



## JENNIFER ABRAMS



Jennifer is an international educational and communications consultant for schools, universities and non-profits. She trains and coaches teachers, administrators and others on successful instructional practices, new employee support, supervision and evaluation, generational savvy, having hard conversations and effective collaboration skills. Her publications include *Having Hard Conversations*, "Planning Productive Talk", her article for ASCD's 'Educational Leadership', her chapter, "Habits of Mind for the School Savvy Leader" in Art Costa's and Bena Kallick's book, *Learning and leading with Habits of Mind: 16 Essential Characteristics for Success*.

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**Being Generationally Savvy:  
Learning and Leading Across the  
Generations**

**Agenda**

- **Generational Differences-An Overview**
- **Workplace Challenges- What Do We Need to Consider?**

**Recruitment and Retainment**

**Coaching and Feedback**

**Daily Communication and  
Etiquette**

**Training and Professional  
Development**

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### About the Presenter

Jennifer Abrams is an international educational and communications consultant for public and private schools, hospitals, universities and non-profits. Jennifer trains and coaches teachers, administrators, nurses, hospital personnel and others on successful instructional practices, new employee support, supervision and evaluation, generational savvy, having hard conversations and effective collaboration skills.

In Palo Alto USD (Palo Alto, CA), Jennifer led professional development sessions on topics from equity and elements of effective instruction to teacher leadership and peer coaching and provided new teacher and administrator trainings at both the elementary and secondary level. From 2000-2011, Jennifer was lead coach for the Palo Alto-Mountain View-Los Altos-Saratoga-Los Gatos Consortium's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program.

In her educational consulting work, Jennifer has presented at annual conferences such as Learning Forward, ASCD, NASSP, AMLE, ISACS and the New Teacher Center Annual Symposium, as well as at the Teachers' and Principals' Centers for International School Leadership. Jennifer's communications consulting in the health care sector includes training and coaching work at the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula and Stanford Hospital and Clinics.

Jennifer's publications include *Having Hard Conversations*, and the Corwin Press e-course by the same name, "Planning Productive Talk," her article for ASCD's *Educational Leadership* (October 2011), her chapter, "Habits of Mind for the School Savvy Leader" in Art Costa's and Bena Kallick's book, *Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind: 16 Essential Characteristics for Success*, and her contribution to the book, *Mentors in the Making: Developing New Leaders for New Teachers* published by Teachers College Press. Her book, with co-author Valerie Von Frank, *The Multigenerational Workplace: Communicating, Collaborating & Creating Community* was published by Corwin Press in November of 2013. Jennifer also writes a monthly newsletter/blog, *Voice Lessons*, available for reading at and subscribing to on her website, [www.jenniferabrams.com](http://www.jenniferabrams.com).

Jennifer has been a featured interviewee on the topic of professionalism for ASCD's video series, *Master Class*, hosted by National Public Radio's Claudio Sanchez, and in the lead article, "Finding Your Voice in Facilitating Productive Conversations" for Learning Forward's *The Leading Teacher*, Summer 2013 newsletter; as a generational expert for "Tune in to What the New Generation of Teachers Can Do," published in *Phi Delta Kappan*, (May 2011), and by the Ontario Ministry of Education for their *Leadership Matters: Supporting Open-to-Learning Conversations* video series.

Jennifer considers herself a "voice coach," helping others learn how to best use their voices - be it collaborating on a team, presenting in front of an audience, coaching a colleague, supervising an employee, and most recently in writing for the stage, as she did in her tenure as a Board Member of the National New Play Network. Jennifer holds a Master's degree in Education from Stanford University and a Bachelor's degree in English from Tufts University. She lives in Palo Alto, California. Jennifer can be reached at [jennifer@jenniferabrams.com](mailto:jennifer@jenniferabrams.com), [www.jenniferabrams.com](http://www.jenniferabrams.com), and on Twitter @jenniferabrams.



## **Just One Filter of Perception**

- Looking at someone with regard to his/her generational affiliation is but ONE filter of perception with which we look at people.
- A person's identification with a certain race, class, region, and religion, etc. will also greatly influence who they are and how they work.

