



SCHOOL REDESIGN AND INNOVATION

School Success

10 CRITICAL DESIGN ELEMENTS
TO
ENSURE LONG-TERM SUCCESS

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SCHOOL SUCCESS

10 Critical Design Elements • Ensuring Long-Term Success

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1. Carefulness • On Caring, Milton Mayeroff

In caring, the other is primary; the growth of the other is the center of my attention. The teacher's interest is focused on the student rather than on himself. To make himself the center of his attention would get in the way of his caring for the student. Only by focusing on the other am I able to be responsive to its need to grow.

There is selflessness in caring that is very different from the loss of self in panic or through certain kinds of conformity. It is like the selflessness that goes with being absorbed in something I find genuinely interesting, that goes with being "more my self." Such selflessness includes heightened awareness, greater responsiveness to both the other and myself, and the fuller use of my distinctive powers.

In caring for the other, in helping it grow, I actualize myself. The writer grows in caring for his ideas; the teacher grows in caring for his students; the parent grows in caring for his child. Or, put differently, by using powers like trust, understanding, courage, responsibility, devotion, and honesty I grow also; and I am able to bring such powers into play because my interest is focused on the other.

Besides the other's need for me if it is to grow, I need the other to care for if I am to be myself. The teacher needs his student, just as the student needs the teacher. The philosopher needs his seminal idea, just as the idea needs the philosopher. But to say I need the other if I am to be myself does not mean I basically experience the other as a means, as existing simply to satisfy my own needs. *I do not try to help the other grow in order to actualize myself, but by helping the other grow I do actualize myself.* My dependence on the other is bound up with respecting and furthering its integrity..." (Mayeroff, 29)

Lewicki

Learning works when caring is a daily experience appearing as incremental acts of kindness and empathy. CARING is THE umbrella value; the organizing philosophy of how members in a learning community choose to treat each other, it is the VERB that activates the Nouns (learning conditions) of trust, understanding, courage, responsibility, devotion, and honesty.

Incremental acts of kindness and empathy – to be REAL must be given with strength to fulfill the school’s mission for caring has real learning consequences: Rigorous Engagement = Active Learning.

2. Leadership • On Becoming a Leader, Warren Bennis

The leader does it better and better and better, but is never satisfied. Aeschylus said that wisdom is gained through pain and reflection. The leader knows better than anyone that the fundamental problems of life are insoluble, but persists anyway, and continues to learn.

Leaders learn by leading, and they learn best by leading in the face of obstacles. As weather shapes mountains, so problems make leaders. Difficult bosses, lack of vision and virtue in the executive suite, circumstances beyond their control, and their own mistakes have been the leaders’ basic curriculum.

Jim Burke and Horace Deets were succinct. Burke said, “The more experience and the more tests you survive, the more apt you are to be a good leader.” Deets, speaking of his job as executive director of the American Association of Retired Persons, said, “It’s a thought job and, I would wager, can only be learned by experience. You can’t learn it by reading up on it; you’ve got to do it. The only real laboratory is the laboratory of leadership itself. (Bennis, 138)

Lewicki

There is no better place than the field of education to be a leader, for the work itself is a world of continuous development, continuous improvement, learning from mistakes, learning from the students, learning from the content itself, and learning about yourself.

WE ARE ALL LEADERS: The defining question: what kind of leader? How will you determine the ratio of power distributed in your classroom? On a student project? At a faculty meeting? On a Governance Council?

Are your collaboration efforts disciplined or undisciplined? Can you really ‘dig in’ on tough issues and improve, or do you skate around the edges then return, unsatisfied, to your classroom – after a faculty meeting? Do you define and deal with the obstacles that are part of the life of a school, or do the obstacles define you?

If we truly are all leaders, how is that leadership distributed throughout the day, week, month, and year – in pedagogy, in governance, in driving the mission forward?

3. Service • The Servant Leader, James A. Autry

And that goes to the very heart of this book: service. The most important thing you can be as a leader is useful. Let me put that another way. The late Robert Greenleaf wrote and lectured extensively on the servant leader. He also established the highly regarded Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership in Indianapolis. Underlying Dr. Greenleaf’s work and my own urging to make you useful is the fundamental concept of being of service to others.

Another way to think of this is as a resource for your people. One of the primary functions of the manager/leader is to assure that people get the resources they need to do the job. To be a leader who serves, you must think of yourself as— and indeed must be— their principal resource.

