Calavera Hills School New Beginnings: Vision and Professional Development

Devin Vodicka

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

Problem Statement

Actualizing the vision of the new Calavera Hills School through implementation of a comprehensive professional development plan for teachers will be approached from the perspective of a pragmatic/existentialist, servant/transforming leader who sees things from a systems perspective. The connection between professional development and the vision of an interdependent learning community will become evident in that the adult pursuit of learning helps to create a fractal integrity in terms of promoting self-similarity at different levels in the organization.

Organizational Overview

Calavera Hills School is an elementary school with grades K-6 located in Carlsbad, California (San Diego County). The school opened in September 2002 as the newest facility in Carlsbad Unified School District with an enrollment of approximately 500 students. The District now includes 12 schools and an average daily enrollment of almost 9800 students. The new site at Calavera features a $12,500,000 facility and is located in the north-east quadrant of town in a high-growth area. The school was designed with an emphasis on the use of technology, including two fully-networked computer labs and the ability to network up to eight computers per classroom. Teaching walls with large-screen televisions are built-in to the site for large displays of computer instruction such as the use of Power Point. Approximately $800,000 of new computer equipment was purchased using bond money to ensure that the students would have access to the newest and most sophisticated technology available to assist in student instruction.

Student demographics for the new school indicate that the students are 60% Anglo, 25% Hispanic, and 15% African-American and Asian. An estimated 15% of the students are classified as English Learners and almost 30% of the students are on free- or reduced-lunch plans as a result of low family incomes. The new homes in the area sell for upwards of $400,000 and there is an income distribution for the families in the school attendance zone that resembles an inverse bell curve with very few in the middle of the socioeconomic strata.

After an internal recruitment and selection process was completed in Carlsbad Unified School District, I was selected as the site principal in February of 2002 to begin the process of staffing the school, building community with the new families that would be attending the school, and managing the purchasing process to secure new furniture and materials that would be necessary for school operations. After I conducted informational forums at each of the existing elementary school sites for staff, interviews and observations were completed to screen potential transfer candidates to work as teachers at the new school. Ultimately, there were more candidates interested in a transfer than there were teaching positions and each of the teachers at Calavera is an experienced teacher who previously worked at one of the other Carlsbad schools. Due to the competitive nature of the process, it is believed that many of the teachers at the new school are among the finest in the District, including three of the seven grade-level Facilitators (chairs for the entire district), a former Carlsbad Unified School District *Teacher of the Year* winner, and several teachers who serve as mentors for new teachers.

Classified staff members were selected using a contractually-structured process that identified potential transfers from within the district and a select number of new candidates. Interview teams including the site principal, teachers, and parents worked collaboratively to select the classified staff. Interestingly, most of the classified positions were filled by individuals

new to the district and with limited school experience—the site administrative assistant, lead custodian, night custodian, and library technician are examples of positions filled with individuals new to the system.

Forums resembling town-hall meetings were held for parents of Calavera Hills students at various locations and dates in the spring of 2002. Approximately 200 parents attended the principal-led conversations to receive information about the school and ask questions regarding the transition process, prospects for the new school. These forums assisted families to determine if they wanted to take advantage of a School Board policy that allowed them to "grandfather" and remain at their existing school if they so chose. One of the outcomes from the parent meetings was the creation of a Calavera Hills PTA in June of 2002. Having the PTA functional before the school opened was an important symbolic act in that it demonstrated that parents would be integrally involved in the process for opening the school and would have a systematic mechanism for continued involvement: "the power of the evidence on parent-school partnerships 'is such that no reasonable case can be made for continued isolation'"(Fullan, 1993, p. 95).

I was frequently asked to describe my vision for a school during my forums with parents and staff members around the school. I used the motto *Building a Learning Community* in my interactions to provide a simple yet powerful statement that encapsulated many of my beliefs about the future of public education (Gladwell, 2000). To demonstrate my conviction to a participative model, teachers and parents participated on interview panels as one indication of the partnership between families and staff that can typify a community-oriented perspective. This motto was the starting point for staff development sessions that occurred in June 2002 to help teachers familiarize themselves with one another and become involved in the planning for the new school. Social events such as a staff barbeque were also held to promote collegiality.