## **However, Generational Challenges Can Cause...**

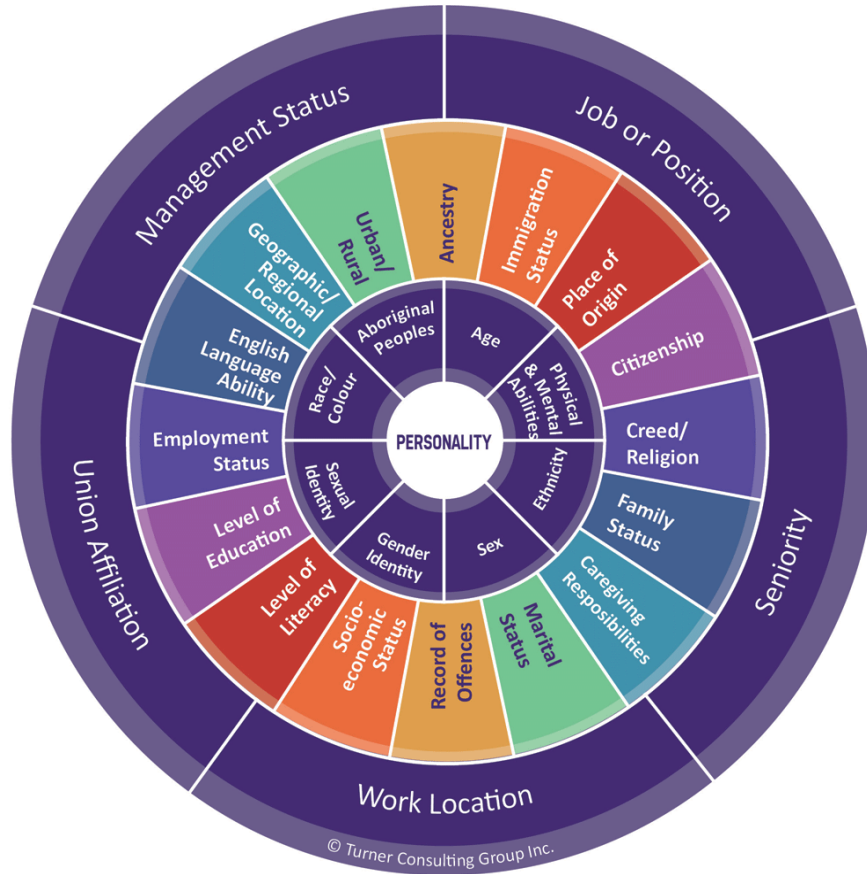
- Decreased efficiency/lower productivity
- Lower morale
- A hampered ability to work in teams
- Communication snafus
- Clashes around issues of fairness
- Increased turnover and hiring challenges
- Challenges in succession planning

## **Purpose Of This Session**

- The purpose of this session is to assist you in supervising, coaching, and supporting teachers and administrators of all generations.

# Quadrant Partners

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>



## Grounding – Generational Savvy

**With your table group, please share your answers to the following questions:**

- **What era did you grow up in? What was the mood of the time? What compelling programming messages did you get from the media, in school, at home?**
- **How did those messages affect who you are on the job today? How do they impact your work ethic?**
- **What are some of your thoughts about colleagues of different generations and their relationships to work, to others?**
- **Do you see professional differences between you and colleagues of other generations? Think of specific colleagues you are working with and with whom you are having challenges.**





**CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY**

	<b>Traditionalists (1922–1943) 52–62 million</b>	<b>Boomers (1944–1964) 80 million</b>	<b>Gen Xers (1965–1981) 50 million</b>	<b>Millennials (1982–2000) 70 million</b>
<b>Other definitions</b>	1922–1945 1930–1945 1900–1945	1946–1964 1943–1960	1961–1980 1965–1976 1965–1977 1965–1980	1977–1990 1977–2000 1980–2000 1981–1999 1981–2000
<b>Other names</b>	Veterans Radio Babies Silent Generation Matures Traditionalists The Greatest Generation	Baby Boomers The “ME” Generation	Baby Busters Latchkey Kids	Baby Busters Echo Boomers Generation Y Generation Why Generation Next Nexters Internet Generation iGeneration Mosaics
<b>Characteristics</b>	Patriotic, loyal, respectful of authority, formal, hierarchical, dedicated, risk-averse, detail-oriented, hard working, financially and socially conservative	Optimistic, idealistic, educated, competitive, diplomatic, loyal, high expectations, opinionated	Skeptical, resourceful, independent, entrepreneurial, pragmatic, straightforward	Technologically savvy, empowered, pragmatic, confident, collaborative, neotraditionalist, community-centered, versatile, very busy
<b>Need</b>	Respect, commitment, consistency, privacy	Privacy, validation	Flexibility, work-life balance	Fast rewards, instant feedback, sense of safety
<b>General description</b>	Their name says it all. They didn’t redefine the nation’s values—they just did their job of winning World War II. They are patriotic, civic-minded, frugal, and private. They	Growing up in a time of economic prosperity, they could afford to focus on their own goals and achievement. They are willing to sacrifice for success and	Less optimistic than Boomers, they were highly criticized as slackers. Their cynicism is born of witnessing corruption revealed and changing values.	This is a generation of multitaskers who value flexibility and freedom. They are socially conscious, highly educated, and tolerant of authority, having been



