Sabbatical Leave for Primary Principals

REPORT

Growing Leadership

THE OPPORTUNITIES AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMMES SCHOOL LEADERS ARE PROVIDING TO DISTRIBUTE, GROW AND SUSTAIN LEADERSHIP IN THEIR SCHOOLS

Peter Pointon
Principal

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This sabbatical was a fantastic opportunity. The purpose of the sabbatical leave scheme is to "provide a sustained period of time as part of a principal's career pathway to engage in a balance of professional learning, reflection and rejuvenation." For me, all objectives were achieved one hundred percent! I found much of the professional learning component affirming of my own practice, and it was interesting to see the subtle differences happening in each of the schools as principals tailored and refined structures to best meet their needs.

The opportunity to meet with Rosemary Hannah-Parr, Chief Executive of the Leadership Development Centre was both very enjoyable and beneficial. Possibly one day principals may have the option to access this organisation as a means of professional growth. We have much to learn and share with leaders in the broader public sector.

Visiting the three schools in London was a highlight. Many of the issues and challenges are the same as those we are grappling with here in NZ. Similarly I saw enthusiastic principals and teachers working hard and doing the best they could for their students and communities. Perhaps the greatest benefit was that this opportunity allowed me to step back from my role as principal, take some time out to think about my own career and life, and have a break that I probably needed more than I realised.

To my colleagues, I thoroughly enjoyed visiting your schools and appreciate the time you made for me and the sincerity of your sharing. It was wonderful to see that despite the length of time you have been school leaders and all of the pressures and challenges, you still have the fire in your bellies and speak of your schools with so much pride and enthusiasm.

To the Ministry of Education and NZEI, this is an excellent initiative, thank you. In addition to its stated purposes, the sabbatical also provides a fantastic opportunity for deputy or associate principals to learn in the authentic context of the 'acting up' role.

Finally, sincere thanks to the Seatoun School Board of Trustees and Seatoun School Staff for supporting my application.

List of People Interviewed

- Liz Millar, Principal Ngaio School. Wellington
- Dave Appleyard, Principal Rata Street School. Lower Hutt
- Ken Pemberton, Principal Murray's Bay School. Auckland
- Kevin Ryan, Principal Raroa Intermediate. Wellington
- John McGowan, Principal Campbell's Bay School. Auckland
- Jacqui Duncan, Principal Cashmere School. Christchurch
- Erica Ross, Principal Russley School. Christchurch
- Robin Bosher, Principal Fairlawn Primary School. Lewisham, London
- Avril Newman, Principal Sir William Borrough School. Tower Hamlets, London
- Karen Fowler, Principal Michael Faraday School. Walworth, London
- Rosemary Hannah-Parr, Chief Executive Leadership Development Centre. Wellington
- Linda Stockham, Aspiring Principal Programme. Ministry of Education. Wellington
- Susan Douglas. National College of school Leadership. United Kingdom

1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Links to current schooling sector priorities:

A number of countries, including New Zealand, are participating in the OECD Improving School Leadership Activity designed to help member countries improve policy and practice related to school leadership.

The New Zealand Background Report 'Improving School Leadership' to the OECD outlines a number of issues we face around enhancing learning and school leadership. Issues include:

- Recruitment and Retention – including the aging workforce and retirement; and negative perceptions impacting on the desirability of increasingly complex, demanding and stressful leadership positions
- Self-management gives school boards the responsibility to select and appoint principals. There is no formal requirement for prior experience, training or qualification- any teacher can be appointed as a principal. There is no longer any clear career path into school leadership
- The ad hoc nature to principal professional development
- The inconsistency in quality of professional development programmes
- The impact of flattened management structures on the provision of middle-management experience opportunities

The NZ experience mirrors what is happening elsewhere. Harris (2008) states:

> *Across many countries there is, or soon will be, shortage of head teachers and principals; and that this leadership crisis is fuelled by two powerful influences: demographic change and accountability. The demographic change as 'baby boomers' reach late middle age and retire was predicted.*

> *The drive for accountability for performance is placing acute pressure on those in positions of school leadership and responsibility. The constant weighing and measuring of school performance, plus the continual stream of policy changes, has meant that many principals are finding the stress of the job too great. In short many are seeking to leave early or retiring through ill health.*

Not only is there a smaller pool of teachers (suitably qualified or not) wanting to take on leadership roles, especially that of principal; those that do, or even those that currently hold these positions are often ill-prepared and inadequately able to cope with the increasingly complex demands and pressures of the job.

In partnership with the various sector groups and researchers, the New Zealand Ministry of Education developed a Professional Leadership Plan (PLP) 2009-2010 with the goal of providing strong professional leadership in every school. The aim of the PLP is to build on the best of what is currently happening in New Zealand to ensure that we have a sustainable supply of highly skilled, high quality professional leaders throughout the school system.

The priority placed on effective school leadership is reflected in the many current initiatives supporting school leaders. Professional learning opportunities cover all the key areas of school leadership i.e. middle and senior leaders, aspiring principals, first-time principals and experienced principals.

Based on the work of researchers such as Viviane Robinson, there has also been a change in emphasis from generic leadership to educational leadership of the type that supports improved student learning outcomes. Educational leadership means direct leader involvement in the oversight of, and participation in, curriculum development and teacher professional development.

Developing and sustaining leadership is a high priority for the sector and the critical role of the principal in growing leadership in their school is clear. By careful consideration of leadership distribution to others with the skills, motivation and willingness to learn, principals increase the effectiveness of their own organisations, reduce the dependency on the talents of themselves

or a few individuals, nurture the talents of others and help build a pool qualified future principal candidates.

Continual reference is made in the Kiwi Leadership for Principals document to the importance of school leaders to distribute share responsibility and develop the leadership potential of others i.e.

- *"Effective educational leadership builds the pedagogical, administrative and cultural conditions necessary for successful learning and teaching. Principals do not do this alone. They use their leadership and management skills in ways that motivate and develop the capabilities of others so that responsibility for strengthening and sustaining the work and direction of the school is shared." P.7*

- *"Our challenges are …to distribute pedagogical leadership capacity and capability through every level of the school to improve student social and educational outcomes, and reduce with-in school variance…" P. 11*

- *"Leading Change…although the principal is in a critical position to lead change, he or she cannot do it alone. Empowering others throughout the school to develop and exercise leadership roles and to share in the leadership of change is both desirable and achievable." P. 16*

- *"Areas of Practice…Create a culture in which teamwork is expected and valued, and in which teachers are enabled to take appropriate leadership roles; build distributed leadership networks that secure commitment and responsibility for continued improvement through all levels of the school." P.18*

- *'Qualities…Guiding and Supporting. The principal also has a key role in guiding and supporting others to step up as leaders. This is achieved by recognising and developing the leadership potential of teachers…this is important not only for building positive relationships, but for growing and sustaining the school's leadership capacity." P.23*

Links to issues important to Seatoun School and my own development:

'Our People' is one of eight key goal headings in our strategic plan.

