

INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP
ASSOCIATION

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Episode #72

How To Detect & Prevent Burnout with Boundaries



Our Essential Question



How can we detect and prevent
burnout in ourselves and our
colleagues?

What Is Burnout?

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Burnout is NOT the same as
being temporarily
overwhelmed at the beginning
of the school year.

What Is Burnout?

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK279286/>

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There are three main areas of symptoms that are considered to be signs of burnout:

- **Exhaustion:** People affected feel drained and emotionally exhausted, unable to cope, tired and down, and don't have enough energy. Physical symptoms include things like pain and gastrointestinal (stomach or bowel) problems.
- **Alienation from (work-related) activities:** People who have burnout find their jobs increasingly stressful and frustrating. They may start being cynical about their working conditions and their colleagues. At the same time, they may increasingly distance themselves emotionally, and start feeling numb about their work.
- **Reduced performance:** Burnout mainly affects everyday tasks at work, at home or when caring for family members. People with burnout are very negative about their tasks, find it hard to concentrate, are listless and lack creativity.

A Maslow-Style Hierarchy



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How To Detect Burnout



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Cracks in the Foundation



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Cracks in the Foundation



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Against Heroism

Educators have the greatest impact when they operate with maximum professionalism, not maximum sacrifice.

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Shrink The Job

When people lack the bandwidth to do the job, they can't borrow this bandwidth from the lower levels of the pyramid—at least not for very long. The only solution is to shrink the job.

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Shrink The Job

People normally “shrink” their job by:

- Moving into a less-demanding role
- Job-sharing
- Setting “stop work at ___” boundaries

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Example: Life-Threatening Illness

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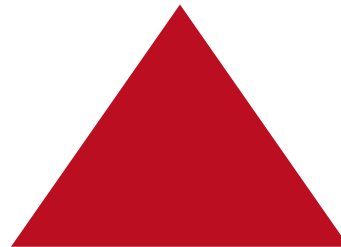
The “Work/Life Balance” Myth

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Personal

Professional



Imbalance

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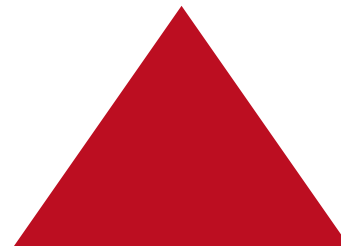
Imbalance

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Personal

Professional



Boundaries, Not Balance



We can protect our ability to do our work with strong boundaries:

- Personal first
- Then professional
- Then role

Detecting Burnout

- Boredom
- Disengagement
- Cynicism
- Perpetual “borrowing” from the foundational levels of the pyramid

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What Do I Have To Give?

- You can donate plasma every month
- You can donate blood every two months
- You can donate a kidney once
- You can only donate your heart once, but...

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Ask Yourself

- Am I putting my own oxygen mask on first?
- Am I giving from a place of strength, or giving at harm to myself?
- What is the 80/20 of my work?
- What's the 80/20 for teachers?
- Who needs to have their load lightened?

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Find the 80/20

Pareto Principle:

80% of inputs produce only 20% of outputs

20% of inputs produce fully 80% of outputs

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One In, One Out Rule

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Eliminating Work for Teachers

1. Stop Duplicating Effort

2. Stop Making Documents

3. Stop Something & See if
Anyone Complains

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If We Can't Stop It Permanently...



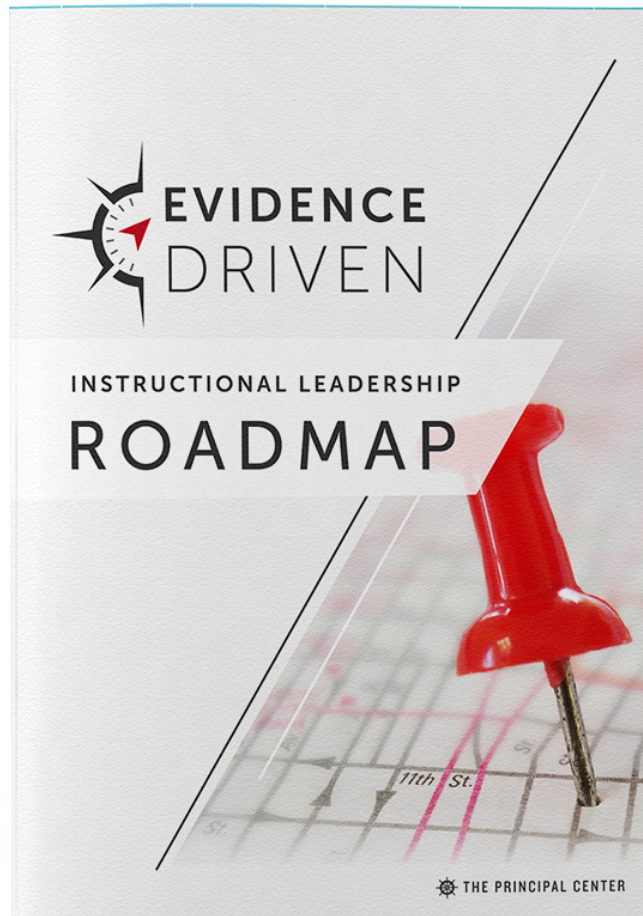
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PrincipalCenter.com/roadmap

