Leadership Integration Project: Addressing the Issues of Human Resources, Funding, and Culturally

Responsive Pedagogy while Operating Small, Northern, Faith-Based Schools

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Executive Summary

This assignment is reflective of knowledge gained throughout my experience in the Master of Arts in Educational Leadership program. My limited experience at Slave Lake Koinonia Christian School, a struggling small, northern, private, faith-based school provides the framework for exploring three of the nine Transformational Servant Leadership competencies: Visioning and Strategic Thinking, Team Leadership, as well as Change and Accountability. The interconnected and relevant nature of these competencies within educational leadership is evident.

For SLKCS to thrive, they need to ensure their vision and strategic thinking aligns with their goals. Introducing teams in the form of PLCs, as well as culturally relevant pedagogy, are highly recommended to counter the challenges faced by human resources and finances. Lastly, utilizing an effective change management tool such as Hord and Roussin's (2013) Concerns Based Adoption Model will assist school leadership in preparing SLKCS for the future.

Operating as a Transformational Servant Leader effectively is explored. Additionally, a discussion regarding the personal implications of the research upon my leadership strategies, strengths, and style is included.

There is limited research focusing on northern, private schools and the challenges they face. This paper attempts to explore some of their unique issues and provide solutions to problems encountered. More research is required addressing the six remaining competencies as well as handling conflict within a small school community.

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Glossary

ACSI – Association of Christian Schools International

ADLC – Alberta Distance Learning Center

Birkman- The Birkman Method: Behaviour and Personality Assessment

ELL – English Language Learner

ESL – English as a Second Language

HPI – Hogan Personality Inventory

KCES – Koinonia Christian Education Society

MLQ – Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

PLC – Professional Learning Community

SL – Servant Leadership

SLKCS – Slave Lake Koinonia Christian School

TL – Transformational Leadership

TSL – Transformational Servant Leadership

Chapter 1

Overview of Leadership Competency Approach and the Organization

What is Transformational Servant Leadership (TSL) exactly? Is it Transformational

Leadership (TL)? Is it Servant Leadership (SL)? Is it a hybrid of both? For multiple reasons

beyond the scope of this paper, I have come to understand that TSL is a hybrid. It is a union

calling the leader to draw from the strengths of each style of leadership to effectively lead in

various situations. By combining TL and SL into TSL, the organizational objectives and the needs

of the people may become better balanced, creating a dynamic, wholesome, and effective

place to work. Essentially, TSL is a holistic leadership style. In defining TSL, Imbenzie, Page, and

Williaume (2015) echo the aforementioned notions of TSL:

> Transformational servant leadership transcends informal relationships to include a study
>
> of leadership in organizations, with specific attention to how people are valued and
>
> empowered while also creating shared decision-making responsibility and authority
>
> over policy, program, and delivery systems, contributing to optimal organizational
>
> performance outcomes or results. (p.10)

Furthermore, Imbenzie, Page, and Williaume (2015) suggest there are ten characteristics of TSL:

Listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship,

commitment to the growth of people, and building community (p. 15-17). These characteristics

of TSL are intricately tied to the individual competencies of leadership as depicted in figure 1.0.

The literature review explores effective ways of developing three competencies while infusing

them with TSL characteristics and values.

Figure 1.0 Master of Arts in Leadership Program Competencies. *Leadership Competency Framework*

Introduction to Slave Lake Koinonia Christian School (SLKCS)

I taught at Slave Lake Koinonia Christian School (SLKCS) for six years before taking a year off to pursue a Masters degree. As the school name suggests, it is located in Slave Lake, Alberta: a small northern community. SLKCS is a private, evangelical, K-12 school. Throughout my career, the lowest enrollment we experienced was 24 in 2011. Upon reflection of the enrollment number, SLCKS' board began playing with the idea to reduce the tuition structure to encourage more people to enroll their children. Currently, there are 60 students enrolled. During the 2014/2015 school year, SLKCS employed four full-time teachers, one part-time teacher, one full-time educational assistant, two part-time educational assistants, one full-time secretary, and one principal with teaching responsibilities.

Most classrooms consist of three grade splits. However, I have taught a five-grade split. In my last year, the high school class included five students. Given the specialized level of instruction within a high school setting, there must be a minimum of two specialized teachers at this level. Rarely can you find an individual that teaches grade 10, 11 and 12 Math/Science as well as English/Humanities. Obviously, running a full high school program for five students is a challenge. Fortunately, distance learning and the opening up of Alberta Distance Learning Center's (ADLC) resources to teachers has been a way to make this possible. However, the issue of meeting the needs of our students and adhering to Alberta Education requirements is a challenge.

Teaching at SLKCS is demanding and requires teachers to utilize a large part of their personal time to mark and plan. Teachers earn 68% of what their public school counterparts earn, even though they carry the same qualifications. Reduced salary adds an extra challenge because the cost of living in Slave Lake is higher than most areas of Alberta. Also, SLKCS has a difficult time attracting teachers to teach because of its remote and semi-isolated location.

The principal of SLKCS is expected to fill a 0.8 teaching position as the budget will not allow for more administrative time. There are issues with training new staff as the principal does not have the time to mentor effectively or evaluate staff. Frustration within the staff is growing, particularly teachers that are new graduates contributing to a higher than average turnover ratio. Traditionally the principal has utilized a mix of TL as described by Bass and Riggio (2006), and SL, as defined by Greenleaf (2003). I have noticed how too much SL breeds problems within the organization. Having witnessed TSL in a previous principal and the success

it bred, more research identifying how TSL works within a small, private, rural, faith-based school is needed.

Given the teaching and administrative demands, professional burnout is becoming a problem at SLKCS. When teachers leave the school, they are often on the verge of burnout and some have not returned to the teaching field. Interestingly, many of these teachers continue to support the school financially by recommending it to friends and people they meet or attending the events the school runs.

SLKCS has students from various economic, social, faith, and cultural backgrounds. While a Christian school, SLKCS accepts a few families that do not profess to be Christian. They enroll their children in the school because they agree with the values taught at SLKCS. There is an increasing student population of english as a second language (ESL) and english language learners (ELL). We also have First Nations and Metis students. SLKCS offers sponsorship and financial assistance to those members of the community who would like to send their children but lack the required funds. Therefore, culturally and socioeconomically SLKCS is diverse, thereby creating another set of issues.

When I moved to Slave Lake in 2009, it was ranked as the town with the most millionaires per capita in all of Canada. I have come to learn of a mindset that exists within Slave Lake where education is not valued. Up until 2009 / 2010, oil companies were recruiting within the local high school. Students received job offers where they could easily earn $80 000 – $100 000 / year without a diploma. Shockingly, parents were okay and remain okay, with their children leaving high school without a diploma. This mindset was new to me, as I come from

Southern Ontario where the assumption is high school graduates will go into post-secondary studies of some fashion.

Within Alberta, a sentiment is growing in retaliation against independent schooling. Many of the general public see private schooling as an elitist, isolationist, and indoctrinating form of education. However, Cardus' study indicates the benefits of options within education and has found that this is not true of private schools (2014). Yet, Alberta continues moving towards cutting funding to private schools. With the recent election of the NDP government, it is anticipated that funding will be cut entirely within four years. Even though there is no confirmed indication of removed funding the issue of sustainability for small private schools, in particular, is at the forefront of discussion in all small, private, rural faith-based schools like SLKCS.

SLKCS is a member of the Koinonia Christian Education Society (KCES) along with seven other schools throughout Alberta. All member schools, except for two, are small, private, rural, faith-based schools. Support and mentorship are offered to the administrators and somewhat to the teachers via KCES. Another organization SLKCS belongs to is the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). SLKCS receives information and training from this organization. Through ACSI, teachers are connected to other schools throughout Western Canada, and even the world. The possibility of virtual teams for training initiatives and collaboration is enormous and exciting.

In my experience, literature dealing with private, rural, faith-based schools and the challenges that they face is limited. Looking beyond the faith-based, small, private school, there are many communities, especially in the north where the number of students is limited, and

one teacher is forced to teach multiple grades. To make schooling in small communities

effective, educators and administrators need access to more research and information.

Therefore, I have attempted to formulate best practice as it relates to leading with TSL virtues,

improving human resources issues, and operating a successful small, northern, private, faith-

based school.

Chapter 2:

Personality Assessments

In determining which leadership competencies to explore further, I underwent three

personality assessments: The Hogan, MLQ, and Birkman.