In 2010 two of the objectives sitting under this heading were:

- Succession Planning – school-wide responsibilities are allocated to address current and future needs; and mentors/support will be provided to assist with any transition.

- Staff Development – provide relevant professional development and growth opportunities to meet both school priorities and individual requirements. Provide opportunities for staff to lead and take meaningful responsibility for resources, projects and developments.

'Developing Others' was one of my personal goals. This involved overseeing the development programme, coaching and mentoring and ensuring there was an appropriate balance of challenge and support for each individual.

2. RESEARCH PROCESS

In addition to researching literature, my inquiry was informed through visiting and talking with a number of principals in New Zealand and in the United Kingdom. A broader perspective was gained by talking with Linda Stockham, responsible for overseeing the Ministry of Education, Aspiring Principal's initiative; and Rosemary Hannah-Parr, Chief Executive of the Leadership Development Centre, the organisation set up to develop effective public sector leadership.

Selection of Schools:

My choice of NZ schools was primarily based on principals and/or schools that mirror my own situation:

- Experienced leaders operating at Stage 5, 'Extended Headship,' of Ingate's model (updated 2010). Appendix 1
- Medium to large schools: 400-700 students
- With one exception, the socio-economic demographics of the schools are similar to my own (decile 10) school
- Two of the schools are located in seaside communities similar to my own, and like Seatoun, two of the schools are full primary schools
- Different perspectives were gained from looking at some schools in Auckland and Christchurch, the large urban areas outside of Wellington; some contributing schools and an intermediate

Working through the National College for Leadership I was able to arrange three London schools to visit. One of the schools was Michael Faraday situated on the Aylesbury Estate, Walworth London: A multi-million pound new school being build alongside the existing school was planned to be open on my arrival. Things were not going to plan and the principal was desperately trying to make arrangements for the children that we due back from school holidays in a couple of days! It was not appropriate to interview her for any length of time given these more pressing priorities. I did however; get an opportunity to have a tour of the new buildings with one of the project managers. This was of interest given my own school was built less than ten years ago.

The other two schools I visited were Fairlawn Primary School, Lewisham; and Sir William Borrough. Limehouse, Tower Hamlets.

3. FINDINGS

Looking Back:

What were the most valuable training and development opportunities each principal had to support them in their progress to becoming a school leader?

Table1 shows the key factors and opportunities that impacted on the leadership and career development of the principals interviewed. The principals from the United Kingdom had related similar experiences, although in some cases the contexts are slightly different.

Table 1

Influential Factors	
New Zealand	**United Kingdom**
Worked with a principal that provided challenging & meaningful leadership opportunities & responsibilities	•
Worked with a principal that championed their career	•
Received coaching/mentoring from a principal they worked with	•
Received guidance, recognition, leadership development from inspectorate	
Followed a 'leadership career pathway' – team leader, deputy principal, principal [possibly small school (s) then larger school(s)]	•
Country service pathway	
Significant acting principal opportunity in the school they worked or seconded to another school	
Learnt from role models, both good & bad	•
Worked with David Steward – Reflective Principal Course, etc. (This factor is obviously specific to NZ, but David was named by more than one principal as having a significant influence in their leadership development.)	
Undertaken further study – e.g. University or Unitec, Post Graduate or Masters qualifications	•
Participated in MOE Leadership Development e.g. First Time Principal, PDPC	
Involvement in MOE Leadership Initiatives e.g. Aspiring Principals, Mentor First Time Principals, Facilitator PDPC	•
Involvement in leading/co-leading MOE or other 'recognised' leadership/curriculum initiatives	•
Secondment or other move from principal into MOE or other leadership position outside of education	
Leadership responsibility in cluster, regional or National educational initiative	•
Significant leadership responsibility in cluster, regional or national professional organisation e.g. APPA, NZPF, etc	•
Principal in 1989 during transition to Tomorrow's Schools	
Regular attendance at regional, national & international principal/leadership/education conferences (networking & learning)	•
'Outside of Education' private sector leadership training	•
Once in the principal role getting on and 'doing it'	•

Whilst only a very small sample group, the principals interviewed (both NZ and UK), were fortunate enough to be exposed to most of the key leadership growth opportunities currently being advocated. This mirrored my own experience.

Two key differences between then and now are the formalised national training programmes now operating and the increased use of formal coaching and mentoring from principals or external experts.

A number of the NZ principals interviewed specifically mentioned the impact David Stewart had on their leadership development, especially in their formative years as principals. In more recent years, all have been involved in and/or accepted key responsibilities in regional and national principal organisations and Ministry of Education curriculum and leadership development initiatives. This type of involvement has honed their leadership skills, ensured currency of thinking and helped to sustain interest and challenge in their roles.

Prior to 1989 and the introduction of 'Tomorrow's Schools' and even well beyond this point; the use of job descriptions, appraisal and personal development programmes were highly variable and inconsistent in the NZ primary education sector.

Between 1989 and 2000 leadership development continued to be of an adhoc nature. Often it came down to luck. If a teacher with leadership aspirations was fortunate enough to be placed in a school with an influential or forward thinking principal, then they received meaningful development and career planning. It could be argued that to a considerable degree this still remains the case. The willingness, ability and commitment of the principal to provide development opportunities for staff through meaningful distributed leadership and effective coaching and support remain key success factors

Current Situation:

How are principals sharing leadership responsibilities and unlocking leadership potential?

(a) New Zealand

Current thinking, research and literature all advocate the benefits of shared leadership and the importance of succession planning. At the national level, the PLP framework and Kiwi Leadership strategy, the various national leadership development initiatives implemented over the last five to ten years years, the increase in management units to primary schools in 2009 and 2010 as part of the Collective Agreement negotiations and an increased leadership component to school staffing allocations are all strategies that have been introduced to attract teachers to school leadership and to ensure they adequately prepared to do so.

