

Scholarly articles on leadership

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



Scholarly Articles 1 by EDD 9100 CRN 35455 Leadership Seminar Nova Southeastern University February 4, 2012 Scholarly Articles 1 According to the authors of this article (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009), principals need to concentrate on the development of skills and behaviors in order to be successful in motivating, leading, and changing the direction of a school. The successful principal understands that there exists a fine balance of caring for others and the need to accomplish specific tasks (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009).

The following areas are targeted in this article: the need to become an effective consultant, the need to become a mediator and consensus builder, the need to become an individual that values relationships and to step back and reconnect on a regular basis to their core beliefs and values (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). Interwoven through all areas is the need to realize that it takes time to develop the skills needed, experience being the best teacher of what works (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009).

The underlying theme throughout the article is one of a need for open communication combined with a balanced and caring attitude towards staff. On the topic of becoming an effective consultant within their school it is pointed out that principals need to be less directive and more collaborative in their push towards improvement and the use of best practice in the classroom (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). It is of primary importance that they possess the ability to listen to the stakeholders and assist in the translation of concerns into practice (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). In order to be able to effectively fill the role

of consultant within their school principals need to possess a reasonable level of understanding of educational pedagogy and curriculum; and possess a skill set combining the ability to problem solve, actively listen, and support (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009).

In terms of becoming a mediator and consensus builder the authors detailed the need for principals to possess relational leadership skills in order to be able to both facilitate groups and coach others on staff in the ability to facilitate their own groups, and stressed that the key to this is the ability to effectively participate in conflict resolution (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009).

The authors suggested that conflict is part and parcel of school reform and that in addition to being able to deal effectively with conflict the successful principal needs to develop the ability for bringing about consensus within the group, noting that interpersonal and intrapersonal skills were as much or more important than knowledge (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009).

In the area of relationships it was noted that principals that are most effective are those that place high value on people and relationships and that when this exists as a core part of the belief system of the principal it is noticeable and is communicated to staff in both subtle and explicit ways (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). According to the authors this sense of value comes through in all of the dealings that the principal has with stakeholders (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009).

It shows in body language, expression, communication, tone and innumerable other subtle signals that help to set the tone of the school's culture (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). Key to this being successfully implemented is for the principal to consciously think through a personal rationale that balances responsibilities and relationships (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). Principals need to occasionally stepping back to reconnect to their core values in order to maintain the balance needed to effectively lead (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009).

It was noted that in all areas of the development process is the need to understand that these skills and beliefs come about over time. The truly effective principal is able uses past experiences to help hone and define these skills and beliefs to bring about change, growth and effective overall leadership (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). The effective principal never stops learning from these day to day and year to year experiences and continues to hone and refine based upon them (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009).

In the writer's opinion it would greatly assist in the growth, development, morale and overall job satisfaction for the organization if the current leadership of which the writer is a member, were to possess the skills and beliefs noted in the article. This would most likely require training, coaching or the reassignment or hiring of new personnel for leadership positions in order to develop the capacity to exhibit a balance between the valuing of individuals and relationships, the need to and responsibilities of the position,

and the skill set of effective collaboration, mediation, and consensus building.

A leadership team that operates following these principals fosters a sense of openness, consistency and fairness among stakeholders (Donaldson, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). When this exists, staff feels secure. When staff feels secure it becomes more willing to step out and suggest or embrace change for the growth, development, and betterment of the organization. References Donaldson, G. , Marnik, G. , Mackenzie, S. , & Ackerman, R. (2009). What makes or breaks a principal. *Educational Leadership*, 67 (2), 8-14.