

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

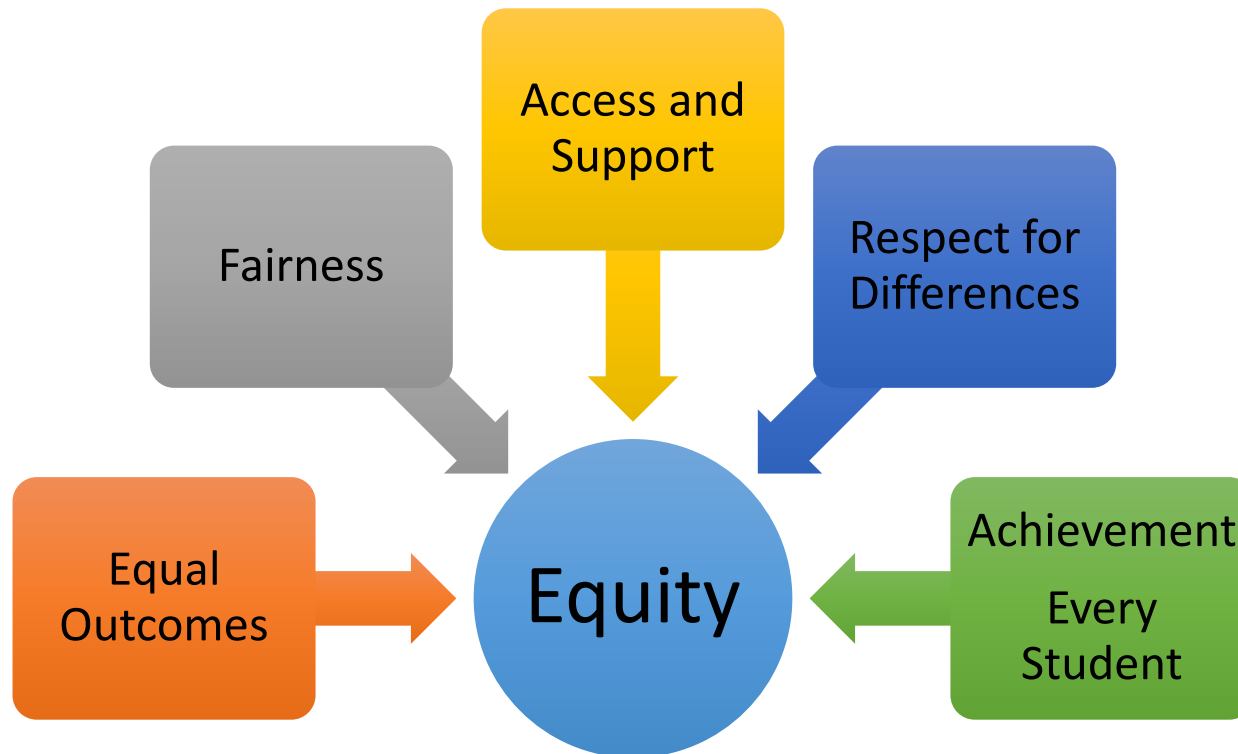


As an associate director, Max Silverman provides leadership for CEL's district leadership work. He joined the Center in 2009, after leading high school reform efforts in the Highline Public Schools (Wash.). As a principal and central office leader, Max successfully led the transformation to a portfolio 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

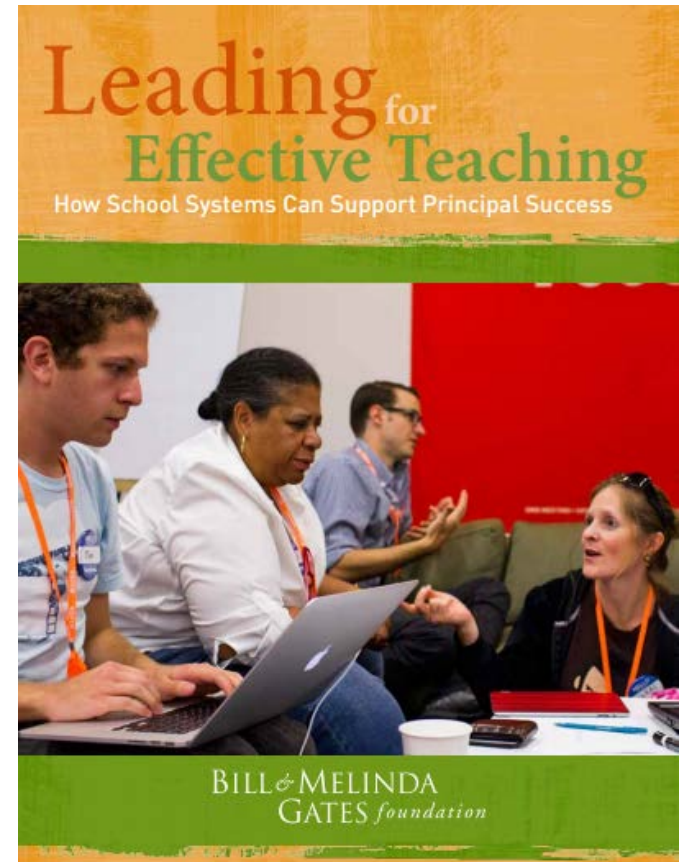
The Center for Educational Leadership (CEL) is a nonprofit service arm of the University of Washington College of Education dedicated to eliminating the achievement gap that continues to divide our nation's children along the lines of race, class, language and disability.