At the ground level, school principals are employing a number of strategies to effectively share leadership responsibilities and unlock leadership potential

1. Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Models:

Leadership Structures Observed

School A

Senior Leadership Team

Principal

Deputy Principal & Associate Principal
Both Literacy Leaders (lead Lit Team)

Syndicate Team Leaders
Other Curriculum Leaders
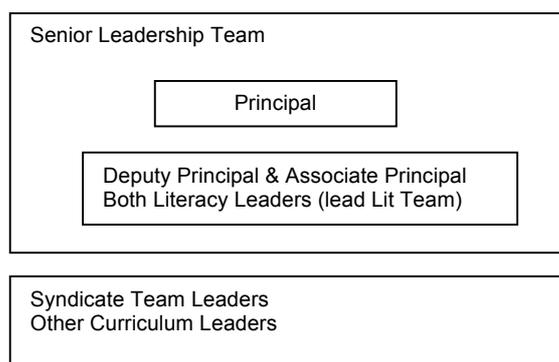
This school has an absolute focus on literacy. 2 x per term the senior team meet with the literacy facilitator to keep their focus moving forward.

DP & AP literacy leaders to utilise their strengths. Part of schooling improvement literacy cluster. This provides considerable opportunities for leadership growth & development. Focus on effective literacy practice rather than leadership per say

The SLT & all curriculum leaders meet as a whole group about 3 x per term for reflection, update progress, etc.
More people can see the 'big picture' & the rationale behind decisions

School B

Senior Leadership Team	Structural change recently introduced, increasing size of syndicate teams. With the increase in units, "learning Leaders" introduced with more responsibility.

Senior Leadership Team

Principal

2 Deputy Principals
Each responsible for 2 Learning Leaders
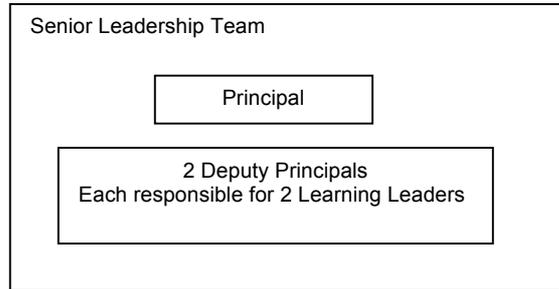
4 Learning Leaders each responsible for team of 7 classes

2 Leaders of Change – specialist team & ICT

Structural change recently introduced, increasing size of syndicate teams. With the increase in units, "learning Leaders" introduced with more responsibility.

Both DPs participating in Aspiring Principal initiative. Attend BoT mtgs, H&S and whanau mtgs

All of management team working with outside leadership development facilitator to grow leadership capacity and consistency.

Opportunities for L Leaders to facilitate in cluster initiative; also report to BoT as required

Regular meetings are held at SLT level and between SLT & other unit holders
Cultural shift to encourage greater risk taking, wanting teachers & leaders to be 'Inquirers'

School C

Senior Leadership Team

Principal

2 Deputy Principals
Embrace whole school
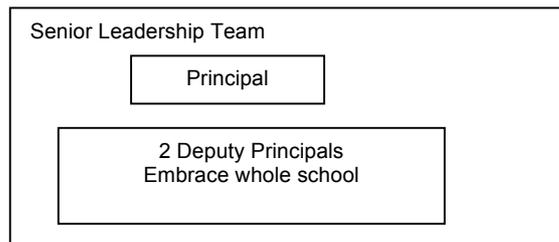
3 Team Leaders (functional)

3 Learning Leaders (pedagogy)

New structure introduced 2010
DPs undertake appraisals & undertake weekly classroom 'walk throughs' as part of coaching & appraisal process.

Involved in schooling improvement contract focusing on coaching linked to student achievement until MoE withdrew funding half way through. Carried on regardless & this has provided a good foundation for professional learning

Team student targets set by Learning Leader & appropriate DP.

SLT go on 'leadership retreats' with SLTs from 2 other schools to develop capacity & share issues. SLT also involved in post graduate educational leadership programmes

Very reliant on teams to influence school direction and change/improve pedagogy

School D

Senior Leadership Team

Principal

3 Deputy Principals
Each responsible for 2 Learning Leaders
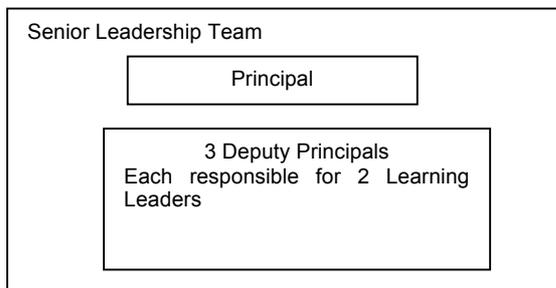
6 Learning Leaders – each responsible for a syndicate of teachers
9 unit holders – responsible for a range of programmes & school initiatives

The DPs are responsible for mentoring the Learning Leaders allocated to them (Leadership Academy). Other school wide responsibilities are shared – a mixture of administrative & curriculum tasks

All DPs & Learning Leaders have received external coaching training

Principal & DPs involved in daily walk throughs of classrooms. Learning Leaders also involved in this process.

Regular meetings between SLT and between SLT and Learning leaders

School E

Senior Leadership Team
Principal
Deputy Principal & Associate Principal Responsibility SENCO & Numeracy Responsibility pedagogy across school & Literacy
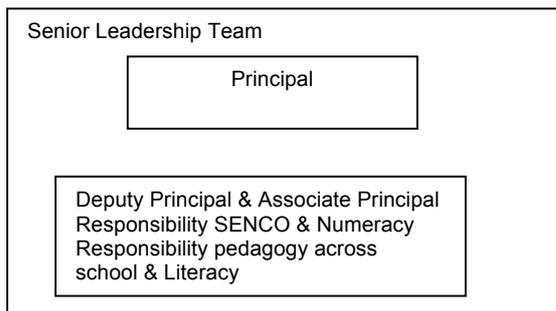
4 Team Leaders (team & school focus) 6 Theme Teams (ICT, Equity, Literacy, Numeracy, Pedagogy, Inquiry)

Neither DP nor AP has a class responsibility. Key role is to implement agreed change & lead across the school, often in conjunction with an external facilitator

Team Leaders have a syndicate focus but also required to have a school focus to ascertain a bigger picture perspective

Theme teams have a strategic focus (work from a strategic plan) & have budget accountability.

Theme teams can change – life span dependent on school needs

Some extensive work done around coaching with an external facilitator.

Regular meetings held between SLT and SLT & other leaders

School F

Senior Leadership Team
Principal
Deputy Principal 2 Associate Principals 2 Syndicate Team Leaders
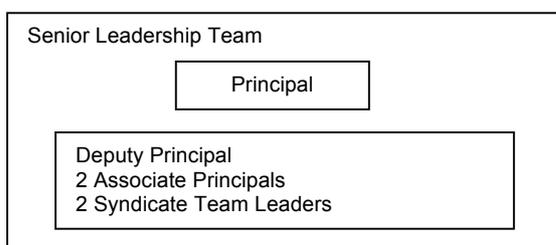
| 6 Lead Teachers. Aspiring Team Leaders with curriculum programme responsibilities & management units |
| --- |

Deputy Principal walking. Responsibilities include Literacy, student pastoral care, assessment, GATE & GT programmes and a number of other school programmes & initiatives

Both APs lead syndicate teams. In conjunction with Team Leaders are responsible for all aspects of team management including coaching & mentoring of team members. All receive CRT

PD based on Kiwi Leadership, with focus on pedagogy & curriculum. Outside facilitators & mentors are used as appropriate

Principal mentors Lead Teachers using 'critical friend' model as used in First Time Principal Programme.

