

INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP
ASSOCIATION

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Leadership
Show

Episode #75

Pareto Satisficing for Overwhelmed Educators



Our Essential Question



How can we help teachers eliminate stressful time-wasters and spend more of their time on high-impact work?

Two Big Concepts

The Pareto Principle
(80/20 rule)

Satisficing
(good enough is good enough)

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The Pareto Principle



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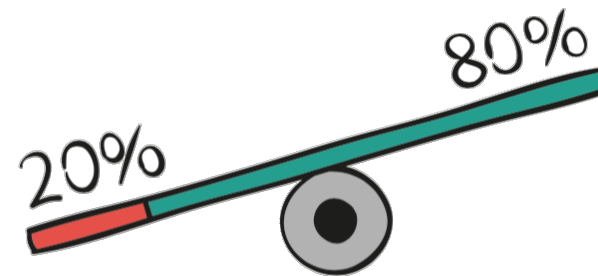
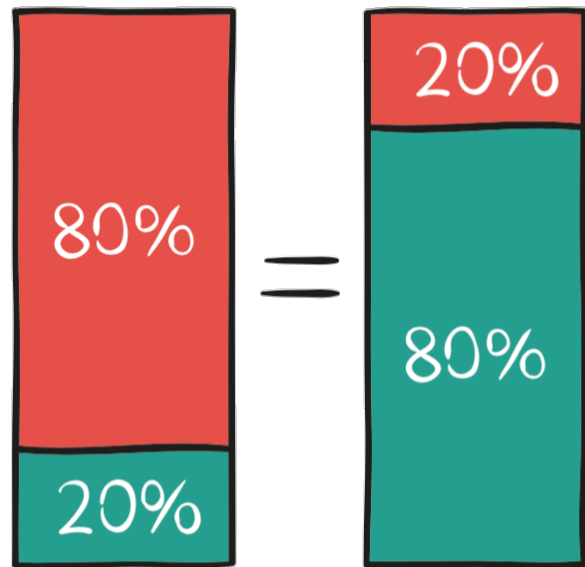
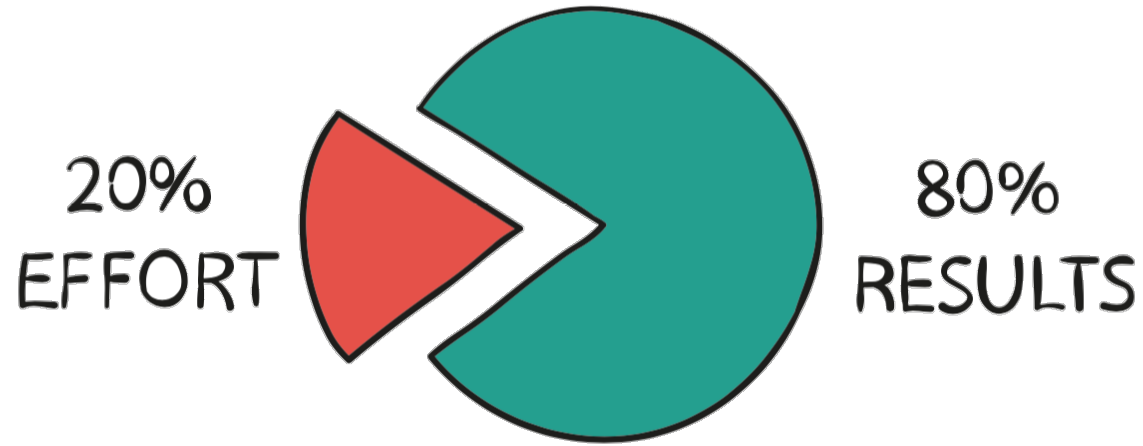
The Pareto Principle



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The Pareto Principle



What If Effort = Cost?

Imagine if teachers weren't
salaried.

What if every ounce of effort cost
money from your school budget?