MLQ and Hogan Reflection

On the MLQ, I found it interesting that I was in the benchmark range with all of my

'ought' categories. Moreover, in the benchmark range for everything except for three where I

was slightly below: Builds Trust (IIA), Generates Extra Effort (EE), Is Productive (EFF). Otherwise,

I was at or above the norm. It was encouraging to see that I have many of the qualities

associated with leaders. Personally, the MLQ confirmed that I am in the right program. The

MLQ also confirmed I am a suited for management, but lack skills in the visioning aspect of

leadership: Thus, visioning and strategic thinking is a leadership competency I need to develop.

The MLQ revealed that I fall into transactional leadership patterns while I possess

transformational leadership traits: a difference of 0.1 between the two categories. This ranking

indicates I need to practice visioning and strategic thinking. I need to take more opportunities

to be the leader on tasks and to make public my opinion. I also need to be sensitive to others

and seek different ways to problem solve.

Based on the MLQ and HPI, I am highly competent in planning and organizing as well as

results in leadership competencies. A weakness to work on is visioning and strategic thinking.

Since service and quality orientation are combined closely with results, it is an area in which I

possess strength. When visioning and thinking strategically one does not want to lose sight of

how to accomplish the vision. Therefore, partnering service and quality skills with visioning and

strategic thinking is a way to develop a firm vision with the plans to effectively implement the ideas.

I also have strengths in relationships and collaboration but need to become more assertive in expressing my opinion, even when it is unpopular. These attributes correspond to people development as well as team leadership. According to the MLQ and HPI, I care about the individual and want to see them succeed yet need to balance the goals of the organization.

Lastly, adaptability and change is another area I need to focus on improving as I am willing to listen to others but sometimes become hesitant to change and embrace new ideas when the old one is working. As an educator, I am faced with change on a continual basis. As I pursue leadership within Education, helping those I work with embrace change is a skill I need to develop.

Birkman

In July of 2016, I underwent a Birkman personality assessment. Since a debriefing session was not provided, I can only offer my limited understanding in deciphering the leadership implications contained in this assessment.

Figure 2.0 indicates my areas of need (square), my stress behaviour (circle), where my interests lie (star), and where my usual behaviour is (diamond).
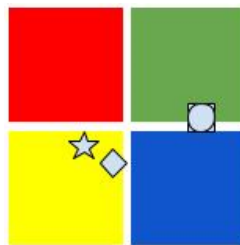

Figure 2.0 Birkman Life Style Grid

Since my interests and usual behavior both lie in the yellow on the Birkman Life Style Grid, an ability and interest in administration and details is indicated. Underneath the surface, I need to work in a team. I have a high social service interest accompanying a high clerical interest. This combination allows me to put my heart into people helping projects and direct individuals beyond their task completion goal in a team environment.

My areas of high interest, otherwise referred to as motivators, are in outdoor, clerical and social service occupational areas. In fact, my score of 94 in Social Service pushes beyond a motivator to become a need. From what I understand, this means I must make time for outdoor activities and clerical initiatives to maintain balance in my life. If I am exhibiting stress behaviours, this indicates a need is not being met and will help to reframe communication with me.

Taken directly from the Birkman (2016) results, my usual behaviour indicates the following:

- "Your primary focus is on immediate action and measurable results. However, your natural decision-making style is more measured: difficult or complex decisions particularly cause you to be more thoughtful" (Birkman, 2016, p. 18).
- I use my social skills to "relate to people in a less formal, group-based context. You have a sensitivity to group dynamics which enables you to 'feel the pulse' of these meetings (p.19).
- "You primarily value an approach which is organized and structured, and which is built where possible on existing systems whose worth has been proved" (p. 20).

- "Your more moderate approach to issues of authority, therefore, is accompanied by a strong belief in the use of intangible, group-based rewards and goals based on ideals" (p. 21).

- "Your main focus is always on the long-term target" (p. 22)

- I multitask by compartmentalizing (p.22).

My needs are:

- I need time to make tough decisions. If I am under stress, I will become more indecisive and want more time to think about tough decisions. I will need people that are willing to talk at some length about tough decisions. I also need a reasonably paced schedule (p. 18).

- "You'll be most effective when you are not made to participate in unnecessary group activities, and when others show at least some sensitivity to your personal feelings" (p.19).

- "You are most effective when others give you a broad plan and leave you to fill in any necessary detail" (p.20).

- "A competitive environment where you work for natural authority figures that you can respect will prove most beneficial for you" (p. 21).

- "You need the stimulus of an environment that offers a variety of different matters to which you can give your attention" (p. 22).

My stress behaviour exhibits in the following ways:

- "It is your tendency to over-emphasize emotional issues and to over-analyze decisions, though, which are your most significant characteristics under pressure. They can cause

you to worry about decision-making to the extent that you endlessly defer making up

your mind, in the hope that something or someone will make the decision for you" (p.

18).

- "You can withdraw from social interaction and then begin to brood about the extent to

  which others may be criticizing you" (p. 19).

- "When you think that others are too influenced by old thinking, you can become

  unstructured and unfocused on the goal as well as the procedure" (p. 20).

- "When you are under pressure you tend to become outspoken, domineering, and too

  focused on personal gain" (p. 21)

- "Your style of becoming less-than-productive is to over-focus on less significant matters

  when the main goals are overlooked" (p. 22).

Other interesting facts about me taken from the Birkman (2016):

- "In working with others, she is sensitive and diplomatic; she appreciates privacy more

  than her behaviours indicate; though she is outgoing, she can be independent and

  operate without full support of the group as needed.

  When giving or accepting direction, she is methodical and persevering, except

  when pressed into boring and unexciting tasks; she is self-assertive. She enjoys debate

  and active, participative discussion.

  As to competitiveness and stamina, she wants to get ahead; she is positive in

  outlook, but her enthusiasm lessens under pressure. She is also prone to justifying her

  mistakes and shortcomings.

When organizing or planning, she typically does one thing at a time, but enjoys having a variety of activities; she is generally restrained, but will appreciate opportunities to act on her own initiative. While she worries unnecessarily during the process of making decisions, she firmly commits to final decisions once they are made" (p. 26).

- Top 3 Job families best suited to me are community and social services; education, training, and library; Office and administrative support (p.106).

In summary, the Birkman confirmed my desire to move into leadership positions. It suggests I have the capability to understand and work with people in an effective manner. Surprisingly, the Birkman suggested I am more visionary than I give myself credit. I look forward to one day understanding this assessment and how I can better use/implement it in my life.

Synthesized Lessons from all Three Assessments

1. I am capable of leadership.

2. I am good with details and thrive in an environment where there is order mixed with creativity.

3. I am approachable, can understand social cues, and enjoy helping people work towards a goal. I am above societal averages in this area.

4. I am suited for teamwork and working individually.

5. I internalize negative comments. This is intensified when I am under stress.

6. I was working in a field in which I have strengths and am suited.

7. I need to work harder to balance my life with activities that build me up, such as being outside, spending time alone, spending time in small group settings, too. When I am stressed, identifying which needs are not being met and fixing this will help.

Given my weaknesses, strengths, and experiences with leadership, the three leadership competency (see Figure 1.0) areas focused on are Visioning and Strategic Thinking, Team Leadership, and Adaptability and Change.

Chapter 3: Literature Review Synthesis

Visioning and Strategic Thinking

According to Trinity Western's MA Leadership Monograph, Visioning and Strategic

Thinking may be defined in the following way:

Visioning: Mental process in which images of the desired future (goals, objectives,

outcomes) are made intensely real and compelling to act as motivators for the present

action. *Strategic Thinking*: "to discover novel, imaginative strategies which can re-write

the rules of the competitive game; and to envision potential futures significantly

different from the present" (Heracleous as cited in Leadership Monograph, 2015, p. 69)

From my exploration of scholarly literature, two concepts, visioning and strategic thinking, are

intricately linked as a leader cannot strategically think if there is not a vision to achieve. While

vision stimulates strategic thinking, strategic thinking refines and inspires vision. Therefore,

when discussing visioning and strategic thinking, I will be referring to them in unison as

strategic thinking.

Strategic thinking involves a plan to inform leadership. Hughes, Colarelie Beatty, and

Dinwoodie (2014) define strategic leadership as "Individuals and teams enact strategic

leadership when they create the direction, alignment, and commitment needed to achieve the

enduring performance potential of the organization" (p. 11). To shape a strategic plan all

members within the organization should be consulted:

Most organizations begin with a traditional pyramid structure with the leader at the top

of the pyramid, since it is the leader who started the organization. To function within

the servant-leader model, however, the entire organizational structure must become

fluid and function like the sand in an egg timer that flows both ways. When it comes to

setting and maintaining the vision for the organization, the pyramid must have the

designated leader at the top. Input into the vision, mission and the organization's goals

and values, however, must be sought from others in the organization, who must come

to own them. Once this has been accomplished, the pyramid reverses. (Page & Wong,

n.d.)