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	may struggle with diversity, having grown up in mostly homogenous groups. Life often revolved around family, school, and church.	are often viewed as workaholics.	They are highly independent and less committed to any organization than to gaining job skills that will take them to their next job. They are unimpressed by titles and authority. They want a life/work balance and are willing to sacrifice to attain it.	coddled and scheduled by parents. They are more inclusive and accepting than prior generations as their world has been increasingly diverse. They are overwhelmingly confident, public in sharing information, and optimistic. They are adaptable, having grown up with constant change.
<b>Defining events</b>	Great Depression Pearl Harbor and World War II GI Bill Korean War	Cold War Civil Rights Act Rock and roll Assassinations of J.F.K., M.L.K. Woodstock Vietnam War Chappaquiddick Watergate Energy crisis	Computers Challenger space shuttle Fall of the Berlin Wall AIDS Oklahoma City O.J. Simpson Chernobyl International Space Station	Internet Diversity Columbine 9/11 Darfur
<b>Technology</b>	Automobiles more common Radio Magazines and newspapers Party telephone lines Handwritten letters	Color TV Car-sized computers in institutions Typewriters Landline telephones	Cable TV Video games MTV	1,000 TV channels Internet Cell phones Instant networking with peers Digital information at their fingertips

(Continued)



(Continued)

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<b>Job prospects</b>	Options often were limited by race, gender, and family background. Women's career options were severely limited, and few pursued higher education. Strong unions supported skilled trades and provided good livings for the working class. Work often resulted in tangible goods, rather than services.	Many individuals were expected to follow their parents' career paths. Good jobs could be had with a high school diploma and on-the-job training. Company loyalty could lead to lifetime employment. Midcareer, they found that retraining became necessary and layoffs were possible—and traumatic.	Factory and labor jobs began to disappear, and this generation became more technologically savvy. Telecommunications became a field, and technology gave rise to new industries.	Knowledge is power, and this generation knows it will need to develop its own expertise to compete economically. Work is less about producing goods than working with information.
<b>Family life</b>	More families had both father and stay-at-home mother. Mixed race families were rare. Divorce was difficult and uncommon.	More women joined the workforce rather than staying home to raise families.	Increase in divorce led to more single-parent families.	Typical families may be single parents, never-married biological parents, blended families, multiracial, multigenerational, or same-sex partner parents.
<b>Organizational structures</b>	A civic-minded generation that fought in World War II. The government has focused on them throughout their lives, from the GI bill through Social Security and Medicare, and they have a better attitude toward government as a result. They are hierarchical, with slower communications through bureaucratic processes.	Structures still surround the workplace, and technology begins to exert an influence. Machines begin to change the nature of work.	Globalization and free trade start to force organizations to restructure. A flatter system often results, and formal hierarchies are loosened. Many jobs, especially middle management, are outsourced overseas or eliminated.	Instant communication allows for much different work relationships, with rapidly changing norms and more unpredictability.
<b>Heroes</b>	Superman Joe DiMaggio Walter Cronkite John Wayne Franklin Delano Roosevelt	John Glenn Martin Luther King Jr.	Someone they seek out.	Danica Patrick Jennifer Hudson Josh Groban



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<b>Pop icons</b>	Wheaties Mickey Mouse The Lone Ranger	Slinkies TV dinners The peace sign Mood rings Bell bottoms Brooks Brothers	Brady Bunch E.T. Cabbage Patch Kids	Barney Oprah X Games
<b>Literature</b>	Daily newspaper The Bible Gone With the Wind	Catcher in the Rye Atlas Shrugged Lord of the Rings MAD magazine	The Stand Angels and Demons Wired magazine	Harry Potter Video games
<b>TV shows</b>	The Lone Ranger, The Cisco Kid, The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show, The Abbott and Costello Show, The Roy Rogers Show, The Jack Benny Program	Laugh-In, What's My Line?, I Love Lucy, Bonanza, American Bandstand, The Twilight Zone, Looney Tunes, Tom and Jerry, Maverick, Doctor Who, Star Trek	Little House on the Prairie, Dallas, Saturday Night Live, M*A*S*H, The Muppet Show, The Waltons, The Six Million Dollar Man	The Simpsons, Saved By the Bell, Full House, Star Trek: The Next Generation, The Cosby Show, Seinfeld



