

June 12, 2014

Service Innovation: Engaging Central Office Staff to Improve Service to Principals

Host: Max Silverman, Associate Director, University of Washington
Center for Educational Leadership

Presenter: Amanda von Moos, Director, Pivot Learning Partners

About the Presenter



Amanda von Moos leads the Central Office Service Quality (COSQ) team at Pivot Learning Partners, a nonprofit school reform organization based in San Francisco. Her work focuses on partnering with school districts to transform the culture and systems of the central office. Prior to joining Pivot, Amanda worked for Oakland Unified School District where she focused on redesigning central office systems to better serve schools. Amanda roots her work in a passion for building systems that enable principals to focus on teaching and learning, and a deep belief that lasting change only happens when the people are engaged in the process of reimagining and redesigning their own work.

About the Host

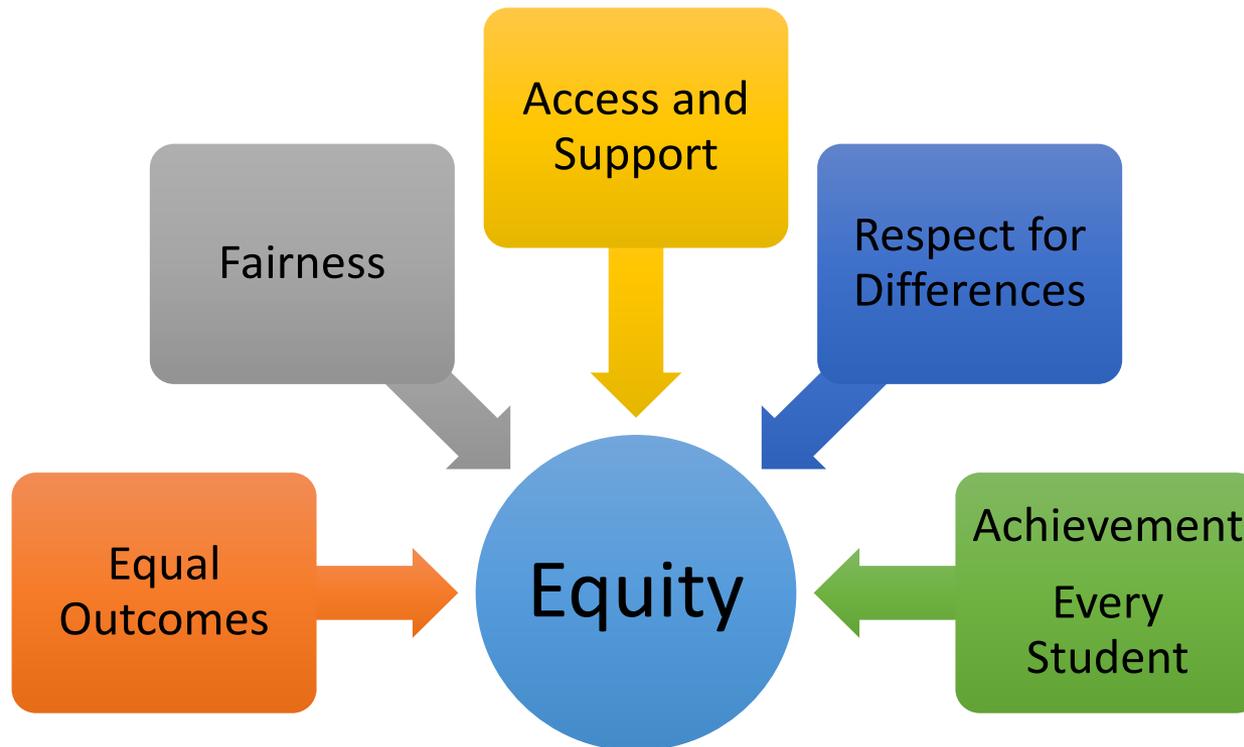


As an associate director, Max Silverman provides leadership for CEL's district leadership work. He joined the Center in 2009, after leading high school reform efforts in the Highline Public Schools (Wash.). As a principal and central office leader, Max successfully led the transformation to a portfolio of high schools focused on sustainable instructional improvement and personalization. Max's central office experience was focused on instructional leadership for ten high schools, particularly in the areas of literacy and math.

Mission

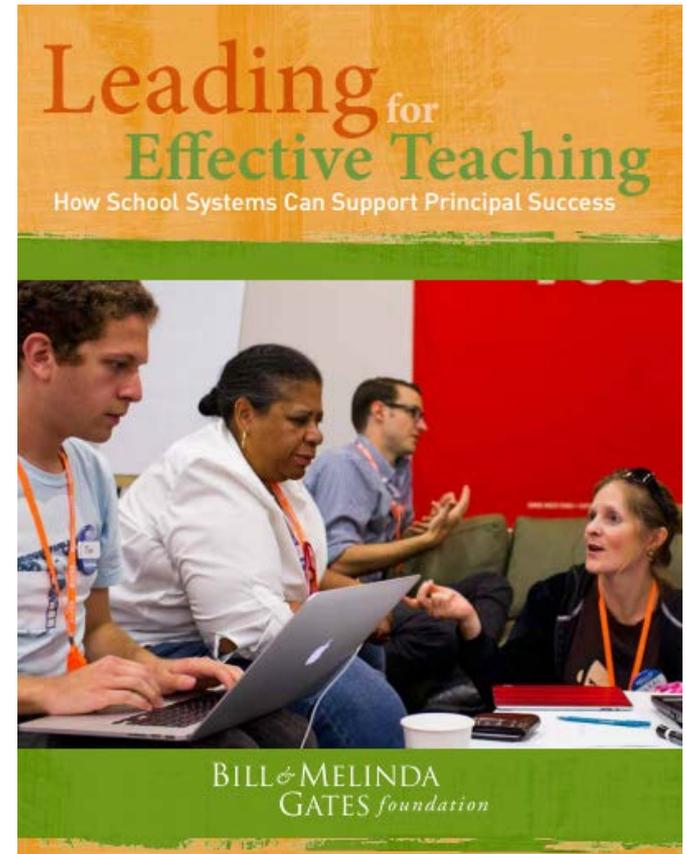
The Center for Educational Leadership (CEL) is a nonprofit service arm of the University of Washington College of Education dedicated to eliminating the achievement gap that continues to divide our nation's children along the lines of race, class, language and disability.