# 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

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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

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“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 concept of an "air sandwich" for principals. It features a blue sky with a large blue cloud at the top containing the text "Principals do 'less of the rest'". Below this is a large orange double-headed vertical arrow. At the bottom is a green grassy field with three white text boxes. To the right of the sky 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....

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# **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



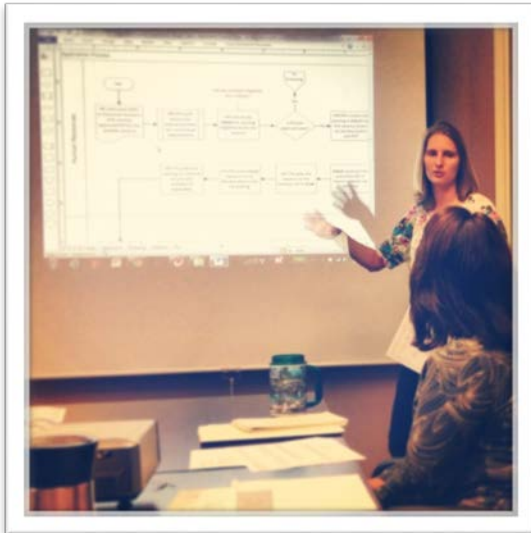
Request to Hire



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

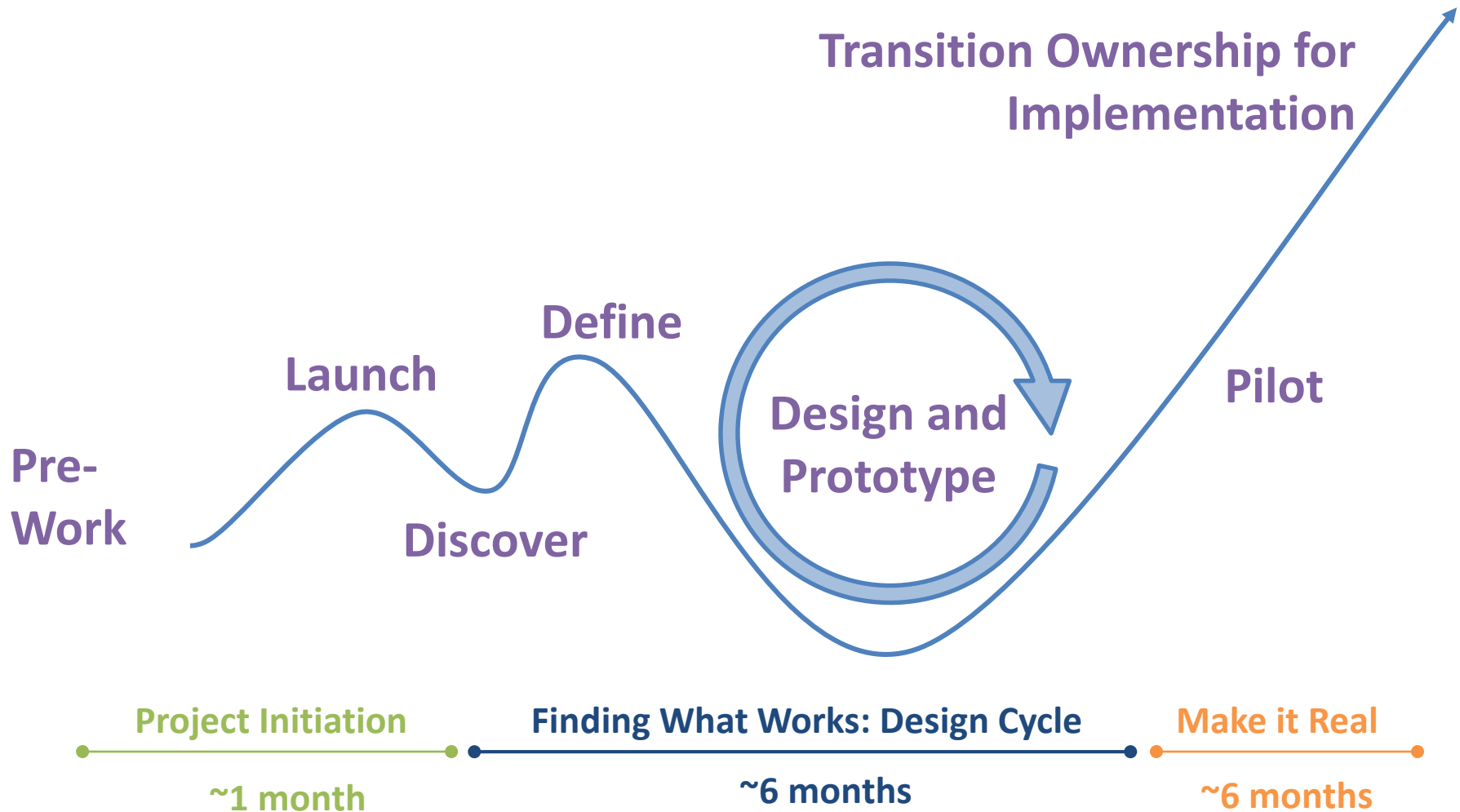


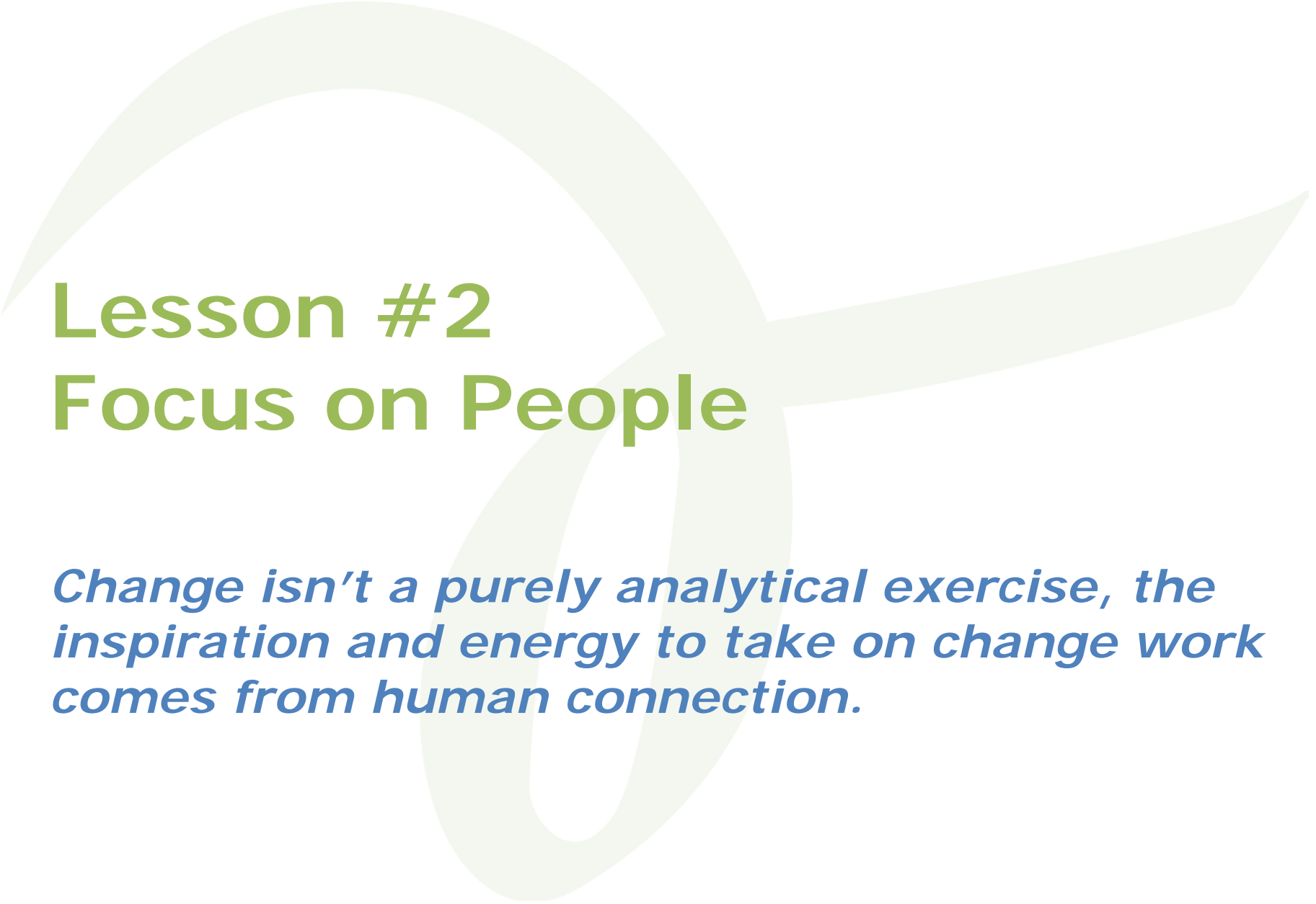
## Vacancy ID Design Team

- **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

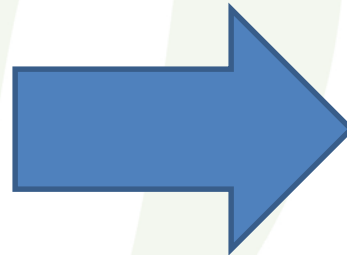
*Change isn't a purely analytical exercise, the inspiration and energy to take on change work comes from human connection.*

# 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

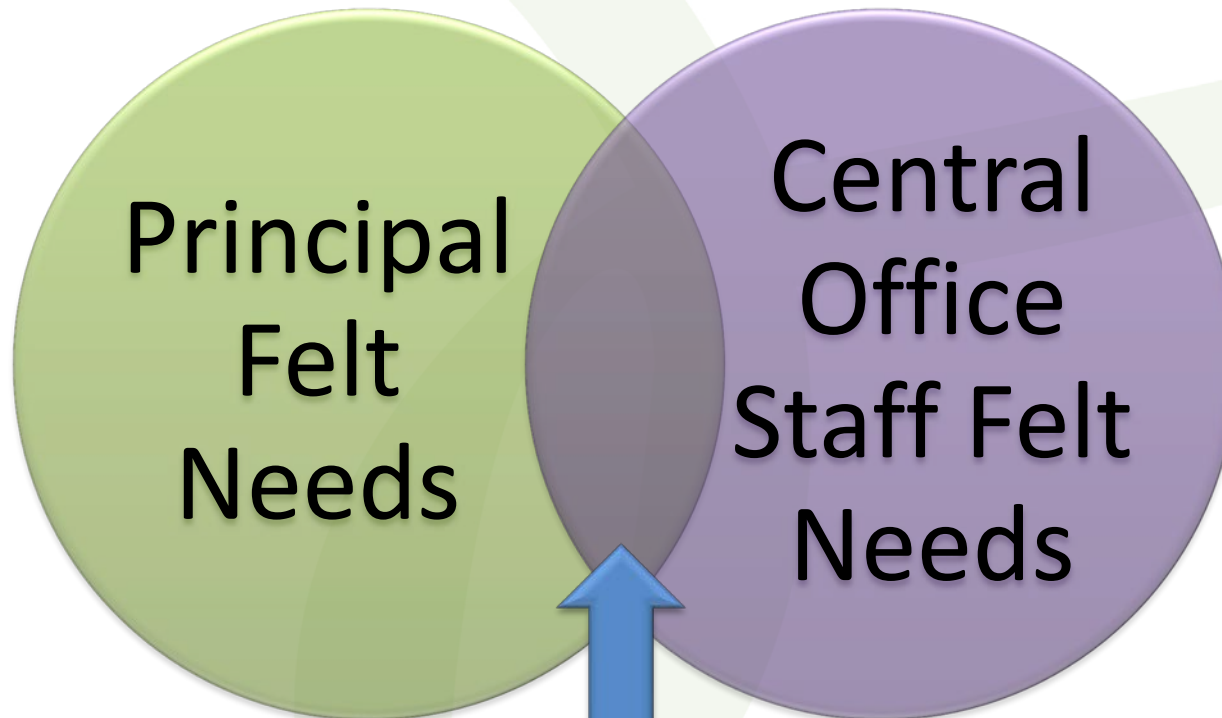
## You Must Prioritize!