By including all members in a strategic plan, leaders have a clear picture of their organization

and an understanding of its values. In the context of a private school, organizational members

are identified as a board (executives); principal (CEO); teachers, educational assistants, support

staff (employees); students, parents, graduates and general community members (stakeholders

and customers). Incorporating insight from all levels of a school creates a holistic picture to

define better the strategic direction of the organization: "Looking at things from a different or

fresh perspective can reveal new realms of advantage and opportunity as well as weakness and

threat" (Rumelt, 2011, p. 21). Hughes, et al., warn, "the danger of not adopting such a mindset

is potential blindness to critical contextual dynamics affecting organizational viability and

success" (p.56). Hughes, et al., also suggest that

Strategic leadership happens in the white space of organization charts: between

functions and groups, between levels of leadership, and between the organization and

other external entities. Strategic leaders must encourage people to span boundaries and

create direction, alignment, and commitment in service of strategic change. Boundaries

can be vertical, horizontal across the organization, geographic, demographic, or with

external stakeholders." (p. 46)

Ultimately, a community of minds working cooperatively to propel an organization forward will have more success than an individual who works alone. Collective experience holds many lessons from which insight fertilizes relevant and competitive organizational strategic growth, especially given the scope of individuals associated with a school.

At the center of strategic thinking lies concern for the organization: "Strategy involves change, and achieving long-term performance potential in an ever-changing environment requires continuous change. The critical issue for strategic leaders is how to make changes that progressively build on each other and represent an evolving enhancement of the organization's well-being" (Hughes, et al., 2014, p.21). Strategic thinking is an ongoing, ever-evolving process that endures throughout the life of an organization. To facilitate continued development within the organization, Rumelt (2011) discusses the importance of building action into the plan:

Strategy is about action, about doing something. The kernel of a strategy must contain action. It does not need to point to all the actions that will be taken as events unfold, but there must be enough clarity about action to bring concepts down to earth. To have punch, actions should coordinate and build upon one another, focusing organizational energy. (Rumelt, 2011, p. 87)

Twenty-first-century education is rapidly changing. Private schools must consider the organization's well-being, plan for change, and identify actions to perform. Strategic thinking is sorely needed but will be useless if poorly communicated.

Leipsinger advocates three essential components of a strategic plan; Accountability, clear communication, and a set timeline (2010, p. 92-93). By ensuring accountability within

strategic thinking or planning, communication becomes streamlined, and progress is more likely

to occur:

> Team members who are held accountable rely on each other more, experience more
>
> success, and express more satisfaction with the members of their teams than those who
>
> are not held accountable […]By increasing team and individual accountability and
>
> encouraging people to take responsibility for their decisions, organizations can have a
>
> highly positive impact on team performance and improve its ability to execute plans and
>
> initiatives. (Leipsinger, 2010, p. 77-78)

Harnish (2002) also stresses the importance of accountability in his advice to ensure someone is

specifically identified as responsible. Otherwise, no one is accountable, creating frustration and

failure for an organization (p.39). Furthermore, accountability moves beyond the scope of the

strategic plan and into the daily running of an organization:

> When other members of the team see you letting someone get away with not producing
>
> the agreed-on output or keeping commitments, they being to wonder why they are
>
> working so hard. They wonder why you don't [sic] take action to address a poor
>
> performer who is creating problems for the rest of the team. Lack of accountability
>
> creates and reinforces a culture of blame –which, in turn, generates other problems. […]
>
> Innovation plunges as people become less willing to be creative and think out of the
>
> box. Employees take fewer risks (or stop taking them altogether) because no one wants
>
> to be blamed if something goes wrong. "Blamestorming" sessions proliferate, creating a
>
> cycle of blame that ultimately shuts down communication. (Leipsinger, 2010, p. 79)

If employees, leadership, and stakeholders do not know who is accountable for specific aspects

of their organization, confusion develops in tandem with frustration. Clearly, an essential

ingredient in strategical thinking is identifying, establishing, and consistently enforcing

accountability.

In partnership with accountability, clear communication is imperative to strategic

thinking. Once the vision is cast, leadership must fully understand the vision and be able to

communicate it to their followers. Additionally, a leader needs to listen to their shareholders

and communicate purpose: "In a strong and ethical corporate culture, only real leaders and

people of strong character can generate and sustain trust. This requires continuous attention

on the part of the leader to such actions as candid and caring communication, attentive

listening, demonstrated competence and constancy of purpose" (Leadership Ethics, 2002). To

facilitate communication throughout the organization, Harnish recommends utilizing a "Daily

Huddle" concept where everyone in the organization meets with their team every day for about

fifteen minutes (2002, p. 86). In this time, mission, or the strategic plan are clarified, questions

and problems identified, solved, or at least brought to management and leaderships attention

for further examination. When an executive demonstratively values the comments of

employees in the lower levels of their organization, unity and loyalty generate: "A side benefit,

of course, is the opportunity these daily and weekly meetings afford you to reinforce your core

ideologies and give pats on the back" (Harnish, 2002, p.92). A strategic plan must be at the

forefront of discussion among and with employees:

It's the repeating of and living consistent with the firm's values that's the most difficult

part of the process. A leader must go beyond merely posting the values on the wall and

handing out plastic laminated cards. To keep things fresh you have to get a little

creative. You have to find lots of different ways to deliver the same information-over

and over- so that it doesn't get stale, yet is reinforced on a daily basis. (Harnish, 2002,

p.46)

Clearly, how a leader is going to communicate or develop their vision and strategic plan is

highly necessary to think effectively strategically.

When communication is insufficient in an organization, the strategic plan suffers.

Employees stress levels rise and dissatisfaction multiplies. Densten (2005) researched the

correlation between visioning behaviours in leadership and employee burnout. He found that

leaders should communicate through their vision and strategic plans "[...]realistic expectations

to their followers and thus further assist individual recovery from burnout" (Densten, 2005, p.

115). Furthermore, the study found that "burnout occurs when people have unmet needs and

unfulfilled expectations, and therefore are unable to derive a sense of significance from their

work" (p.106). If ideals remain unclearly communicated, accountability not established, and

expectations not adjusted in partnership with the individuals when plans are not working,

burnout occurs among employees and the organization suffers.

Another impediment to communication is large groups or too many levels of leadership:

"As a rule of thumb, aim to build a structure of working groups composed of between five and

ten people. Such a policy will insure you against the common mistake of building into the

structure too many levels of leadership management [...] Simplicity must be a hallmark at every

level" (Adair, 2010, p. 87). All organizational members must understand their position within

the school and the reporting system when there are problems with leadership or the

organization

Furthermore, when strategically thinking, one must consider one's training and legacy

as well as what training is available to organizational leaders: "Supervisors who themselves

need to upgrade their own skill sets and understandings of standards- based supervision may

need to go through their own retooling process, and may have to attach that journey to the

succession of steps to transforming their own professional identity and capacities" (Sergiovanni,

Starratt, & Cho, 2002, p.60). Additionally, Hughes, et al.,(2014) discuss the importance of

continual training in leadership: "one of the strongest mechanisms for supporting individuals in

changing the behaviors that will strengthen their leadership effectiveness is establishing an

active learning and developmental support network- a group of trusted "accountability

partners" to challenge and support leaders in the developmental process" (p. 270). Part of

leading strategically is ensuring continuous growth and support exists through ongoing training

efforts for all members of the organization, including leadership.

An effective organization frequently asks what plans are in place to replace existing

leadership (Harnish, 2002, p.58). Sergiovanni, Starrat, and Cho (2014) state "when even one of

these experts is out sick or drives home at the end of the day, the overall knowledge of a school

is diminished. As any school that has faced turnover challenges can attest, lost expertise comes

at a high cost to effectively interpreting and solving problems" (p. 30). Specifically within the

context of education, mentorship should occur on board, staff, student, and parent levels.

Parent volunteers fill roles on key committees; when one backs down, schools are left

scrambling thereby burdening the principal or teachers to perform the role of the committee.

Therefore, an effective strategic plan addresses how schools/organizations are planning for the future leadership of committees, board, and school so that knowledge and expertise are not lost.