Equity is a Key Principle of Our Work



Leading for Effective Teaching Project

- Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- 11 Sites: 3 Key Questions
 - What do principals and central office leaders need to know and be able to do to support the improvement of leadership and teaching performance at scale?
 - How are principals and central office leaders changing how they work to improve teaching performance?
 - **How can school districts and CMOs organize their central offices to support principals' work as instructional leaders?**



Why This Webinar?

- 75% of principals feel the job has become too complex.
- 69% of principals say the job responsibilities are very different from just five years ago.

“Expectations for the principalship have steadily expanded since the reforms of the early 1980s, always adding to and never subtracting from the job description. One can argue that we have reached a point where the aggregate expectations for the principalship are so exorbitant that they exceed the limits of what might reasonably be expected from one person.”

- Michael A. Copland

“The Myth of the Superprincipal”

Phi Delta Kappan, March 2001

The Principal Support Framework

Action Area 1: A Shared Vision of Principals as Instructional Leaders.

Action Area 2: System of Support for Developing Principals as Instructional Leaders.

Action Area 3: Making It Possible for Principals To Be Instructional Leaders.

Principal Support Framework

Introduction

Over the past several years, Partnership Sites to Empower Effective Teaching, supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and other school systems have designed and implemented new systems to measure and improve teaching effectiveness. This effort has raised important questions about the role of principals as the primary instructional leaders responsible for continuously improving teaching effectiveness and student learning. In *The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning* (The Wallace Foundation, 2011), the authors describe effective leadership in the following ways:

- Shaping a vision of academic success for all students
- Creating a climate hospitable to education
- Cultivating leadership in others
- Improving instruction
- Managing people, data and processes to foster school improvement.

Leadership is, after all, second only to teaching among all school-based factors that contribute to student learning. This inquiry into instructional leadership has therefore highlighted the need for central offices to be intentional about developing principals as instructional leaders. Before beginning an assessment of a system's current approach to supporting principals as instructional leaders, however, it is extremely important to reflect upon the extent to which a central office has established a culture of service and coherence that will make it possible for principals to serve as instructional leaders. This culture is grounded in a set of shared beliefs that are reflected in the district's vision, mission, and theory of action and is typically characterized in the following ways:

- The system has a vision focused on student learning and instructional improvement that is reflected in concrete actions by the district or charter management organization.
- Central office creates a primary focus and sense of urgency on improving instruction.
- The district or charter management organization has a theory of action that is clearly articulated and well communicated throughout the system and community.
- There are routinized communications from central office to schools and from schools to central office making it possible for principals to understand and be able to articulate the connection of their work to the broader work of the system.
- Central office implements strong accountability systems and sets and monitors non-negotiable goals for student achievement.

Action Area 3

Making It Possible for Principals to Be Instructional Leaders

The school system has made it possible for instructional leadership to be the primary job of principals.

Enable principals to succeed as instructional leaders by providing sufficient time and strategic supports to perform the job well.



Service Innovation

*Engaging Central Office Staff to
Improve Service to Principals*

Webinar Goals

Share insights and lessons learned from the HR Transformation Project to:

1. To give you a **practical starting point** for thinking about how to help principals “do less of the rest” by redesigning how work gets done in your district.
2. To share what we have learned about **what it takes** to successfully transform a district office process or system.

About Pivot Learning Partners

Pivot Learning Partners

- Nonprofit organization of **k12 experts** who work directly with schools and school districts.
- We have a *20-year track record* of building the organizational and leadership capacity of school districts to design, lead and implement change.

HR Transformation Project

From a center of compliance to center of service

- 3 year project
- Partnered with HR Departments in Sacramento City and Fremont Unified School Districts
- Supported by the Stuart Foundation

The Air Sandwich



“The empty void in an organization between high-level strategy conjured up in the stratosphere and the realization of that vision down on the ground”

-Nilofer Merchant,
The New How

Our Air Sandwich

A diagram illustrating the "Air Sandwich" concept. It features a blue sky with a large blue cloud at the top containing the text "Principals do 'less of the rest'". Below this cloud is a large orange double-headed arrow pointing both up and down. At the bottom of the diagram is a green grassy field. On the grass, there are three columns of text. To the right of the sky, there is a sun partially obscured by a white cloud.

Principals do "less of the rest"

My PE teacher is absent, guess I am teaching gym today.

Another mandatory meeting at the district office.

My new teacher still doesn't have email.

It takes three months and six calls to get a consultant contract processed.

Extending the Analogy....



The Heart of Talent Mgmt.



Creating workplaces where people are **highly effective** and **thrive** is the heart of talent management.

This project sought to operationalize this idea with a central office team.



Service Innovation: 5 Lessons Learned

Lesson #1

Collaboration Requires Structure

In Switch the Heath brothers assert that “What looks like resistance is often a lack of clarity.” This is especially true for collaboration. You need to create a structure for the work to unfold within.

