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Conference

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TOM HIERCK

SUNDAY 20 MAY

Session 3

RTI is a Verb

MELBOURNE

TOM HIERCK

Tom Hierck has been an educator since 1983, in a career that has spanned all year levels and included many roles in public education. His experiences as a teacher, school leader, department of education project leader and executive director have provided a unique context for his education philosophy. Tom is a compelling presenter, infusing his message of hope with strategies culled from the real world. He understands that educators face unprecedented challenges and knows which strategies will best serve learning communities. Tom has presented to schools across North America and internationally, imparting a message of celebration for educators seeking to make a difference in the lives of students.



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Hawker Brownlow Education
P.O. Box 580, Moorabbin, Victoria 3189, Australia
Phone: (03) 8558 2444 Fax: (03) 8558 2400
Website: www.hbe.com.au
Email: orders@hbe.com.au

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Response to Intervention (RTI)

RTI is...

...**HEE** – Highly Effective Education.

...Response to *instruction* and *intervention*.

...a *verb*.

...a problem solving process that leads to *deeper levels of learning*.

...a problem solving process that leads to *more equitable learning*.

...*systems of support* that leads to all students graduating post-secondary and career ready.

...inclusive of academics *and* behaviour (e.g., self-regulation, executive functioning).

...**Tier 1:**

- Viable, Clearly Defined Curriculum
- Formative Assessments
- Scaffolds and Differentiation
- Small Group Supports

...plus, **Tier 2:**

- If It's Predictable, It's Preventable
- More Time / Alternate Approaches
- Mastery of Prioritised Tier 1 Content
- Monitoring to Ensure that Students are Responding to Intervention

...plus, **Tier 3:**

- Deficits in Foundational Prerequisite Skills

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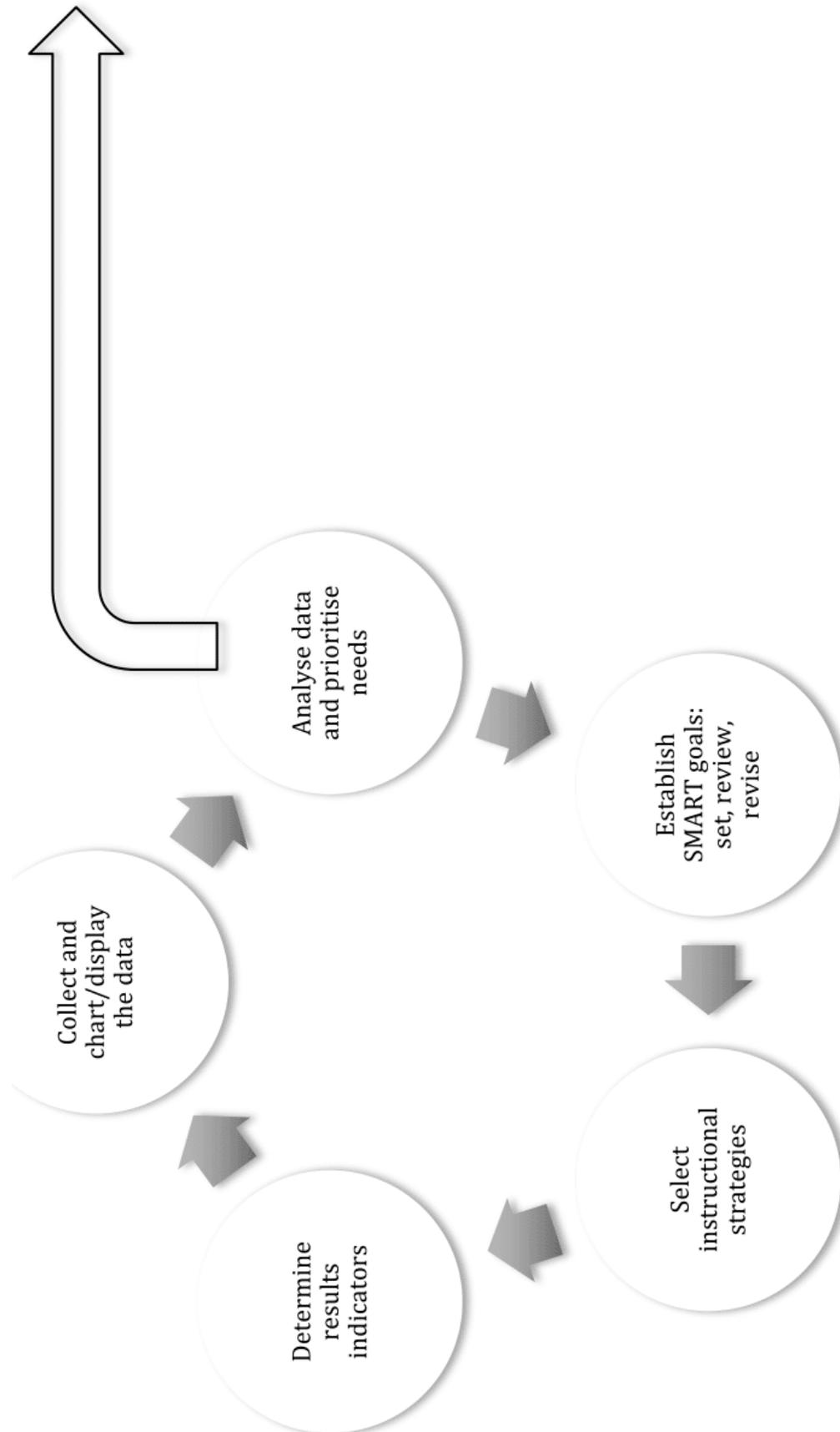
- Early and Intensive
- Diagnostic and Targeted
- Monitoring to Ensure that Students are Responding to Intervention