### Identifying People's Generational Profiles

Think about each generation's "take" on the following concepts:

<b>The Delineators</b>	<b>Boomers</b>	<b>Xers</b>	<b>Millennials</b>
Perspective on work	Career	Job	There will be many careers
Communication style	Diplomatic	Blunt	Easy and open Don't hurt me
View of authority	Impressed	Unfazed	Wants it
Need for approval	Seek validation	Indifferent	Needs it a lot
Perspective on resources	Abundant	Scarce	No worries or lots of worries
Response to policies and procedures	Protective	Mistrustful	Need help with protocols
Relationship to team	Team-oriented	Self-reliant	Been on 'em Can do them
Work ethic	Driven	Balanced	Multi-Task
Focus on work projects	Relationships and results	Tasks and results	Lots of fun and lots of results
Relationship to technology	Acquired	Assimilated	In the DNA
Entitlement	Experience	Merit	Assumed

Adapted from [The Xers & The Boomers](#)

### Processing Prompt

Think about how all the generations of educators you work with would relate to these ideas. What are some of the implications of this thinking for you in your work?



## **Starting The Year “Right” An Orientation Checklist**

### **To Be Done BEFORE or DURING the First Week of School**

#### **Things to Consider or Decide regarding New Teachers**

- Is a new teacher orientation happening at your site? If so, who is running it and can you get a description of what he/she will be covering so you can review specifics from the agenda and add department specifics that won't be covered that day?
- Does the new teacher know how to make copies on the department machine? Does he/she need a code? Has the school orientation helped introduce them to the school copy machine system, copy assistant and policies/timelines?
- Did the school orientation help with the attendance, cuts and tardies policy, as well as keys, parking and email, etc? Does the new teacher need additional support with those ideas? (i.e. what to send and not send via email, the importance of getting roll sheets done daily, etc.)
- Do you and the new teacher(s) have a prep period in common? If not, do you have a game plan or a regular set time for how you will communicate with each new person?
- What is the game plan for helping the new teachers with their long term planning and pacing? Are there a certain number of weeks they should have certain books before returning them? A number of weeks/days they should be doing certain units? How will this be communicated?
- How will you set up your walkthroughs and or informal observations for the first few days, first weeks and first ½ of the quarter before warning notices are due?
- When will you explain your job and what that role entails? What should they go to you for and for what should they go to others in the administration?



## **Starting The Year “Right” An Orientation Checklist**

### **To Be Done DURING the First Weeks of School – Less Urgent**

#### **Things to Consider or Decide regarding New Teachers**

- When will you explain the evaluation system and the district system of informal and formal observations to the teacher?
- In terms of administration, how will they be introduced to the new teachers? Who to go to for what? What type of encounters should the new teacher have with administrators? What should they know about ASAP and what should they go to you about? Should the new teachers be the ones to introduce themselves to the administration or should they wait until administration comes to meet them/observe them, etc?
- If you have videos or resources that are department related, do you have a system for how to access and use them?
- Does the school have expectations of staff doing adjunct duty? If so, how will that be explained to new staff? If they are “exempt” from the duty, how might they show their participation in school and community in other ways so they are seen as ‘involved’?
- Who will explain to the teacher the challenge of tardies and cuts? For tardies, the school policy, the forms to send to parents (where are they, do we do the teachers do them, what do we do when there are eight tardies, etc.?)
- Do new teachers do anything with the list of people absent for sports/field trips or do they mark people absent who are absent and not worry about it? In terms of cuts, if nothing happens after four cuts do new teachers request action? Does the new teacher notify the counselor if cuts are way too excessive?
- Does the new teacher know the counselors and what they do? Does the new teacher know when to get them involved and about what issues they offer support? Does the new teacher have any say about how they move students in and out of classes? Can they offer feedback to the counselors?



## **Starting The Year “Right” An Orientation Checklist**

### **To Be Done DURING the First Weeks of School – Less Urgent**

#### **Things to Consider or Decide regarding New Teachers**

- Does the secretary (if your department or school has one) have a job description the new teacher will need to know about so he/she isn't asking for something inappropriate from the secretary or could ask for assistance and knows what is offered?
- Is there a way to ask the new teachers about their strengths, weaknesses and concerns and then begin to figure out how to work with those strategically now vs. later?
- Does your department have a protocol for parent complaints/problems/conferences? Who handles the complaint first/second? Is there a department timeline for getting back to a parent? When should a new teacher come to you with a parent concern? How will you, as department chair, explain when you will be the one handling a complaint?
- Are there expectations in your department about grading – what types of grades offered, how they are weighted, rubrics, etc.? Do you have a suggested timeline for getting back student work? Is there a way to help the new teacher calibrate with others within a given department/course/level?
- In terms of technology resources, do the new teachers know who to go to for various types of support (e.g. hardware problems vs. software requests)?