Establish a Team

Bring together those who work with the process on a regular basis:

- 5-7 people
- Interdepartmental
- Led by “Project Driver”

Lots of Stakeholders? Establish a separate stakeholder group to provide regular feedback.



E-Application



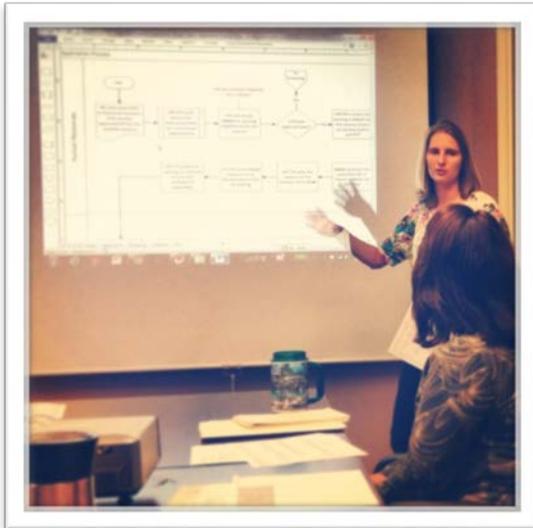
Request to Hire



Online Forms

Establish Regular Meetings

Meet for two hours every other week.



*These are **working sessions**, always advance tangible work during meetings.*

Design Team Example

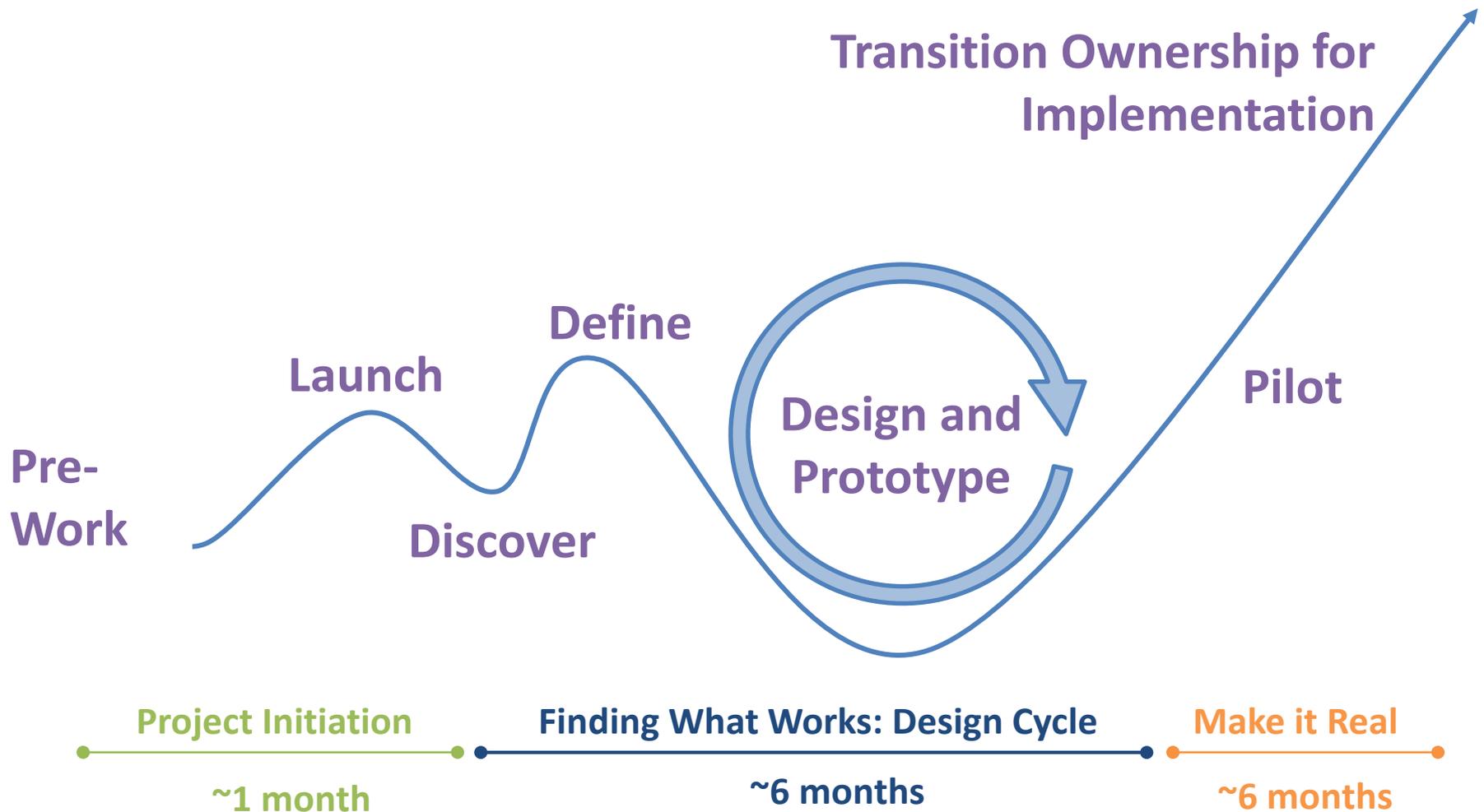


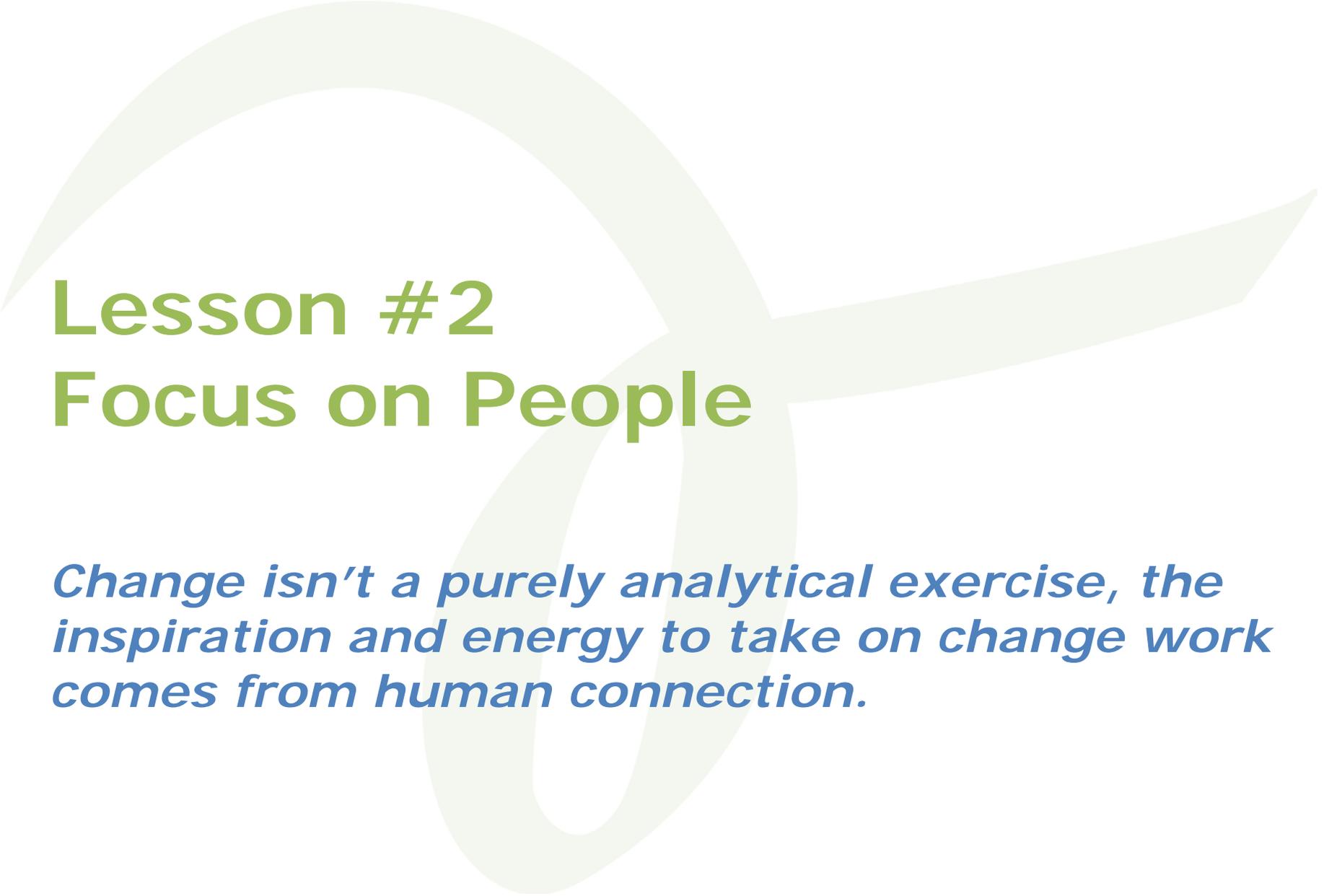
Vacancy ID Design Team

- **Challenge:** *Demonstrate the potential of online forms by streamlining the position requisition process.*
- **Team:** Interdepartmental team from HR, IT and Budget met regularly for a year
- **Results:** Currently implementing new online form and approval process

“We are literally changing the culture of how we do things in SCUSD.”
-Design Team Member

Follow a Roadmap





Lesson #2

Focus on People

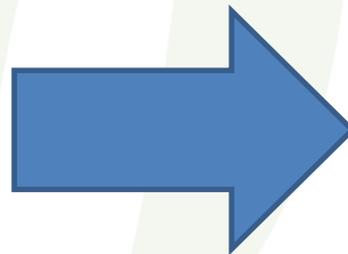
Change isn't a purely analytical exercise, the inspiration and energy to take on change work comes from human connection.

Start with Principal Experience

Inspired by design firms like IDEO, we begin all projects by asking teams to get curious about the experience of those who use their systems.



