

500 GROWTH CONVERSATIONS

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE STRANGEST SCHOOL YEAR EVER

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500 Growth Conversations: Instructional Leadership for the Strangest School Year Ever



How can instructional leaders help teachers set goals for their professional growth in a school year that may involve virtual, hybrid, and heavily modified in-person teaching and learning?

Goal-setting, supervision, and evaluation will take dramatically new forms in the 2020-2021 school year, but one core element will remain the same: evidence-based professional conversations.

Whether you're observing in person, on live-streamed video, or via a pre-recorded video, evidence-driven instructional leadership will be more important than ever.

In this session, you'll learn how to keep the focus on evidence and improvement, while respecting the unique challenges teachers face.

On a scale of 1 to 10...

How weird is the '20-'21 school
year going to be?



The Leadership Question



What does this situation demand of me?

Technical vs. Adaptive Change

Understanding the nature of the challenges
we face



Technical Vs. Adaptive Change



- **Technical** change—solving problems using our existing roles, skills, knowledge and processes
- **Adaptive** change—solving problems by changing *ourselves* and/or developing new roles, skills, knowledge, and processes

Technical Change



In an ordinary year, helping teachers make well-known technical changes is straightforward

Adaptive Change

- How do I teach with half of my students home at any given time?
- How do I start my class virtually?
- How can students work together within our safety guidelines?



Technical & Adaptive Changes

What are some technical or adaptive changes your school will be wrestling with in the coming year?



One Adaptive Change for Teachers & Other Professionals

from

*Meeting familiar expectations in
familiar ways*

to

*Using professional judgment to solve
new problems in unfamiliar situations*



One Adaptive Change for Instructional Leaders

from

Supervision & Feedback

to

*Evidence-Driven Growth
Conversations*



Improving Judgment

A key point of leverage in unpredictable environments



Our Biggest Point of Leverage



Professional Judgment

Improving Professional Judgment



Conversation

How Conversation Improves Professional Judgment

- Established dimensions
- Shared framework language
- Evidence-based conversation



How Conversation Improves Professional Judgment



How Conversation Improves Professional Judgment



My Challenge To You

Typical year:
500 classroom visits

Strangest year ever:
500 growth conversations



500 Conversations

Working with each teacher to promote
maximum growth



500 Growth Conversations Plan

3 conversations a day:

- Start with a pressing problem
- Talk in depth about practice
- Work toward a framework



Problem to Practice to Framework In Professional Conversations



Problem

Practice

Framework

Problem to Practice to Framework



- What problem are we trying to solve?
- What practice are we employing?
- What are the components of that practice?
- What are the levels of performance within each component?

Example: Checking for Understanding In Remote Math Lessons



- Students watch video lesson
- Students work practice problems

Problem: How can we check for understanding and provide targeted assistance, without grading every problem?

Example: Checking for Understanding In Remote Math Lessons



- What are people already doing?
- What's not working?
- What is working?
- What are we doing that we could stop?

Instructional Frameworks for New Practices

- Steep learning curve
- Variability from teacher to teacher
- Huge benefits to aligning expectations



What's An Instructional Framework?

- Specific dimensions of practice
- Organized by category
- Broken down into levels of performance
- Levels create growth pathways



Instructional Frameworks: Rubrics for Practice



C. Delivery of Instruction

a. Expectations	Exudes high expectations, urgency, and determination that all students will master the material.	Conveys to students: This is important, you can do it, and I'm not going to give up on you.	Tells students that the subject matter is important and they need to work hard.	Gives up on some students as hopeless.
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e. Clarity	Presents material clearly and explicitly, with well-chosen examples and vivid, appropriate language.	Uses clear explanations, appropriate language, and examples to present material.	Sometimes uses language and explanations that are fuzzy, confusing, or inappropriate.	Often presents material in a confusing way, using language that is inappropriate.
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The Instructional Framework Development Program



Specificity
getting clear on the heart of practice

05:24

Context
overcoming observability bias

07:16

Specificity: Getting Clear on the Heart of Practice

Drafting A Framework
a 5-step process

12:01

INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Drafting a Framework Step Process

In this video, you'll learn the 5 steps of developing a framework that will be used in your instructional conversations.

Drafting a Framework From Buzzword to Rubric

In this video, we walk through the 5 steps of developing an instructional framework.

INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

WORKBOOK

Teacher Goals

Address the most pressing challenges...while contributing to the organization



Focusing Teacher Goals



- What problems am I trying to solve in my classroom?
- What skills do I need to serve my students this year?
- How can I contribute to my team?

Think Ahead About Evidence

What will constitute evidence for this goal?

(It may not involve classroom
observation)



Accountability: Cutting Back



What expectations can we scale back?

2:1 Cut : Add ratio

Accountability: Deliverables

- Clear
- Simple
- Minimal



Accountability: Deliverables

There is no reason to create new materials from scratch for remote/hybrid learning.