...dependent on exceptionally-sound *structures* and *cultures*.

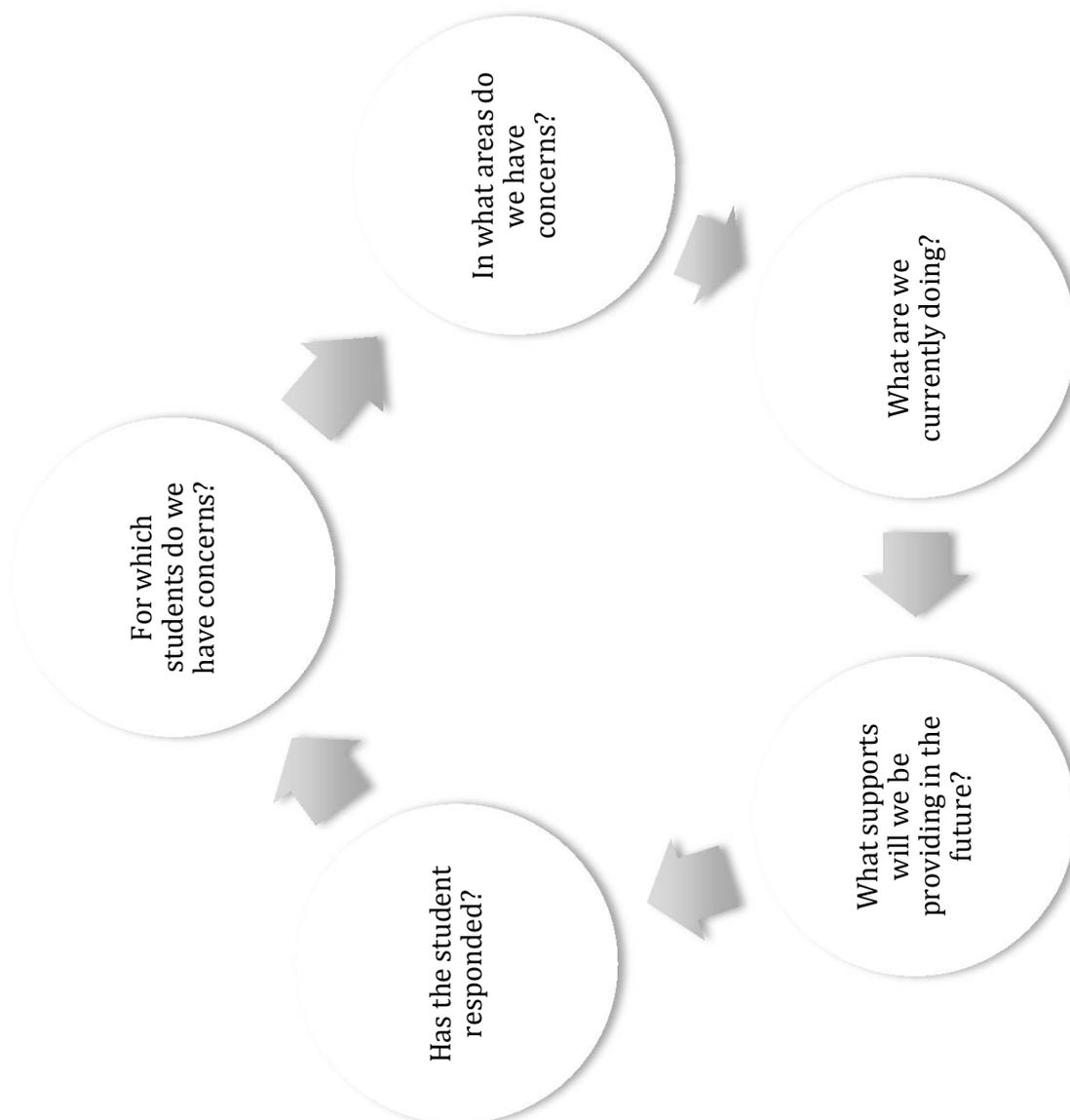
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When school teams meet together to problem solve on behalf of students, they follow a process such as the one illustrated below. On the left-hand-side, teams analyse student performance in response to Tier instruction. On the right-hand-side, the needs of students who have not yet responded to instruction are further diagnosed.