Interview
principals and
office managers



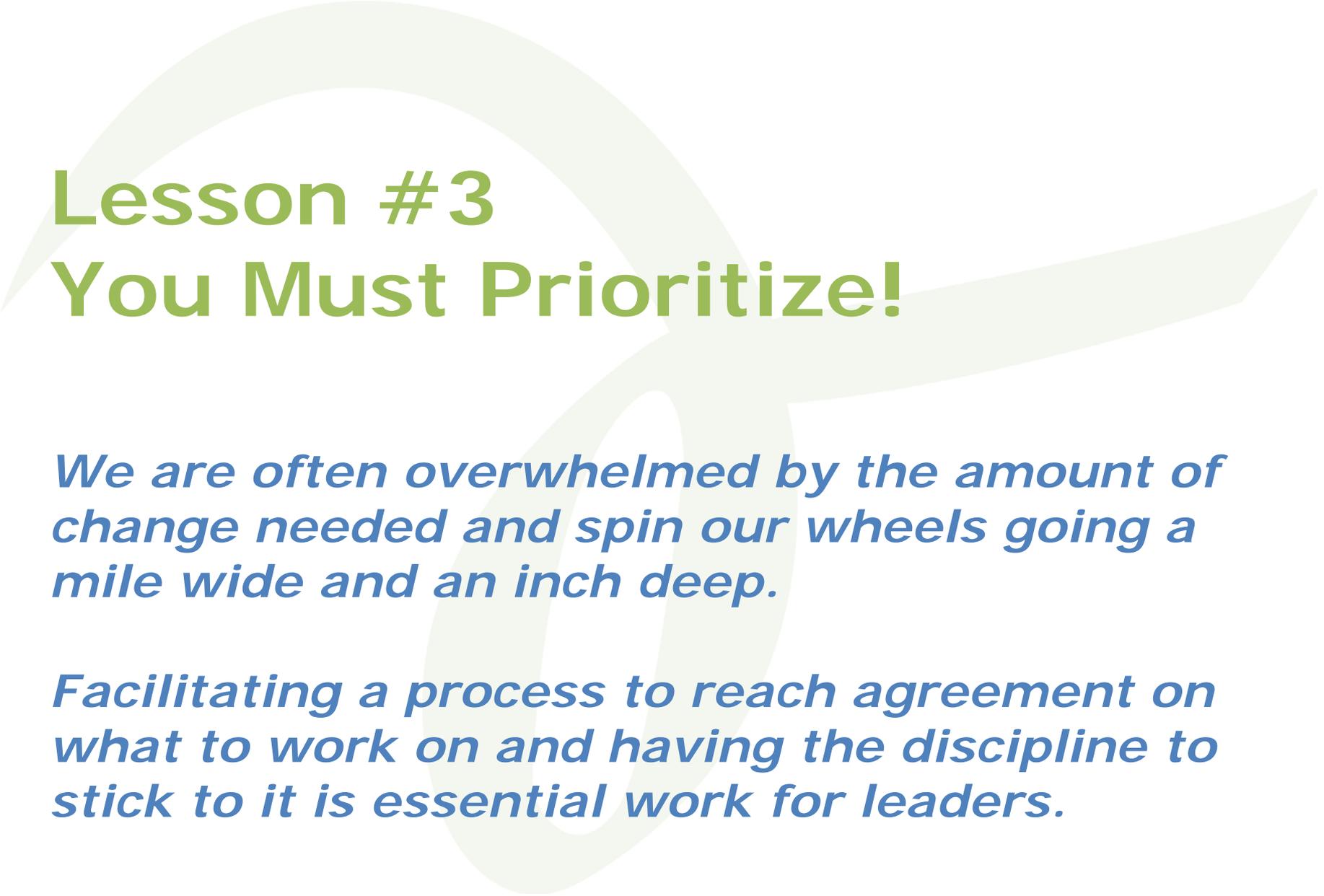
Share observations
and insights

(Re)Building Relationships

Reflections from a Design Team Member

"In our district, every department is compartmentalized, we all work in our own world, which leads to finger pointing.

Once we started working deeply on something together it changed the dynamic. I get to know them and they get to know us."



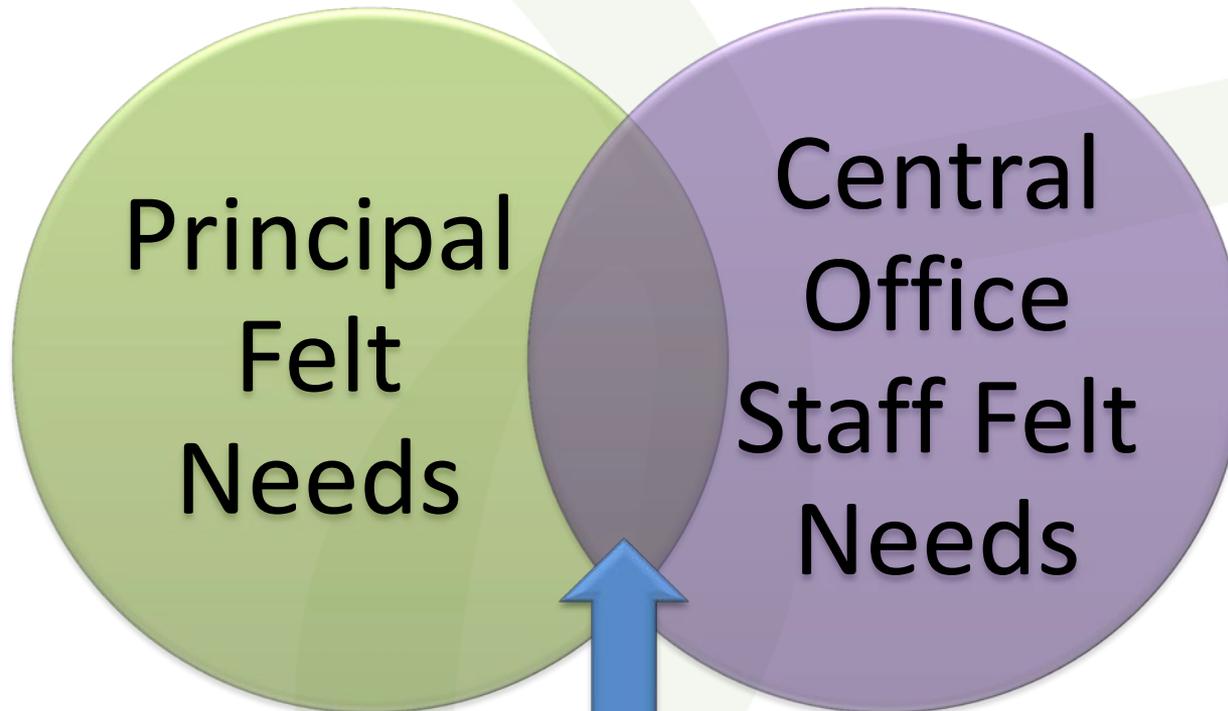
Lesson #3

You Must Prioritize!