## **Starting The Year “Right” An Orientation Checklist**

### **To Be Done DURING the First Weeks of School – Less Urgent**

#### **Collaboration between Department Colleagues**

- Do you have your grade level/course specific teams set up? Are the veteran teachers aware of who will be new to the department and/or who will be new to the grade level or course?
- With private resource sharing among colleagues, do you have a protocol for sharing and maintaining resources so colleagues return materials in a timely manner?
- Do you have new folks working with veterans on the same grade level or in the same course? Have the veterans been told this will happen? What are the expectations for the more experienced teachers in terms of mentoring and time spent with a course-alike colleague?
- Within a grade or a team, does everyone know his or her role and responsibility? How will the new folks be introduced to the group and how will the norms and responsibilities be explained to them? Does the “leader” need support in the areas of facilitation, coaching or collaboration? Do veteran members need a review re: what effective collaborative behavior looks like?
- Is it clear to all how to communicate with one another? Are there changes you would like to make about email etiquette? Putting things on one’s desk? Timelines for getting things back to one another?

## Starting The Year “Right” An Orientation Checklist

### **To Be Done DURING the First Weeks of School – Less Urgent**

#### **Changes/Challenges for the Year**

- Are there/will there be changes in personnel mid-year due to maternity, sick leave, retirement that will result in a change of someone’s status, job description, percentage of work? (For this year or even next year)
- Has someone changed grade levels or courses? Moved to work with AP students or to work with “lower levels”? Moved into direct instruction? Moved from another school within the district or another grade? Will they need additional support content-wise, student-wise, and culture-wise?
- Will there be changes in textbooks, materials, use of computer labs, libraries, and room assignments due to construction or maintenance?
- Are there school goals to plan around/for?
- Who will need formal evaluation or supervision this year? How many teachers are new? How many are veteran?
- What will be my timeline for doing what I need to do for all the first final evaluations to be completed by 11/1?
- Have you had a beloved colleague leave and do you have a new person in that spot? How will you support him/her and deal with the parent community around the loss?
- Has someone retired with a bunch of institutional history? Is there a way to capture some of his/her time and expertise before they go or even for a bit during their retirement?
- Do you have a teacher trying out or teaching a singleton class that will be needing materials, help locating support through an organization or another site?



## **Starting The Year “Right” An Orientation Checklist**

### **To Be Done DURING the First Weeks of School – Less Urgent**

#### **Upcoming Changes/Challenges for the Year, continued**

- Has there been a change in how courses will to be taught? (e.g., 9<sup>th</sup> grade science, open enrollment in AP classes, a new turn for a team in 6<sup>th</sup> grade with Special Ed kids, a colleague changing from the ELL team to the Special Ed team.) What support do you as the IS need to offer to the colleagues teaching these classes?

#### **Direction for the Coming Year – Visioning**

- What are your thoughts about how you’d like to see the department work together process-wise this coming year?
- What are your thoughts about how you’d like to see the department work together in terms of developing or refining content this coming year?
- What are your thoughts about how you’d like to see the department work together in terms of teaching a specific skill (writing, technology, use of primary sources,) this coming year?
- What are your thoughts about how you’d like to see the department work together in terms of teaching a student behavior or personal skill (ethics, stress, character ed, social justice, etc.) this coming year?
- How do you see your department aligning with your school and district goals (Equity, Identity Safety, social and emotional development of students, differentiation work for GATE and ELL students)?

## Language and Communication

<b>Traditionalists</b>	
<b>Persuasive Language</b>	<b>Turnoffs</b>
Authority	Profanity
Discipline	Slang
Dependable	Emotional language
Great	Disorganization
Respect	Lack of respect for tradition
Sacrifice	Poor grammar
Consistent	Disrespect for experience
<b>Baby Boomers</b>	
<b>Persuasive Language</b>	<b>Turnoffs</b>
Consensus	Brusqueness
Human Rights	Unfriendliness
Involvement	Not showing interest in the person
Relationship/Trust	Shows of power and one-upmanship
Team	Political incorrectness
Tolerance	Sports and war metaphors
Equal/Fair	
<b>Gen Xers</b>	
<b>Persuasive Language</b>	<b>Turnoffs</b>
Alternative	Schmoozing
Independent	Inefficient use of time
Efficient	Flashiness
Pragmatic	Hyperbole
Results	Incompetence
System	Bureaucracy
Competent	Complex Policies
<b>Millennials</b>	
<b>Persuasive Language</b>	<b>Turnoffs</b>
Achievement	Cynicism
Challenge	Sarcasm
Collaborate	Unfairness
Community	Condescension
Discovery	
Future	<i>(Adapted from <u>Connecting Generations</u>-Claire Raines</i>
Positive/Fun	



