

Learning for effective teaching

1.1 Understand how self and others learn



Essence >
Leaders and teachers develop their understanding of current learning theories, and themselves as learners, to inform learning and teaching design.

1.1 Understand how self and others learn

In my role as a leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

- **Develop awareness of myself as a learner and a leader**
 - > Understand my preferences for thinking, learning and leading
 - > Clarify and articulate my values as a leader
- **Appreciate the impact of my style of leading on others and strengthen aspects as needed**
 - > Gather 360° feedback regularly to monitor my impact on staff learning and check for congruence between my intent and the impact
 - > Develop strategies to enhance my skills to lead for learning
- **Develop an appreciation of the learning strengths and dispositions of my staff**
 - > Explicitly draw out the learning dispositions and strengths of staff
 - > Affirm and acknowledge staff members by engaging them in projects that utilise their strengths
 - > Deliberately design teams to include complementary strengths

I will strategically design to:

- **Determine the level of staff members' understanding about themselves as learners to establish relevant professional learning**
 - > Ensure professional learning enables staff members to develop their understanding more deeply and learn about how this impacts on their teaching
 - > Provide opportunities for staff members to extend their learning strategies
 - > Encourage staff members' self-reflection and sharing about their learning
- **Engage staff members in sharing their expertise and understanding of learning with each other**
 - > Infuse meetings with a focus on learning
 - > Encourage staff conversation about students as individual learners
 - > Ensure professional learning incorporates the sharing of staff expertise
- **Ensure professional learning engages staff members with current learning theories as a basis for co-constructing our whole school's vision and values for learning and teaching**
 - > Strategically plan staff development to explore current learning theories and develop clear expectations for trialling, reviewing and implementing
 - > Develop shared meaning and whole school agreements about learning and teaching
 - > Be precise about what our shared agreements mean we do and don't do



1.1

Alert

We teach and lead who we are

We're 'naturally' blind to the impact we have on others—at the heart of developing our leading for learning is the recognition that we lead (and teach) to our preferences. Without this recognition, there is a danger of not seeing the strengths others bring to professional work, excluding some and stereotyping others.

'Know thyself', knowing your own worldviews and others' perceptions of you are key to leading for learning.

Practice check

- Do I have processes for gathering feedback, and a capacity to stay open to this and use it discerningly to rethink and modify my leadership as needed?
- Do all meetings of staff reflect sound learning principles? Do I:
 - > create safe conditions for rigorous learning with staff?
 - > develop staff expertise about learning?
 - > personalise and connect the learning of staff?
- Is there differentiation in the learning program to accommodate staff difference?
- Have we really learnt about 'learning', or have we simply engaged at a surface level and are mouthing the rhetoric?
- Have I identified who was an effective leader of my learning and modelled myself on his/her skills and attributes?

If teachers understand how self and others learn, they will ...

- understand the process of learning as personal meaning making, and design teaching practice based on this understanding
- understand the fundamentally social and dialogic nature of learning and reflect this in the learning program
- appreciate the potency of the learner's self-concept in determining learning success
- know the significant role that emotion and the executive functions play in motivation, attention, felt meaning and learning
- develop an understanding of thinking and the role thinking plays in deep learning
- integrate current learning theories into their own personalised theories of learning and teaching
- appreciate diversity and, to enrich their thinking, collaborate with others who learn differently
- help their students understand and appreciate learner differences

Notes:

Leaders of learning—Food for thought

I would like to emphasise that unless leaders become learners themselves—unless they can acknowledge their own vulnerabilities and uncertainties—then transformational learning will never take place. When leaders become genuine learners, they set a good example and help to create a psychologically safe environment for others.

Edgar Schein

Effective leadership values diverse perspectives and believes that the richest view is that which is built from the perspectives of all.

Julia Atkin

Sustained school improvement processes are premised on the leader knowing the 'right questions to ask' without necessarily knowing all the answers.

Daniel White

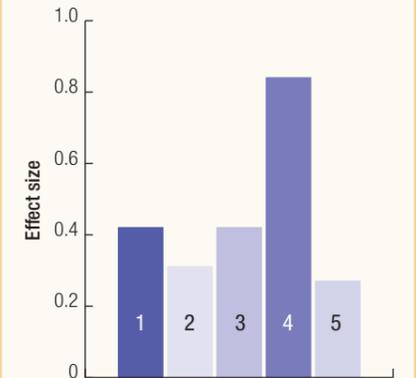
It is ironic that whilst schools exist to educate children, the principles and processes of learning are rarely applied to organisational learning and the professional learning of teachers.

Andy Hargreaves

The more leaders focus their relationships, their work and their learning on the core business of teaching and learning, the greater their influence on student outcomes.

Viviane Robinson

Leadership dimensions that make a difference to student outcomes



- 1 Establishing goals and expectations
- 2 Resourcing strategically
- 3 Planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum
- 4 Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development
- 5 Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment

Viviane Robinson