When shaping the vision and strategic plans, remember that human beings are at the center of the organization. Without people, there would not be a company or a school. Hughes, et al., (2014) caution "too little attention is paid to the human element of strategy" (p.32). Remembering the flaws of humankind and the supports that they need will help to formulate a strong strategic plan. Incorporating plans for leadership to address their inner lives, take breaks when needed, or to seek counsel is a way to make any organization unique: "Our frequent failure as leaders to deal with our inner lives leaves too many individuals and institutions in the dark" (Palmer, 2000, p.91). Regarding education specifically, training should include professional skills but also address the stages of life occurring within the teacher. Sergiovanni, Starratt, and Cho (2014) use Erikson's life cycle model to explain the crisis teachers find themselves in upon a new job placement:

> There is a process of growth, however, always going on beneath that professional growth, and that involves the human development of teachers as they stretch into a fuller, more mature human being. The work of supervisors needs to be present to that process of growth and its challenges as well, for that attention can support and energize the more particular work of professional growth and development. (p.53)

Therefore, strategic thinking is best shaped by balancing a realistic picture of the human beings who form the organization, with the needs of the organization.

Ultimately, people will perform if they trust the leadership in front of them. Utilizing accountability, proper communication, and valuing the people working in, for, and around the organization is a part of strategic thinking. The mindset established through vision is the responsibility of leadership: "Whatever strengths or weaknesses exist within the organization can be traced right back to the cohesion of the executive team and their levels of trust, competence, discipline, alignment, and respect" (Harnish, 2002, p. 11-12). If the executive team/leadership is working well together, the organization falls into balance. If they are not, strategic direction cannot be defined nor developed in the organization. As Page and Wong stated, "A strong commitment to common values and attitude will propel the organization rather than enforced regulations" (Page & Wong, n.d.). This commitment begins with leadership.

Team Leadership

The direction education is moving requires teachers to work together. A necessary part of visioning and strategic thinking for the educational leader is how to facilitate, utilize, and implement team leadership. According to Imbenzie, Paige, & Williaume (2015), team leadership may be manifest if expectations, including a high level of performance for self and others, is communicated and supported throughout the organization (p. 71). There are many skills which reveal effective team leadership;

Valuing differentness and diversity; modeling self-knowledge to foster team effectiveness; fostering a climate of collaboration; providing flexible project leadership structures, linking teams to organizational expectations; building team skills and processes in order to prepare others to embrace challenging assignments; identifying

and being accountable for employee teamwork capacities and task commitment.

(Imbenzie, Paige, & Williaume, p.71, 2015)

Within education, these manifestations and expressions of team leadership are most notably

found in the professional learning community (PLC) movement as discussed by Dufour, Dufour,

and Eaker (2008); as well as Dufour and Fullan (2013).

Teams and the Professional Learning Community

Many teachers feel isolated in their professional discipline despite being surrounded by

colleagues. Experts believe breaking the barriers between educators and creating PLC schools is

a way to improve education: "Collaborative cultures take the brakes off and accelerate a

faculty's capacity to improve instruction. […] when teachers have many opportunities to

collaborate, their energy, creative thinking, efficiency, and goodwill increase—and the cynicism

and defensiveness that hamper change decrease" (Kohm, 2009, p.68). Seconding the beneficial

nature of PLC's, Harris states "Where professionals work collectively and systematically, when

they engage in systematic or disciplined collaboration, then positive outcomes are much more

likely to result" (2014, p. 33). Clearly, two purposes of a PLC school are to implement change

and build a culture within the school through the use of teams. Obviously, effective leadership

skills are required: "Transforming a school organization into a learning community can be done

only with the sanction of the leaders and the active nurturing of the entire staff's development

as a community" (Hord & Roussin, 2013, p. 57).

When implementing a PLC to create change and growth within an educational body,

Richard Dufour and Michael Fullan (2013) stress the importance of a leader's ability to

communicate clearly and concisely. Secondly, sustaining a PLC school requires continual

training of leaders; "It requires many leaders who work on the system as well as within it. Effective leadership is imperative, but it is a leadership that focuses on building the individual and collective capacity of people throughout the organization" (Dufour & Fullan, 2013, p. 64).

Why Use Teams?

As previously mentioned, utilizing teams is an effective way to bring the existing collective knowledge into the operating of an institution or business. Teams are an efficient method to discover ways to improve an organization, implement change, facilitate change, and monitor the required transitions. Harris (2014) suggests it is through group problem solving that real change can occur. Hord and Roussin (2013) also stress the importance of working together as a team to create change within the organization.

According to the literature, most successful businesses and schools function optimally when they employ smaller teams:

> As a rule of thumb, aim to build a structure of working groups composed of between five and 10 people. Such a policy will insure you against the common mistake of building into the structure too many levels of leadership or management […] Simplicity must be a hallmark at every level." (Adair, 87)

A network of teams helps a leader to delegate, receive feedback, and effectively run their company or school. When thinking strategically, developing and supporting the effective and sustained use of teams is imperative to the success of the organization as it grows.

Team Leadership in Practice

When running a team, Adair (2010) suggests leaders remember that group members share three needs: the need to accomplish the common task, the need to be held together and

maintained as a working unit, and the needs that individuals bring with them into any

organization (p.23). Evidently, people are at the center of an organization. Individuals with

needs make up the team. Therefore, it is a team leader's job to balance the needs of the people

with the vision of the organization. To do this effectively, a leader, as Harnish states, must

possess the ability to predict and delegate (2002, p. 12).

      Secondly, the role of team leaders is to facilitate working relationships between

members and leaders which move the organization towards success: "Leadership that does not

result in action, for example, is like a work only half completed no matter how eloquent its

ideas or passionate its followers. Action is much more likely to result when leaders and

followers are connected to each other by a commitment to common ideas" (Sergiovani, 2007,

p. 3). Again, a team leader must connect the team with the vision and mission of the

organization in order to progress. Interestingly, a way to develop a cohesive and harmonious

team is to employ distributed leadership strategies: "the leadership is viewed as a process, not

a position. That is, it shifts from person to person depending on who has the knowledge or

experience most relevant to the issue at hand" (Hughes, 2014, p. 202). Utilizing distributed

leadership empowers team members and facilitates a deeper connection with the goal and

purpose of the company while tapping into the collective knowledge/experience which exists

within an organization: "distributed leadership does not mean everybody leads but rather that

everybody has the potential to lead, at some time, depending on expertise and experience"

(Harris, 2014, p.41).

      When implementing distributed leadership or a team structure, a leader must ensure a

collaborative culture is established within the organization. According to Harris (2014), if an

organization is in crisis, there is lack of trust, or the culture is not conducive to distributed

leadership and collaboration then distributed leadership will not work (p.41). Furthermore, the

role of a leader in a team environment cannot be understated: Harris (2014) warns:

> In very practical terms, to be most effective, distributed leadership has to be carefully
>
> planned and deliberately orchestrated. It won't [sic] just happen. Therefore, those in
>
> formal leadership roles have a key role to play in creating the conditions for distributed
>
> leadership to occur. They are responsible for making it happen. Formal leaders have to
>
> model disturbed leadership by actively encouraging others to take the lead, at
>
> appropriate times. They need to invite others to lead and to reinforce the idea that
>
> leadership is about expertise as well as responsibility. They have to facilitate the
>
> professional collaboration of others. (p.41)

Clearly, organization, facilitation, and delegation skills are crucial for a team leader. Harris

(2014) also suggests team leadership requires strength, vision, and compassion. A leader must

walk the fine line between empowerment and control; They must be able to empower yet

intervene when necessary; They must encourage creativity while staying true to the

mission/vision of the organization; They must hold the reins tightly and loosely at the same

time:

> It takes a secure and strong leader to be able to facilitate distributed leadership while
>
> also retaining a firm hold on the overall direction of the organization. It takes a leader
>
> who can empower but can also intervene, if the extended leadership activity is
>
> misaligned or having a negative impact upon the organization. It also requires a leader

who understands and can overcome some of the inherent barriers to distributed

leadership practice. (Harris, 2014, p. 71)

Since leading a team requires a leader to work with people, providing an environment where

people feel valued, appreciated, and motivated to work can be a challenge: "The very best

leaders put people before terms and conditions. Creating organizations where relationships

matter and where everyone's contribution is valued is what characterizes effective leadership"

(Harris, 2014, p.69). However, Adair (2010) warns "a balance needs to be struck in any group or

organization between order and freedom" (Adair, p. 83). To illustrate how a team should work,

Adair (2010) uses three overlapping circles representing the three needs of a team as identified

above. According to Adair, at the center of the overlapping circles is where leadership and its

function is found, "the center is there to serve the parts-not the other way about" (p. 95). It is a

team leader's responsibility to serve their team members humbly. Adair further argues "if you

exercise the art of leadership properly, you will generate a sense of responsibility in the team as

a whole, so that members naturally want to respond to the three sets of need" (2010, p. 26).