*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

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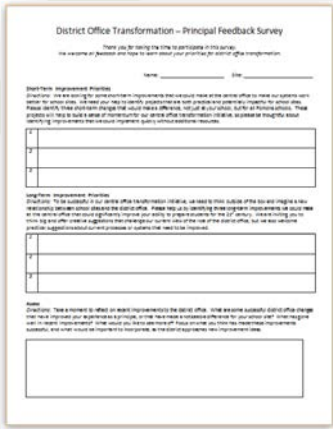


***Projects most likely  
to succeed.***

# Prioritization Options

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

# Crowd Source Example



District Office Transformation - Principal Feedback Survey

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. The results of this survey will be used to help guide the district's transformation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Short-Term Improvement Priorities**

Directions: Use the ranking for each item to indicate the number of times you would like to see this item implemented in the next 12 months. Rank items from 1 (highest priority) to 26 (lowest priority). Items are ranked based on the number of times they are ranked 1. Items are ranked based on the number of times they are ranked 1. Items are ranked based on the number of times they are ranked 1.

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**Long-Term Improvement Priorities**

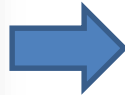
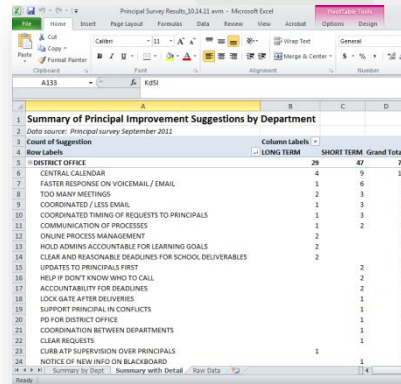
Directions: Use the ranking for each item to indicate the number of times you would like to see this item implemented in the next 3-5 years. Rank items from 1 (highest priority) to 26 (lowest priority). Items are ranked based on the number of times they are ranked 1. Items are ranked based on the number of times they are ranked 1. Items are ranked based on the number of times they are ranked 1.

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**Comments**

There is a comment field on each improvement item. Use this field to provide additional information or to provide feedback on the item. This field is optional. You may use this field to provide feedback on the item. This field is optional. You may use this field to provide feedback on the item. This field is optional. You may use this field to provide feedback on the item.

Surveyed all principals

Count of Suggestion	Column Labels	LONG TERM	SHORT TERM	Grand Total
1	SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS BY DEPARTMENT			
2	DATE SOURCE: PRINCIPAL SURVEY SEPTEMBER 2011			
3	COUNT OF SUGGESTION			
4	ROW LABELS			
5	DIRECTOR'S OFFICE	26	47	73
6	CENTRAL CALENDAR	4	9	13
7	FASTER RESPONSE ON VOICEMAIL/EMAIL	1	6	7
8	TOO MANY MEETINGS	2	3	5
9	COORDINATED / LESS EMAIL	1	3	4
10	COORDINATED TIMING OF REQUESTS TO PRINCIPALS	1	3	4
11	COMMUNICATION OF PROCESSES	1	2	3
12	ONLINE PROCESS MANAGEMENT	2	2	2
13	HOLD ADMINS ACCOUNTABLE FOR LEARNING GOALS	2	2	2
14	CLEAR AND REASONABLE DEADLINES FOR SCHOOL DELIVERABLES	2	2	2
15	UPDATES TO PRINCIPALS FIRST	2	2	2
16	HELP IF DON'T KNOW WHO TO CALL	2	2	2
17	ACCOUNTABILITY FOR DEADLINES	2	2	2
18	LOCK GATE AFTER DELIVERIES	1	1	1
19	SUPPORT PRINCIPAL IN CONFLICTS	1	1	1
20	PD FOR DISTRICT OFFICE	1	1	1
21	COORDINATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS	1	1	1
22	CLEAR REQUESTS	1	1	1
23	CURB ATTY SUPERVISION OVER PRINCIPALS	1	1	1
24	NOTICE OF NEW INFO ON BLACKBOARD	1	1	1

Identified top themes.



**Reduce the number of mandatory meetings from 16 hours a month to 8 hours a month.**

Set a goal.

