Leadership Development
Anywhere, Anytime

Practical Tips for School Leaders – #30   July 16, 2020

Over the past few months, I have included elements of the characteristics of Facilitative Leadership in these Leadership Tips. Now more than ever it is imperative that we continue to focus on relationships, process and data. As schools reopen attention will be given to all three, at different times, in varying contexts. We ask teachers to focus on relationships, process and data in PLC Teams. Their conversations will continue to be framed around the four PLC questions as identifying the achievement gap, preparing students for instruction in the classroom, attending to the social emotional health and well-being of everyone in the building (including the leaders) will be at the forefront. Leading during turbulent times when the landscape changes daily requires, among other things, resilience, empathy, problem identification and reflection.

Below please find a summary of an article regarding facilitative behaviors which I hope will be beneficial as you plan for reopening your school or leading your department.

"The Art of Facilitative Leadership: Maximizing Others' Contributions"
Jeffrey Cufaude

Review of the components:

- **Facilitative leaders make connections and help other's make meaning**. Building connections with others through the use of **preventions and interventions**, using **active listening skills** and open-ended questions to expand understanding. Work with others to understand the past, present and future context and **achieve synergy** for powerful results.

- **Facilitative leaders provide direction without totally taking the reins**. Ensuring the groups effectiveness is the responsibility of all members of the group. **Establishing quality agendas** and using **group norms** to assure everyone is participating. Facilitative leaders help the group move forward **by leading from the front, alongside and behind** during the process. Facilitative leaders help the group move forward and communicate that each member must be concerned with the good of the whole.

- **Facilitative leaders balance managing content and process**. Facilitative leaders use **quality agendas, group norms** and end with **action planning** to achieve desired results.

- **Facilitative leaders invite disclosure and feedback to help surface unacknowledged or invisible beliefs, thoughts and patterns.** Facilitative leaders help the group address and confront tough issues. They make sure **perception sharing** of the issue is the norm rather than the exception assuring each person has an opportunity to share. They develop trust among the team members by the use of **group norms, collaborative skills, the use of open and honest dialogue, and feedback**. Facilitative leaders disclose their own perceptions and observations and encourage all members to do the same.

- **Facilitative leaders focus on building the capacity of individuals and groups to accomplish more on their own, now and in the future.** They make use of **debriefing their meetings and projects** to determine strengths and needed adjustments (**plus/delta**). Making use of **quality agendas** with clearly defined **roles** and **group norms** assists in this process. Being willing to change processes to address change in context and environment is important.

- **Facilitative leaders operate from a position of restraint**. They make use of **interventions and preventions** that assist with developing **collaboration and buy-in**. They work toward **consensus** so all team members will **support the decision** and be an integral part of the **action plan** to assure implementation. Facilitative leaders do not make decisions for the groups that they do not need to make, they promote collaborative decision making.