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Questions...	Motives <i>Atkinson, Covington</i>	Attribution for Success <i>Weiner</i>	Self-Efficacy <i>Bandura</i>
What motivates students?	Students are motivated to succeed AND/OR to avoid failure	Students can believe success is due to External or Internal forces <i>that</i> can change or cannot change	Students are motivated by outcome expectation (how they <i>perceive</i> that they will be judged) and self-efficacy (belief that they can do something well)
What beliefs are desirable?	Most successful students have HIGH motive to succeed combined with LOW motive to avoid failure. Students who are HIGH on both (success and avoiding failure) are hard-working but also stressed.	Students who believe that success is due to EFFORT (internal, unstable) may feel guilt when they don't try hard enough and will try harder. Students who believe success is internal, stable (ABILITY) are motivated if they are successful (because they believe they are smart).	Students with HIGH outcome expectations and HIGH self-efficacy feel confident and capable. Students with high self-efficacy BUT low outcome expectations may initially be successful <i>but</i> eventually may begin to doubt self and become less successful
What beliefs are not productive?	Students with LOW motive to succeed and HIGH motive to avoid failure are failure avoiders (seek easy work). Students with LOW motive to succeed and LOW avoid failure accept failure.	Students who believe success is internal, (ABILITY) BUT who are NOT successful, feel NOT smart and get depressed when they fail because they feel they can't improve. Students who believe cause is external and stable feel that prejudice is the cause of their failure that it will never change & get angry. Students who believe cause is external and unstable feel that it is luck, get frustrated by inability to influence change or know the outcome.	Students with LOW outcome expectations and LOW self-efficacy results in giving up and feeling there is no chance to success. Students with low self-efficacy and high outcome expectations become depressed and may give up because they feel they cannot live up to the expectations held for them.
What can we do to help?	Work to reduce fear of failure: <i>Stress that mistakes can be overcome and are less important than students' hard work and drive to succeed.</i>	Focus on effort (internal, can change) as the reason for success: <i>Stress that success & intelligence can be formed through hard work and effort.</i>	Identify students' beliefs and help to make those beliefs more positive: <i>How do they perceive they are judged? What do they believe they can do?</i>

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Element	Desired Behavior	What students may do	Successful strategies you have used...
Self-Awareness of Motivation Beliefs	I understand how motivation works and I can self-motivate when I need to.		
Learning Strategies	I use different study methods for different types of assignments and tests.		
Time Management	I plan how to use my time and adjust when needed.		
Physical Environment	I change my study environment so I can concentrate.		
Social Environment	I ask questions, & seek assistance and support when I need help.		
Performance	I set regular goals and I evaluate my work to determine progress towards meeting my goals.		