School G

Senior Leadership Team
Principal
2 Deputy Principals Team Leaders
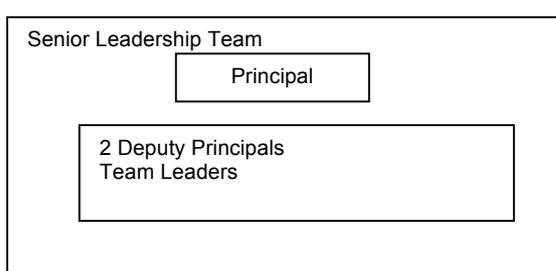
Unit Holders – curriculum and/or programme responsibilities

One DP has school wide responsibility for curriculum & inquiry, the other for learning support and assessment & reporting

Team Leaders are responsible for the learning of the students in their teams & leading discussion around achievement data

External leadership advisor is working with the team. Also meet with the SLT from another school (same advisor) to share and reflect

Principal involved in 1-1 mentoring with staff

- As expected, especially given the size and type of schools, there is considerable similarity in the SLT models operating. In the majority of cases this is principal and 2 deputy principals, both with equal status and units. Some schools operate a DP/AP model with the same number of units allocated to both people. One school has adopted a slightly more hierarchical model of two equal associate principals sitting beneath a deputy principal. DPs and/or APs share the responsibility of overseeing a number of teams or syndicates and "Learning Leaders" or curriculum leaders. They may also have key curriculum responsibilities e.g. literacy and/or pastoral responsibilities

- While similar, structures and models have been adapted to suit the priorities and needs of individual schools. Some structures are new and in the trial stage, others are more embedded.
- New positions/names have been created in an attempt to better reflect the key tasks and responsibilities e.g. "Learning Leaders" that oversee pedagogy across more than one team.
- There is a range of systems operating in terms of appraisal. Sometimes these are undertaken by DP/APs, sometimes team leaders, sometimes Learning Leaders.
- There is a range of communication, meetings and support and accountability models operating. In all instances there appeared to be well-established, regular formal structures in place to promote open communication and idea sharing between both the senior management team and between this team and the next level of curriculum or pedagogical leaders.
- In addition to the principal, all schools had at least one other member of the senior leadership team walking. This differs from my own school where both associate principals have a full class responsibility, with one regular CR day per week, supplemented by other days as required.
- Most schools are using external facilitators and/or working alongside other schools as a means of developing leadership capability and capacity. This can either be as part of a cluster or school improvement initiative, or through some other tertiary or training provider. In some instances this involvement is focused on curriculum development, with leadership growth and development opportunities being generated as a by product.

2. Broader leadership opportunities and how emerging leaders are prepared for, and supported in, these roles?

As shown in the leadership structure diagrams all schools are operating extensive second, and sometimes third tier leadership models. These are usually allocated one or two units, either fixed term or permanent.

Responsibilities may include leading a syndicate of teachers and/ or a curriculum initiative or school programme. There is a greater emphasis on effective pedagogy and student learning outcomes with decision making based on the analysis of data. In one instance a school is trialling a model of functional or administrative team leaders and pedagogical learning leaders.

These middle leaders often have budget responsibility as well the requirement to achieve expected outcomes as outlined in some form of strategic or operational plan. They are required to provide regular progress updates to a variety of stakeholders that might include all or some of the following: other unit holders, the SLT, the Board, external facilitators, cluster groups. Principals are attempting to provide meaningful responsibility and leadership opportunities which should include accountability for results.

Members of the SLT have responsibility for mentoring/coaching and supervising these emerging leaders. One school has formalised this process under the umbrella of their Leadership Academy.

In addition to the actual tasks or responsibilities that come with the role, a range of programmes and professional learning strategies are being used to prepare and support emerging leaders. These include: shadowing, mentoring, reflection on practice and critical friend meetings, formal training (tertiary institutions, correspondence), networking with colleagues, working alongside external facilitators and advisors, observing and being observed, asking for and giving feedback, rotating responsibilities, giving and receiving coaching, collaborative projects, team meeting and reading/discussion.

Often these positions involve working with other teachers, and it is in this difficult area of inter-personal relationships that includes facilitating professional discussions and giving feedback, having difficult conversations and holding others accountable that personal development and support is required.

(b) United Kingdom

Fairlawn Primary – Mr Robin Bosher, Headteacher 22yrs, 8 at Fairlawn, which is also a 'teaching school.' Has an annexed 100 part-time places nursery school. Robin is also the headteacher of another Lewisham primary school (500 students) which is experiencing difficulty. This school has had 6 different heads in the past 5 years. He is one of 5 dual school primary school principals in the area. There are also 2 secondary principals each responsible for 3 schools.

Fairlawn SLT

Principal- 3 days per week

DP responsible for day -to-day management of the school & school-wide teaching & learning

4 other 'Key Stage' leaders – i.e. Nursery, Foundation, Stage 1, Stage 2

'Working Party' Leaders (as per School Improvement Plan): Personalised Learning, Science, Geography, Design Technology, Family Learning, Quality Learning in Nursery

Other curriculum and school programme responsibilities

2nd school

Principal – 2 days per week

DP – senior staff member from Fairlawn

Principal responsible for strategy, structure for operational delivery, finance, human resources, governance, staff disciplinary action
DP is responsible for the daily operation of the school
Stage leaders responsible for the performance management of their teams & other assigned curriculum/school programmes.

SLT and key stage co-ordinators are each assigned to 2 working parties e.g. principal part of Personalised Learning & Nursery Learning working parties
Has a planned leadership strategy with the aim of achieving a flat structure where every adult is a leader.

Each year 5 priority initiatives are agreed to. The leaders who champion these priorities are often emerging leaders. Each priority has around 6 objectives & up to 10 staff on each team. All PD and appraisals are linked to the priorities

Issues & Challenges for Fairlawn:
- Succession planning at the most strategic level
- Having enough quality leadership capacity to go around

Sir William Burrough – Ms Avril Newman, Headteacher. 17 years as a head, all at this school.

