Got Good Teachers? How Do You Know?

10 Simple Challenges to Try

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Practical leadership
Serious Cat Herders at Work

“Being a teacher is about helping children to learn. Being a principal is about helping adults to learn. That’s why it’s tough . . . I walk the halls, walk the halls, and walk the halls . . . I only look at my inbox after everybody else leaves.”

[Principal quoted in McKinsey Report, 2007]

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pk7yqITMvp8
Professional Responsibility

• Principals must drive the vision of their school.
• As Principal you cannot delegate the ultimate responsibility for quality teaching in your school. This doesn’t mean YOU have to DO it all!
• Delegated authority requires great care and ongoing monitoring.

*Schools that more frequently evaluate teachers have more effective teachers, and schools that emphasise particular aspects of teaching in their teacher evaluations create improvement in the quality of teaching in these areas (What Teachers Want, Grattan Institute, 2010)*
Performance and Development Culture

- Focus on student outcomes
- Clear understanding of effective teaching
- Reflection and goal setting
- Professional practice and learning
- Leadership
- Coherence
- Feedback and review
- Flexibility

Performance and Development Cycle
What works

1. Focus
2. Capacity building
3. Consistency of practice
4. Learning from each other
5. Leadership that obsesses with 1-4

Michael Fullan
THINK SMALL
TAKE ACTION

(kaizen: small, seemingly insignificant, continuous, ongoing and never ending improvements)
NO CHILD DESERVES TO HAVE THEIR TIME WASTED TODAY
Rocket Science?

- Improve the quality of applicants to the teaching profession
- Improve the quality of initial education and training
- Develop teachers’ skills once they enter the profession and are working in schools
- Promote, recognise and retain effective teachers and move on ineffective teachers who have been unable to increase their effectiveness through development programs.


*Where are the points of influence for you as principal? What are/can you do?*
Classroom Practices

• How do you know what is happening in the classrooms in your school? (That’s EVERY classroom).

• What principles are you using that inform classroom supervision?

• How do you judge the quality of teaching in the classrooms in your school?
What Teachers Want

• Meaningful evaluation & development that recognises quality and innovation in the classroom.
• A focus on & recognition of their work in schools.
• Meaningful consequences to flow from their performance evaluations.
• Grattan Institute: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZEZgalfWCg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZEZgalfWCg)
Diary Dip

Audit your diary
• What % of time for classroom visits?

Take the 2 hour plunge
• What happens?
• What do you see, feel, hear and sense?
• Who reacts? How do they react?
• What conversations occur as a result of your visiting?
• What do you note about teacher quality and student learning?
Happy Snapper

• 20 photos
• Quality teaching and/or learning
• Photostory
• Backing song
• Share (staff, peer principals, CE, parents, students)
• Staff Meeting – reactions?

NO DELEGATING ALLOWED – YOU TAKE THE PHOTOS!!

Woz Up?

Could a 6 year old (13 year old) in your school, tell you about the language of learning?

Visit as many classes as you can in a week and ask a random selection of students:
- What are you learning?
- Why are you learning it?

The learning classroom has students speaking about learning in an active manner. We need to THINK and TALK about the learning process (adapted from work by Chris Watkins, Institute of Education, University of London).
Woz Up V2

Could teachers in your school, tell you about the language of learning?

Visit as many classes as you can in a week and ask a random selection of teachers:
- What are you teaching?
- Why are you teaching it?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9TVYCffHEE
The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

• List some/all of your teachers
• Rate each one (+/-/0)
• Build a profile (professional & personal)
• Start with a focus on one teacher at a time:
  
  • What is this teacher doing?
  • How is he/she making a difference?
  • What evidence shows you this?
  • What are the key indicators that are observed in this teacher to show they are teaching effectively?
**Teacher Pet**