Moving into the realm of education, Sergiovanni (2007) stresses the role of leadership in

facilitating relationship between organizational members as they embrace the school's goal and

implied change: "The net effect of the cultural force of leadership is to bond together students,

teachers, and others as believers in the work of the school" (p. 10). Utilizing PLCs or other team

centered approaches to education have propelled schools towards meeting the demands of the

twenty-first-century student.

When specifically leading a team in an educational context, Harris advises: "If a principal

or superintendent talks the language of empowerment or collective engagement but in reality

allocates unwanted tasks to others, then his or her version of distributed leadership will soon

be viewed as inauthentic and disingenuous" (Harris, p.66). Leaders must be aware of their

purpose in using distributed leadership, PLC's, or other team-based strategies. Many teachers

transitioning into a team environment see team initiatives as a top-down, cost-cutting initiative

of adding more responsibility without compensation. Therefore, as Harris (2014) discusses, it is

crucial for leadership to remove unused or superfluous tasks as new responsibilities are added

(p. 45). An effective way to monitor this process is utilizing Kim and Mauborgne's Eliminate,

Reduce, Raise, and Change Matrix (Appendix A).

    Secondly, a leader must ensure time and the necessary support is allotted to meet

collaboratively as well as individually to learn new tasks/skills: "Time is a significant issue for

faculties who wish to work together collegially, and it has been cited as both a barrier (when it

is not provided) and a supportive factor (when it is available) by staff engaging in school

improvement" (Hord & Roussin, 2013, p. 59). Tomlinson (2008) also discussed the importance

of meeting regularly with other teachers in learning communities when attempting a change in

assessment practice. However, leaders must continually ensure they are not micro-managing

their teachers time nor are perceived to be operating in a manipulative manner. Harris echoes

Tomlinson's (2008), as well as Hord & Roussin's (2013) argument regarding the importance of

providing time for groups to meet. However, Harris reiterates the connection between effective

leadership and organizational success/growth: "Essentially, if formal leaders create the time,

space, and opportunity for colleagues to meet, plan and reflect, it is far more likely that

distributed leadership will be viewed as genuine and will be sustained" (Harris, 2014, p. 42).

Maintaining high expectations conducive to positive results while not manipulating or micromanaging team members is the role of a leader when implementing PLC's.

As previously discussed, teams are primarily used as a method to evoke change or improvement within education. PLCs are becoming commonplace throughout educational institutions in Alberta, and arguably Canada. Therefore, team leadership is a pertinent topic. Interestingly, Dufour and Fullan stress the importance of celebrating small wins with the team (2013, p.61) as a schools direction is championed not only by the successful team but by all members of the organization; students, parents, board members, staff, administration, and the general public. In effect, a team's successes are shared beyond the individual school:

> The goal [of a PLC] is not to replace isolated teachers with insulated teams. With the technology that is readily available today, a team that is struggling to help students draw inferences from their reading should be able to access a network of state, provincial, national, and even international educators who are dealing with a similar challenge. Proximity is no longer a prerequisite for membership on a team and distance does not negate the possibility of being a contributing member to a highly effective team (Dufour & Fullan, 2013, 60).

Seemingly, the role of an administrator has morphed to facilitate dialogue between academic teams locally, nationally, and potentially internationally.

Given the location of SLKCS, collaboration with other Christian school teachers, while needed, is a challenge. Utilizing virtual teams, as Levi (2017) suggests, is fraught with challenges. Establishing cultural norms and expectations of communication must occur early on. In fact, incorporating face to face interactions remains an important task when operating

geographically separated teams (Levi, 2017, p. 58; Dr. Phil Laird, personal communication, July

28th, 2016). To truly celebrate accomplishment in geographically separate places is problematic.

Clearly, time and finances must allow for a leaders schedule to travel, or an employee brought

to the home base, for meeting and celebrating in person with remote team members.

Unfortunately, the budget of most small private schools can barely afford to pay their teachers

which is why virtual teams are considered. SLKCS is caught in a juxtaposition of realities: Virtual

teams appear to be a solution to our geographical isolation issues, yet budget and time do not

allow for effective leadership of virtual team.

The second challenge to virtual teams at SLKCS is the function of technology. The

framework for successful meetings and training of how to use the technology must exist before

the formation of a virtual team (Levi, 2017, p.213). Not all teachers are technologically savvy.

Incorporating training directed to communications efforts must be incorporated into

professional development days at SLKCS to remain viable in the twenty-first century.

Since most literature suggests teams as an effective means to inspire change or

improvement, issues surrounding sustaining the initiative when a change in leadership occurs

have developed. A solution, as argued by Dufour and Fullan, is to develop leaders continually

within teams:

Sustaining improvement requires developing many leaders at all levels who are learning

from each other in a focused manner […] Organizations are able to sustain an

improvement process when leaders create: Coherence and clarity; widespread

commitment to both long-term goals and short-term action; a collaborative culture and

collective responsibility for achieving goals; lots of leaders to sustain reform; a relentless

focus on continuous improvement; recognition and celebration of short-term wins;

engagement in continuous improvement and focused innovation; resolute leadership.

(2013, p. 64)

Therefore, leadership must develop effective team leaders and succession plans with required

training for new leaders to assume a leadership position once the leader exits, this includes

specialized attention on virtual teams.

In summary, team leadership has many uses. Operating or growing an organization

without the use of teams is essentially impossible. Thus, understanding the complex role of

leadership in facilitating team leadership, as well as the operation of teams, is necessary. A

leader must be trustworthy, strong, fair, humble, servant-hearted, proactive, strategic, and able

to predict and delegate. After all, "It is through teamwork that we most effectively develop

other leaders and accomplish more than we could on our own" (Page, 2009, p. 235). With high-

functioning teams lead by TSL values, an organization such as SLKCS could adapt and face

changes successfully.

Adaptability, Change and the Role of Leadership in Education

Dr. Richard Swenson (2012) discusses the exponential curve of progress; what I am

equating with the driving force for adaptability and change within organizations. Swenson

argues the Industrial Revolution was the beginning of significant advancements and increases in

change. In a very short amount of time, progress/change has developed explosively. According

to his curve, we currently live in a time of volatile and excessively rapid change. Since progress,

as defined by Swenson, runs the economies and correlates directly with volatile change facing

all organizations, I believe education is directly and, arguably, most affected as progress will not

end: There will always be new jobs created requiring new skills and educational foundations for success. Therefore, the adaptability and change competency within educational leadership is crucial to the future success of the students and is an integral part of an effective, twenty-first-century school.

Moving forward, if change is a constant in the world of education, how do we proactively recognize areas to adapt or change? How do we track progress through change initiatives? How do we prepare organizational members to limit resistance?

Identifying When to Adapt/Change

In an interview with Tom Peters, a successful business person, he expressed the correlation of embracing new technology with success (Heywood, De Smet, & Webb, 2014, p.9). Without such an embrace, an organization is left out of business. Likewise, private and public educational institutions must stay up to date on technology as well as best pedagogical practices otherwise they run the risk of closing. For leaders to understand areas of weakness within their organization, they must go to the people of the organization. Individual schools can strategically identify areas to improve by recognizing and consulting the knowledge and experience of all individuals in the organization (Hayward & Spencer, 2010). Sometimes, it is the culture of an organization that must first change before true progress can occur: "Culturally responsive action is not only about culture, but also about intimate knowledge about one's community. Accordingly, the initiatives that might address structural problems might vary, depending upon community context" (Sergiovanni, Starratt, & Cho, 2014, p.45). Ultimately, as Sergiovanni, Starratt, & Chow, (2014) warn, the level of connectedness that exists within an organization informs the decision-making process (p.31).

Leading Parents through Changes/Adaptations

All schools consist of multiple organizational members: Mandates are set by government level bodies; Boards hire superintendents and principals to ensure government mandates are executed in schools; Principals then work with their teachers and support staff to ensure students' needs are met while achieving government expectations. Principals often consult teachers and support staff to determine best practice and thus influence decisions by working up the organizational ladder. Unfortunately, one rung is often missing, skipped, or silent on this ladder, the primary caregivers. In fact, Warren, Hong, Heang Rubin, & Sychitkokhjong Uy suggest it is time to recognize parents as assets and not deficits when planning and educating children (2009, p.27).