SLT

Principal

Deputy Principal
2 Associate Principals
3 Team Leaders

Literacy Co-Coordinator

Principal responsible for appraisal, appointments, finance & property
DP responsibilities include school-wide curriculum & assessment
APs – special needs and ICT
Literacy co-ordinator mentored/supported by SLT. This applies to anyone who takes on something new
Apart from principal everyone teaches. CRT as appropriate e.g. DP 2 days

Regular meetings for sharing of ideas & evaluating what is working. Exchange thinking – can often be challenging & uncomfortable.
Ethos that everyone is a leader, given space & freedom to lead-no action plans etc required. If staff indicate they want leadership opportunities then career planning & support available

Sir William Borrough has a business partnership with Unilever and the principal identified her opportunity to be involved in Unilever Business Leader training in New York as being very powerful in her personal leadership development. As a result, she was able to make generic connections with all forms of leadership & 'recognise the power of leadership to change destinies."

Issues & Challenges for Sir William Borrough:
• Succession planning for the principal and anxiety around the future. This is a very stable staff, people don't leave. A challenge is fears of destabilization if/when there is a new style of leadership.

These two principals identified the following key national issues for the United Kingdom in terms of schools and leadership development:
  o Just getting enough good principals
  o Raising the quality of learning- too much emphasis on teaching rather than learning. Students need to manage their own learning (fundamental partner) with the support of a good teacher
  o Current political climate is one of very low trust of schools and educationalists
  o Just let good people do good jobs
  o Allow enough time for systems to self-correct without government interference

On the Job Learning

Kolb (1984) introduced the concept of experiential learning (learning by doing) and then following up with focused reflection in order to increase knowledge and develop capabilities.

Research undertaken by the Learning & Development Roundtable (2002 & 2009) identified that on-the-job learning activities have three times more impact on employee performance than formal training programmes and that employees exposed to such learning activities are 2.6 times more likely to be highly engaged. Other benefits noted were: reduced training expenses, reduced time-to-productivity, and increased sharing of best practice.

Learning by doing is equally relevant in schools. The Roundtable came up with the following 'litmus test' for helping to select high-value activities for direct reports.
• Beyond the Comfort Zone: Does the activity force the employee to stretch herself beyond things she already does well?
• Accountability: Does the activity require the employee to take responsibility for the outcomes of the activity, positive as well as negative?
• Lesson Visibility: Does the activity contain lessons that will become clearly apparent to the employee?
• Lesson Relevance: Does the activity result in lessons that are of significant importance to the employee?

The same document provides a simple model that shows how a person taking on a responsibility can intentionally learn from the experience. Job descriptions or change plans usually specify the expected outcomes, but often no consideration is given to the learning the person may want to gain from the activity or responsibility they have undertaken.

| **Active Anticipation** Before an activity, the person thinks about what they want to learn | + | **Deliberate Reflection** After an activity, the person thinks about what they have learned & how they could best use it | → | **Application** People who show high levels of anticipation & reflection, apply 24% more of what they learn on-the –job to their day-to-day work |
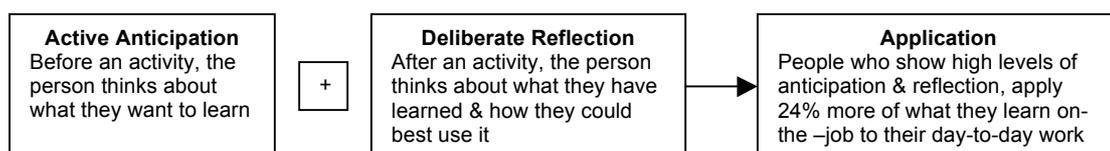
A Strategic Approach to Leadership Development and Succession Planning

Schools varied in the degree that they thought and strategically planned for growing leadership capability and succession planning. Where a key person or the principal signals well in advance their intention to leave the organisation then a more planned approach can be taken. However if the person leaves with little warning the process can be more reactive and adhoc. This is especially true if the person has a full time teaching component.

A Model for Strategic Leadership Development & Succession Planning (adapted LDC)
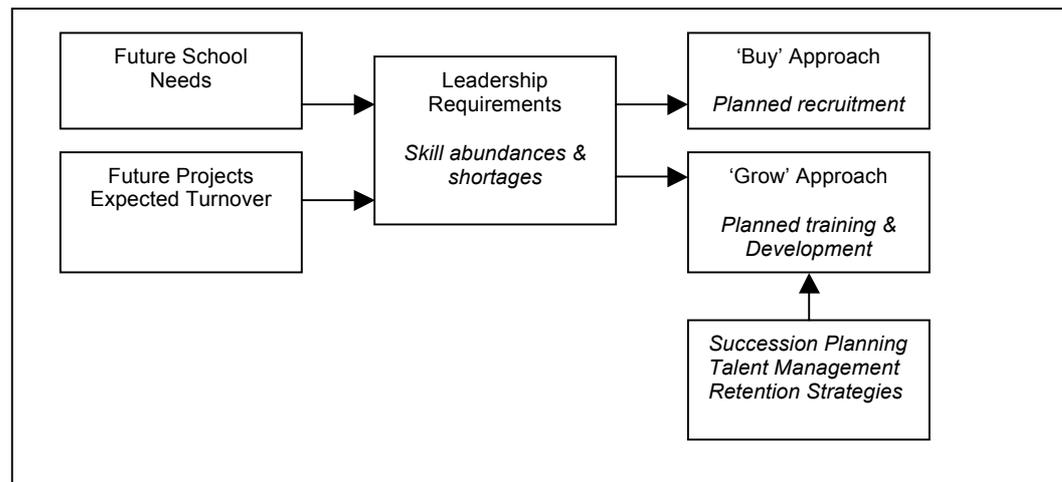
Grow or Buy?

As expected in all of the schools visited a combination of approaches was employed. However the vast majority of middle and senior leaders where grown from within. 'Talent spotting' began early, with Scale A teachers with perceived leadership potential being identified and given opportunities to develop and assume responsibility.

There are advantages to both approaches. In addition to filling a specific skill shortage/gap, recruiting from outside the organisation can introduce new ideas and behaviours, refresh the current culture and challenge current thinking by 'seeing things through a new set of eyes." Growing internal capability helps create and sustain a culture of continuous learning and development and demonstrates to staff that there are opportunities for them to grow and progress by remaining with the organisation.

