



Leading the Journey

An E-newsletter on EXCELLENCE in Leadership

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 3 • A PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE • NOVEMBER, 2012

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Berit von Pohle
Director of Education
Pacific Union Conference



Ed Boyatt
Retired educator with 32
years in administration

Dr. Harold Crook
Superintendent of Schools
Southern California
Conference

Dr. Kelly Bock
Superintendent of Schools
Washington Conference
Former Director of
Education, Pacific Union
Conference

Power of Example

Ed Boyatt

Leadership begins with me. My credibility as a leader begins with my example and character. What is it that brings credibility to my example?

I believe that “behavioral integrity” is the basis of a credible example for my school and church. For most of us, seeing is believing. Since words flow so easily, credibility comes from practicing what we preach. What I **say** as a leader may get a staff member's attention, but what I **do** determines my credibility. St. Francis of Assisi agrees when he says “preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words.” There is power in my positive example.

Yes, effective leaders set a good example. I want to model spiritual maturity, physical fitness, professional growth, time management, and emotional wholeness to my staff, students, and parents. In the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi and Ellen White, I want to be the change that I wish to see in my staff and students. There is believability in my positive example.

Early in my educational career, I worked with some administrators who did not always keep their word. They were not intentionally dishonest; they just forgot what they promised me. As a new administrator, I wanted to keep my word. I carried a pen and index cards with me and often made notes instead of relying on my memory when I made promises. I wanted to build people's trust in me. I wished my “behavioral integrity” to be high. I wanted strong relationships with my staff so we could work together to make big improvements in our school. My goal was to be an honest and trustworthy example.

If I promised \$200 a year per teacher for professional development, I found monies to increase my promise. I sought donations and redistributed money from unused line items to double my promise for professional growth. I found it helped staff moral when I under-promised and over-delivered.

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Ensuring Quality Schools

Dr. Harold Crook

Quality teachers equal quality schools. Principals have the responsibility to bring quality Christian educators to their school. That is why hiring a teacher is one of the most important roles of a principal.

When I hire a new teacher, there are three major questions I ask each candidate:

- Do you want to be in the ministry of education?
- Do you understand that mentoring Jesus to your students is your most important role?
- Do you love kids/teenagers?

These three questions quantify what it means to be a teacher in the ministry of Adventist education. I want them to understand that they are in the ministry of education and how that ministry makes a difference in their teaching style and their relationship with students. I believe that a higher quality of academics and love will come when teachers see the difference between teaching the usual accountability and academics versus the love and patience reflected by teachers who mentor Jesus to every student throughout the curriculum, hallways and playgrounds.

Principals have a vision of the climate they want to establish on their campus. There is nothing more important than casting a vision of Jesus through the teachers they hire. This vision of modeling Jesus to students is step one in ensuring a quality school. It is the best way to ensure a cohesive, caring, and loving staff that mentors Jesus to their students.

This mission to mentor the values of Jesus is demonstrated through student discipline, late work, and other fundamental day-to-day tasks that are associated with the typical school day.

By taking the time and effort to ensure a quality teaching staff, the principal takes the most critical step to create a successful, quality, Adventist Christian School. ☪

There is power in practicing integrity for it builds confidence in the leader. Transparency in my communication with staff means I trust them with information. I remember sharing one year the reasons why the school's bills were not paid on time. Several teachers privately responded to me that they would delay spending from their classroom budgets until the cash flow improved. Without revealing confidentialities, I found it better to communicate details because it built more confidence in difficult decisions made by the board or by the leadership team.

"I either lead by example or I don't lead at all," states James Kouzes. My credibility as a leader is built on what people see more than what I say. I want to model the values and principles that win the confidence of my staff. Behavioral integrity is the foundation of credible leadership. ☉

Leadership is Your Craft

Ed Boyatt

"By the end of my first year as principal I was seeing a doctor for stress. I was taking heartburn medication and sleeping upright at night. My marriage was strained. Why was this so hard? Why was this work so lonely? Why was every road uphill?" This was the experience that Mike Bossi describes on the web site for the Association of California School Administrators.

Mike's superintendent recommended that he attend an ACSA program, *Project Leadership*. Mike remembers Bill Kipp putting his hand on his shoulder after he attended a few meetings and saying, "Son, you are bright, enthusiastic and energetic. You know what good teaching is. You've got a good heart and nothing but positive intentions. But Son, you don't know spit about leadership. If you are serious about being a leader, you need to study leadership. Leadership is your craft now."

Effective leaders are students of leadership. Are you attending workshops or conventions that train leaders? Are you in a degree program at the university? Are you reading a book on leadership? Have you spent a day with an effective principal? All this adds up to self-improvement and modeling

Kelly Bock

At a recent administrators' retreat in the North Pacific Union, educational leaders were surveyed to ask what advice they would give to a new principal. The following advice represents their wisdom:

- "Don't be afraid to ask" – Larry Marsh
- "Listen, pray, lead" – John Winslow
- "Most questions don't need an immediate answer" – Archie Harris
- "Don't take yourself too seriously" – Randy Thornton
- "Don't surprise people" – Wayne Wentland
- "Ask more questions; tell people less" – Kelly Bock
- "Send thank you notes and cards to students" – Doug White
- "Have monthly parties for the faculty and staff" – Tom Roosma
- "Visit a successful principal" – Gayle Crosby
- "Don't say much until you hear both sides" – Stephanie Gates
- "Keep sharing the message, you're talking to a parade" – Peter McPherson
- "Take care of your family" – Patti Revolinski
- "Visit prospective hires where they work" – Lanny Hurlbert ☉

JOINING the JOURNEY

Excellence in leadership is the journey. YOU can join by sending an email to: leadingthejourney@puconline.org OR by visiting <http://paucedu.adventistfaith.org/leading-the-journey> to sign up. It's that simple.

Let's make this journey together!

Leadership is Your Craft (continued)

professional development. This demonstrates how serious you are about your craft as a leader and professional competence. See your superintendent for ideas and resources. ☉

Berit von Pohle

Once the board, in collaboration with administration, has established the mission for the school, it's time to determine how the mission will be accomplished. In many cases, the board will have already voted a strategic plan, which was likely created in conjunction with the accreditation self-study report.

Working on the "how" may have several layers. In the process of preparing the self-study report for an accreditation visit, one of the significant components is the section on action plans. Defining these action plans provides direction for the areas of growth identified through the self-study process. Written with care, the action plan will become a guide to "how" the school is going to more adequately meet its mission.

Another layer of the "how" is an ongoing review and establishment of board policies. Many items come to the board for approval, both from the school staff and administration. Repeating the discussion of these types of items takes a significant amount of the board's time and takes away from focusing on the more important tasks. When a request of some type comes to the board, or an issue is raised, the board should first ask whether a policy already exists for dealing with this. If not, is it something that occurs with enough frequency that it would be in the best interest of the board to create a policy. An ad hoc committee of the board can be formed to create a policy to be brought back to the next board. Or administration can be tasked with the development of such a policy, utilizing feedback from the staff where appropriate.

Next month, we'll look at some additional layers of the process of "how". ☉