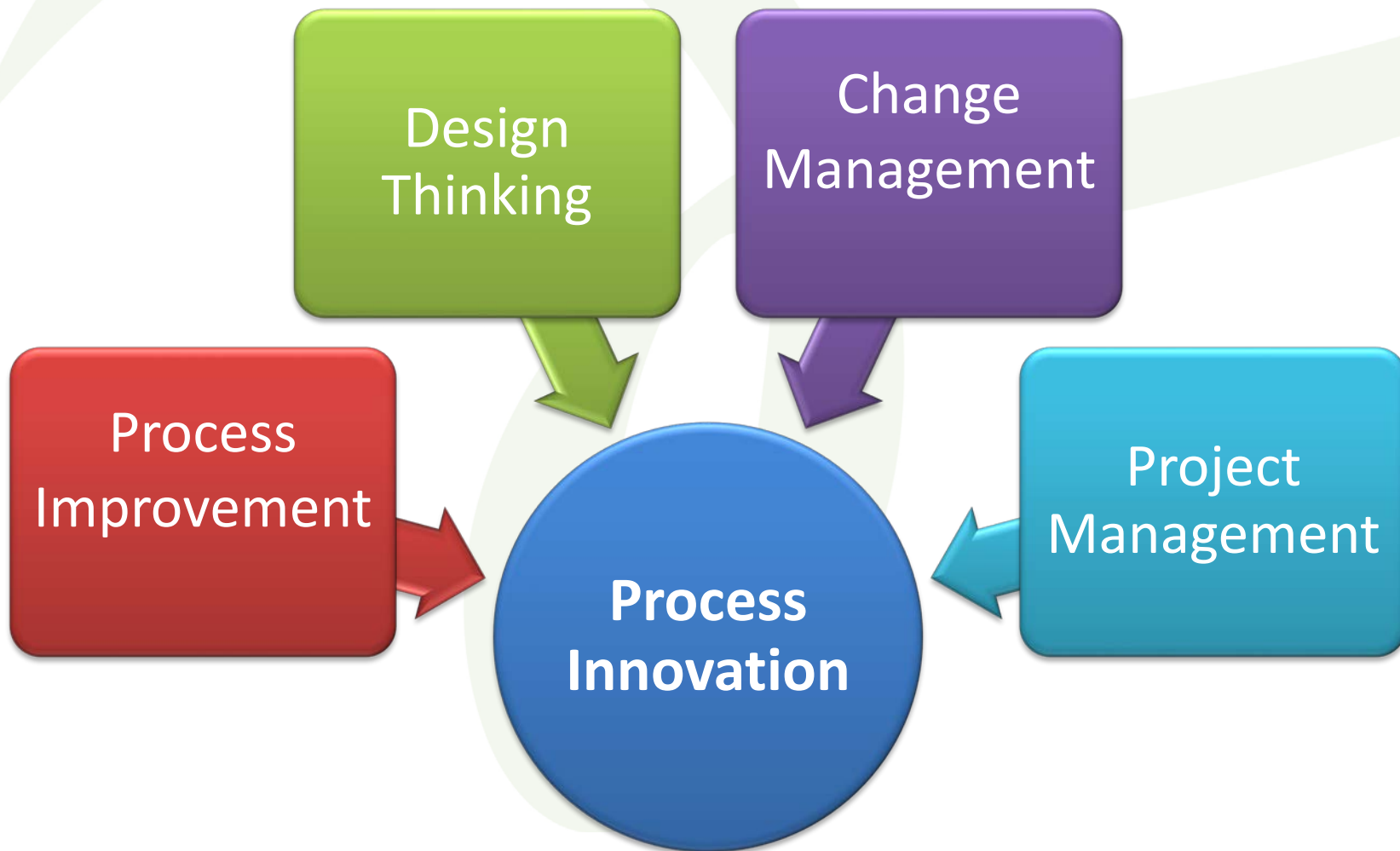
**Postscript...** When the district began implementing this change (starting by eliminating operational meetings during the school year), we heard from principals that we hadn't gotten it quite right. They wanted better meetings, not necessarily fewer meetings.

## Lesson #4

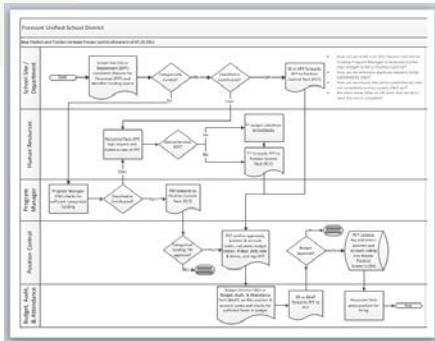
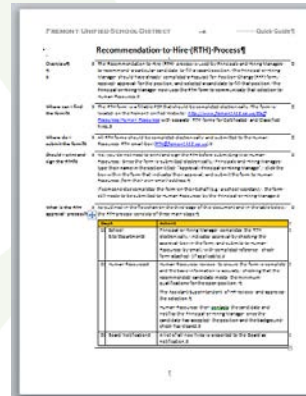
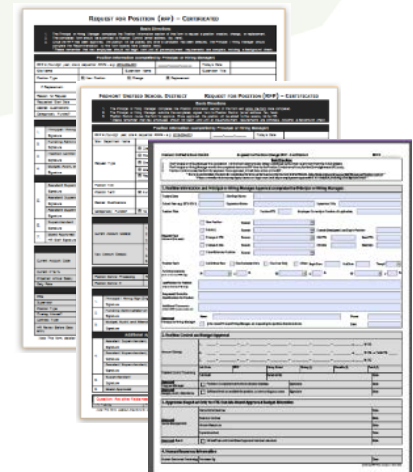
# It Takes a Diverse Skill Set

*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 gift from Pivot Learning to Customer Partners. It can be used as a starting point for your own design thinking process.