Use available resources whenever possible.



Accountability: Deliverables Examples

- One Google Classroom post per day with the day's resources and assignments
- One major assignment per week
- One “office hours” call per week



Team-Level Deliverables



- Develop organization-wide pacing calendars—scaled back
- Rotate responsibility for online assignments
- Monitor individual contributions

Accountability for Individual Contributions to Team



- Have the conversation up front
- Encourage teams to calibrate their expectations
- Specialization without imbalance
- Clarify authorship

Evaluation

Assessing performance when this isn't what we signed up for



Evaluation: No One Signed Up For This

- Teachers weren't trained to teach remotely
- Teachers weren't hired to teach remotely
- Students didn't sign up to learn remotely
- There is zero research on involuntary remote learning



New Skills

- Teaching demands 100% of people even when they aren't learning new skills
- We're giving people added responsibilities
- Learning new skills takes time
- Using new skills takes more time than using existing skills



The 0.1% Problem

In a typical year,
we only see about
1 hour out of
1,000 hours of
teaching in formal
observations



A Shift in What Teaching Is



- From teaching as *lessons*
- To teaching as *responsibility* for students

Ultimately, what if we evaluated professional responsibility and judgment more than lesson-teaching?

Pseudo-Evidence vs Evidence



- Assumptions
- Suspicions
- Hearsay
- Reputation
- Rumor
- Complaints

- Conversations
- Observations
- Video
- Documents

Evidence of Practice



- In person
- Live-streamed video
- Pre-recorded video
- Artifact analysis

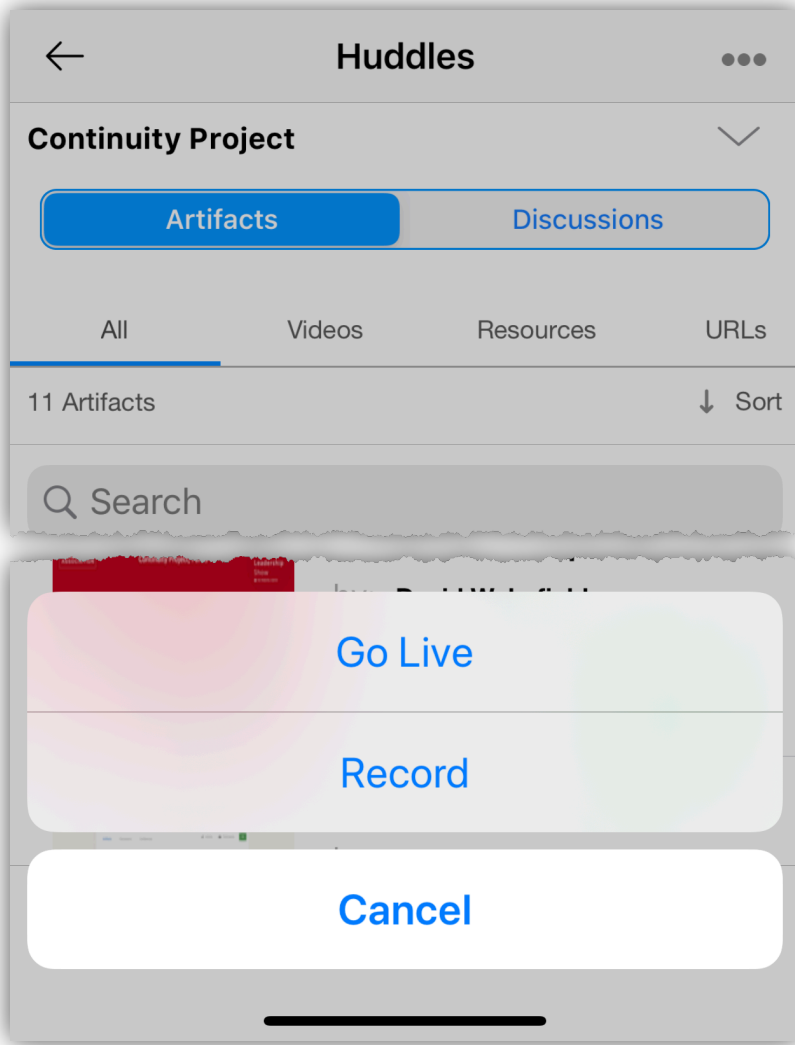
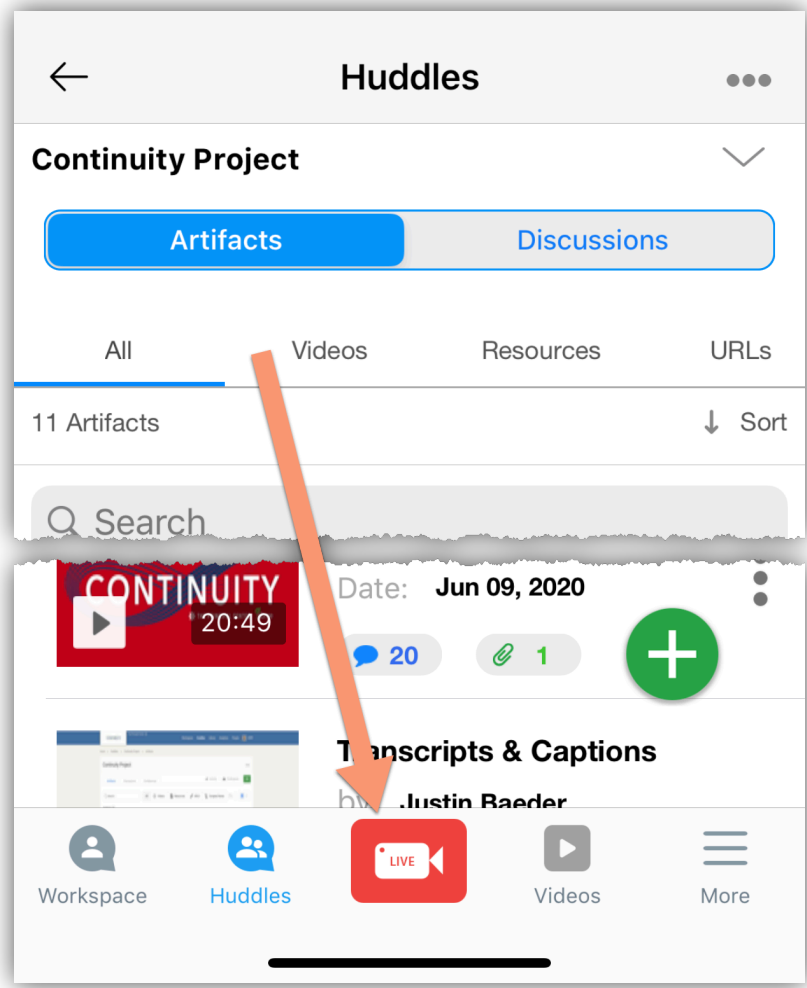
In-Person Observation