We are often overwhelmed by the amount of change needed and spin our wheels going a mile wide and an inch deep.

Facilitating a process to reach agreement on what to work on and having the discipline to stick to it is essential work for leaders.

Look for Dual Felt Need



***Projects most likely
to succeed.***

Prioritization Options

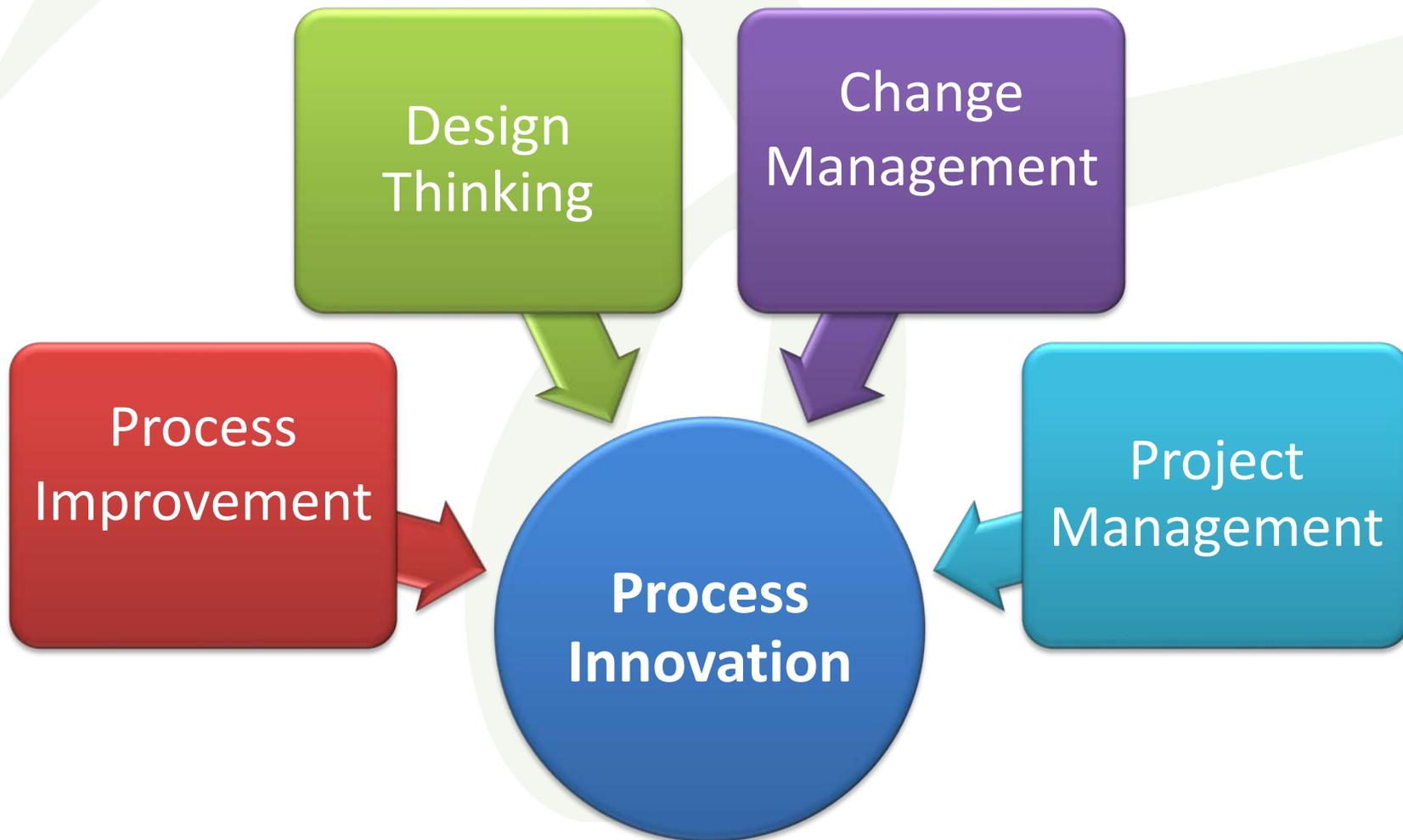
Method	What It Might Look Like	Key Tips
Crowd Source	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Survey principals to identify top themes 2. Input from CO on feasibility 3. Affinity voting 	<i>Do multiple rounds of feedback.</i>
Organic	Conversation with team to agree on what to work on.	<i>Must resonate with felt need.</i>
Analytic	Time study of what principals spend time on.	<i>Don't use all of your energy and resources on early analysis.</i>

Lesson #4

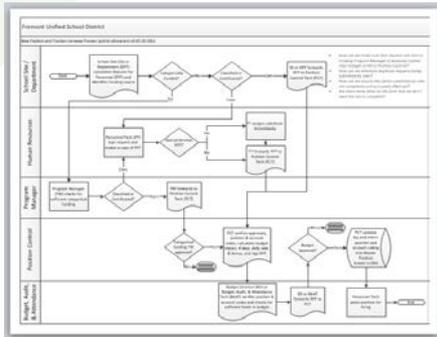
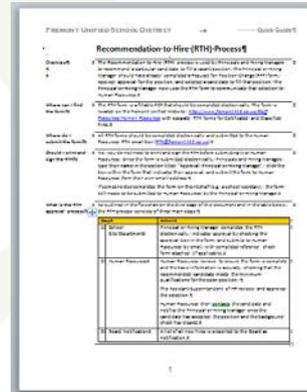
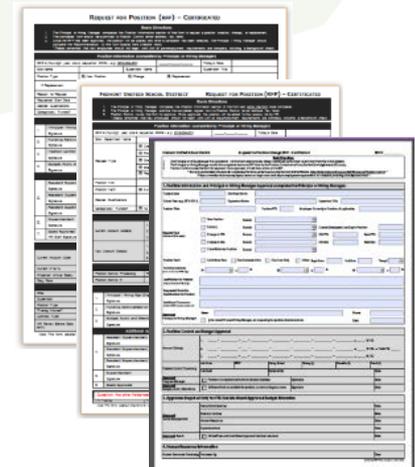
It Takes a Diverse Skill Set

We are doing more than just organizing tasks and holding ourselves accountable. We need to chart our course, envision what is possible, build enthusiasm for the change and learn to work collaboratively.