Utopian planning models indicate that "levels of design" should go from the vision level to the strategic level, to the managerial level, and then to the operational level (Anderson & Anderson, 2001). Unfortunately, due to our status as a new school with extremely limited time for staff development (when Calavera Hills School opened in September 2002 the staff had amassed a total of 12 hours of collaborative time), much of the attention was on *survival* issues—operational questions such as scheduling, furniture needs, food service issues, playground supervision, attendance systems, and disciplinary referrals were the focus from the teacher perspective. There is an entire book, entitled *If You Don't Feed the Teachers They Eat the Students*, describing the exigent need for the instructional leader to be responsive to teacher requests (Connors, 2000). This demand for logistical information is analogous to an organizational hierarchy of needs—too much uncertainty creates an environment in which the brain downshifts and cannot focus on larger issues or future planning (Caine & Caine, 1997).

Professional Development: Current Reality

Ongoing professional training and development is one of the four critical functions of human resource management (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1999). The training and development sector includes orientation and ongoing efforts to improve employee performance. The following section briefly describes the various systems that are currently implemented in Carlsbad Unified School District that focus on ongoing professional growth.

The present system for professional development is segmented into classified and certificated realms. The classified performance evaluation system utilizes the same checklist for all of the various professions that do not require a teaching credential; in other words, the lead custodian is evaluated on the same criteria as the administrative assistant, the district painter, truck driver, and computer technician. Classified employees are evaluated at two-months and

five-months during their probationary period and annually thereafter. The categories of evaluation include attendance, personal appearance, quantity of work, reliability, and effective working relationships ("Classified performance evaluation," 1994). Employees can receive a rating of *Meets Standards, Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory*, or *Not Applicable*.

Certificated employees have a completely different evaluation system based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) and the *cognitive coaching* model to promote reflective feedback ("Certificated performance evaluation system," 1999; Costa & Garmston, 1994). Teachers identify a standard of focus and tailor their own professional development plan to their individual needs. Classroom observation cycles that include a planning and reflecting conference are completed either two or four times per year. The teacher then completes a year-end reflection on their professional growth ("Certificated performance evaluation system," 1999). Quarterly conferences are held so that site administrators and teachers can periodically review progress with regard to professional growth.

Managers and school administrators also have a unique system for professional development. The superintendent creates a document entitled “Goals and Objectives” that guides the managers to complete individual goals that match the direction of the district. Quarterly conferences between the superintendent and site administrators are held to periodically review progress made with relation to the site goals and objectives. For the purposes of coherence and consistency, this paper will focus on the professional development of the teachers and provide supporting information about classified and administrative systems.

My role and leadership style

As the site principal for the new school, my role is to ensure that all students are learning. That occurs through supervision of all campus employees, both certificated and classified, and facilitation of processes to promote greater effectiveness in instructional practice. I aspire to the Taoist ideal of a leader: "Good leadership consists of doing less and being more" (Heider, 1985, p. 113). More specifically, I align myself with the metaphor of water, that substance which provides one of the two essential building blocks for life (heat is the other): "water cleanses and refreshes all creatures without distinction and without judgment; water freely and fearlessly goes deep beneath the surface of things; water is fluid and responsive" (Heider, 1985, p. 15).

This model for leadership is consonant with Greenleaf's servant leadership, in which the leader's priority is the fulfilling the needs of others (Greenleaf, 1995). I agree with Greenleaf's assertion that leadership is least effective when it is typified by a coercive relationship and more effective when the goal is for leader and follower to mutually support one another. The crux of this philosophy is the understanding that leadership evolves based on an individual's ability to choose to support the leader. In most respects, I believe that my style of leadership is primarily oriented to the service of others and that my actions are congruent with Greenleaf's model.

