity. High efficacy teachers derive genuine fulfillment from their work.

**Question 10:** Describe one of your favorite teachers...what made them especially successful?

Listen for...specific characteristics of compelling nature such as the ability to connect with students, genuine enjoyment of the work, accomplishments that were due to skillful practice.

**Question 11:** Describe a time when you found yourself so wrapped up in something that you lost track of time.

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Listen for...an example from the teacher's work life. One proof of high efficacy is regularly getting lost in the moment of an interesting and challenging task. Be wary if all the examples of this come from leisure time or hobbies.

**Question 12:** Teachers who establish a personal connection with students seem to be more effective in teaching them. Why do you think this is so?

Listen for...the teacher's understanding of compelling nature as the ability of the teacher to connect with students, draw them toward self, and, in so doing, connect them to the work at hand.

### Compelling nature and meaningful work co-create each other

In repeated surveys of employees regarding what attributes of the workplace are most attractive, inviting, and important, one item consistently appears at the top of the list... the nature of work itself. Is it meaningful, authentic, and important? In servant leadership, it is considered one of the key functions of effective leadership to design and assign work in a way that contributes to the wellbeing of the worker, not only to the success of the enterprise.

*"Deprived of meaningful work, men and women lose their reason for existence."*

Fyodor Dostoyevsky

*"Servant leadership make work meaningful in three ways. First, belonging to a community. Second, contributing to a mission. Third, growing as a person."*

Joseph J. Larocci

*"There is no income level at which people are not desperate for meaning."*

David Brooks



### Characteristics of meaningful work

**Purpose:** Meaningful work is always connected to a larger purpose that is seen as important, consequential, valuable, and linked to the well-being of others.

**Agency:** Work is more meaningful when one has autonomy and ownership of the work.

**Challenge:** Meaningful work is complex, daunting, but within reach. It occupies one's entire area of ability. It represents a considerable stretch but is not impossible.

**Mastery:** Meaningful work involves craft mastery, skill development, and peak performance in an area of one's strength and ability.

**Recognition:** Work is seen as meaningful when it evokes recognition from colleagues and others that are credible and knowledgeable.

**Community:** Work is meaningful when it provides opportunities to work together with like-minded colleagues to create synergy, collaboration, teamwork, and positive interdependence.

doodles and notes

*"Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God."*

Leo Buscaglia

## EPISODE 7: Recruiting, Interviewing, Selecting, and Developing Staff Bibliography and Additional Resources

doodles and notes

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