

Facilitated Conversations: Strategic Leadership — Current Issues and Emerging Research

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SECC Forum, Oct. 2007



REGIONAL EDUCATION LABORATORY—SOUTHEAST REL—SE

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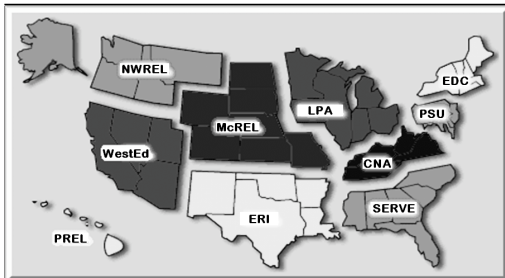
Dr. Ludwig van Broekhuizen



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REL-SE's MISSION

**To serve the educational needs of the
Southeast, using applied research,
development, dissemination, and
training and technical assistance to
bring the best available evidence and
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regional school improvement efforts.**



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A Question to Ponder:

If a worldwide Fortune 100 list for
education was developed, would schools
in the top 10 percent of districts in your
state be on the list?

What do you think?



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How About this Question?

Will those same schools be on the Fortune 100 list in 2012?

Which question is more important?



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Point #1

Even in schools of the nation's highest performing districts, what used to be good enough no longer is.



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Point #2

Excellence today is about CHANGE!



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Times are Changing

View the slideshow, *Times are Changing*

Consider the following:

What leadership qualities contribute to teachers being able to prepare our students?



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Does Leadership Matter?

- School leadership is second only to classroom instruction in its impact on student learning.

» Waters, Marzano, and McNulty, 2000



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What do Leaders Do?

- Leaders prepare organizations for change and help people cope as they struggle through it by:

- Setting direction
- Aligning people
- Motivating people

» John Kotter, 2001



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So let's personalize this...

Think of a time when you changed. Why did you change?



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Why do we change?

- There are many reasons, but they all begin with getting feedback that something isn't working.
- You learned something and acted on that learning.
- You learned because you are a system.



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A system is...

the only mechanism for creating learning or a learning culture in an organization.



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A system is defined as...

Any group of interrelated, interacting, and interdependent parts that form a complex and unified whole with a specific purpose.



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“Fix the system, don’t blame the people.”

--W. Edwards Demming



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Keep Conversation Focused

Ask these kinds of questions, in this order

1. Just the facts
2. Feelings, reactions
3. Meanings, implications
4. Decisions, applications



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Share with Us...

What is our current system of developing school leadership for student learning?



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If we were truly focusing on school leadership development as a system, what would it...

Look Like?	Sound Like?	Feel Like?



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Groups and Teams: It's a Matter of Collaboration

- Group – a set of individuals with something in common (e.g., runners in a marathon)
- Team – individuals who must work in concert or are interdependent to produce a joint work product (e.g., runners in a relay race)



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Do Schools Need Teams?

Complete the checklist:

The work is complex.	
Creativity is needed to do my job.	
The path forward can be unclear.	
Fast learning is necessary.	
High commitment is desirable.	
The implementation of a plan requires the cooperation of others.	
The task and/or processes can be cross-functional.	

Research shows that teams outperform individuals when these conditions exist.



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Do Schools Need Teams?

Complete the checklist:

The work is complex.	✓
Creativity is needed to do my job.	✓
The path forward can be unclear.	✓
Fast learning is necessary.	✓
High commitment is desirable.	✓
The implementation of a plan requires the cooperation of others.	✓
The task and/or processes can be cross-functional.	✓

Research shows that teams outperform individuals when these conditions exist.



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What do these results imply?

- Your thoughts?
- Developing leadership capacity involves teacher-leader capability and principal intentionality in planning and facilitating the process of collaborative leadership (Moller & Pankake, 2006).




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Strategic Leadership

- School leaders will:
 - Create conditions that result in strategically re-imagining the school's vision, mission, and goals
 - Create a climate of inquiry that challenges the school community to continually re-purpose itself for the future
 - Develop a pathway to reach that future
 - » Based on the experience and research from McREL, Triangle Leadership Academy, and the Wallace Foundation.




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The expanded definition of learning requires learning rather than being learned.

“In times of change, the learners shall inherit the earth while the learned shall be beautifully equipped for a world that no longer exists.”

--Thurber



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Table Talk

- *So...does leadership matter?*
- *What leadership capabilities does the strategic leader need?*
- *What are two things from this conference you can take back to your organization to help build strategic leadership?*



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Questions?



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