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Episode #68

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## Structured Cycles of 1:1 Conversations with Staff



# Our Essential Question

How can we maintain professional relationships without casual face-to-face interactions?

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# Impact Depends on Dose

Typical year: 500 classroom visits +  
feedback conversations

This year: 500 1:1 conversations

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# Kinds of Conversations

- Meetings
- Quick questions
- Issue resolution
- Structured cycles



# Protect Face-To-Face Interaction

If it would have been a face-to-face interaction under normal circumstances, do a video call.  
Don't shift to text or email.

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# The Loss of Serendipity

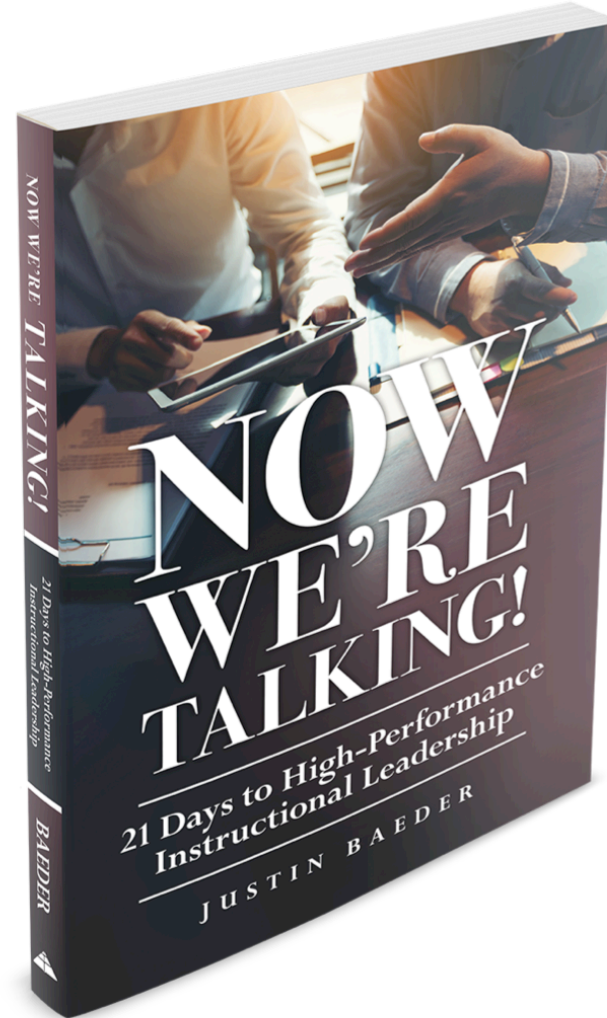
The conditions we're working under this year will vastly reduce casual face-to-face interaction.

We can only make up for this loss with intentional, structured cycles of 1:1 conversations.



# Structured Cycles

## Chapter 20: Choosing an Instructional Focus for an Observation Cycle



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# Why Structured Cycles Matter

- Maintain relationships
- Advance specific goals
- Get input from quieter staff
- Staff cohesion
- Better input





# Choosing A Focus

- What is my purpose for this cycle?
- What information do I need to *convey*?
- What information do I need to *gather*?
- What questions will I ask?
  - Connection
  - Reaction
  - Input



# Budgeting Time for A Cycle of Calls

- How long will each call be?
- How many people total?
- How much time can I devote daily?
- How long will I take to finish the entire cycle?

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# Scenario: New Leader

- Purpose: Meet each staff member; establish rapport
- Convey: Who I am as a leader; caring; competence
- Gather: Feelings & intentions about returning
- Ask:
  - Connection: Tell me about yourself
  - Reaction: How are you feeling about coming back? What do you think your students will need most? What can I do to support you and make sure this is a safe, happy place?
  - Input: What do you see as the most effective ways of working with your team while maintaining social distancing?



# Scenario: Returning Staff

- Purpose: Reconnect after 5+ months
- Convey: We're still a team; we can do this; I care
- Gather: Intentions about returning; concerns; issues
- Ask:
  - Connection: What's kept you going during this time?
  - Reaction: How are you feeling about coming back? What do you think your students will need most? What can I do to support you and create a sense of normalcy?
  - Input: What do you see as the most effective ways of working with your team while maintaining social distancing?