A major obstacle to overcome, as reported by Warren, Hong, Heang Rubin, & Sychitkokhjong Uy (2009), is the mutual mistrust between educational professionals and parents. They recommend relationship building activities, cultural sensitivity training, patience, and mutual support to bring parents to a recognized level of equality with teachers (Warren, Hong, Heang Rubin, & Sychitkokhjong Uy, 2009, p. 23, p.26). Once accomplished all members can work towards a better education for all as effective change agents: "Bridging relationships between parents and teachers and other school staff provides a basis for more meaningful collaboration (and mutual accountability) so that the school and home work together for the benefit of children" (Warren, Hong, Heang Rubin, & Sychitkokhjong Uy, 2009, p. 26). In fact, researchers suggest the connections parents have with their community, the insight they offer from their experience, and the dreams of a successful future for their children, can shape the vision of the school and develop pertinent initiatives (Warren, Hong, Heang Rubin, &

Sychitkokhjong Uy, 2009, p.28). Additionally, Hord and Roussin argue sustainable change can only occur when adults are given the opportunity to come together and learn (2013, p.2). In essence, parents and educators form a professional learning community to explore and progress through change (Warren, Hong, Heang Rubin, & Sychitkokhjong Uy, 2009, p.29). Clearly, when determining areas of growth, the best way to set direction is in consultation with parents and educators.

Interestingly, Warren, Hong, Heng Rubin, & Sychitkokjong Uy warn of parents developing into negative change agents. Parent engagement is not a quick fix for school improvement: "In other words, relationships matter to participation. Investment in parent engagement, then, should be about creating the relationships that provide a foundation for long-term and sustainable change in schools, not a quick fix to any schools problems (Warren, Hong, Heang Rubin, & Sychitkokhjong Uy, 2009, p. 33).

Therefore, building long-lasting, sustainable relationships with parents and incorporating them into the change process is an essential yet delicate tool. Accounting for this resistance, managing communication and motivation is critical to any leader pursuing a change initiative within education.

Leading Teachers through Changes/Adaptations

In conversation with colleagues, many teachers lament the constant trends and changes that occur within education only to see it fail within five years and replaced by a new idea (Personal Communication, 2016). Hesitation, distrust, and a feeling of "why should I try" is often present in teachers when administration approaches them with an idea. Therefore, the question arises of how to lead teachers effectively through curricular and pedagogical changes?

Firstly change is cyclical, directly linked to Erikson's life stages theory, and deeply

personal (Sergiovani, Sarratt, & Cho, 2014, p. 54-60; Hayward & Spencer, 2010, p.175). If

respect is not shown for an individual's journey through change, success is unlikely: "However,

failure to understand and appreciate the emotional part of change frequently leads to

implementation failure." (Hord & Roussin, 2013, p. 131). As an adult teacher encounters

changes to something that is familiar, they revisit all stages within the life stages model,

beginning with infancy otherwise referred to as establishing trust. Both new teachers and

veteran teachers facing pedagogical change or upgrading find themselves forced into an

uncomfortable situation where they must re-establish trust with their leader before embracing

a new idea and begin developing into change agents (Sergiovanni, Starratt, & Cho, 2014, p.53-

61). Interestingly, the first way to earn the trust of a veteran teacher is to "respect the way

human beings grow into new roles" (Sergiovanni, Starratt, & Cho, 2014, p. 60). Remembering

that the organization would not exist without the human beings working for it, centering a

change initiative to reflect the needs, and assisting all employees through the transition reveals

the trustworthy character of a leader: "To be sustainable, any model attempting to describe the

interaction of factors has to recognise the need to personalise each one, identifying the unique

mix of persons relationships, histories and policies relevant to those circumstances" (Hayward

& Spencer, 2010, p. 174).

In any field, people should be the central focus of a leader (Heywood, De Smet, & Webb,

September 2014, p.6). Possessing the ability to monitor and assess the progress of every person

in the organization must be top-priority. Specifically directed to helping teachers progress

through a change initiative is Hord and Roussin's (2013) Concerns-Based Adoption Model

(CBAM). Hord and Roussin (2013) have developed a method of collecting data from organizational members to place them on the spectrum of change as well as offer suggestions for how a leader can motivate their people as they progress through the change based on the corresponding stage. After all, "change is about giving reinforcement at precisely the right moment" (Heywood, DeSmet, & Webb, 2014, p.7). Hord and Roussin's (2013) CBAM model provides advice, reflects anticipated challenges, identifies solutions to potential problems, and suggests proactive behaviours for leadership.

Multiple studies have revealed teachers progress through change/adaptation if they are directly involved in the process (Hord & Roussin, 2013; Hayward & Spencer, 2010; DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008; Sergiovanni, Starratt, & Cho, 2014; Sergiovanni, 2007; Harris, 2014; Culver, 2007). Honouring teachers' professionalism by including them in discussions surrounding policy, working toward the desired results as a part of a team, creating community, listening to their requests, and assisting them as they move forward are all ways to engage teachers successfully through the change process:

> This participative role gave teachers a sense that their professionalism was respected
> and crucial to the development[…] This sense of belonging to a (sometimes quite small)
> community with common interests and concerns was an important factor as teachers
> experimented with approaches, evaluated and modified them, and developed their
> commitment to formative assessment as integral to their teaching. (Hayward & Spencer,
> 2010, p. 168)

The end goal is to develop teachers into change agents so that they can help facilitate the entire process on a larger scale.

Like parents, bringing teachers on board with the desired change requires an

understanding of the relevance and benefit for their students: "Educational and personal

professional integrity required deep understanding of the nature of pedagogy" (Hayward &

Spencer, 2010, p. 170). Ensuring changes incorporate culturally relevant pedagogy is also wise:

"In the end, culturally responsive pedagogy has the potential to help teachers and students go

beyond the standards in ways that are vital to both academic and lifelong success"

(Sergiovanni, Starratt, & Cho, 2014,p. 48). Hayward & Spencer (2010) found teachers embrace

change if professional development opportunities and conversation focus on the curriculum,

not theories (171). Teachers want to do better but need concrete examples of how to utilize

best practice. Time is also a crucial factor when initiating change. Teachers, like other people,

need time to adjust to the expectations, familiarize themselves with what is required, as well as

time and finances to perform and plan the desired tasks associated with the movement

(Hayward & Spencer, 2010, p. 172; Hord and Roussin, p.15).

Interestingly, Hayward & Spencer could not find a preferred amount of administrative

support which guaranteed the success of a change initiative. Instead, sensitivity to a teacher's

preference and ability to work alone or with support appears to be the best practice (2010,

p.173). While Harris (2014), among other experts, recommend distributed or shared leadership

practice, Hayward & Spencer warn against relying on the development of a few people to then

change the organization with the future removal of support:

The assumption being that once ideas had been developed by a limited number of

people, others could simply be informed or instructed what to do as the initiative was

'rolled out' or 'cascaded.' Our study suggests that there are things that matter in the

process of real change, whether an individual or a school is in the first phase of a

development or the last. Failure to attend to them, as we push the boulder of

innovation uphill, is likely to condemn us to being crushed every time it rolls back

down. (Hayward & Spencer, 2010, p.176)

Supporting Hayward and Spencer's (2010) warning, Hord and Roussin (2013) articulate the

importance of large-scale professional development sessions followed by individually focused

training activities (p. xiii). Without leadership's continual active role and support in a change

initiative, progress will falter and die: "When there is no change leader or if there has not been

continuing support, implementation can take more than five years or may never be

accomplished" (Hord & Roussin, 2013, p. 130). Therefore, establishing a community focused

environment, where risk-taking behaviour is encouraged, organizational members feel safe,

and financial as well as time supports are in place is key to creating a culture conducive to

successful change.

General Change/Adaptation Tools to Embrace when Leading

        While Hord and Roussin's CBAM model is useful in an educational context, it is not the

only tool available for leaders as they navigate change. Golden (2006) developed a recipe for

successful change which included five ingredients; Vision, skills, incentive, resources, and an

action plan (Appendix A). If one of the ingredients is missing, a specific inhibitor to change will

result. Therefore, Golden's (2006) diagram equips leaders with the ability to diagnosis what is

needed when experiencing the identified challenges.

        Another diagnostic diagram breaking down the change process is Herzberg's (2003)

Theory related to engagement (Appendix B). Herzberg details how to bring employees to a

point where motivation is possible in a change effort. Conditions within a work environment

are related to satisfaction, but are separated from motivation in that someone can be satisfied

with their work conditions but unmotivated to progress with the organization. Also, Herzberg's

theory suggests the culture, or working conditions, must be primed for change to take place.

