

THE PRINCIPAL CENTER

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Experience. It's what prepares you for the next level of leadership. You're gaining experience every day, but too often, it slips by before you can document it.

Life moves fast, and no one is following you around filming a documentary about your leadership. That's why the Ascend Leadership Journal can make such a difference.

In this journal, you'll find a number of prompts to help you identify and document the experience you're gaining. Some of these prompts are counterintuitive—like the conflict log and the mistake log. Our natural tendency is to forget these negative experiences as quickly as possible—but hidden in these painful experiences are true gems that prove your leadership mettle.

Note: Most of what you document in the Ascend Leadership Journal will NOT appear in your résumé, cover letter, or interviews—at least, not directly. You certainly won't want to add a "Mistakes I've Made" section to your résumé. Instead, the experience you document in this journal will allow you to craft a more compelling story for the hiring team.

Contrary to popular belief, landing your next ed leadership job isn't about having a longer résumé than everyone else—it's about telling a more engaging and inspiring story that aligns with the vision of the hiring team.

Your application materials and interviews should give the hiring team a clear picture of who you are as a leader, what you've accomplished up to this point in your career, and why they should consider you the obvious choice for the position. But the basic facts that most people list on a résumé—where they've worked, what duties they've fulfilled, and for how long—do very little to make them stand out above other candidates.

What makes your story unique—and what distinguishes you as a candidate—is the unique details you'll document in the following pages.

This journal features two kinds of templates. **Logs** allow you to keep a running record of a particular type of experience, across multiple roles and years. **Inventories** dive into the detail of each specific role you've held, so you'll want to complete one copy of each inventory for each role that you've held.

The final log, the Story Log, is where you'll start to craft compelling, detail-rich stories to use in interviews and application materials, based on the other inventories and logs in this journal. Any time you think you might have the beginnings of a good (and of course, 100% true) story, add it to the Story Log.

Here's how to get started:

- 1. Flip through the entire journal to get a sense of what you'll be documenting. The Table of Contents will help you recognize experience you should document.
- 2. Starting with your current or most recent role, write at least one thing in each section of the journal. Do this right now.
- 3. Print or copy additional Inventory pages for each role you've previously held, going back as far as you think may be relevant. For example, if you're in your 4th job now, make 3 additional copies of each Inventory page.
- 4. Schedule times on your calendar to fill out the additional inventory pages.
- 5. Keep the Ascend Leadership Journal close at hand, so you can add to the Logs and Inventories quickly and easily.
- 6. Most importantly, update the Story Log and the other relevant Logs and Inventories whenever you have a new and noteworthy experience, or recall one you may have forgotten.

Thanks for checking out the Ascend Leadership Journal. Best wishes as you prepare, apply, interview, and win your next ed leadership role.

Sincerely,

Van Belle

Justin Baeder Director, The Principal Center

ROLE

DATES

INSTRUCTIONS:

List all of your duties in this role. Be as comprehensive as you can. Include duties that may be common or expected in your organization, but not necessarily in other organizations. Complete a separate copy of this inventory for each role you've held.

Think of:

- Before school
- Weekends
- Beginning of class
- Annual
- At testing time
- Committees

- After school
- Over breaks
- End of class
- Quarterly
- Parent request

- Evenings
- During class
- Prep period
- Per grading period/ semester
- Student referral

ROLE

DATES -

ROLE

DATES _____

ROLE

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ROLE

DATES

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete a separate copy of this inventory for each committee you've served on.

RESPONSIBILITIES

What work was this committee tasked with? Be as comprehensive as possible.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

What key accomplishments did this committee achieve?

DILEMMAS

What were 3 tough dilemmas, decisions, debates, or tensions this committee dealt with?

COLLEAGUES

Who served with you on this committee?

GROWTH

How did serving on this committee help you grow as an instructional leader? What did you learn?

ROLE

DATES

RESPONSIBILITIES

What work was this committee tasked with? Be as comprehensive as possible.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

What key accomplishments did this committee achieve?

DILEMMAS

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

What key accomplishments did this committee achieve?

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DATES

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DATES

RESPONSIBILITIES

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

What key accomplishments did this committee achieve?

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COLLEAGUES

Who served with you on this committee?

GROWTH

How did serving on this committee help you grow as an instructional leader? What did you learn?

ROLE

DATES

INSTRUCTIONS:

List your key accomplishments in this role—not routine duties that everyone else in a similar role would list, but unique achievements specific to your work, no matter who else was involved or how minor the accomplishment. Then, list the impact on students. Complete a separate copy of this inventory for each role you've held.