Clearly this requires a change of orientation for many people. After all, you worked hard to get to be a manager, to get to be the boss. And now I’m telling you to be a resource.

Yes.

Because this concept of serving others is an essential part of what I believe about leadership, let me offer you a list of six things I believe about leadership:

1. Leadership is not about controlling people; it’s about caring for people and being a useful resource for people.
2. Leadership is not about being boss; it’s about being present for people and building a community at work.

3. Leadership is not about holding on to territory; it's about letting go of ego, bringing your spirit to work, being your best and most authentic self.
4. Leadership is less concerned with pep talks and more concerned with creating a place in which people can do good work, can find meaning to their work, and can bring their spirits to work.
5. Leadership, like life, is largely a matter of paying attention.
6. Leadership requires love.

I'm sure that what I've written here so far could be considered almost antithetical to what you've been taught to believe about management and leadership. But that's because so much of what we think we know about leadership is based on old concepts of power. In organizations we spend a lot of time figuring out who has power and how much we have, it's only natural that if we think we have power, some of us seem to have to prove it by flexing our management muscles.

But true power comes from the people. It comes from gaining the trust and support of the people who then give you the power. Power is like love. The more you try to give it to others, the more it just seems to flow to you naturally.

If you, in a leadership position, can attain the **authenticity, vulnerability, acceptance, presence, and usefulness**, to become a servant leader, then I believe that is the highest manifestation of your spirituality in the context of work. (Autrey, 20)

Lewicki

Authenticity: Does this matter?

Vulnerability: Can we trust each other?

Acceptance: Do we tolerate differences and difficulties?

Presence: Am I paying attention?

Usefulness: Are we all involved in an important way?

4. Interdisciplinary Learning • The Disciplined Mind, Howard Gardner

Again, the pursuit of disciplines and disciplinary thinking is not controversial, except perhaps in certain postmodern educational circles. But the *purposes* of pursuing disciplines are often forgotten. One should not take chemistry in order to satisfy Andrew Carnegie's notions of how many hours of science are required in high school (the so-called Carnegie units, established by the Carnegie Foundation), or to gain admission to a certain college or professional school. Rather, the rationale and the reward for studying the disciplines should be enhanced access to, and stronger purchase on, the major question of human life.

If you want to understand what it means to be alive, study biology; if you want to understand the composition and dynamic of the physical world, study chemistry, physics, or geology; if you want to understand your own background, study national history and immigration patterns and experiences; if you want to gain intimate knowledge of the feats of which human beings are capable, study and participate in art, science, religion, athletics, and perhaps even developmental psychology.

The purpose of disciplinary study in the pre-collegiate years is not to develop miniature scientists, historians, or aestheticians. The goal is to make youngsters comfortable with the intellectual core, the analytic power of several ways of approaching the world...Youngsters... should understand how disciplinarians approach questions; and they *should* gain deep familiarity with a few evocative examples. (Gardner, 218)

Lewicki

'Study and Participate in'... 'Comfortable with the intellectual core, the analytic power'
To arrive at a place of comfort, I must grow my capacity, gaining skills, knowing what I don't know, and knowing how to find out.

5. Stewardship • Earth in Mind, David W. Orr

Recovering a sense of place: I do not know whether it is possible to love the planet or not, but I do know that it is possible to love the places we can see, touch, smell, and experience. And I believe, along with Simone Weil (1971), That rootedness in a place is “The most important and least recognized need of the human soul.

The attempt to encourage biophilia will not amount to much if we fail to decide to reshape these kinds of places so that we might become deeply rooted. The second decisions we must make, then, has to do with the will to rediscover and reinhabit our places and regions, finding in them sources of food, livelihood, energy, healing, recreation, and celebration. Whether one calls it “bioregionalism” or “becoming native to our places” it means... rebuilding family farms, rural villages, towns, communities, and urban neighborhoods. It means restoring local culture and our ties to local places, where biophilia first takes root. It means reweaving the local ecology into the fabric of the economy and life patterns while diminishing use of the automobile and our ties to the commercial culture. It means deciding to slow down, hence more bike trails, more gardens, and more solar collectors. It means rediscovering and restoring the natural history of our places. And, as Gary Snyder (1974) wrote, it means finding our place and digging in. (Orr, 147)