## Coaching and Feedback

### What might a Boomer want in a coach?

- A coach who has high expectations for you and for them – for ‘us’
- A coach who connects with the deep values around education
- A coach who acknowledges prior experience and values it
- A coach who understands personal connection matters
- A coach who thinks in ‘affiliation’ to a greater goal – thinking ‘we’
- A coach who is mindful of language and respect given through language
- A coach who gives of him or herself – willing to do something additional
- A Coach who understands it is jolting to be on the bottom of the pecking order again and the difficulty of being a “rookie” or paying one’s dues and proving one’s self all over again
- A coach who can acknowledge the challenges of a 2<sup>nd</sup> career person seeing this system as strange because it is experienced based vs. performance based
- A coach who is very clear and understanding of the need for clarity of protocols AND knows that the coachee can also ‘read between the lines’

### What might an Xer want in a coach?

- A coach for whom constant face to face interaction isn’t needed
- A coach who understands and believes in the life-work balance
- A coach who gets the need to affiliate, but not totally commit to work
- A coach who isn’t afraid to answer the question “Why?”
- A coach who doesn’t take it personally when someone is blunt
- A coach who can be clear and discuss consequences honestly
- A coach who is comfortable with transparency
- A coach who is ok with not a lot of schmoozing and getting to business
- A coach who understands and doesn’t judge when someone just ‘does the work’ to ‘get it done’ and that there are other priorities

### What might a Millennial want in a coach?

- A coach who is easy with email communication
- A coach who is open to just in time, relevant support and access to materials when needed
- A coach who acknowledges smarts in 20 somethings and doesn’t patronize
- A coach who praises the present and sees a speedy path for the coachee’s growth
- A coach who is willing to take as much feedback as is giving it
- A coach who is willing to collaborate and change (think co-creation)
- A coach who acknowledges the whole life of the coachee and isn’t bitter when the coachee has a life and will be moving on

## Collaboration Questionnaire

### WORK STYLE

- Describe your work style. Are you a 'get things done right away' or a 'give me a day or two to think about it' kind of worker?
- Which tasks do you enjoy doing with others? Which tasks do feel better doing things on your own?
- What are your strengths as a worker? What about as a co-worker? What do you feel are your learning edges?
- What motivates you at work?
- What situations/challenges/work assignments do you find fun? Which ones challenge you?
- How do you handle interruptions or a change of plans? How might someone work best with you in those types of situations?
- Do you consider yourself an introvert or an extrovert? In which situations?
- If you have taken any other personality/work style/learning style assessment, what learnings might be useful to share with others?

### COMMUNICATION STYLE

- What are the best ways to communicate with you? Text, email, in person, phone?
- What is one thing about how you communicate that you would like to improve?
- Do you tend to write in brief or be detailed? What types of direction do you need when you go off and do an assignment? A bulleted list of to dos with deadlines or just the gist of what is to be done?



### Collaboration Questionnaire

- How will others know you are hurt or upset? If you are upset, how do you want to be treated?
- How do you like to handle mistakes? Yours or others?

#### TEAMING

- In a group situation, what are your strengths? What can you be counted on for? Keeping others on track, always bringing in another perspective?
- What types of acknowledgements do you like? Public or private praise, tangible gifts, etc.
- In what situations do you ask for help? How do you feel about asking for help?
- How would you like to receive feedback? In what forms?
- What does the ideal team member look like to you?
- What are your pet peeves in terms of team work/working with others/collaborating?
- Do you consider yourself a risk taker? In what areas of your life do you like to be spontaneous? In others where are you more cautious?

#### PERSONAL LIFE/PROFESSIONAL LIFE

- How much of your personal life do you like to share with those at work?
- Are you someone who socializes with colleagues from work? Lunch with those while at work?
- Anything else in any category above or any new category of info you would like to know in order to collaborate most effectively with your colleagues?