Integrating Four Disciplines



Process Improvement Skills

Process Improvement

Process Innovation

Tip: Don't get lost in analysis.

Design Thinking Skills

Design Thinking

Quick Guide Worksheet

Plan Your Exploration

This worksheet is a 90-minute workshop. Working in Customer Panels™ is an essential activity for understanding the customer's perspective on a product or service.

Plan Your Observations

Think about what you would want to see if you were the customer. Consider interactions that are interesting or unusual. You might use a storyboard to capture what you see. Have a list of "probe questions" with observations, observations, or simply, of paragraphs and other details. Write a plan to guide the observation time at each point.

What to Observe	When	When
Observe how substitute services are handled at beginning of the day	Between 9:00-10:00	9:15-9:30

Plan Your Interactions

Think about people who interact with your service and those who do not. Consider how they will interact with the service. Who is not able to use the service and why? Who might be a customer in a meeting, but not open to thoughts, who would be a product manager or service manager?

Who	When	When
Observe how the service is provided	Between 10:00-11:00	10:15-10:30

Plan Your Questions

Ask specific questions, rather than asking people to generate. Don't ask customers to problem solve. Of course, their questions will flow naturally from your observations.

Q1	Observe: How do you feel about the service? Can you describe the things you see?
Q2	
Q3	
Q4	



Process Innovation

Tip: Ask to show people your prototypes, involve them in the journey



Change Management Skills

Fremont Unified School District
Staff Recommendation to Senior Management



Background

In April of this year, the Human Resources (HR) department pulled together an interdepartmental work team to take a look at the Request for Position (RFP) process -with the goal of making the process easier to navigate. Our team includes members from HR, Business Division, and Technology Services, which we believe has allowed us to create a very well-designed and thoughtful new process.

In order to redesign this process, we first sought input from frequent users of RFPs, including principals, school secretaries, and other district office personnel. We believe that this has allowed us to refine the forms -so that the forms will work better for everyone who interacts with the process.

Our Recommendations

Long-term we intend to put the entire process, including the approval process, online. Technology Services has estimated that we can move forward with a long-term solution over the next six months. In the interim, we are making a series of recommendations that improve the current process and lay the foundation for the long-term solution:

Change Management



Process Innovation

***Tip:** The overarching narrative should always be about being mid-stream. Honor what came before and recognize that we aren't yet where we want to be.*

Thank You Pilot Sites!



Our pilot sites have provided lots of feedback, which we've used to keep making the new process even better.






We now hope your feedback over the next few months will help us continue to improve it!

March 2013 www.fremont.k12.ca.us

Lesson #5

The “How” Matters as Much as the “What”

It is easy to get into an “ends justify the means” mindset and try to jam through projects. That approach rarely creates lasting change. Learning how to work in a new way IS the reform.

The Impact of "How"

Common Patterns

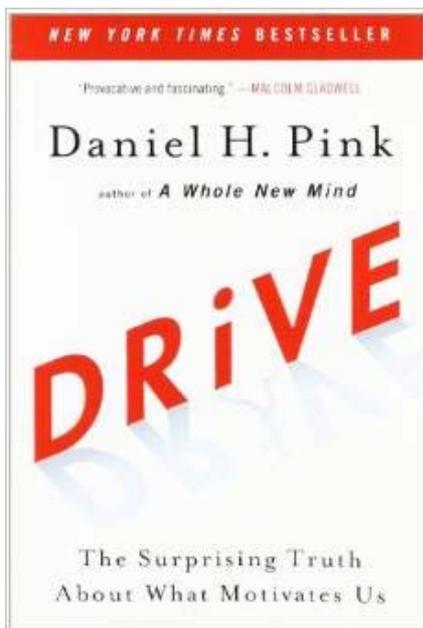
- Band-Aid / Triage
- Firefight
- Fly-by Assignment
- Assign Solutions
- Abandon Projects Mid-Stream

Reinforces a culture that is....

- Reactionary
- Short-term
- Focused on discrete tasks and tightly defined roles

Bringing Intentionality to “How”

Research on intrinsic motivation suggests three essential elements:



Autonomy

The desire to direct our own lives

Mastery

The urge to make progress and get better at something that matters

Purpose

The yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves.

-pg 219

Leadership Practices



“Insource”

- Involve those closest to the work (i.e. those who will have to implement the change) in the project.



Assign Challenges

- Practice assigning challenges, not solutions.
- Ask for recommendations, give them space to be creative.



