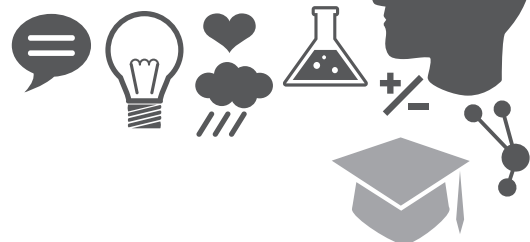




Innovate!

Educate!

Inspire!



Anthony Muhammad

Monday 26 May

**Getting Everyone on the Bus:
Creating Healthy Cultures**

Session 1





ANTHONY MUHAMMAD



Dr Anthony Muhammad is a much sought-after educational consultant. A practitioner for nearly 20 years, he has served as a principal for a middle and high school, a middle school teacher and assistant principal. His tenure as a practitioner has earned him several awards as both a teacher and a principal. Dr. Muhammad's most notable accomplishment came as principal of Levey Middle School in Southfield, Michigan, a National School of Excellence, where student proficiency on state assessments more than doubled in five years. Dr. Muhammad and the staff at Levey used the Professional Learning Communities at Work™ model of school improvement, and they have been recognised in several videos and articles as a model high-performing PLC. As a researcher, Dr. Muhammad has published articles in several publications in both the United States and Canada.

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Hawker Brownlow Education
P.O. Box 580, Moorabbin, Victoria 3189, Australia
Phone: (03) 8558 2444 Fax: (03) 8558 2400
Toll Free Ph: 1800 334 603 Fax: 1800 150 445
Website: www.hbe.com.au
Email: orders@hbe.com.au

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Getting Everyone on the Bus: Creating Healthy Cultures

Anthony Muhammad, PhD

Hard Fact 1

Human beings are complex!

Cultural Change

“Structural change that is not supported by cultural change will eventually be overwhelmed by the culture, for it is in the culture that any organization finds meaning and stability.”

—Schlechty, 2001, p. 52

Transformational Leader

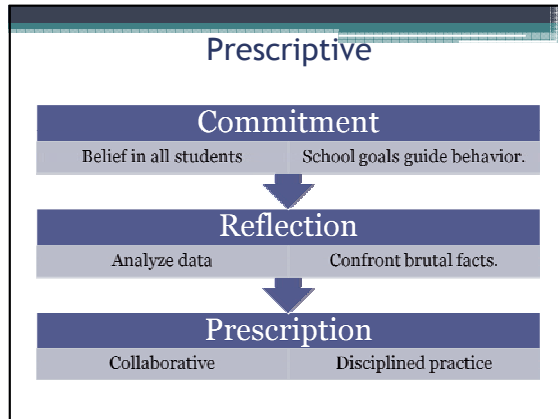
The transformational leader (at all levels) is determined to lead a person into better behavior rather than being satisfied with identifying and criticizing current behavior.

What qualities do leaders need to possess to transform behavior?

Healthy School Culture

“Educators have an unwavering belief in the ability of all of their students to achieve success, and they pass that belief on to others in overt and covert ways. Educators create policies and procedures and adopt practices that support their belief in the ability of every student.”

—Kent D. Peterson in Cromwell, 2002



The Will to Lead

- Aligning the philosophy
- Managing frustration
- Creating a culture of collaboration
- Institutionalizing cultural health

—Hollie & Muhammad, 2011

Hard Fact 2

You can't hold people accountable for what you haven't made explicit.

Aligning the Philosophy Developing Shared Purpose

“The mission question challenges members of a group to reflect on the fundamental purpose of the organization, the very reason for its existence. The question asks, ‘Why do we exist?’ ‘What are we here to do together?’ and ‘What is the business of our business?’”

—DuFour & Eaker, 1998

Developing Mission

- Who are your students?
- How could their lives be enhanced through education?
- What collective commitment will you make to enhance their lives?
- Mission must have a **service orientation!**

Who Are Your Students?

Levey Middle School, 2001

- 97% African-American
- 72% at or below national poverty line
- 80% of families headed by single mothers
- 25%–40% annual student mobility rate

State achievement scores are well below state averages.



Levey Middle School Mission

“We will work collaboratively to ensure that each student is prepared for post-secondary education.”