## School Savvy Etiquette

### Email

#### RESPECTFUL RESPONSE

- Try to return email within 48 hours. If you need to RSVP to an event or a meeting, do so promptly.
- If you cannot get an email response back in that time, send a courtesy email stating you received the email and when you can respond.
- If someone from the district office sends you something, either via email or pony, please respond to it as soon as possible. In fact, respond to anyone at your site as soon as possible too.
- Beware of “reply all” – know whom the email is going to.
- Be aware of text messages as well. Anything in writing can be subpoenaed.
- If you have a strong feeling about the email you have just been sent and you need to respond:
  - Wait 24 hours
  - Put your response in Word and cut and paste it into the email
  - Send it to the department chair, your coach or a colleague to read it for tone.
  - “cc:” your supervisor if you feel he or she needs to be “in the know”

#### FORM

- Proof your writing to catch typos, mistaken or missing words, grammatical errors.
- Use clear subject lines. Do not put names, especially student names, in the header. If you receive an email with a student’s name in the subject, change it to “Your student” before you send it back.
- Consider your use of capital letters – they can be perceived as hostile.
- Consider your opener – the reader might forget what a “yes” or “no” refers to. Begin with a greeting and a reiteration of the question or topic. “Hello...nice to hear from you...with regard to your invitation/concern/assignment...”
- Consider if email is the correct medium for the topic. If you have gone back and forth two to three times, voice or face to face might be a better way of handling the situation.
- Less is more. Shorter is almost always better in email exchange. Think Hemingway. Short noun-verb sentences and bullets.
- Limit the number of different questions or issues in one email. If you include too many, some may not get addressed in response, and that can irritate. If you do have several answers, state you will respond to the questions with responses directly below the question and if possible, put them in another color so your reader can easily see them.





## School Savvy Etiquette

### Staff/Department/Collaboration Meetings

- Be on time to all meetings; in fact, be there a few minutes early.
- Bring what you need for the meeting. If they asked you to bring suggestions, paperwork filled out, a set of something, do so.
- Do not do crossword puzzles, read the newspaper, grade papers or do lesson planning during the meeting—behave in a way you would want colleagues to attend at a meeting you were leading—full attention makes for a better result. It will get noticed if you don't.
- Do not text message during the meeting.
- Be considerate and put your cell phone on vibrate. If you need to answer it, do so with a quick “just a minute” and wait until you are out of the room to continue the conversation. Do not talk from the table to the door.
- If a disgruntled colleague engages you, try to shift away from that energy. Don't continue whispering to them during the meeting.
- If you need to leave the meeting, try to let the administrator know ahead of time so when you leave it is expected.
- Avoid defensive reactions - eye rolling, sighing, shouting out or giggling.
- Offer an apology if disrespectful.
- Explain yourself and your mood (if stressed/if angry).
- If you are running the meeting, have an agenda and facilitate well. Learn how to keep things on track, how to ask people to adhere to norms and how to work effectively with conflict and discomfort.

### Working with Office/Support Staff

- Do not treat them as your assistants nor with a condescending tone.
- Say hello to the office staff when you come into the office. Use eye contact.
- Ask if it is a good time to review something you need or when that time would be.
- If requesting an item, something copied, something done, give explicit instructions for the task. Don't assume understanding.
- Be aware of the procedures in place. If copying is done at 9am, have it ready by then.
- Be aware of the proper channels. Do you need to get approval by a supervisor or a front office administrator to have a support staff assist you with something?
- Consider priorities. What is immediate (something unsanitary on the floor that needs to be swept up immediately) vs. something that can wait (fixing a light)?
- If you break something, or finish with something, please let someone know so they can handle it.
- Acknowledge everything they do for you. Thank them.
- If something is not done, or a mistake has been made, address it directly, but in an understanding, unthreatening way.



## School Savvy Etiquette

### Dress

- Ask directly if there is a dress code for teachers.
- Read the student dress code and, by all means, do not break it.
- Make a visual poll of what your colleagues are wearing and go for a middle ground.

### Conflict

- If you are struggling with something or someone, talk it through with your coach, the new teacher mentor at your school or a very trusted colleague. Do not tell everyone in the lunchroom. Do not tell the parents about it when they come to pick up their children.
- If you are going into a difficult meeting with your supervisor or the principal, bring your coach or a trusted colleague, if you can.
- If you can, go to the source whenever possible.
- Do not shout across the hallways or the quad to the person. Instead, approach him or her face-to-face.
- Do not send notes or emails stating only, “How about returning this?” Or “How about getting this done?” and then adding an attachment. The impression isn’t a good one.
- Do not have the difficult discussion in front of students.
- Do not talk to students about your conflicts with others.
- When discussing events, try to go “global/general” vs. name-dropping.
- Exercise care and caution regarding the time and place for addressing delicate topics; before school, after school, during passing periods. Think about the impact.