# Scenario: Instructional Coach

- Purpose: Reconnect; remain relevant
- Convey: I'm here to support you with new challenges
- Gather: What skills do you want to develop/improve?
- Ask:
  - Connection: How have you/family/pets been?
  - Reaction: What do you have in mind for your class this year? What do you think your challenges will be?
  - Input: How might I be of assistance to you? To your colleagues who may be struggling?



# Scenario: Principal Supervisor/Supt

- Purpose: Create cohesion across district
- Convey: We're in this together and I believe in you
- Gather: What's the sense you're getting from teachers?
- Ask:
  - Connection: Vacation time/reading?
  - Reaction: How are teachers reacting to the reopening plans? Where do you agree/disagree with them?
  - Input: What kinds of support do you need? What needs to be on my radar that may not be?

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# Options for Reaching Everyone

- Ask to schedule—send Calendly link
- Call during inservice days
- Call before/after school during contract hours

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# Keeping Track

- Staff roster—checklist
- Task board—drag to next column
- Track “scheduled” *and* “done”

To Schedule	Scheduled	Done
+	+	+
Jones	Martin	Landry
McWilliams	Gonzalez	



# Taking Notes & Verifying Details

“I’m going to take notes as we talk, and I’ll email you my notes after our call. Feel free to correct anything or add additional detail.”

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# How To Connect

- Phone
- Skype/Zoom/Microsoft Teams/  
FaceTime/Google Meet
- Voxer/Marco Polo



# Frequency for Structured Cycles

- 3+ conversations per day
- 2-week rotation
- 15-18 cycles per year
- 500 conversations per year

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# Your First Few Cycles

- What will your first few structured cycles focus on?
- Connect with everyone
- Share & gather key information
- Make decisions & solve problems
- Inform other meetings

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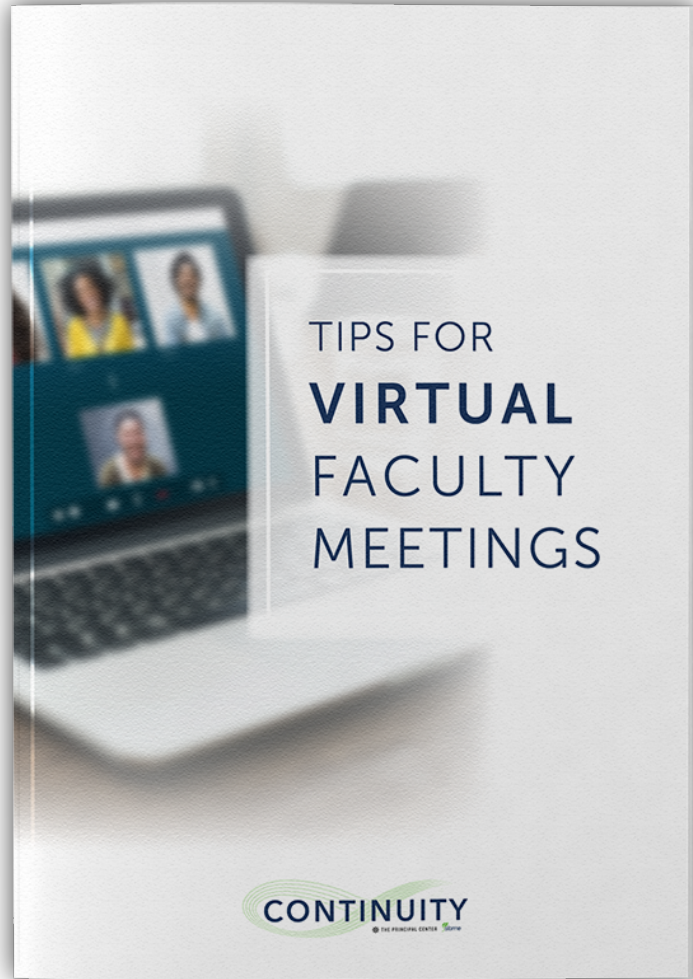
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