Another way to describe my leadership style is to borrow the words of systems theorist Jamshid Gharajedaghi: "Leadership is … defined as the ability to influence those whom we do not control" (Gharajedaghi, 1999, p. 32). The distinction of importance in this phrase is the clarification between control and influence—control is a concept rooted in the industrial/mechanical era of mass production and Newtonian thinking (Capra, 1996). Influence is more aligned with the new systems thinking popularized by Senge (1990), Wheatley (M. Wheatley & M. Kellner-Rogers, 1996), and others (Gharajedaghi, 1999). Harvard professor

William Fullmer describes the new model for leadership as akin to being a catalyst that will "create and nurture an environment that allows the organization to operate at the edge of chaos … to successfully lead in this type of environment requires a nontraditional view of leadership" (Fullmer, 2000, p.230).

Joseph Jaworski describes the connection between servant leadership and a systems perspective: "In our traditional way of thinking, 'servant leadership' sounds like an oxymoron. But in a world of relationships, where relatedness is the organizing principle of the universe, it makes perfect sense" (Jaworski, 1996, p. 59). Servant leadership places an emphasis on the relationship between leader and follower and de-emphasizes the task-oriented nature of many leadership models. The focus on the quality of the relationship is consistent with my studies of chaos theory, quantum physics, complexity theory, and other new scientific models. Although I have great respect for thinkers such as Kouzes and Posner I would not agree with their definition of leadership as "the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 30). For me, leadership is not about mobilizations or struggle—it is about helping others to reach their potential through quality relationships.

The final piece of the leadership equation for me goes back to Heider's assertion that good leadership is about "being" and not about "doing." Burns elaborates on this distinction by utilizing the terms transforming and transactional as descriptors for leadership (Burns, 1995). He claims that the transactional leader engages in exchanges of valued things (political, psychological, etc.) and the transforming leader is typified by engaging and elevating others to pursue higher levels of "motivation and morality" (Burns, 1995, p. 101). My aspiration is to be the transforming leader who assists others to "move from one stage of development to a higher one and in doing so to address and fulfill better a higher human need" (Cuoto, 1995, p. 103).

Although this theme of development will be expanded in the ethical platform, at this point I can summarize by stating that my opinion is that the transforming leader is most effective through modeling the pursuit of higher developmental stages and cultivating quality relationships with others.

SPEL: Driving forces for professional development

The SPEL model provides an "internal and external analysis of an issue or organization" and promotes a well-balanced understanding of the complexity of a particular situation while also indicating potential areas for action (Schmieder-Ramirez, 2001, p. 2). The model consists of a matrix identifying driving forces in the social/political, economic, and legal arenas. Briefly, the driving forces for the focus on professional development at the new school site are as follows:

Table 1

SPEL Matrix

Social/Political	Economic	Legal
Transition to information age	Limited funding	Negotiated agreements with labor groups
School choice movement		Single Plan for Pupil Achievement (SPPA)

Social/Political. Schools are in the midst of a transformation from industrial-age institutions to an organization that is better aligned with the information age (Senge et al., 2000). This shift entails a reorientation of employee perceptions about lifelong learning. Drucker asserts that one of the characteristics of the "knowledge worker" is a "habit of continual learning" (Drucker, 2001, p. 305). California's educational system has acknowledged this change in the restructuring of teacher credentials—"lifetime" credentials are being replaced by

staggered levels of certification which all require annual participation in professional development sessions. At Calavera Hills continued employment of several staff members is contingent upon upgrading their certification status to comply with state requirements.