### Aspiring Leader Self-Assessment

**Objective:** To determine your own strengths and identify areas to focus on to become a leader. If you plan a career that includes administrative opportunities or a leadership role, assess how well you are preparing for increased responsibilities. The suggestions below are an incomplete list of opportunities to develop leadership skills. They are non-successive and do not need to be addressed in order.

Place a check next to each statement that matches your experience.

#### Curriculum design/lesson study/analysis of student work/professional learning

- I have participated in writing curriculum.
- I have worked with peers at different grade levels to examine curricular needs.
- I have participated in peer observation, through lesson study or walk-throughs.
- I have participated in a professional book study with my teaching colleagues.
- I have taken part in action research.
- I have evaluated my own students' performance based on thorough review of various data.
- I have analyzed student work alongside colleagues.
- I have worked with peers in different schools to examine student needs or other district-wide concerns.
- I have participated in a professional book study with my teaching colleagues.
- I have attended a regional, state, or national professional learning conference.
- I have a deep understanding of socioeconomic and cultural factors that influence student learning.
- I use social networking for my own professional learning.



\_\_\_ I have participated on a district-wide or statewide committee to design curricula, standards, or otherwise frame an educational issue.

### **Adult learning and meeting facilitation**

\_\_\_ I have taken part in some form of professional learning about meeting the needs of adult learners and different models of professional development.

\_\_\_ I have facilitated a group.

\_\_\_ I have designed a meeting or professional learning opportunity.

\_\_\_ I have been a department chairperson.

\_\_\_ I have provided peer feedback.

\_\_\_ I have studied conflict management and how to use conflict effectively.

\_\_\_ I have taken part in communications training.

\_\_\_ I have mentored new teachers or pre-service candidates.

\_\_\_ I have led professional learning for colleagues in my school or district, or an external group of educators.

\_\_\_ I have participated in peer observation, through lesson study or walk-throughs.

\_\_\_ I have been a peer coach.

\_\_\_ I have developed skills in questioning, paraphrasing, and so on to be able to coach others.

\_\_\_ I am an effective writer.

\_\_\_ I am a good speaker.

**School/district leadership**

- I have served in a leadership position with my teachers association.
- I have worked on a school-related issue with a community partner.
- I have worked with peers to analyze data.
- I have read and understand the district antidiscrimination policies and procedures.
- I have led an accreditation committee.
- I communicate with parents in a variety of ways.
- I understand the proper etiquette for in-school communications, including the lines of authority for regular tasks, how and when to approach support staff and supervisors.
- I have served on a principal or teacher selection committee.
- I am familiar with my school's emergency response protocol.
- I have been part of a school-wide council or a member of the school leadership team.

**Understanding the perspective of school and district leaders**

- I can identify which different groups the position to which I aspire interacts, and I am able to state concerns and interests each group is likely to have in school matters.
- I have reviewed the role and responsibilities of the position to which I aspire, for example, by getting the official job description.
- I have discussed career paths with a knowledgeable authority.
- I have shadowed a leader.
- I have studied professional literature on national and global education trends.
- I have attended a school board meeting to observe.

Adapted from Ontario Principals Council, Ontario, Canada



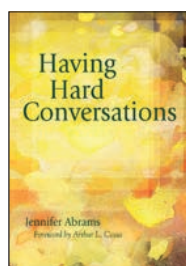


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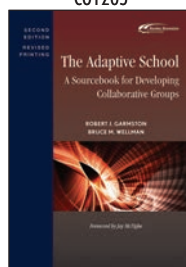
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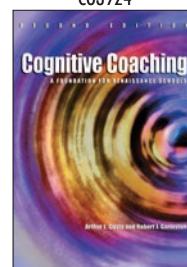
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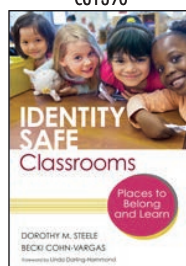
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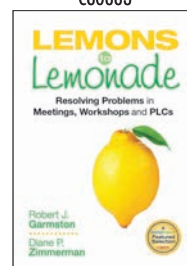
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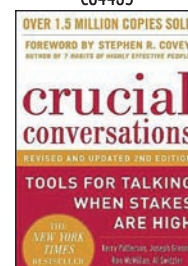
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