Celebrate Progress

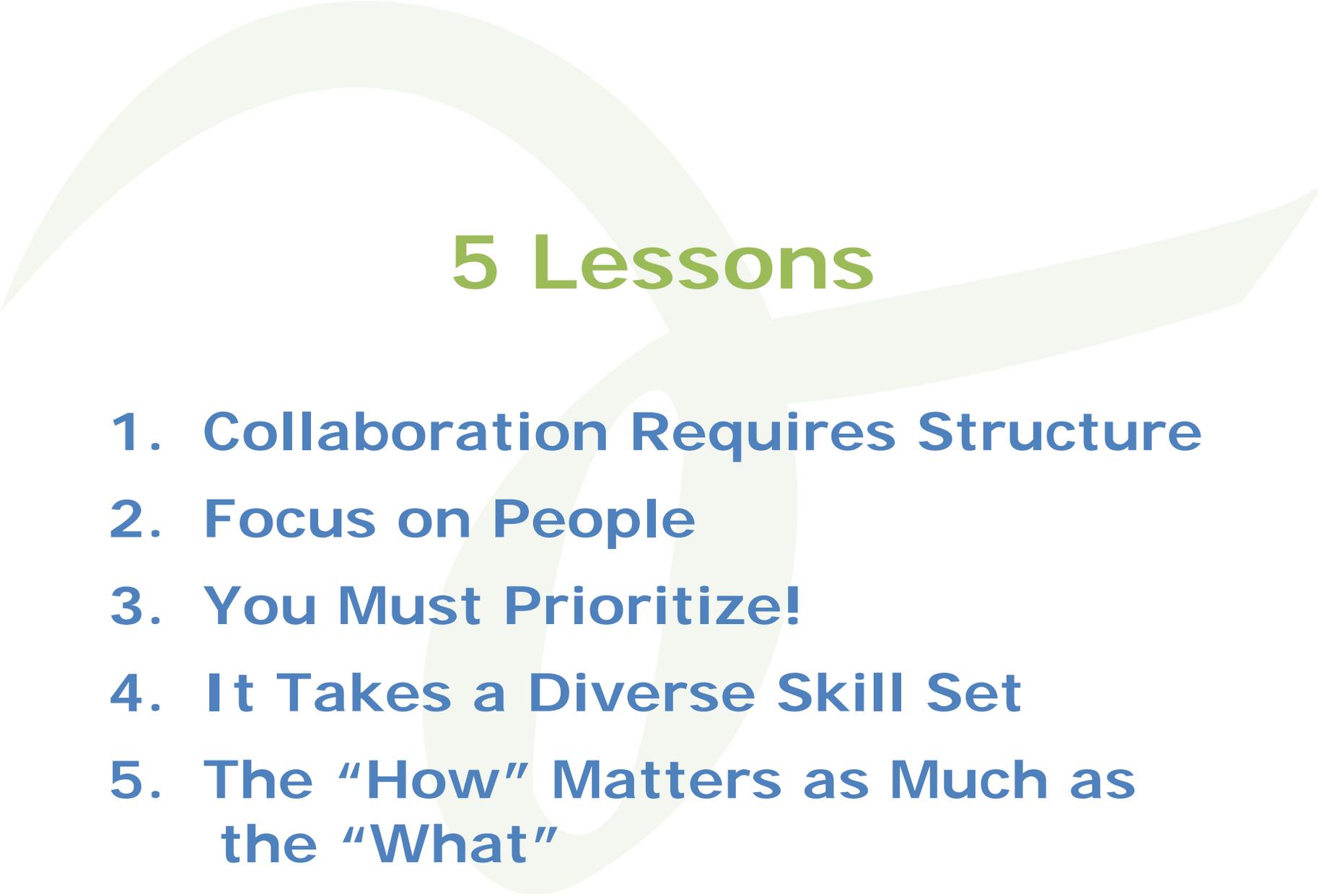
- Seek opportunities to celebrate progress.
- Find opportunities for your team to present their recommendations.

A Leader's Perspective....

*"Design teams have been the silver lining to this school year. Budget reductions, layoffs and doom and gloom are the HR norm but the **design team work has given the hard-working staff hope.** It is great to be part of something bigger than yourself."*



Think Beyond the Project



5 Lessons

1. **Collaboration Requires Structure**
2. **Focus on People**
3. **You Must Prioritize!**
4. **It Takes a Diverse Skill Set**
5. **The “How” Matters as Much as the “What”**

A New Identity for the CO



“The ultimate goal is a new identity, not a series of interventions”

-Dan Heath, author of Switch, at the Carnegie Improvement Summit



Thank you!

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Questions?



www.k-12leadership.org/leading-for-effective-teaching

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→ Central Office Transformation
→ Leading for Effective Teaching
Online PLCs
Principal Support Framework
Central Office Transformation Toolkit

Teacher Evaluation
Subject Matter Expertise
District Partnerships
Coaching

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Leading for Effective Teaching Project

Chicago Convening



Check out this great [video](#) produced by Long Story Short Media. It captures the spirit and content of how the Leading for Effective Teaching Project is assisting school districts and charter management organizations with how they can best support principals' work as instructional leaders.

Shelby County ILD Initiative Featured in the News

In Memphis, Principals Are Being Coached Like Executives



MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Principal James Shaw is in the fight of his career at A.B. Hill Elementary. Last spring, two years after he arrived, test scores at the South Memphis school dropped. And this fall, just before the first nine-week report card, he got word that nearly half the fifth-graders had failed math.

The era when grades were a teacher's problem is over. In the data-driven

Partnership Sites to Empower Effective Teaching (EET) has been active since 2009 with support from the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**. As school systems across the country implement new systems to measure and improve teaching effectiveness, a group of 11 school districts and charter management organizations (CMOs) has undertaken efforts to improve effective teaching and dramatically increase student learning. The Leading for Effective Teaching Project highlights how EET sites are evolving the role of principals as instructional leaders as well as how central offices are adapting to better support principals in these efforts.

Contact Us

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