Within education, motivational factors most likely exist as a person's work is meaningful. If

teachers perceive their efforts to be useless, then they quickly become unmotivated as their

'hygiene factors' are not satisfactory. A leader must evaluate the change process and see if

there are 'motivation factors' employed or if employees are struggling as basic 'hygiene factors'

are missing. Effective leadership must use strong analysis' of stakeholders views and concerns

(Feser, Mayol, &Srinivasaan, 2015, p.3). Hord and Roussin's CBAM and Herzberg's theory are

two tools which provide methods of data collection to monitor an organization effectively and

efficiently while adapting or progressing through change.

Adaptability and Change Skills a Leader Must Have

In summary, the skill set of a leader who will effectively guide an organization through

change is diverse. My research suggests leaders must be trustworthy, strong communicators,

and offer supports as needed/anticipated (Mitchell, Williaume, & Wu, 2013, p.70).

Transformational Leadership with values makes better leaders (Copeland, 2014). Arguably,

Transformational Servant Leadership, as described by Imbenzi, Page, & Williaume, (2013) fits

Copeland's call for high-quality leadership, and utilizes the adaptability and change leadership

competency. Further, leaders must utilize effective time management (Feser, Mayol, &

Srinivasaan, 2015). Self-awareness in a leader allows them to see and embrace personal

opportunities for change. A personal willingness to change course or modify expectations given

circumstance is also indicative of a leader with strength in the change and adaptability

competency (Mitchell, Williaume, & Wu, 2013, p. 70).

Change takes time, is not easy, and can be messy: "Messiness is an essential part of the

process. There are no short cuts to real and meaningful change. Recognizing and living with the

political tensions arising from real change requires both professional and political action to

ensure that all communities, including parents and employers, as well as teachers, policy-

makers and researchers are part of the process" (Hayward & Spencer, 2010, p. 174). Embracing

the experiences, knowledge, and skills of the community members, then equipping them with

the tools to change or adapt is at the center of successfully leading an organization into its

future.

Chapter 4: Implications for Personal Action

Visioning and Strategic Thinking

Personally, determining and developing a leadership style that facilitates a prime

environment for strategic thinking is essential. I believe the TSL style holds the most potential

for effective visioning, and strategic thinking. All members of the organization are valued, and

their experience sought after. By combining the attributes of servant leadership, as defined by

Greenleaf, and transformational leadership, as defined by Burns, organizational interests and

human beings are valued and involved in developing strategic plans.

Since "Leadership can bond people together or drive them apart. It can create unity out

of disorder or promote chaos. Leadership can make things happen or put a damper on all

activities. It can inspire or destroy" (Page & Wong, n.d.). I strive to develop a leadership style

that bonds people, creates unity, and moves an organization forward. Furthermore, I strive to

be a leader organizational members can trust: "In the absence of trust, fear dominates

organizations and inhibits productivity" (Russel & Stone, 2002, p.149). Utilizing communication

skills, establishing and maintaining accountability, setting clear measurable expectations within

a strategic plan, asking the right questions, listening, remembering human beings are at the

center of an organization and engaging in mentorship initiatives are key lessons taken from this

literature review.

Regarding private education, I am perplexed by the question - how can the

recommended exercises to improve strategic thinking occur within a voluntary board of

directors, where all members have primary jobs and limited time to dedicate to strategic

thinking training? This is a key question and challenge of working with volunteer boards. I don't

know that there is an answer beyond making involvement enjoyable and rewarding in other

ways. A sense of belonging and purpose is key. In business, executives financially benefit from

the success of their organization. In private education, the benefits are not fiscal as the only

paid member is the principal, the rest of the governing board hold voluntary positions:

However, all members desire and strive to see the school succeed.

Moving forward, becoming a better strategic planner is a skill I intend to develop. I am

taking away lessons on the importance of core values, relationships, self-awareness, and

balancing the values of the organization with those of the individual members of the

organization. Current strategic questions for private schools in Northern Alberta involve issues

with funding and location: How can a private school survive when government funding is

removed? How do we effectively train our staff, as it is difficult to recruit certified teachers,

educational assistants, and principals due to the school's location? How do we stay

academically competitive while embracing the culture of the surrounding area?

Interestingly, Blakesley, in his article about education in the Yukon, highlighted thought-

provoking issues regarding culturally responsive pedagogy. Many teachers in the north have

moved to the location of the job. They enter into a culture that, at times, does not value

education. Personally, this was a difficult belief held by community members in Northern

Alberta that I had to overcome. Blakesley suggests a future problem in education because

leaders are not equipped to educate in remote settings: "Demographics and the nature of the

broader labour market raise concerns regarding the future nature and quality of educational

leadership in Yukon schools. It is quite possible that, in the near future, it will become

increasingly difficult to find school administrators with the skills and attributes, however they

are defined, to lead schools in culturally relevant ways, given the Yukon context of self-determination" (Blakesley, 2008, p. 451). While Blakesley discusses public schools throughout his article, I wonder if the potential of private schools, governed by community members on the board, operating in northern communities, is the answer to leading schools in culturally relevant ways. Since, community members govern small private schools, strategic visioning that accurately reflects the needs of the organizational members is more likely to occur. Therefore, integrating culturally relevant pedagogy into strategic thinking and planning on the private school level is an area in need of further study.

Team Leadership

Team leadership, as previously discussed, appears to fit best by employing TSL. Team leadership seeks to provide an avenue for "shared decision-making" while empowering and valuing the organizational members. Therefore, learning the skills and strengths of the staff is the first step in employing effective team leadership.

I sometimes struggle with delegation. I also have been on the receiving end of apparent distributed leadership and have felt taken for granted. Truly creating an environment where people are valued and empowered while also steering the team in accordance with the vision and mission of the school will be something I strive to balance. Personally, ensuring the environment is primed for operating in teams instead of simply imposing them on the staff was an important reminder. Team leadership is something that is built up by knowing, understanding, and trusting who is working with you. Adair's framing of the three needs of a team in three circles was an interesting perspective. Transitioning from a top-down approach to a collective approach has rewards. But, how will this work in a small school where the

geographical location isolates teachers and leadership from colleagues? As Dufour and Fullan

argue, a PLC may be the way to break down the barriers between schools and facilitate an

opportunity for collaboration in small, northern, faith-based schools. Truly, it is up to leadership

to provide the framework for a PLC to operate. The board and administration must model

effective teamwork then facilitate the opportunity if teachers are expected to collaborate with

colleagues from another school. Further exploration into how to lead virtual teams effectively

would be an asset. Investment in professional development days, time and budget for travel, as

well as the technology to maintain communication on a weekly timeframe, may be required.

Adaptability and Change

In the world of education, there is a constant need to adapt and change to remain

relevant. Therefore, the skills outlined to be proactive in leading an organization have been

most helpful. Specifically, the importance of data collection to closely monitor the organization

as they progress through a change initiative was new to me. Now, I feel equipped with tools,

the CBAM model specifically, to effectively monitor and diagnose organizational members as

they progress while not micromanaging. Creating a culture conducive to change before any

change initiative can take place was another concept that resonated with me. Just as

horticulturalists must prepare their garden with the right ingredients, plant in prime conditions

reflective of each plant's needs, then continue to water, trim, and otherwise nurture the

growth of the plants, so must a leader carefully reflect upon and prepare the environment in

which they wish to plant their seeds of change. If the conditions are not correct, the garden

dies as does a change initiative. Herzberg's (2003) theory succinctly identifies areas of focus for

priming an organization's culture.

Currently, SLKCS possesses the framework for change to occur. The parent community is actively involved in the decision-making processes at the school. However, there is a rift growing between teaching staff and administration. If not monitored closely, the rift will significantly hurt the school and hinder all the progress they have accomplished in the past five years. SLKCS must consult the stakeholders (parents, teachers, community members) to see what programming should change, be introduced, or be forgotten. Once a vision is communally established and understood, identifying goals then implementing data, results-driven assessment to monitor progress and shape goals is the next step. Exploring where resources are spent and ensuring spending matches organizational goals should also be undertaken, as recommended by Hord and Roussin (2013, p. 15). Closely monitoring and adopting practices to help SLKCS move into financial stability for the time when Alberta Education decides to withdraw funding is of paramount importance. Without teacher and parent satisfaction or partnership, finances will always be an area of need.