**Plan Your Observations**

Think about what you would want to see if you could see it, on the wall. What interactions might be interesting to observe? You might not know what this document looks like until you have it for the first time! With observations, observations, be creative, be playful, and other things. Where possible, include the option to take the observation time at your own pace.

What to Observe	When	Where
Observe how students behave at the beginning of the day	Between 8:30-9:00	9:15-9:30

**Plan Your Interactions**

Think about people who interact with your service and those who struggle. Create a list that will maximize your learning. Who is not asked to use your service? Who might be a good fit for your service? Who is not asked to use your service? Who might be a good fit for your service? Who is not asked to use your service? Who might be a good fit for your service?

Who	When	Where
Observe how students behave at the beginning of the day	Between 8:30-9:00	9:15-9:30

**Plan Your Questions**

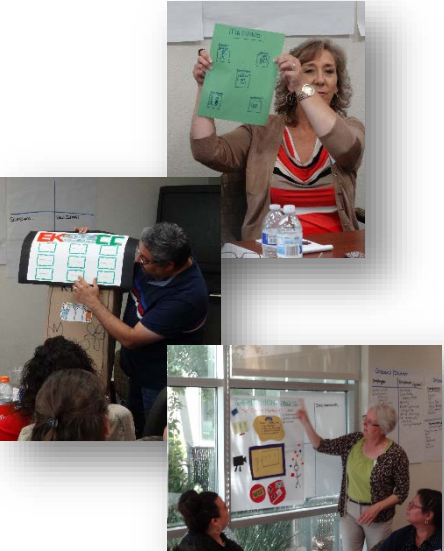
Ask specific questions, rather than asking people to generate. Don't ask customers to problem solve. Of course, that questions will have relevance to your organization.

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Observe how students behave at the beginning of the day	Between 8:30-9:00	9:15-9:30	




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

# Project Management Skills

Fremont Unified School District HR Transformation Project Design Team Project Charter	
Group Working Name:	HR Process Design Working Group
Charter Date Owner:	HR
Charter Date:	3/25/2012
<b>Project Charter Purpose</b>	
The project charter describes the work to be completed and the key project goals that will be measured and will be used in planning, executing, and evaluating the project.	
<b>Project Owner:</b>	
<b>Project Sponsor:</b>	Bill Lee, Assistant Superintendent Human Resources
<b>Project Key Driver:</b>	HR
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Andrew Con Hogg, First Learning Partners, Amy Lauchman, First Learning Partners
<b>Working Group Members:</b>	Cheryl D'Amico, Human Resources, Tony Daniels, Human Resources, Dorey Brock, Human Resources, Kristin Hines, Applied Services, Tracy Houghton, HR Services
<b>Project Description:</b>	The HR process design working group will focus on improving the business HR process, which begins with the Hiring Manager's request and ends with a new employee starting on the job position.
<b>Project Objectives:</b>	The working group will meet for a major staff meeting, followed by a major meeting meeting through the design process. The timeline for the implementation and rollout of the work program.
<b>Key Metrics to Measure Progress:</b>	The working group will identify key metrics to measure the impact of process improvements by comparing to data collected prior to implementation of the program.

agenda	
1:00:00	Meeting Purpose: 1. Review agenda, determine order of day 2. Review HR Transformation 3. Review HR and HRM Goals/Initiatives 4. Meeting Time: 90
1:00:00	Meeting 1:00:00-1:15:00 1:15:00-1:30:00 1:30:00-1:45:00 1:45:00-2:00:00 2:00:00-2:15:00 2:15:00-2:30:00 2:30:00-2:45:00 2:45:00-3:00:00