Schools are now situated in an environment that is increasingly competitive. The Academic Performance Index ranks schools against one another and the school choice movement is gaining momentum. Home schooling is "the fastest-growing segment in education" with "between 1.6 and 2 million children" now home schooled; a figure that is rising at a rate between 15-20 percent each year (Davenport, 2002, p.14). Private schools and charter schools are also increasing their enrollments. The following table summarizes charter school enrollment over the past three years at the state and county level as an indication of the growing market pressure for charter school expansion (Education, 2001):

Table 2

Number of Charter Schools and ADA

		1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
California	Number of Charter Schools	182	240	302
	Total Charter School ADA	86,205	102,339	115,582
San Diego County	Number of Charter Schools	18	24	32
	Total Charter School ADA	13,275	15,712	18,382

The increased enrollment in charter schools means that millions of dollars are being redirected to charter schools as a result of market forces indicating a continued preference for alternative means of education. The inference that can be drawn from this data is that the public increasingly prefers to "buy" the educative product offered by charter schools instead of continuing to participate in the existing system. Improving teacher practice through professional

development is considered one of the more effective forms of school improvement (Fullan, 1993)—as schools move into this competitive environment there will be additional pressure for teachers to be current in their practice.

Despite the trend for increased school choice, conventional public schools have considerable competitive advantage due to the history of public education and the support systems that are presently available. Projections for Calavera Hills enrollment were underestimated due to the fact that large numbers of students previously enrolled in private schools switched to the public institution when we opened in the fall.

Economic. The driving forces in the social/political arena are offset by the harsh realities of the economic situation of public schools. For example, Calavera Hills Elementary School has an unrestricted annual budget of $30,843. Reformists have called for approximately 20% of teacher time to be dedicated to professional development (Cook, 1997)—for the Calavera Hills staff that would amount to approximately $200,000 in expenses for teachers and another $60,000 for classified personnel. These estimates reinforce the fact that current funding is insufficient, catalyzing creative and inexpensive strategies for ongoing employee learning. It is also likely that the costs of public education will continue to escalate without a concomitant increase in the level of funding appropriated to schools (Townley, Schmieder, & Wehmeyer, 1998). The lack of available funding is a limiting factor in the effective development and implementation of professional development opportunities for school personnel.

Legal. Another factor that has a profound impact in terms of the design and execution of professional development systems are the negotiated labor agreements with certificated and classified staff. The agreements serve as legal documents that set policy for the schools. For example, our District has an early student release each Thursday that provides an additional hour

of time that could potentially be allocated for structured teacher professional development. However, the negotiated agreement indicates that the time cannot be directed by administration and that only teachers can determine the nature of their efforts during the additional time ("Negotiated agreement between Carlsbad Unified School District and Carlsbad Unified Teachers Association," 2001). The classified employee contract places similar restrictions on the degree of direction that will come from administration to guide professional learning ("Negotiated agreement between Carlsbad Unified School District and Carlsbad Unified Teachers Association," 2001). I am hopeful that my participative leadership style will facilitate the evolution of an organizational culture in which such contractual barriers are minimized and the primary referent for work becomes a shared vision instead of a negotiated agreement.

Finally, a driving force for continued professional development is the implementation of the Single Plan for Pupil Achievement (SPPA) specified by the SB 374 amendment to Education Code Section 64001. All schools in California are required to complete the SPPA and have the plan approved by the local school board prior to the distribution of any discretionary funds. The SPPA includes a component that identifies professional development as an area of focus and compels schools to review their existing systems and create improvement plans to accelerate professional learning.

The combined force of the shift to the information age, school choice momentum, limited funding, negotiated labor agreements, and the SPPA indicate that professional development is an area of great need with many restrictions and limitations. The brief SPEL analysis reveals that it will require creative thinking and resourcefulness to actualize the site vision through implementation of a comprehensive professional development plan.

Chapter 2

Identity

One of the challenges of opening a new school was to approach the creation of an organizational identity with great attention and intention. Myron Kellner-Rogers and Margaret Wheatley assert that identity "becomes the sense-making process of the organization. In deciding what to do, a system will refer back to its sense of self" (M. J. Wheatley & M. Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 21). In addition to "current interpretations of its history" an organization utilizes its vision, mission and values as referents (M. J. Wheatley & M. Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 21). As the principal of the new Calavera Hills School I determined that it would be essential to carefully focus on those elements listed as referents. The following sections chronicle my thinking and briefly describe my efforts to communicate a clear vision to the stakeholders.