Lewicki

“Reweaving the local ecology into the fabric of community”

Having helped support the development of dozens and dozens of schools in many places across America: from Coos Bay, Oregon to Blue Hill, Maine; from Los Angeles, California to North Bergen, New Jersey; from Spokane, Washington to Las Vegas, Nevada; from Bentonville, Arkansas to Erie, Kansas; from Goffstown, New Hampshire to Keystone Heights, Florida; from Reno, Nevada to numerous villages, towns, and cities in Wisconsin. Consider this...any one of these places – rural or urban – West Coast, Mountains, South, East Coast, or Midwest...would be proud to have a school with a mission statement akin to any of the following examples:

Reweaving the local ecology into the fabric of community, one project at a time

Reweaving the local ecology into the fabric of community, understanding health sciences, constructing change.

Reweaving the local ecology into the fabric of community, enlisting the Arts as a defining expression of rigorous learning.

Reweaving the local ecology into the fabric of community, building entrepreneurial leadership for change.

6. PLACE: A Trilogy

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, Betty Smith

Serene was a word you could put to Brooklyn, New York. Especially in the summer of 1912. Somber, as a word, was better. But it did not apply to Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Prairie was lively and Shenandoah had a beautiful sound, but you couldn't fit those words into Brooklyn. Serene was the only word for it; especially on a Saturday afternoon in summer. (Smith, 1)

Lewicki

So begins a novel of childhood and a novel of place with all the universal elements that make up a community mosaic. Dozens of landmarks in the world of literature can provide students the narrative of home that David Orr speaks to above. These are three of my favorites:

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, Anne Dillard

Living this way by the creek, where the light appears and vanishes on the water, where muskrats surface and dive, and redwings scatter, I have come to know a special side of nature. I look to the mountains, and the mountains still slumber, blue and mute and rapt. I say, it gathers; the world abides. But I look to the creek, and I say: it scatters, it comes and goes. When I leave my house the sparrows flee and hush; on the banks of the creek joys scream in alarm, squirrels race for cover, tadpoles dive, frogs leap, snakes freeze, warblers vanish. Why do they hide? I will not hurt

them. They simply do not want to be seen. "Nature," said Heraclitus, "is wont to hide herself." A fleeing mockingbird unfurls for a second a dazzling array of white fans...and disappears in the leaves. Shane!...Shane! Nature flashes the old mighty glance--drops the handkerchief, turns tail, and is gone. The nature I know is old touch-and-go.

I wonder whether what I see and seem to understand about nature is merely one of the accidents of freedom, repeated by chance before my eyes, or whether it has any counterpart in the worlds beyond Tinker Creek. (Dillard, 2003)

A Sand Country Almanac, Aldo Leopold

Hunts differ in flavor, but the reasons are subtle. The sweetest hunts are stolen. To steal a hunt, either go far into wilderness where no one has been, or else find some undiscovered place under everybody's nose.

Few hunters know that grouse exist in Adams County, for when they drive through it, they see only a waste of jackpines and scrub oaks. This is because the highway intersects a series of west-running creeks, each of which heads in a swamp, but drops to the river through dry sand-barrens. Naturally the North bound highway intersects these swamp screen of dry scrub, every creeklet expands into a broad ribbon of swamp, a sure haven for grouse.

Here, come October, I sit in the solitude of my tamaracks and hear the hunters' cars roaring up the highway, hell-bent for the crowded counties to the north. I chuckle as I picture their dancing speedometers, their strained faces', their eager eyes glued on the northward horizon. At the noise of their passing, a cock grouse drums his defiance. My dog grins as we note his direction. That fellow, we agree, needs some exercise; we shall look him up presently.

The tamaracks grow not only in the swamp, but also at the foot of the bordering upland, where springs break forth. Each spring has become choked with moss, which forms a boggy terrace. I call these terraces the hanging gardens, for out of their sodden muck the fringed gentians have lifted blue jewels. Such an October gentian, dusted with tamarack gold, is worth a full stop and a long look, even when the dog signals grouse ahead.

Between each hanging garden and the creekside is a moss-paved deer trail, handy for the hunter to follow, and for the flushed grouse to cross—in a split second. The question is whether the bird and the gun agree on how a second should be split. If they do not, the next deer that passes finds a pair of empty shells to sniff at, but no feathers.