*Tip: Our rule of thumb for project plans is to keep it to one page, two max.*

Sec City/ED Roll-Out Planning Calendar Summer 2013			
<b>Week of June 10-17</b>	<b>Week of June 17-24</b>	<b>Week of June 24-31</b>	<b>Week of July 1-7</b>
<b>HRD Visits</b> - Support with support feedback on student video (Jonathan) - Check with legal counsel reproduction options for HR video (Amy) - Research video reproduction shops for HR video (Amy) - Research options for downloading Q&A HR video (Amy) - Finalize handouts for team to review in next meeting (Amy) Meeting Date: Wed, 6/12 (Jonathan) Meeting Date: Wed, 6/12 (Jonathan)	<b>HRD Visits</b> - Meet with video eds (Mia Mulvan-Bridgton) - Prepare for video to reproduction shop for duplication (Amy & Team) - Review draft of HR handouts (Team) - Prepare handouts to distribute for HRD (Jonathan) - Continue building out presentation and collector notes (Amy/Katy) Meeting Date: Wed, 6/19 (Jonathan) Out: Jonathan (2nd week)	<b>HRD Visits</b> - HRD on-site HRD from reproduction shop (TRD) - Collect feedback from Jonathan share with HRD team (Amy) - HRD Presentations - Continue building out presentation and collector notes (Amy/Katy) Meeting Date: Wed, 6/26 (Jonathan) Out: Jonathan (3rd week)	<b>HRD Presentations</b> - Input on Professional Development agenda (Katy) - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations Meeting Date: Wed, 7/9 (TRD) Out: Jonathan (3rd week), Lori, Katy (TRD)
<b>Week of July 8-14</b>	<b>Week of July 15-21</b>	<b>Week of July 22-28</b>	<b>Week of July 29-Aug 4</b>
<b>Roll-Out Prep</b> - Make fine adjustments based on dry-run - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations Meeting Date: No meeting Meeting Date: No meeting Meeting Date: No meeting Meeting Date: No meeting	<b>Roll-Out Prep</b> - Roll-out through new HRD (TRD) - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations Meeting Date: No meeting (last gathering)	<b>Roll-Out Prep</b> - Make fine adjustments based on dry-run - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations Meeting Date: Wed, 7/24 (Jonathan)	<b>Roll-Out Prep</b> - Make fine adjustments based on dry-run - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations - HRD Presentations Meeting Date: Wed, 7/31 (TRD)
<b>Week of Aug 5-11</b>	<b>Week of Aug 12-18</b>	<b>Week of Aug 19-25</b>	<b>Week of Aug 26-31</b>
<b>HRD Visits</b> - Roll-out new HRD on Wed, Aug 7th - HRD Visits - HRD Visits Meeting Date: No meeting	<b>HRD Visits</b> - HRD Visits - HRD Visits Meeting Date: No meeting	<b>HRD Visits</b> - HRD Visits - HRD Visits Meeting Date: No meeting	<b>HRD Visits</b> - HRD Visits - HRD Visits Meeting Date: No meeting

**Process Innovation**

**Project Management**

## 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"

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## Common Patterns

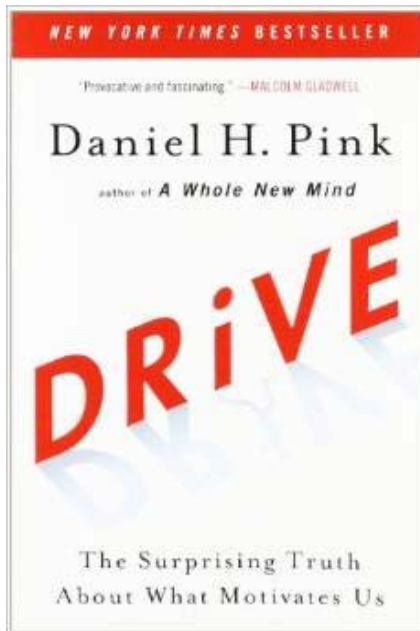
- Band-Aid / Triage
- Firefight
- Fly-by Assignment
- Assign Solutions
- Abandon Projects Mid-Stream

## 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....

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*"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

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

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



# Thank you!

**Amanda von Moos**  
**Pivot Learning Partners**  
[avonmoos@pivotlearningpartners.org](mailto:avonmoos@pivotlearningpartners.org)

**?**  
**Questions?**



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

The screenshot shows the website for the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Washington. The header is yellow with the center's logo and name. A dark navigation bar contains links for Home, About, Services, Research, News & Events, Contact, and Store, along with a search bar and a LOGIN button. A purple sidebar on the left lists various resources such as '5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning™', '4 Dimensions of Instructional Leadership™', and 'Central Office Transformation'. The main content area features two articles: 'Chicago Convening' and 'Shelby County ILD Initiative Featured in the News'. The 'Chicago Convening' article includes a video thumbnail and text about a video produced by Long Story Short Media. The 'Shelby County' article includes a photo of Principal James Shaw and text about his career challenges. A third article, 'Partnership Sites to Empower Effective Teaching (EET)', is partially visible on the right, mentioning support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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What We Do  
5D™ Assessment  
5D™ E-Learning Series  
Purposeful Instruction Course  
Ultimate Online

4 Dimensions of Instructional Leadership™  
→ 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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