Aspiring Principal Programme

The Ministry of Education 2009-2010 Professional Leadership Plan describes 3 priorities for this initiative:
- Implement a national programme for 230 aspiring principals with a focus on hard to staff schools and embedding culturally responsive leadership practices
- Evaluate professional learning for aspiring principals against a set of national indicators of leadership effectiveness to ensure professional learning leads to improved student outcomes for Maori, Pasifika students and those with special education needs
- Explore options for a pre-principalship qualification to ensure applicants for principals' positions are well prepared to lead change and improve teaching and learning for every student

The expected results of the programme are that aspirant principals are identified and developed for principal positions:
- In hard to staff schools
- With a focus on developing Maori and Pasifika teachers as principals

- To ensure a pool of quality applicants

This programme is one of four strands of the PLP. My interview with Linda Stockham (MoE) was to gain some insight into the effectiveness and success of the programme.

In 2010, of the 230 participants, 30 were Maori, 5 worked in Maori medium settings and 7 were Pasifika. Participants must have a formal leadership role in classrooms beyond their own. The focus of the programme is within each person's context; leading others in their school through a leadership inquiry. The initiative must involve other staff and must link to the school's strategic goals.

Participants blog on line and maintain a personal reflective journal recording what they have learnt about leadership. They are visited each term by their assigned coach, meet with their principal and the other members of their professional learning group (PLG). They are also required to make a presentation to their PLG (including their principal), and to their employing board. The programme is based around dimensions of the Kiwi Leadership for Principals.

An evaluation of the pilot programme showed:

Positives:
- High levels of positivity from all participants (facilitators & aspirants)
- The terminology ' Aspiring Principal" gave mana and respect to the programme
- The importance of principal endorsement and involvement – including aspirant in strategic planning, discussions with the board, etc
- There are people wanting to apply for the programme in 2011

Issues:
- Where the involvement of the principal was minimal or waned, the effectiveness of the programme was greatly reduced
- A change in principal partway through the programme had the potential for negative implications/problems

Participants have dropped out of the programme (no number provided) because:
- They have won principal positions (positive)
- Small number for health reasons
- Increase in self-awareness and a realisation that principalship was not right for them (a positive, as these people had a better insight into school leadership and had gained valuable skills and knowledge to do their jobs better

Considerations for the future:
- Tracking what happens to aspirants when they have completed the programme. How many go onto to become (successful?) principals
- The programme gains greater traction, status and budget -similar to First Time Principal programme
- More feedback for aspirants built into the programme – e.g. 360 degree. Aspirants actively seek, change and grow from the feedback they receive
- More tools and resources developed to support the programme
- In-depth knowledge of assessment seen becomes an important component of the programme
- Explore a compulsory, national pre-principalship qualification

The Leadership Development Centre (LDC)

The LDC was established in 1994. Its goals are to be:
- The Centre of Excellence for leadership development and talent and succession management within the public sector;
- The partner of choice for member chief executives and their agencies in advising and supporting their responsibility to identify and develop effective public sector leaders;
- A strategic partner with the State Services Commissioner in delivering to his needs for appointable candidates for chief executive roles and appropriate development for those in or near those roles

It is governed by a Board of public sector chief executives and has its own Chief Executive responsible for day-to-day operations.

My purpose in including the LDC in this inquiry was to look at how leadership development is being handled in the broader public sector. Given that agencies such as the Ministry of Education and Education Review Office are charged with developing the policies and overall direction of our schools, and evaluate our effectiveness, it was of interest to gain some insight into how those leading these organisations are grown and prepared. The basic questions I wanted to explore were:
- What strategies were being employed?
- How effective were they?
- What were the challenges and issues?
- What were the similarities with schools and what might tools and ideas might be transferable to the school context?

The LDC offers individualised personal development for senior managers and agency-wide advice and services to chief executives for their own development and development of their teams. This includes assistance with developmental secondments, opportunities for shadowing, advice and guidance on leadership development programmes and formal training opportunities such as the Advanced Leadership Programme and the Leadership in Practice programme.

Currently there is mixed buy-in from chief executives to leader lead development, with about one third taking a proactive stance. The State Services Commission is becoming more explicit in its expectation that leadership development is a core part of the chief executive role. As is the case in education the aging demographic means it is critical to invest in future leadership.

A review of the Advanced Leadership Programme has seen a tightening of the selection criteria with participants now having to show evidence of self-awareness and have a track record of a commitment to development. This has meant that some applicants, which in the past would have been accepted onto the programme, have been declined.

Whilst hard to measure the success of the programme, individual participants have reported that their involvement was pivotal in their careers; increasing their self-awareness, giving them much broader perspectives and facilitating cross agency networks. Data is kept on the number of participants who get short-listed or appointed into CEO roles.

Challenges and looking forward:
- Getting all senior leaders to accept this responsibility, and seriously take it as a core part of their job
- Develop effective tracking/trace systems and get a systematic picture of what is happening-
    o % of participants that make an upward career move
    o % of participants that make a sideways career move into a different area
    o % of participants that move into another sector
    o Look at supply and demand – what exactly are we building leaders for/to do?
- Look at development in a broader sense: what exactly are the needs of individuals and businesses- looking further out with more of a strategic focus
- Getting best value for money. A lot of high quality development isn't necessarily high cost. Getting a clearer picture of what is going on and being planned for across clusters of departments and looking for opportunities of working across agency boundaries

As stated in the introduction, New Zealand is not alone in the challenges it faces in developing and growing strong educational leadership. Neither is the schooling sector. The core public sector faces similar issues and challenges. Within their own context so too does the private sector. Three key goals of the 2009-2010 PLP is to 'attract, develop and retain' school leaders. The LDC '20 Questions Framework for Developing Leadership Capability' states:

> *Developing leadership capability can be a complex and challenging task. Leadership development is about continually growing the attributes and abilities of current leaders as well as those individuals demonstrating an appetite and potential for senior leadership in the future. The key tools here are succession planning, talent management and retention, and development programmes that enhance and stretch leaders to learn and embed new attributes and abilities.*

3. CONSIDERATIONS & IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

- Distributing leadership reduces the dependency schools have on the talents of a few and cushions the impact if/when key people depart.

- School structures may require changing and jobs redesigned to effectively distribute leadership. Sometimes the ability to change structure and operating processes is limited or blocked by a current, often long-serving member(s) of the senior leadership team. It is not until that person(s) retires or moves on that the principal can fully implement their preferred structure and operating systems.

- Organisations should plan and think out an approach for growing and developing people to enable succession when a leader moves on. Hargraves argues that "Planned continuity occurs when the assignment of a new principal reflects a well thought out succession plan meant to sustain and build on the goals of a predecessor. Sustained school improvement over long periods and across multiple leaders requires carefully planned continuity." (Leadership Succession, 2005). He goes on to say that "from the first day of appointment, leaders need to give thought to the leadership capacity they will build and the legacies they will leave." This opinion reflects the thinking of the States Services Commission in placing greater demands on public sector chief executives to incorporate leadership development into a core component of their jobs.