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EVIDENCE DRIVEN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ROADMAP						
Stage	Productivity	Walkthroughs	Conversations	Framework	500 Classrooms	High-Performance Instructional Leadership
Focus	Get Current!	Get Into Classrooms!	Get Into Feedback Conversations!	Get Aligned & Specific!	Get Consistent & Impactful!	Get Strategic!
Level 1	I'm overwhelmed and can't even think about getting into classrooms	I rarely get into classrooms for informal visits, and do only the minimum required formal observations	I give teachers feedback only in the annual evaluation process or when I see something out of the ordinary	I evaluate teachers as satisfactory or unsatisfactory based on my professional judgment	I'm afraid to visit classrooms because I don't know what I'll see, and neither teachers nor students expect to see me	I know only what I see during formal observations, and don't have any sense of teachers' typical practice or how it relates to our school's goals or strategic plan
Level 2	I'm keeping my head above water, but can't get into classrooms consistently	I get into classrooms a few times a week, but I'm inconsistent and don't make it around to everyone	I give teachers written feedback from my informal visits, without having a conversation	I evaluate teachers according to a leveled rubric based on the evidence I've collected	I get into classrooms as I'm able, but I'm often thrown off-track by having to deal with unpleasant surprises; my visits catch teachers and students off-guard	I have a general sense of each teacher's practice, but am unclear how it relates to our school's goals and strategic plan
Level 3	I'm staying on top of my work so I can get into classrooms regularly	I get into three classrooms a day, every day, so I see every teacher on a 2-week rotation	I share my written evidence with the teacher immediately, and have an evidence-based feedback conversation on the spot or soon after my visit	I have regular, evidence-based conversations with teachers using the language of our instructional framework	I visit three classrooms a day, every day, so teachers and students are used to seeing me, and my feedback conversations are having an impact on teacher practice	I have a good sense of each teacher's practice in specific areas and how it relates to our school's goals and strategic plan
Level 4	I have well-optimized systems to keep me organized so I can confidently get into classrooms every day, without worrying about my other work	I visit every classroom every two weeks, and rotate my visits so I see each teacher at different times of day	I differentiate my feedback conversations using the boss (directive), coach (reflective), or leader (reflexive) roles depending on each teacher's needs, always sharing my written evidence immediately	I gather evidence of teacher practice using the language of our instructional framework, and have discipline-specific conversations with each teacher	Teachers and students expect to see me in classrooms, and I can see the impact it's having on students and on teacher practice in specific areas of our instructional framework	I have a clear sense of each teacher's level of performance in specific areas of our instructional framework and how it relates to our school's goals and strategic plan, so I can identify our biggest opportunities for school improvement



EVIDENCE DRIVEN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ROADMAP

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PRODUCTIVITY

Get Current!

I have well-optimized systems to keep me organized so I can confidently get into classrooms every day, without worrying about my other work



WALKTHROUGHS

Get Into Classrooms!

I visit every classroom every two weeks, and rotate my visits so I see each teacher at different times of day



CONVERSATIONS

Get Into Feedback Conversations!

I differentiate my feedback conversations using the boss (directive), coach (reflective), or leader (reflexive) roles depending on each teacher's needs, always sharing my written evidence immediately



FRAMEWORK

Get Aligned & Specific!

I gather evidence of teacher practice using the language of our instructional framework, and have discipline-specific conversations with each teacher



500 CLASSROOMS

Get Consistent & Impactful!

Teachers and students expect to see me in classrooms, and I can see the impact it's having on students and on teacher practice in specific areas of our instructional framework



HIGH-PERFORMANCE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP™

Get Strategic!

I have a clear sense of each teacher's level of performance in specific areas of our instructional framework and how it relates to our school's goals and strategic plan, so I can identify our biggest opportunities for school improvement



WALKTHROUGHS Get Into Classrooms!

I visit every classroom every two weeks, and rotate my visits so I see each teacher at different times of day