Ethical Platform

Given my unique blend of influences, ranging from Eastern religions to modern scientific theory, my personal philosophy is best described as a mix of existentialism and pragmatism. Pragmatism is typically defined in terms of "efficacy in practical application" (Honderich, 1995, p. 710) and has roots in utilitarian ethical models. John Stuart Mill describes the utilitarian model as a model for ethical determinations in which individual liberties must be weighed against the "definite risk of damage, either to an individual or to the public" (Mill, 1999, p. 330). In other words, individual decisions should be made for the benefit of the individual and the community. According to research from complexity and chaos theory, systems perched on the "edge of chaos" are most likely to adapt and survive (Fullmer, 2000)—thus "efficacy in practical application" can be evaluated by the degree to which the actions of individual agents assist the organization or system to balance between order and chaos.

Existentialism, on the other hand, focuses more on the "irreducibility of the perspective of human agents, whose activities, emotions, and thoughts … are to be understood in terms of their aspiration to 'become an individual'" (Honderich, 1995, p. 261). That is, the existentialist understanding of reality is based on an individual's experiences as he or she strives to develop to higher states of consciousness. This drive for higher stages of development that is inherent in the existential philosophy is closely related to my decision to become an educator and serves as a foundation in my leadership philosophy.

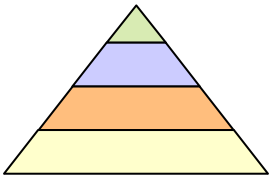
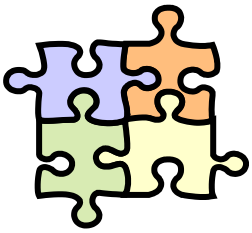
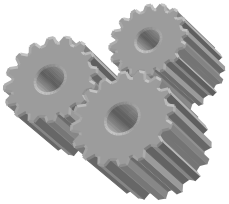
Ken Wilber utilizes a developmental model proposed by Clare Graves known as "spiral dynamics … an unfolding, emergent, oscillating spiral process marked by progressive subordination of older, lower-order behavior systems to newer, higher-order systems as an individual's existential problems change … when the human is centralized in one state of existence, he or she has a psychology which is particular to that state" (Wilber, 2000, p. 6). Using this model, he defines development as "a successive decrease in egocentrism" (Wilber, 2000, p. 17). Another way to phrase this is to see human development as a transition from physiocentrism to egocentrism to sociocentrism (Wilber, 1996).

Steven Covey articulates this developmental progression as a "maturity continuum" in which we move from dependence to independence to interdependence (1989, p. 48). The following table is my integration of the Wilber and Covey models with additional descriptors (organizational and societal) provided for reinforcement:

Table 3

Maturity Continuum Descriptors

Dependent	**Independent**	**Interdependent**
Physiocentric	Egocentric	Sociocentric
Mythic—	Mechanistic—	Systemic—
Oracles, Prophecies,	Clocks, Newton, Cartesian	Complexity Theory, Organic

Predetermination, Divine Kings	Segmentation, Division of Labor, Populist Movements	models (living systems)
Agrarian Economy	Industrial Economy	Information Age
Pre-rational	Rational	Trans-rational
Vertical Dyads	Individuals	Teams and Organizations
"They"	"I"	"We"
		
Authoritarian	Incoherent chaos	Network stable complexity
Efficient (brainless)	Creative	Effective
Focus on compliance	Focus on autonomy	Focus on process
Centralization	Decentralization	Balance
Integration	Differentiation	Integrated differentiation
Purpose	Participation	Feedback
"Swing"	"Improvisation"	"Call and Response"

My personal ethical platform is thus founded on the pragmatic and utilitarian concern for application for the benefit of the community and mixed with the existentialist drive for personal development exemplified by Wilber's spiral dynamic developmental model and Covey's maturity continuum. These elements will be evident in the creation of the site vision.