- The Schooling Improvement contracts and networked learning communities can expose aspiring, and senior leaders, to 'really good' people and opportunities for challenging and meaningful leadership development opportunities

- There is a tension between giving teachers additional responsibility and their classroom teaching obligations. Teachers can be out of their rooms too much and this can have more of a negative impact on students than the benefits the initiative the teacher is being released to lead.

- Many primary schools are small and they might not have the staffing flexibility, people capability or resources to provide effective leadership programmes

- Modelling can be a powerful means of demonstrating leadership practice. Just as outlined by Myers, for some of the principals I interviewed, not all memories were positive. But 'even negative experiences can be useful preparation for the job, as some poor role models can teach you how not to do things."

- Principals require in-depth, up-to-date pedagogical knowledge in at least one curriculum area (Robinson 2006). All of the principals I interviewed have retained some hands on involvement in curriculum. All other leadership roles in the schools have a significant curriculum leadership component.

- Whilst principals require current pedagogical knowledge to effectively plan for and make strategic and operational decisions, and maintain their professional credibility; the New Zealand's school leadership and governance model also requires principals to be confident and capable generic leaders. Whilst the Kiwi Leadership Plan highlights New Zealand's distinctive decentralised system, it is my view that policy makers and those in central agencies still do not fully comprehend the complexities and challenges faced by principals working in this environment. Being the Leader of Learning is not enough.

- Development programmes can be destabilised by the 3 year BoT cycle, especially if there is a high level of board member turnover and board members have little knowledge, experience or training.

- Relationship skills are embedded in every leadership dimension – effective leaders do not get the relationships right then tackle the educational challenges – they incorporate both sets of constraints into their problem solving (Robinson 2006)

- It is said that you can learn more from your mistakes than your successes. Aspiring leaders will, and must be permitted to make mistakes. Schools are currently operating in a high accountability/low trust environment with little tolerance for mistakes. Such an

environment is not conducive to learning and requires a strong and wise principal to create and manage an environment that has some room for error and learning.

- Maintain an open mind. Some principals I visited reinforced my own view that there is a need to keep an open mind and to be wary of national models and school leadership development being taken over by individuals, vested groups or universities. This is sound advice.

- The principals interviewed, and much of the literature, endorses the view that the gulf between deputy principal or senior leader and principal was vast and 'no course or reading matter can really prepare you for the job.' (Weinding, 2000, p12). The ability to lead can only occur through experiencing leadership itself and this will entail experiencing both success and failure.

- Effective leaders are able to transfer knowledge, skills and competencies into different contexts and are able to think strategically.

- Effective leaders have the knowledge, skills and attributes to engender others to follow. This could be described as 'fit.' It is the right person, in the right place at the right time.

- Is dual/multiple school principalship as option for New Zealand?

4. CONCLUSIONS

In his paper 'Ten questions for School Leaders' Green cites Rajan (1996) who studied leadership development in about 500 organisations? In order of priority, he found the top five to be:
  - Coaching and mentoring
  - Sideways moves (often into unfamiliar settings either inside or outside their current organisation)
  - Challenging assignments, that really stretched capability
  - Networking with peers
  - Formal training

Green suggests that from this study there are lessons for those working in schools and school leaders, not least the low ranking of formal training. Consideration should be given to strategies that increase opportunities for the first four at all levels of leadership responsibility; within and between schools, regionally and nationally.

The evidence from my inquiry suggests that this is happening. In all the schools that I studied mentoring and coaching programmes were in place, both internally where a senior leaders are mentoring aspiring/new leaders, and from external mentors and coaches. Assignments and leadership tasks were challenging to the individual, important to the organisation and focussed on the core business of improving the quality of teaching and improved student learning outcomes. Structures have been set up within schools for all of those with leadership roles to work together, share issues and strategies and reflect upon their progress. Increasingly, there is networking between schools, either formally through cluster initiatives or Ministry contracts; or informally with schools actively forging relationships to optimise learning opportunities.

Leaders are developed when they have the opportunity to practice leading; it cannot be taught, it has to be learnt. This applies to all levels of leadership within an organisation. Meaningful opportunities must be created to lead in a supportive culture that values the sorts of learning most likely to enhance the capacity of individuals. This is a core responsibility of the principal, headteacher or chief executive.

Finally, aspiring leaders are partners in the process. They must display the motivation, self-awareness and ability to learn and be able to acknowledge what they need to learn. In the 09 July 2007 NZ Education Gazette, Katie Roche a young secondary school teacher from

Wellington wrote a guest column about aspiring to leadership. She stated: "My advice to those new teachers who are excited about the prospect of one day being in a leadership role is just to get involved. Learn as much as you can from the leaders around you and make it known that you have high aspirations. As far as I'm concerned, there's nothing wrong with letting your principal know that you are after their job, they might just help you get there."

Ingate's 3 Stages of Headship (2006)

	Stage	Descriptor & Behaviours
1	Early (0-3 years)	Initial honeymoon period, followed by unsustainable, hectic, stressful & fragile phase Weak & variable induction Focus on establishing ethos & environment Quick-fix solutions sought Non-distributed instructional hands-on type leadership
2	Middle (4-8 years)	Less stressful, more sustainable Team building Longer-term planning tackling deeper-rooted issues Focus on school improvement & the standards agenda Transactional & transformational leadership
3	Late (8+ years)	Disengagement Decline Limited succession planning-sudden exit strategy

Chris Ingate (UK high school head teacher) explored the dilemma of experienced head teachers having served a number of years in a school – whether to leave for a new school or stay in current school for the long term. His 2010 research basically supports the 2006 'three stages' with some additions:

- Transformation from early to middle headship is not so much about changing behaviours as years of service completed, with individuals taking varying times to enter the 'middle' stage
- Where early headship is more lengthy, this was often to do with an entrenched senior leadership team resistant to change
- A 'crunch' period was identified – key moment when the option to stay or 'escape' is considered. This is often a very personal decision not shared with anyone at school.
- In terms of late headship new evidence is emerging that suggests long-serving heads can stay energised well beyond a decade in charge- distributing leadership throughout the school allows heads to 'let go' to some extent & direct energies in other directions outside their own schools into the wider educational context
- In general movement from one stage to the next is gradual and more dependent on personal & contextual factors than years of service. Each stage builds on the last, rather than replacing it. The job becomes easier and more manageable over time mainly because it is so difficult to begin with – time allows most heads to become more strategic and less operational in focus.