ACCOMPLISHMENT	IMPACT ON STUDENTS

ACCOMPLISHMENT	IMPACT ON STUDENTS

ROLE		
DATES		
ACCOMPLISHMENT	IMPACT ON STUDENTS	

ACCOMPLISHMENT	IMPACT ON STUDENTS

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ACCOMPLISHMENT	IMPACT ON STUDENTS

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ACCOMPLISHMENT	IMPACT ON STUDENTS

ROLE		
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ACCOMPLISHMENT	IMPACT ON STUDENTS	

ACCOMPLISHMENT	IMPACT ON STUDENTS

INSTRUCTIONS:

List all professional development (in-school, in-district, or outside, including conferences) you have attended.

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GRATITUDE LOG

INSTRUCTIONS:

Add an entry to this log any time someone thanks you for something you haven't already recorded. You can also add entries to note anything <u>you</u> feel grateful for.

DATE:	NAME:	ME
Expressed gratitude for:		
		—

DATE:	NAME:	ME
Expressed gratitude for:		

DATE:	NAME:	ШМЕ
Expressed gratitude for:		

DATE:	NAME:	ME
Expressed gratitude for:		

GRATITUDE LOG

DATE:	NAME:	ME
Expressed gratitude for:		

DATE:	NAME:	ME
Expressed gratitude for:		

DATE:	NAME:	ME
Expressed gratitude for:		

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Expressed gratitude for:		

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Expressed gratitude for:		

GRATITUDE LOG

DATE:	NAME:	ME
Expressed gratitude for:		

DATE:	NAME:	ШМЕ
Expressed gratitude for:		

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Expressed gratitude for:		

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GRATITUDE LOG

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GRATITUDE LOG

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Expressed gratitude for:		

INSTRUCTIONS:

Add an entry to this log each time you experience conflict in your work as an educator. This will help you identify key stories to tell in interviews.

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INSTRUCTIONS:

Add an entry to this log each time you realize you've made a potentially significant mistake. Note any insights or lessons learned—this will help you identify key stories to tell in interviews.

DATE:	
DESCRIPTION:	INSIGHTS/LESSONS LEARNED

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INSIGHTS/LESSONS LEARNED	

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DESCRIPTION:	INSIGHTS/LESSONS LEARNED

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DESCRIPTION:	INSIGHTS/LESSONS LEARNED

DATE:	
INSIGHTS/LESSONS LEARNED	

INSTRUCTIONS:

Add an entry to this log any time you think of a noteworthy story from your experience, such as:

- Times you made a difference
- Conflicts you experienced
- Lessons you learned the hard way
- Insights you gained from conversations
- Growth you experienced from a challenge
- Miscommunications that ultimately resulted in greater empathy or understanding

WHO WAS INVOLVED	
WHAT HAPPENED	
WHERE IT TOOK PLACE	
WHEN IT OCCURED	

WHY IT'S NOTEWORTHY

WHO WAS INVOLVED

WHAT HAPPENED

WHERE IT TOOK PLACE

WHEN IT OCCURED

WHY IT'S NOTEWORTHY

WHO WAS INVOLVED

WHAT HAPPENED

WHERE IT TOOK PLACE

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WHO WAS INVOLVED

WHAT HAPPENED

WHERE IT TOOK PLACE

WHEN IT OCCURED

WHY IT'S NOTEWORTHY

TELL US ABOUT YOUR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND, AND WHY YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A SCHOOL LEADER.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THIS PARTICULAR POSITION?

WHAT STRENGTHS WOULD YOU BRING TO THIS POSITION?

WHAT APPROACHES DO YOU USE TO MANAGE YOUR TIME EFFECTIVELY?

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS YOUR GREATEST WEAKNESSES, AND WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ADDRESS THEM?

WHAT WOULD YOU PLAN TO ACCOMPLISH BY THE END OF YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS ON THE JOB? FIRST 60 DAYS? FIRST 90 DAYS?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR?

HOW WOULD YOU BUILD A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE?

HOW WILL YOU BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS?

VISION FOR LEARNING YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

WHAT DOES THE IDEAL SCHOOL CULTURE LOOK LIKE, AND WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO CREATE THE KIND OF CULTURE YOU ENVISION?

VISION FOR LEARNING YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

WHAT DOES EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP LOOK LIKE?

VISION FOR LEARNING YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

HOW HAVE YOU DEMONSTRATED INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN YOUR MOST RECENT ROLES?

VISION FOR LEARNING YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION?

VISION FOR LEARNING YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

WHAT BOOKS HAVE HAD THE MOST INFLUENCE ON YOUR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS?

WHAT STEPS WOULD YOU TAKE TO CREATE A HIGH-PERFORMING ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM?

HOW DO YOU INVOLVE STAFF IN DECISION-MAKING?

WHAT DOES DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP MEAN TO YOU? HOW HAVE YOU FACILITATED DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AMONG YOUR STAFF?

HOW WOULD YOU CELEBRATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALL STAFF MEMBERS?

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTORS TO A POSITIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHOOL SECRETARIES AND OTHER OFFICE STAFF?

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR WHEN HIRING A NEW STAFF MEMBER?

GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF A SITUATION IN WHICH YOU DEALT WITH A CON-FLICT BETWEEN TWO STAFF MEMBERS. WHAT DID YOU DO TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT, AND WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE? WHAT WOULD YOU DIFFERENTLY IF YOU COULD DO IT OVER AGAIN?

HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND IF A PARENT COMPLAINED ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY OF HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS?

DESCRIBE A CHALLENGING SITUATION INVOLVING AN IRATE PARENT OR FAMILY MEMBER. HOW DID YOU HANDLE IT, AND WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE SITUATION?

HOW WOULD YOU HANDLE A CONFLICT BETWEEN A PARENT AND TEACHER IN WHICH THE TEACHER WAS CLEARLY IN THE WRONG?

HOW WOULD YOU COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR STAFF ABOUT A DISTRICT DECISION WITH WHICH YOU DISAGREED?

DESCRIBE YOUR APPROACH TO SUPPORTING TEACHERS IN IMPROVING THEIR PRACTICE.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAD A NON-TEACHING STAFF MEMBER WHO WAS NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAD A CLASSROOM TEACHER WHOSE PERFORMANCE WAS BELOW EXPECTATIONS AND NOT IMPROVING?

WHAT WOULD YOU TO DO WORK WITH A TEACHER STRUGGLING WITH SERIOUS CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT ISSUES?

HOW WOULD YOU DEAL WITH A TEACHER WHO WAS RESISTANT TO A NEW INITIATIVE AND WAS DISCOURAGING OTHERS FROM PARTICIPATING?

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH STUDENTS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS? HOW DOES DIVERSITY IMPACT STUDENT LEARNING?

WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH TO WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

HOW DO YOU BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS AND ENCOURAGE STUDENT LEADERSHIP?

WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK WITH (ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL) STUDENTS?

WHAT ACTION WOULD YOU TAKE TO DEAL WITH HALLWAY DISCIPLINE ISSUES?

HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND IF A TEACHER CAME TO YOU TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE OF A STUDENT AT HOME?

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE? HOW DOES IT RELATE TO STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

DESCRIBE YOUR PROCESS FOR HANDLING A DISCIPLINARY REFERRAL IN WHICH A STUDENT HAS BEEN SENT TO THE OFFICE FOR BEING DISRUPTIVE AND DISRESPECTFUL IN CLASS.

WHAT EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE CREATING AND MAINTAINING A BUDGET?

IN THIS POSITION, YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAKE REGULAR REPORTS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT (OR DESIGNEE). WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE WILL FACILITATE A POSITIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT?

GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF A SITUATION IN WHICH YOU WORKED EFFECTIVELY WITH A NON-INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF MEMBER, SUCH AS A CUSTODIAN, TO SOLVE A PROBLEM. WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THIS SITUATION, AND WHAT WOULD YOU DO DIFFERENTLY?

DESCRIBE YOUR APPROACH TO HIRING AND RETAINING TALENTED STAFF.

DESCRIBE YOUR APPROACH TO ENGAGING FAMILIES FROM DIVERSE CULTURAL, SOCIOECONOMIC, AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS.

HOW WILL YOU ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT BOND ISSUES?

HOW WOULD YOU HANDLE A DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PARENT GROUPS (SUCH AS PTA) AND STAFF?

HOW WOULD YOU ENGAGE PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS AS ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN THE SCHOOL?

IMPROVEMENT MAKING TEACHING AND LEARNING BETTER

HOW WOULD YOU CREATE A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE YEAR? WHAT INFORMATION WOULD YOU GATHER, AND WHAT STEPS WOULD YOU TAKE TO CREATE THE PLAN?

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING?

IMPROVEMENT MAKING TEACHING AND LEARNING BETTER

HOW DO YOU SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION IN THE CLASSROOM?

DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH INVOLVEMENT IN CURRICULAR CHANGE.

WHAT DO YOU ENVISION DOING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE QUALITY OF CURRICULUM IN THIS ROLE?

HOW WILL YOU ENCOURAGE EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN TEACHERS?

WANT MORE? INTERVIEW PRACTICE & COACHING

LAND YOUR NEXT LEADERSHIP ROLE. MULTIPLY YOUR IMPACT.

If you're currently applying for a new leadership position, you'll benefit from our additional services that are available exclusively to leaders seeking their next role, including:

• Search Strategy

We'll work together 1-on-1 to map out a winning job search strategy, so you can apply for the right positions at the right time

• Practice Interviews

We'll do 1-on-1 practice interviews, so you can hone your responses and your interview skills.

• Application Review

You'll get detailed feedback on your résumé, cover letter, recommendation letters, and other application materials, which we'll review with our proprietary rubrics.

• Video Feedback

We'll provide timestamped feedback on your practice interview videos, so you can see exactly where to focus.

Learn more at

http://www.principalcenter.com/ascend

ASCENDENCE WIN.

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