New Frontier 21 School A Fresh Approach



Nine Core Beliefs

1. Schools are places built for educating children, not for adult employment.
2. Schools play a major role in the future life success of students and their community.
3. Education is a profession, and educators should conduct themselves as professionals.
4. Education is a mission, and educators should conduct themselves as missionaries.
5. Schools are a community's most precious institution, and they have the power to transform a community.

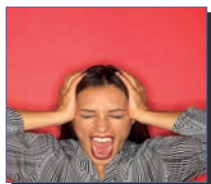
Nine Core Beliefs

6. Children are at the center of everything we do, and our practice should reflect their best interest.
7. We believe that schools must partner with other members of the community for the educational experience to be optimal.
8. We believe that character is important and that schools can help shape a child's character.
9. We believe that service to the community is important and that it is essential in a democratic society.

Pause to Think

1. Are you and your colleagues clear on your fundamental purpose?
2. What would be evidence that your school has a clear and concise shared purpose?

Why Is Everyone So Resistant?



Human beings are complex!



Hard Fact 3

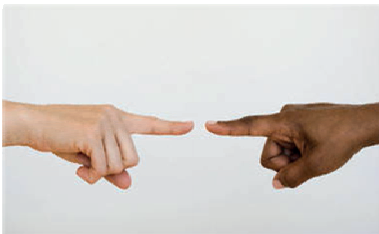
A highly frustrated staff
is a highly unproductive staff.

Toxic School Culture

“Educators believe that student success is based on students’ level of concern, attentiveness, prior knowledge, and willingness to comply with the demands of the school, and they articulate that belief in overt and covert ways. Educators create policies and procedures and adopt practices that support their belief in the impossibility of universal achievement.”

—Kent D. Peterson in Cromwell, 2002

Descriptive and Deflective



Frustration The Root of a Toxic Culture

Frustration: A feeling of anxiety as a result of the inability to perform a task

- Is a mismatch between skill set and task
- Causes people to deflect blame onto others and create covert alliances with people experiencing similar struggles

Recipe for Disaster

- Inappropriate preparation
- Poor support system
- Task overload

The Culture of Complaint Two Vs

- Venting
- Validation



Time Out!

“To be a good teammate, your responsibilities must be more important than your rights”

Orr, J. (2009). Our Top Ten Favorite John Wooden Quotes. [Christian Science Monitor](#). Boston, MA.

Good to Great, Jim Collins

What do **great** corporations or organizations do differently than **good or average** organizations?

1. They seek and confront the brutal facts.
2. They get the right people on the bus and sit them in the right seats.

Pause to Think

- What are your most prevalent frustrations?
- How do you and your colleagues typically respond when you get frustrated?
- Does your leadership relieve or add to your frustrations?

Contact Information

E-mail:
amuhammad@newfrontier21.com

Website:
www.newfrontier21.com

Twitter:
@newfrontier21

Facebook:
"Dr. Anthony Muhammad"

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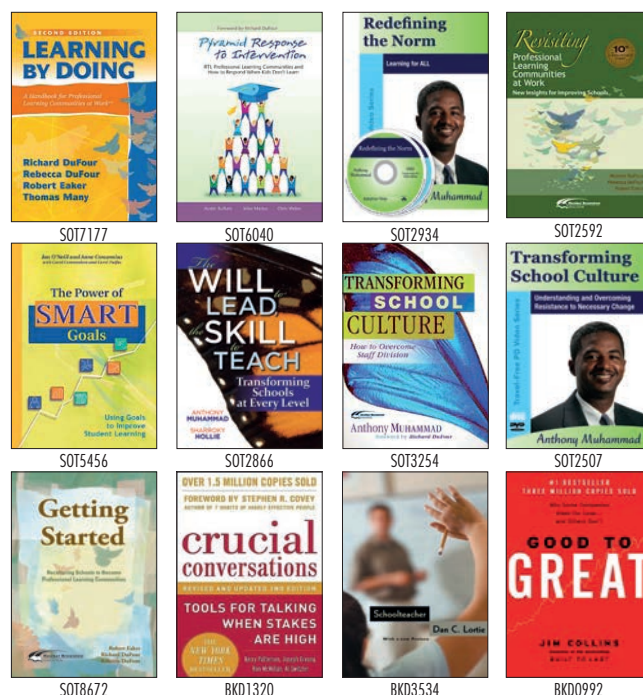
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