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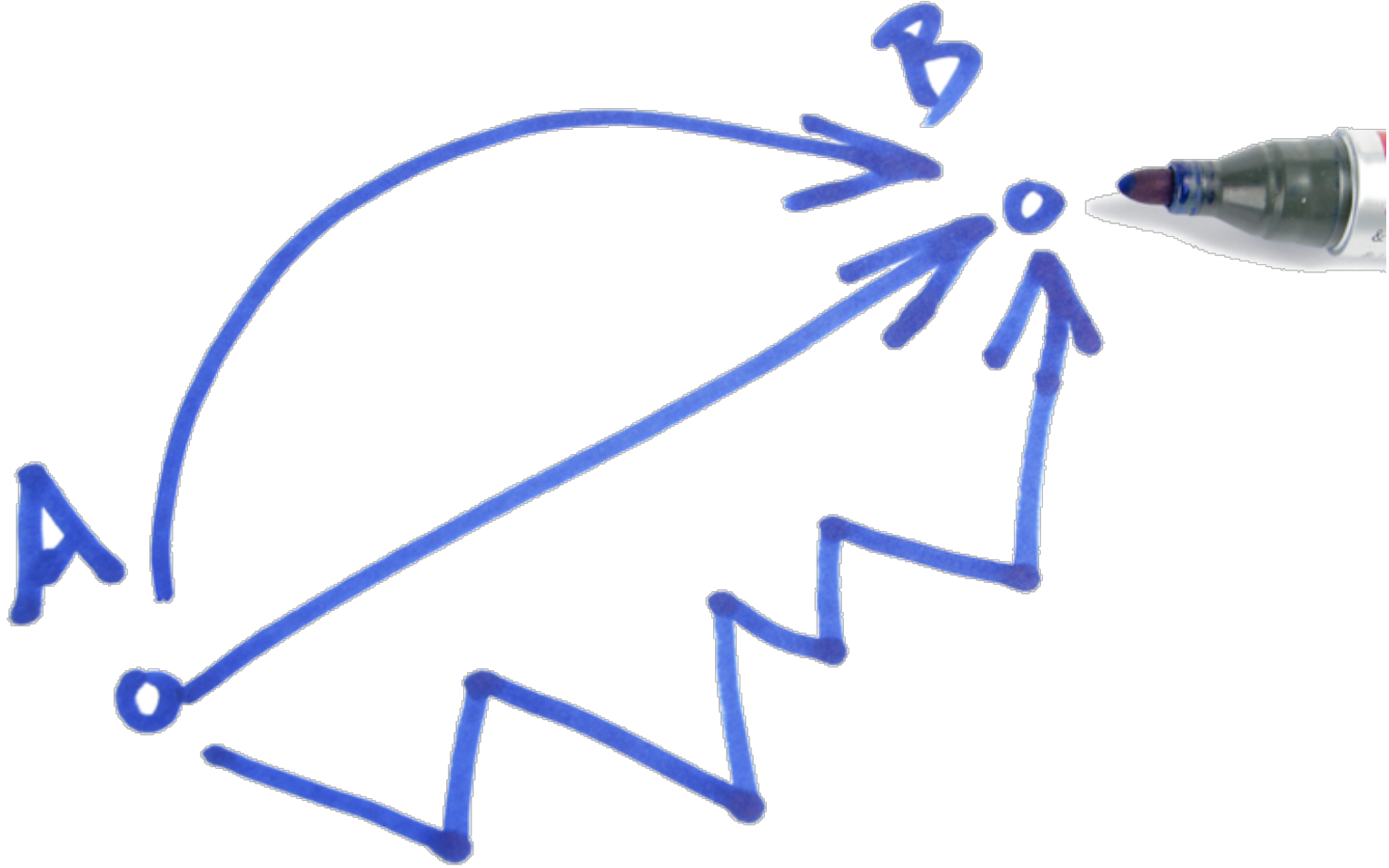
The 20% → 80% Question

Will this effort have a direct impact on student learning?

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The Instructional Gap: Where Learning Occurs



The Essential Elements of Engaging Online Learning



Engagement with content



Scaffolds



Real-world connections



Active inquiry



Feedback and Assessment



Relationships



DESIGNING ENGAGING
VIRTUAL LEARNING

Low-Impact Work

How can we identify time-consuming but low-impact work?

- Grading paper/pencil student work that could be done in an app with instant feedback
- Reinventing the wheel/duplicated effort
- Documents for the sake of documents

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The Originality Norm

One of the biggest time-wasting norms in our profession is the idea that teachers must each invent their own **original** materials.

Making it their own doesn't require making it from scratch.

Curate, customize, adapt.

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Questions for Teachers

- How can I curate or adapt existing resources rather than starting from scratch?
- How can I team up with other teachers (even in other districts) to maximize quality and minimize effort?
- What uniquely “me” value can I add with minimal effort?

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Questions for School Leaders



For teachers:

- Could we have this discussion in Google Docs?
- Can I get this information in a more efficient way?
- Can I stop collecting information I'm not going to use?

For self:

- Can I re-use an old reply to answer this email?
- Can I share scheduling templates/strategies with other schools?
- Can I ask my supervisor to waive this requirement or do part of it for everyone?

Questions for District Leaders

- Compliance documents: How can I do 90% of this for school leaders, and let them fill in the rest?
- Could this be an email instead of a Zoom meeting?
- Could this be a conversation instead of a “plan” to be turned in?

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Satisficing



Satisfice = Satisfy + Suffice

**Herbert Simon, decision-making &
administration pioneer**

Satisficing vs. Optimizing

“Decision makers can satisfice either by finding optimum solutions for a simplified world, or by finding satisfactory solutions for a more realistic world. Neither approach, in general, dominates the other, and both have continued to co-exist in the world of management science.”

—Herbert Simon, 1978 Nobel acceptance speech

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Satisficing vs. Optimizing

Optimizing: *What's the very best?*

Satisficing: *What's good enough to meet the criteria?*

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Optimizing Gone Overboard: Math Practice Websites



- IXL
- Xtra Math
- Prodigy
- Khan Academy
- MathSeeds
- DreamBox
- Edgenuity
- LearnZillion
- Mathletics
- MobyMax
- BrainPop
- Kahoot
- Edulastic
- Multiplication Nation

Takeaways

- Less, but better
- Find the 20% of efforts that produce 80% of results
- Satisfice—meet your criteria without perfectionism
- End the “Sage on the Stage” mindset
- Curation, not originality

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New Resource



PrincipalCenter.com/virtual-pdf