While not explored extensively in this paper, utilizing a Professional Learning Community (PLC) to facilitate growth at Slave Lake Koinonia Christian School (SLKCS) is intriguing. Adopting distributed leadership principles as described by Harris (2014) and actively mentoring all community members will help SLKCS to become a successful twenty-first-century private school. Embracing parents as a part of a PLC culture is also an idea worth considering. Empowering parents to become better leaders is relevant to SLKCS' operations as the school claims to be parent run. Constructing a parent/teacher PLC facilitating leadership training of parents as described by Warren, Hong, Heang Rubin, Sychitkokhjong Uy (2009) is an area to consider for future programming at SLKCS.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion & Recommendations

Throughout the process of this Capstone project, the flow of influence between the explored leadership competencies of visioning and strategic thinking, team leadership, and adaptability and change has morphed into a sequential understanding of what I must do to move forward.

Personal Action Plan

Firstly, I possess the values discussed by Copeland (2014) required of a leader. I need to take the theoretical framework for TSL, as outlined by Imbenzi, Page, & Williaume (2013), and utilize it practically while guiding an organization. If I were to lead SLKCS, these are the steps I would take to ensure I am practicing TSL as I exercise the three leadership competencies outlined in this project: Visioning and Strategic Thinking, Team Leadership, and Adaptability and Change.

Step One

I will understand the vision, mission, and values of the organization before determining how I lead. Utilizing teams and monitoring progress through changes experienced while under new leadership are all things I will strive to live out.

As SLKCS fights to remain a sustainable private faith-based school, they need to bring mentoring activities into practice. To meet the goal of developing a mentoring program, other Koinonia schools will need to be on board. Presenting my ideas to the other principals and coaching them through the process of virtual teams may become a part of my job description.

Step Two

I will take the time to learn the strengths of all community members and search for opportunities to bridge any gaps that may exist within the organization. Meeting with the board would then be the next step as leadership must be united in their efforts, even if that is simply seeing where the school needs to go. Approaching all community members through surveys or personal communication to collect data reflecting their opinions, desires, and perspectives on the school would come next. Synthesizing and analyzing the data will follow. From this data, visioning and strategic thinking practices will be formed/modified and direction set.

Step Three

If the culture of SLKCS is conducive to change, ensuring the board, parents, and teaching staff fully understand the vision and direction would be the next step. Implementing and facilitating PLC's as a method of gathering information, creating change agents, and mentoring teachers, parents, and other staff members are best practice.

As a part of introducing teamwork and PLC's into the culture of SLKCS, I would ensure there is time in my schedule to meet face to face with the teams. If teams are virtual, I will do my best to provide opportunities for team members to meet face-to-face, at minimum, once per year. Team building initiatives strategically designed to meet the areas of needs would also be implemented. A beginning place of reference for team building activities is Don Page's pdf document *Effective Team Leadership: Learning to Lead Through Relationships* found within his book *Servant Empowered Leadership* (2009).

Lastly, a PLC for parents and teachers, as previously discussed, is something I would try to bring into SLKCS.

Step Four

I will implement data-driven assessment practices for students and the general operation of the organization. Furthermore, introducing methods regularly to gather the attitudes, concerns, and ideas of staff, students, parents, and community members is something I would facilitate. Bringing the feedback received into board level and staff level meetings, discussing the results, then shaping decisions based on the data would become practice.

Step Five

Determining supports and ensuring funding as well as time allotment is reflective of the new direction/change effort. I would cover classes to provide planning time for teachers or include the anticipated costs for subs as teachers adjust to the new expectations.

When utilizing virtual teams, I will incorporate time into schedules for face-to-face interaction. It would be my hope that virtual teams could meet in person at least once per year at minimum.

Step Six

Throughout all steps, I would plan on using Hord and Roussin's CBAM model to monitor progress and better equip myself with the knowledge and language necessary to facilitate change. Maintaining an open door policy is also something I would do. Utilizing Transformational Servant Leadership characteristics, skills, and strategies is another area I would personally develop as I lead through the change effort.

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Concluding Thoughts

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SLKCS is at a unique point in their twenty-year history. They are at a point of moving forward or ceasing to exist. To adapt to the current educational climate and expectations in

Alberta, SLKCS needs to embrace teams and seek clarity in visioning and strategic thinking.

Without a clear plan or operating as a team in multiple fronts, SLKCS will continue to struggle.

After completing the research into best practice, I believe solutions to human resource issues,

finances, and isolation are found in creating teams. SLKCS' vision and strategic thinking must

encompass the use of teams: Otherwise, they will never survive the transition. Once teams are

built into the vision and mission of SLKCS, adapting to a new direction can begin. Without

support, people will continue to leave the school. In embracing TSL and engaging in the process

of setting direction, SLKCS' future success will be determined. After all, SLKCS is there to

develop people. This can only happen if we work together:

> Leaders serve and are accountable to those above them while at the same time
>
> investing in those who serve below or with them. Process flows up and down and across
>
> the organization in a way that captures the enthusiasm and loyalty of everyone.
>
> Through common expression throughout the community of the heart and mind of
>
> servant leadership [or TSL], people rise to levels that they could never reach on their
>
> own, all to Gods glory (Page, 2009, 446).

> Lastly, as I am no longer at SLKCS, the universal lessons learned by examining these

three competencies have provided me with the courage and understanding to move forward in

any leadership position. It will not be easy, but I look forward to the challenge.

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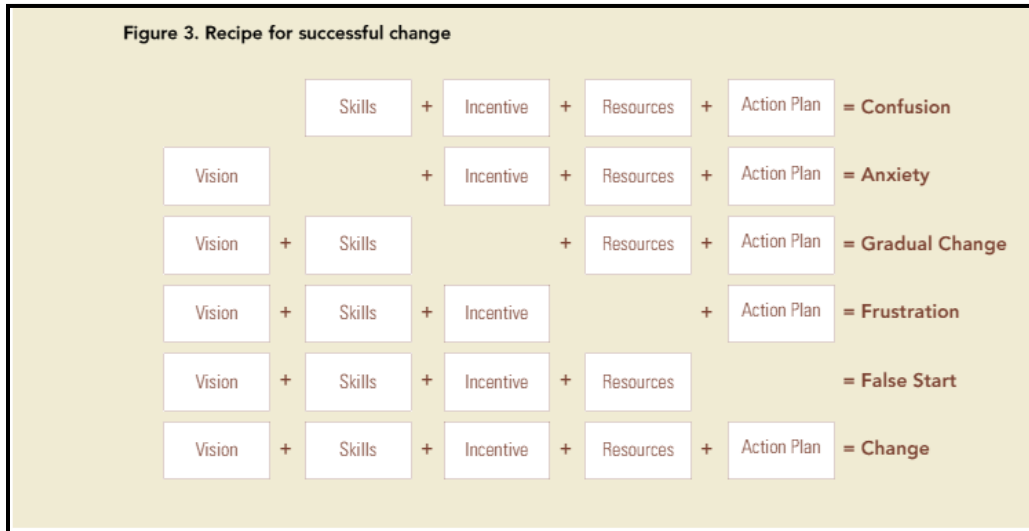
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Appendixes

Appendix A:

Kim and Mauborgne's ERRC Matrix

THE BLUE OCEAN LEADERSHIP GRID

The Blue Ocean Leadership Grid is an analytic tool that challenges people to think about which acts and activities leaders should do less of because they hold people back, and which leaders should do more of because they inspire people to give their all. Current activities from the leaders' "as-is" profiles (which may add value or not), along with new activities that employees believe would add a lot of value if leaders started doing them, are assigned to the four categories in the grid. Organizations then use the grids to develop new profiles of effective leadership.

ELIMINATE
What acts and activities do leaders invest their time and intelligence in that should be eliminated?

RAISE
What acts and activities do leaders invest their time and intelligence in that should be raised well above their current level?

REDUCE
What acts and activities do leaders invest their time and intelligence in that should be reduced well below their current level?

CREATE
What acts and activities should leaders invest their time and intelligence in that they currently don't undertake?

Appendix B: Golden's (2006) Recipe for Successful Change

Figure 3. Recipe for successful change

		Skills	+	Incentive	+	Resources	+	Action Plan	= Confusion
Vision			+	Incentive	+	Resources	+	Action Plan	= Anxiety
Vision	+	Skills			+	Resources	+	Action Plan	= Gradual Change
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentive			+	Action Plan	= Frustration
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentive	+	Resources			= False Start
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentive	+	Resources	+	Action Plan	= Change

Appendix B

Herzberg (2003) Theory related to engagement