Strengthening Action Planning through Shared Decision Making Process

Adapted from a presentation by Judy Ness based on her work with the Gates Foundation.
Our Learning Targets:

- Examine strategies for ensuring effective alignment in the organization through shared understanding of roles and responsibilities.
- Determine how to apply this information as a school leader to help the organization maximize its human capital.
Key terms:

- **Alignment**: A framework of roles and responsibilities that maximizes the focus of human capital on the change process.

- **Human Capital**: The talent, knowledge, skills and commitment of the employees of the organization.

It is all about organizational effectiveness.
The key to organizational effectiveness today is not unyielding strength but flexible resiliency.
Resilience requires alignment:

If we are going to:

- apply our human capital (knowledge, skill, energy) in a maximum way
- to the implementation of a targeted change intervention
- to help us reach our goal,
- we must be aligned.
ALIGNMENT

- Creates **connections** throughout the school around an intervention.
- Identifies the source of **authority** for the intervention.
- Helps those involved in the intervention stay **proactive** in their work on that intervention.
- Helps us learn from our **past**, make the most of our **present**, and plan for the **future** success of the intervention.
Past: Examine what we did and what the data indicates was the result (both successes and failures).

Present: Take time to stop and analyze the data. Study, decide and plan what we will do differently. (Intervene)

Future: Work on creating that preferred future. Implement an improvement strategy that will help us create what we want the data to say in the future.
Alignment can help us with this implementation. There are roles in the alignment process. They are **NOT** job-title roles. Instead, they are functional roles.

The roles are:
- Sponsor
- Implementer
- Agent
- Advocate

What is the meaning of each of these roles?
### Roles and Responsibilities of Alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Sponsor</strong></th>
<th><strong>Agent</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The person with the authority to make things happen.</td>
<td>The person with expertise and not authority.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Implementer</strong></th>
<th><strong>Advocate</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The person who will do the work to make it happen.</td>
<td>Some with a good idea about making things happen.</td>
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Let’s add to our beginning-level of knowledge…

- Form trios or quartets with people near you.
- Each of you take one of the labeled small sheets of white paper. (If in a trio, someone take two.)
- Each of you take one of the colored sheets of paper.
Person with the advocate label, please read your colored sheet to your group. It describes the responsibilities of one of the roles.

Then, as a group, come to informal consensus about the match between the label and the responsibilities description. Does the description that was read describe the responsibilities of an advocate, agent, implementer, or sponsor?
The Answers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor – authority</th>
<th>Agent – expertise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLUE</td>
<td>GREEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementer – work</td>
<td>Advocate – new idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YELLOW</td>
<td>PINK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor – authority</td>
<td>Agent – expertise</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clarity</td>
<td>• Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accountability</td>
<td>• Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support</td>
<td>• Connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be intentional and reiterative.</td>
<td>Help others do the work, not do it for them.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Implementer – work</th>
<th>Advocate–new idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Clarify understanding</td>
<td>• Enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Name concerns</td>
<td>• Creative options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contribute ideas</td>
<td>• Proactive influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be a proactive partner.</td>
<td>Be an inside innovator.</td>
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Two types of Sponsors

- **Executive Sponsor:**
  - Is the first line of authority to make the implementation happen.
  - Is ultimately responsible for the success of the implementation.

- **Sustaining Sponsor:**
  - First functions as the implementer of an assignment given by the executive sponsor.
  - Stays connected to the executive sponsor and connects with the implementers.
  - This role is an essential link in the successful implementation of an intervention.
Apply to the Action Plan

☐ Look at your action plan.

☐ When you developed the action plan what role (sponsor, agent, implementer, or advocate) did each member of the team take?
Apply to the Action Plan

- Look at each action in your action plan.
- When implementing the action plan what role (sponsor – executive or sustaining, agent, implementer, or advocate) does each responsible person take?
- Does each responsible person know what their role is?
Teaching all leaders about the roles and responsibilities of alignment helps increase functioning as an aligned system.
One person with a belief is a power equal to 99 who have only interests.
Change is inevitable.

Growth is optional.
People in all the alignment roles need to become skilled in the four phases of the Change Conversation if the implementation of an intervention is to be successful.
Change is
The effort to convert *possibles*
Into *probables*
In pursuit of *preferables*.

Toffler
Our Learning Targets

- Examine a four phase process for focusing an improvement strategy so it effectively addresses the real problem you are trying to solve and generates commitment for its implementation.

- Improve our crucial conversation skills so we can help team members narrow the communication gaps that interfere with the effectiveness of the implementation of the improvement they are trying to achieve.
Why this topic?

*Coming together is a beginning.*

*Staying together is progress.*

*Working together is success.*

Henry Ford
We need to know as individuals and as a collective team:

**what** work we are working on and

**why** we are working on it if we are to succeed together.

This requires clarity about “tight” and “loose!”
The Change Conversation

- A four phase process that builds a scaffold for clear communication.
  - Between leaders and led
  - Among team members
The change conversation results in clarity about the: What, Why, How, When of a change.
This clarity about the intervention is a responsibility shared by, the sponsor (executive and sustaining), the agent, the implementer and the advocate.
The Change Conversation

- Clear Expectations
- Check for Understanding
- Concerns/Reactions
- Readiness
Change Conversation Expanded

1. **Clear Expectations**
   What – Why – When – Tight/Loose

2. **Check for Understanding**
   Comprehension of What– Why – When – Tight/Loose

3. **Concerns/Reactions**
   Name concerns, Reactions, Problem-solving

4. **Readiness**
   Confidence, Needs for support, Next steps
Phases 1 and 2

Clarity

Phases 3 and 4

Commitment
Our Learning Target

Explore a four-phase process for focusing a change intervention so it is more effectively implemented.

The four phases are:
1. Clear expectations
2. Shared understanding
3. Reactions, concerns & problem solving
4. Readiness, confidence & commitment
Organizations of the future must rely more and more upon commitment to participative problem solving rather than submission to authority.

Gordon Lippett
Decision Making:

- The critical step to planning, problem solving and implementation of plans and solutions.
Decision Making is a matter of two deciders and clear options.

The two deciders are:

1. The Leader
2. The Team

(Unless all have explicitly agreed it is an individual decision.)
The options with the leader are:

- Leader on his or her own
- Leader with input
- Leader with recommendation(s)
The options with the team are:

- Team by majority vote
- Team consensus
- Delegate to an ad hoc group with authority to decide with clear parameters
Decision Making Wisdom

- Clarify input versus recommendations
- Skills of consensus
- Decision Making Record
Take Away Inventory

- What will I take away as the result of my time here today?

- How will I use what I am taking away?

- What would I like to advocate that we as a team take away?
To the confident, it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better.

James Gordon MD
Perhaps...

Our challenge/opportunity is to consistently build confidence...

- our own
- our teachers’
- our children’s
- our school’s.