- Choose one teacher on staff (not the greenest graduate nor the highest flying lead teacher).
- Categorise according to the national standards (graduate, proficient, highly accomplished, lead).
- Create a profile of this teacher by beginning with a brainstorm – what are 20 things you know about this teacher?
- Plan for and invite the teacher to have a conversation with you about his/her professional status; how he/she views him/herself in the teaching role; what goals, challenges, supports he/she would like to pursue.
- Work together to articulate in writing an inquiry question the teacher wishes to pursue or a small action research focus he/she is interested in undertaking.
- Set some deadlines and other times to meet to check progress.
Reflect and write on:

What does a competent teacher look like?
What capabilities do you think are most important?
Where does relationship building fit?
How is the competent teacher nourished and nurtured?
What are you prepared to ‘go to the wall for’ in teaching?
What gets up your nose and what are you going to do about it?

Am I seeing others as competent beings, allowing them to reach their potential and experience an ongoing learning journey?
What impact am I having?
How might I support and enable individuals to be continuously improving and learning?
Is my practice showing others that I honour this image of the teacher?
What are the characteristics of teachers who make a difference?
Teachers who make a difference . . .

- Risk takers
- Team players who are excited, enthused, able to be challenged/provoked/willing to change
- Value all learning areas
- Organise space/furniture for learning
- Ensure students are aware of expectations
- Consider the ‘wider’ classroom beyond 4 walls
- Ensure ICT is accessible for students
- Ensure students know what to do when the teacher is not there
- Want to learn
- Ensure students know what to do to help students who don’t know what to do
- Have an authentic willingness to change
- Accept criticism/feedback
- Have a love of children
- ‘Own’ challenges rather than handball them
- Ask questions
- Want to make a difference
- Are not afraid to admit fault, challenge or struggle
- Engage in deep conversations about learning & teaching
Until we have a shared language around what is an excellent teacher and in what context is that teacher excellent, and what must (not should) a teacher be able to know, believe and do on their first day of teaching, we will continue to take baby steps on what is a significant and important milestone for the Australian Teaching Profession.

ACEL Response to Draft Teacher Standards, 2010
Afterthoughts

Popular vs Productive

Yes/No vs Degree/Extent
Develop their capacity to learn & play an active role in their own learning

Have the essential skills in literacy & numeracy and are creative & productive users of technology, especially ICT, as a foundation for success in all teaching areas

Are able to think deeply & logically, and obtain & evaluate evidence in a disciplined way as a result of studying fundamental disciplines

Are creative, innovative & resourceful, and are able to solve problems in ways that draw upon a range of teaching areas & disciplines

Are able to plan activities independently, collaborate, work in teams & communicate ideas

Are able to make sense of their world & think about how things have become the way they are

Are on a pathway towards continued success in further education & training, & acquire the skills to make informed decisions

Are motivated to reach their full potential.
An effective feedback culture does not include ‘no news is good news’.
Sacred (Head) Space

We need to recognise exhaustion, in ourselves and in others. When we recognise this, we can take ourselves away and rest awhile.

Do you find time to retreat: go to a place of stillness where you can drop your public mask, reflect and rest. Successful leaders do this in small ways in their everyday lives and occasionally take extended time to do so too.

‘The sole cause of man’s unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room’. Blaise Pascal
#10  **Personal ‘Retreat’**

*To walk with:*
How will you walk with teachers in your school?

*To listen to:*
How do you listen to teachers in your school?

*To evoke responses:*
How do you enable teachers in your school make decisions?

*To celebrate community:*
How do you encourage inclusiveness, welcome, courage and discernment among teachers in your school?

*To promote identity and mission:*
How do you encourage and show solidarity and service in your school?
Tough Navel Gazing

• Why should anyone be led by you?
• How do you know you’re in the right job?
Great coaches never impact the outcomes of a game by sitting behind a desk all day. Great coaches are on the field where the game is being played. Your job as an Instructional Leader is to be ‘on the field’ where the game is being played, and in your case, that’s the classroom.

Malachi Pancoast,
President of The Breakthrough Coach
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• 3 new challenges
• 2 new insights
• 1 action in the next 7 days
• 1 meaty piece of feedback
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