Higher up the creeklet I encounter an abandoned farm. I try to read, from the age of the young jackpines marching across an old field, how long ago the luckless farmer found out that sand plains were meant to grow solitude, not corn. Jackpines tell tall tales to the unwary, for they put on several whorls of branches each year, instead of only one. I find a better chronometer in an elm seedling that now blocks the barn door. Its rings date back to the drought of 1930. Since that year no man has carried milk out of this barn.

I wonder what this family thought about when their mortgage finally outgrew their crops, and thus gave the signal for their eviction. Many thoughts, like flying grouse, leave no trace of their passing, but some leave clues that outlast the decades. He who, in some unforgotten April, planted this lilac must have thought pleasantly of blooms for all the Aprils to come. She who used this washboard, its corrugations worn thin with many Mondays, may have wished for a cessation of all Mondays, and soon.

Musing on such questions, I become aware of the dog down by the spring, pointing patiently there many minutes. I walk up, apologizing for my inattention. Up twitters a woodcock, batlike, his salmon breast soaked in October sun. Thus goes the hunt.

It's hard on such a day to keep one's mind on grouse, for there are many distractions, I cross a buck track in the sand, and follow in idle curiosity. The track leads straight from one Jersey tea bush to another, with nipped twigs showing why.

This reminds me of my own lunch, but before I get it pulled out of my game pocket, I see a circling hawk, high skyward, needing identification. I wait till he banks and shows his red tail. I reach again for the lunch, but my eye catches a peeled popple. Here a buck has rubbed off his itchy velvet. How long ago? The exposed wood is already brown; I conclude that horns must therefore be clean by now.

I reach again for the lunch, but am interrupted by an excited yawp from the dog, and a crash of bushes in the swamp. Out springs a buck, flag aloft, horns shining, his coat a sleek blue. Yes, the popple told the truth.

This time I get the lunch all the way out and sit down to eat. A chickadee watches me, and grows confidential about his lunch. He doesn't say what he ate; perhaps it was cool turgid ant-eggs, or some other avian equivalent of cold roast grouse.

Lunch over, I regard a phalanx of young tamaracks, their golden lances thrusting skyward. Under each the needles of yesterday fall to earth building a blanket of smoky gold; at the tip of each the bud of tomorrow, preformed, poised, awaits another spring. (Leopold)

Lewicki

Whether one is immersed in grouse hunting in Adams County or tinkering at Tinker Creek; then one is immersed in the inner vibrancy of learning; in effect, connecting ideas to action. The activity itself becomes an intersection for the ecology of self and place. Whether Leopold or Muir -- two Wisconsin legacies who have gifted the world with ideas and action -- or the dozens of others who have walked in their footsteps, they all agree with Emerson's truism that 'Nature Teaches'. (Leopold, 55)

7. The Role of the Student • FLOW: The Psychology of Optimal Experience, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

The outcome of having an autotelic self -- of learning to set goals, to develop skills, to be sensitive to feedback, to know how to concentrate and get involved -- is that one can enjoy life even when objective circumstances are brutish and nasty. Being in control of the mind means that literally anything that happens can be a source of joy. Feeling a breeze on a hot day, seeing a cloud reflected on the glass façade of a high-rise, working on a business deal, watching a child play with a puppy, drinking a glass of water can all be felt as deeply satisfying experiences that enrich one's life.

To achieve this control, however, requires determination and discipline. Optimal experience is not the result of a hedonistic, lotus-eating approach to life. A relaxed, laissez-faire attitude is not a sufficient defense against chaos. As we have seen from the very beginning of this book, to be able to transform random events into flow, one must develop skills that stretch capacities, that make one become more than what one is. Flow drives individuals to creativity and outstanding achievement. The necessity to develop increasingly refined skills to sustain enjoyment is what lies behind the evolution of culture. It motivates both individuals and cultures to change into more complex entities. The reward of creating order in experience provide the energy that propels evolution—they pave the way for those dimly imagined descendants of ours, more complex and wise than we are, who will soon take our place.