Ingate's 6 Phases of Headship (2010)

	Stage	Descriptor & Behaviours
1	Head teacher Appointment	Challenging, critical exercise. Aspiring heads need to carefully match own requirements with those of the school for which they are applying
2	Pre-Headship	Time between appointment & starting. Can be anxious with interim visits raising anxiety rather than reducing it. Planned induction is needed here.
3	Early Headship	Challenging & demanding, especially for externally appointed heads. Pressure to make an impact & tendency to resort to a pace-setting, 'quick-fix' style to begin with. Eventually, these strategies are replaced by longer-term approaches dealing with more substantial issues & the enlisting of other leaders in the school to help with the change process.
4	Middle Headship	Perhaps the most effective period as heads begin to deal with deeper-rooted issues & capitalise on the changes that have already been made. This may be a time when headship becomes most rewarding & sustainable. It is essential to create reliable & high-functioning teams of senior leaders & overcome any difficulties arising from the inheritance of a team that belonged to the previous head.
5	Extended Headship	The best years are not necessarily over. Capacity building, distributed leadership & collaborative networking are essential to continued effectiveness at this stage.
6	Exit Strategies	Some are planned & some are hurried or forced. Heads tend to think of others before themselves, and put off considering their long-term plans until it may be too late to do so positively & constructively.

Appendix 2

Stretch & challenge through work experience

HOW DEVELOPMENTAL IS YOUR JOB?

This checklist from the Boeing Company can help a person with leadership responsibility and their direct manager/principal understand how to embed further stretch and challenge in their current job. It may help to determine what skills your current assignment is developing and what you might do to make it more developmental. It measures the developmental potential of leadership positions. Place a 1 next to the statements that describe your current job then add up the total.

While not all statements are relevant to the school setting, most are. Some of the statements are expressed in more 'straightforward' language than might be commonly used in the schooling sector

Dimensions & Statements	Score	Dimensions & Statements	Score
Managing the Business		**Drawing on Others**	
I have profit/loss responsibility in my leadership role (adapt to financial responsibility)		My manager has high expectations of me, is confident in me, and gives me a great deal of autonomy to get things done	
I am required to regularly interact with external customers		I have people inside & outside of work who can support me when times get tough	
I have to work with multiple stakeholders who have contradictory or competing agendas		I often have to work through difficult, hostile, or ineffective individuals to get things done & achieve my business goals	
The position comes with aggressive deadlines or targets		I regularly work with leaders who are at least two levels above me and/or with people who are recognised as experts in their field	
The position requires me to consider the impact of my decisions on the larger organisation		I have to get the job done through a very diverse group of people from other business units, functions, countries and/or demographic groups	
Stepping Up		**Learning from Results**	
This position pushes me to the edge of my comfort zone		Standards of what constitutes success have been clearly defined, & success is expected	
I will not be able to accomplish everything I want to; this job will stretch me		Success in this position is critical to the overall success of the organisation	
The job is highly visible so my success or failure will be obvious to everyone		The position has built-in feedback mechanisms so I always know if I'm succeeding or failing	
I am the one who will be held responsible if we do not meet performance targets		There is time to reflect on the business & my development as a leader if I make it a priority	
I have to accomplish things through other people over whom I have no direct responsibility		I regularly get candid & sometimes brutally honest feedback from others about how I am doing	
Creating Change			
I will have to lead the organisation through significant changes in our business in the coming year		**TOTAL SCORE**	
I must overcome significant barriers in the organisation to reach my business goals		Source: The Boeing Company: Learning & development Roundtable research. Learning & Development Roundtable 2006. (accessed through the LDC)	
When I took over, I inherited significant problems that need to be solved			
I have to lead the organisation through changes that haven't been attempted before (launch new service, product, introduce major change)			
I have to take the business in new directions that will require many stable business practices to be changed despite their effectiveness in the past			

SCORE	KEY
0-10	Your job is not very developmental. You are unlikely to improve as a leader over the coming year unless you build additional challenges into it
11-20	Your job has several of the critical elements that will stretch & develop you as a leader. In the coming year, focus on the elements of your job that will challenge & stretch you in the areas that you have targeted for development
21-25	You are in a challenging position. Make sure it is not stretching you too far. The critical test is to ask yourself how confident you are that you can navigate through the next year successfully. If you find yourself overwhelmed & lessons are passing you by, then you are probably in over your head. You are not fully developing your leadership potential. It is time to put a support system in place that will get you through the tough times or find a new position

Appendix 3

Emerging Themes in Leader-Led Development

Managers play a key role in the support and development of the next generation of leaders- and the business case is compelling. Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) research reports that future leaders who receive high levels of support (for development) from their managers perform up to 27% better, have more effective teams and are more likely to exceed business and financial goals. Interestingly (developing) leaders are reporting that they do not receive effective support-CLC research reports that around 72% of senior leaders are 'less than effective' at developing the next generation of leaders.

Providing levels of support and development is often not a matter of managers not wanting to, but in some cases not knowing where to start or what activities can provide valuable experience. The CLC has a vast source of data on Leadership Development – a recent factsheet ('Ten Steps for Leaders Who Manage Rising Leaders') gives some ideas to try out:

Manage by doing less 'telling' and more 'advising'
- provide rising leaders guidance & feedback that helps them ask the right questions, rather than simply telling them what they should do. Enable them to build on their strengths before addressing their weaknesses.

Connect them with other leaders
- introduce them to other leaders and stress the importance of these relationships on their development.

Help them build the right relationships
- drawing on your knowledge of the organisation give them guidance on who they should get to know in extending their networks. Where possible, leverage your relationships.

Direct them to experiences that build long-term capabilities
- create compelling and challenging career paths for them by effectively sequencing roles that build on prior experience and allow them to build capabilities they will need in advance.

Create opportunities for growth within their present role
- ensure they have the right amount of stretch and leverage through development opportunities within their current roles. High impact opportunities include widening their scope of responsibility; turning around failing projects and dealing with uncertain situations.

Provide occasions for them to apply lessons from experience
- Ensure rising leaders have the opportunity as well as the tools they need to reflect and synthesise what they have learnt from the experiences. Provide opportunities for them to safely try out and practice their new skills.

Serve as an advocate for their career advancement
- Help them to advance by preparing them for senior leadership and making sure others see their long term potential. Check that they understand what they need to demonstrate to be promoted and to give them opportunity to do so.

Demonstrate your own 'coachability'
- Acknowledge (some) of your own development needs. Let them know that you also receive coaching and feedback-and make sure you act on the feedback you received!

Maintain a productive relationship and management style
- Be on good terms with your future leaders; treat them with the respect to make them learn from their decisions.

Establish Credibility
- Make sure they understand your vision for the future and your business plans to achieve this.

Being a support and advocate for your rising leaders is a key role that managers can play. Being interested, available to test ideas and act as a sounding board is something that can be done during the course of any day-to-day relationship.

Source: Leadership Development Centre, Wellington

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