- Proceed as usual if you can
- A “typical” lesson may be less typical than usual
- Health concerns



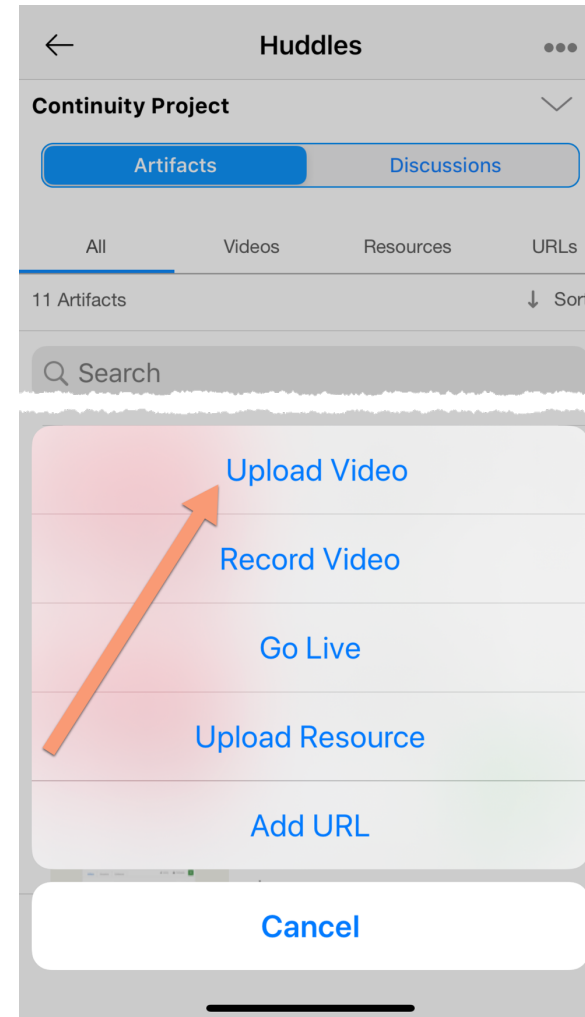


Live-Streamed Video



Pre-Recorded Video

- You decide what to share
- Do over if you prefer
- Get the feedback you want





Artifact Analysis

- Student work is often the best evidence of good teaching
- Before/after samples
- Save feedback to student as evidence

Artifacts

Discussions

Conferences

Activity

Participants



Search....

All

Videos

Resources

URLS

Scripted Notes



Final Thoughts

Growth conversations in the strangest school year ever



Takeaways



- Focus on conversations, not observations
- Think flexibly about goals and evidence
- Problem → Practice → Framework
- Streamline everything

Final Reflection

How will you use professional growth conversations to get through the strangest school year ever?



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