But to change all existence into a flow experience, it is not sufficient to learn merely how to control moment-by-moment states of consciousness. It is also necessary to have an overall context of goals for the events of everyday life to make sense. If a person moves from one flow activity to another without a connecting order, it will be difficult at the end of one's life to look back on the years past and find meaning in what has happened. To create harmony in whatever one does is the last task that the flow theory presents to those who wish to attain optimal experience; it is a task that involves transforming the entirety of life into a single flow activity, with unified goals that provide constant purpose. (Csikszentmihalyi, 212)

Lewicki

One must develop skills that stretch capacities. For the challenge of the task at hand is always correlated with the ability – the capacity – to meet those challenges. Balancing each – challenge and ability – from school design to lesson design is the single most important factor in a successful school. A challenge that is unachievable breeds anxiety; whereas ability that is unchallenged will breed boredom. The zone of maximum learning – FLOW – is what generates a vibrant and relevant curriculum.

Another critical leadership technique is teambuilding. Lombardi believed that a team of people working together with discipline, singleness of purpose, and a commitment to excellence could prevail, no matter how heavily the odds were stacked against them. Team spirit, according to Lombardi, grows out of three interrelated elements: common goals, complementary skills and abilities, and mutual accountability.

Common goals create drive and energy. A team that hungers for the same outcome is a motivated team. Common goals foster the subordination of the individual will to the group will.

Complementary skills and abilities make football the great game that is. People play (and watch) football to experience that elusive, perfect mix of brains, brawn, experience, and drive that somehow come together to produce a winner, coming up with that mix and motivation the plays who contributed to it, is what separated Lombardi from all but a handful of his fellow coaches.

Mutual accountability grows out of complementary skills and abilities. Teammates ultimately end up playing for each other. A key opponent of the Lombardi system was getting each player to believe that every other player would do his part, expertly, each time he was called upon to do so. How? In part by getting each player to do his own part expertly, through relentless drilling in the fundamentals. By the time Coach Lombardi was done with you, you were saying to yourself: I'm talented, I'm skilled and I'm fully prepared to perform my roll on his particular play—and so is everyone else on this line and in this backfield.

Lombardi told his players exactly what he expected of them. He convinced them that they had everything they needed to succeed—the training, the preparation, and the skills. He emphasized that their job was worth doing. And in all of this, he created an atmosphere of togetherness, inclusiveness and solidarity.

Here are three tactics you can use to nurture the sense of team in your organization.

Fit your game to the talents of your team: A team works together most successfully when each individual component is used to best advantage. Tailor your approach to fit the ability of your team members.

Emphasize responsibility and loyalty: Teams depend on an extraordinary cohesiveness. Encouraging all members of an organization to support and aid other members in the pursuit of shared goals will strengthen this bond.

Focus on team success rather than personal glory: Strong team members place the interests of the team first, sublimating their personal visions of glory to the team's success. A good leader will encourage—and exemplify—this trait. (Lombardi, 49)

“Build for your team a feeling of oneness, of dependence upon one another, and of strength to be derived from unity.”

Lewicki

The above sentiment reflects the reality of the life of a teacher – there is no better word to describe what we in education DO than the word COACH.

9. The Role of the Community • Building Community in Schools, Thomas J. Sergiovanni

Purposeful communities are characterized by unified action. Members link what they do to shared values, conceptions, and ideas. Since members must work together, a plan for unified action is needed to help this transformation occur. One way to formulate such a plan is to first develop an educational platform for the school. (Sergiovanni, 96)

What key elements should be included in a school's educational platforms?

The aims of education

What are the three essential aims of learning for your students?

Major achievements of students this year.

What are those for this year? How might they improve?

The social significance of the student's learning.

What does it matter to the student's world?

The image of the learner.

Define and explain that role of the student?

The image of the curriculum.

Define and explain the role of the curriculum?

The image of the teacher.

Define and explain the role of the teacher?

The preferred pedagogy.

Define and explain the preferred implementation of the curriculum in light of the roles of the student, curriculum, and teacher?

The preferred school climate.

What are the shared values and beliefs that define our school?

10. Knowing the Aims of Education • Democracy and Education, John Dewey

Normally every activity engaged in for its own sake reaches out beyond its immediate self. It does not passively wait for information to be bestowed which will increase its meaning; it seeks it out.

Curiosity is not an accidental isolated possession; it is a necessary consequence of the fact that an experience is a moving, changing thing, involving all kinds of connections with other things.

Curiosity is but the tendency to make these conditions perceptible. It is the business of educators to supply an environment so that this reaching out of an experience may be fruitfully rewarded and kept continuously active. (Dewey, 209)

Lewicki

The last two – Sergiovanni and Dewey -- speak for themselves.