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Element	Desired Behavior	Suggestions for improving self-regulatory skills...	Resources
Self-Awareness of Motivation Beliefs	I understand how motivation works and I can self-motivate when I need to.	Use language that affirms positive motivational beliefs (motives, attribution for success, self-efficacy). Make explicit the learning strategies you use (when modeling during instruction) as well as the strategies most successful with a given task.	(Previous page) Characteristics and cues/prompts <i>Negative Self-Talk</i> (Dembo)
Learning Strategies	I use different study methods for different types of assignments and tests.	Embed timelines/benchmarks and revisit those timelines in daily work, ongoing lessons, assignments and projects.	7 Flaws of Human Memory (next page) <i>Thinking Skills Scale</i> <i>Strategies Critical for Success</i> (Eisenberger et al.) <i>Framework for Learning</i> (Eisenberger et al.) <i>Time-Management Plan</i> <i>Challenging Irrational Beliefs</i> (Dembo)
Time Management	I plan how to use my time and adjust when needed.	Make explicit why you establish certain physical environments in your classroom.	<i>Study Environments</i> <i>Improving Attention & Concentration</i> (Dembo)
Physical Environment	I change my study environment so I can concentrate.	Establish a culture that welcomes mistakes as a natural part of learning.	<i>Skills Evaluation</i> (Eisenberger et al.)
Social Environment	I ask questions, & seek assistance and support when I need help.	Work with students to establish regular goals that are incremental and developmentally appropriate.	<i>The Objective Test Taking Cycle</i> <i>Setting & reflecting on Goals</i> <i>Test-Taking Critique</i> (Eisenberger et al.)
Performance	I set regular goals and I evaluate my work to determine progress towards meeting my goals.		

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Flaw	Description	Example	Problem/Solution
Transience	Failing to remember a fact or idea.	Forgetting information you felt you had learned (might be minor like a password or major like studying for a test).	Information did not make it to long-term memory. Need to use elaboration and organisation.
Absent-Mindedness	Breakdown between attention and memory.	Forgetting where you placed keys. Not being attentive to steps in problem-solving and being unable to reflect afterwards on what went wrong.	Must be cognisant of process to enter working memory; increase self-awareness.
Blocking	Unsuccessful search for information we want to retrieve.	Seeing a person you know but being unable to recall his/her name. Not being able to recall information for an exam.	Information might have entered long-term memory but cannot retrieve due to failure to organise or link information.
Misattribution	Assigning memory to a wrong source.	Believing someone told you something that was on the news or vice versa.	Information might have entered long-term memory but faulty retrieve due to failure to link information to source.
Suggestibility	Memories are implanted due to leading questions, or suggestions.	Imprinting incorrect steps to solve a problem after premature group or independent practice.	Independent practice should not occur until students have had an opportunity to demonstrate understanding. Practice makes permanent.
Bias	Editing of previous experiences based on what we feel now rather than what actually happened.	Remembering a past relationship more (or less) fondly than it truly was experienced. Recalling incorrectly how one performed in class or prepared for a test.	Taking notes and being cognisant of learning behaviours and reflecting on those behaviours and their relationship to performance.
Persistence	Remembering what we would prefer to omit from memory.	Rather than sleeping or relaxing, continuing to play negative experiences over and over in your mind.	Work on self-talk and strategies to increase self-efficacy.

Dembo & Seli (2008) based on Schacter (2001)

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RTI and Leadership Pitfalls

The basic tenets of RTI (universal screening, universal quality instruction, frequent formative assessment and descriptive feedback, catching behaviour and academic problems early, and intentional follow-up) are part of any school vision and are key to the work of successful leaders. That they are further enhanced through strong collaboration should “seal the deal” and ensure effective outcomes. What could possibly go wrong with a well-defined approach and collective approval? Plenty! DuFour and Marzano (2011), whose work is referenced in the table above, outline ten common mistakes schools and districts make as they embark on ensuring a solid RTI foundation.

