

Leadership Missteps to Avoid

Recognizing and preventing these common mistakes will help administrators become more productive, successful and respected by staff



Trying to be popular

Too often, leaders think they have to please everyone. And worse: to please them all the time. Yes, leaders want to be well-liked, but it is more important to be respected.

Not defining goals

When your staff doesn't know your goals as a leader, they are not efficient educators, and it becomes difficult for them to support you. It is also challenging for staff to be productive if they don't know or see what they're working for or what their work means.

Assuming you are right—instead of working to get it right

Often, leaders mistakenly think a title and a position means their way is automatically the right way. The more time a leader spends involving their team at the beginning of the process, the easier it will be to carry forth a decision and move toward the established goal.

Meeting just because

Meeting for the sake of having regular meetings—particularly if there is nothing on the agenda frustrates people. Plan meetings for a strategic purpose or to develop professional learning outcomes, not to disseminate information.

Not making time for staff

It's easy to get wrapped up in email, phone calls, data and your own work. Before you know it, you are not available to your staff. People must come first. If you are not available when they need you, your staff will feel not supported and will lose trust.

Failing to delegate

Some school leaders don't delegate because they feel that no one but them can do tasks correctly. What quickly follows is stress and burnout. Delegation can take a lot of effort as it can be hard to trust your staff to do the work correctly. But unless you delegate, you're never going to have time to focus on the vision and goals of your school. Leaders have a busy, full schedule, so it makes sense to ask others to handle a variety of tasks.