Inevitably, they are traced back to the role of the leader. I’ve adapted their list here:

1. Add-on RTI

- If teachers teach without checking whether or not students are learning and assessment becomes the tool for ranking and sorting students, then intervention will have little impact. If instead, intervention is integrated within the context of a guaranteed and viable curriculum, regular formative assessment, and ongoing improvement, ALL students will show gains.

2. Checklist RTI

- If the view is that RTI is the latest “flavour” or purchased program, the school will fail to develop an effective intervention plan. Implementing RTI to meet a mandate of compliancy will not lead to improvement. Effective implementation leads to RTI being part of “the way we do things around here”.

3. Reactive RTI

- If the approach is to “wait and see” where students are in terms of behaviour and academics, it’s likely too late to intervene in an effective fashion. The educational autopsy yields less value information than the educational physical.

4. Replacement RTI

- If students are removed from the “regular classroom” instruction for reading to be placed in the “special classroom” instruction for reading, they may get different strategies but not additional time. Similarly, if students are given more time but not a different instructional approach, they are also not receiving effective intervention. Students require both

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differentiated instructional strategies AND time to bridge the gaps. These are the same recommendations that Benjamin Bloom made in the 1960s under the guise of Mastery Learning.

5. RTI on demand

- If students are expected to drop by during unstructured time (before school, at lunch, or after school) as needed, it's not likely to occur and especially not for those students who need the interventions the most.

6. Timed RTI

- If a formula existed that defined intervention in terms of seat time, we would all be using it. If the objective is proficiency, time is less the driver.

7. Generalised RTI

- When intervention is assigned on the basis of a general concern (Chris failed Math) rather than a specific struggle (Chris has difficulty with borrowing when subtracting four digit numbers), it limits the effectiveness of the intervention.

8. Private RTI

- If the approach to intervention does not include widespread communication with all who contribute to the process including roles and responsibilities, the intervention will be ineffective.

9. Untrained RTI

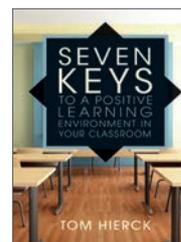
- Too frequently students who need the most skilled teachers do not get them. Instead education assistants, volunteers, or new teachers, with a wide variation in their teaching load, provide intervention. The oftentimes result is an increase in the learning gap.

10. RTI = Special Education

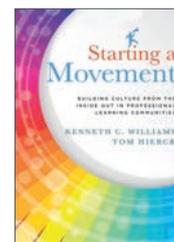
- RTI is intended as a universal approach that strengthens instruction for ALL students in order to limit special education to those who have identified physical or mental disabilities. This will allow our highly trained special educators the capacity to serve the clientele their programs were designed for. The interventions proposed when a student experiences difficulty should be designed to allow that student to overcome the learning gap without having it always ascribed to a neurological problem.

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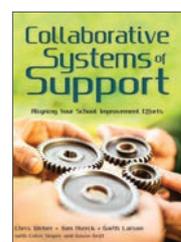
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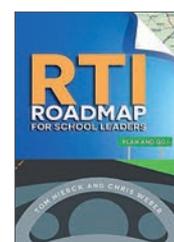
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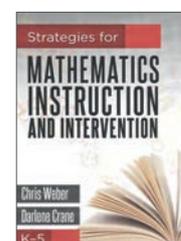
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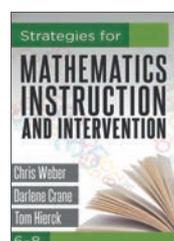
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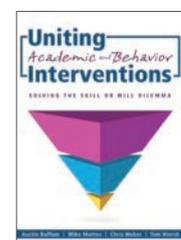
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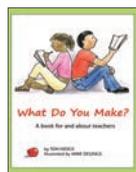
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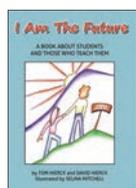
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