Vision

There are two extremes on the theoretical foundations of implementing a vision for an organization: one school of thought focuses on the leader who "enlists others in a common vision" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 148) while the other sees a shared vision emerging through interaction among individuals with their own visions (Senge et al., 2000). Although I tend to align myself with systems theorists and living systems models promoting an emergent vision, I felt that the context demanded a shift in my leadership style. Even a compromise approach such as the "guiding coalition" model proposed by Kotter "often requires those on the guiding

coalition to spend a few hundred hours collecting information, digesting it, considering alternatives, and eventually making choices" (Kotter, 1996. p. 86). Given the fact that we did not have the necessary time or information to make collective decisions (recall that we had but 12 hours of time as a group before the students arrived), I proposed that my motto of a "learning community" serve as the springboard for team-building and collaboration and that our staff would be involved in the process of creating a shared vision throughout the course of our first year of operation.

I used a consensus-assessment strategy developed by Sheri Barker at the San Diego County Office of Education to determine if the staff was agreeable to my proposal and quickly determined that all of the staff members were comfortable with the plan to utilize the "learning community" as the initial vision and work on the creation of a shared vision after the challenge of opening the school had been completed. I believe that my pragmatic foundation and drive for that which is effective assisted me in shifting to a non-preferred mode of leadership; after all, "Whatever is flexible and flowing will tend to grow. Whatever is rigid and blocked will atrophy and die" (Heider, 1985, p. 151).

To provide some context for the "learning community" theme I gave a brief presentation on jazz music at our first staff development meeting. I focused on the three elements of jazz: swing, improvisation, and call and response (Folley-Cooper, Macanic, & McNeil, 1997) and discussed the tension between group harmony and individual improvisation. I described how jazz musicians use call and response to generate feedback so that they can straddle that creative edge between coherence and dissipation. Next I utilized a pitchfork bifurcation diagram from chaos theory to visually depict the "edge of chaos" and asked the group to describe, in their own words, how an effective organization is also situated on the edge (See Appendix A). Next I

distributed the table demonstrating the maturity continuum and the various elements that can be correlated with the different stages. That document served as the foundation for a brief dialogue about the fact that our society is currently transforming from an industrial economy to the information age and how that shift is impacting schools.

Given my knowledge of chaos theory and transformative leadership I understood that the group needed an organizing force—some referent or *strange attractor* that would facilitate a degree of self-organization (M. J. Wheatley & M. Kellner-Rogers, 1996). It was at that point that I unveiled the proposed mission statement for the school: "Calavera Hills will be a student-centered learning community characterized by interdependence at all levels of the organization." A parallel should be evident between this statement and the ethical platform describing the maturity continuum. The operative phrase with regard to professional development is "all levels of the organization"—that is, we are not simply striving for student growth, but personal development for teachers, support staff, administration, and parent groups. The goal of that growth is movement along the continuum (dependence→independence→interdependence). Given my pragmatic tendencies, it was important for me to articulate the importance of this growth in the context of increased organizational effectiveness and benefits for the community. I also presented the following table that I developed for the purposes of linking individual development with the effectiveness of the organization:

Table 4

Scalar Maturity Continuum

Organization			Dependent	Independent	Interdependent
Team		Dependent	Independent	Interdependent	
Individual	Dependent	Independent	Interdependent		

The model infers a delay in the development of teams and organizations that results from delays in the coupling process (Capra, 1996) (Kaufman, Watkins, & Leigh, 2001). The professional development model for the school should connect with this scalar maturity continuum to promote alignment between the mission and the plan for professional growth; measurement systems should also connect with the various levels of the organization to ensure that the stated objective (interdependence at all levels) is congruent with the evaluation systems.

Strategic Planning

Professional development should be situated within the context of a comprehensive strategic plan. Bolman and Deal refer to a fragmented approach to organizational leadership as limited, instead encouraging a "holistic framework" to improve effectiveness (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 16). Other authors further distinguish between a "system" and a "systems" approach, asserting that a "system" approach begins with society as a whole whereas the "systems" approach looks at individual institutions (Kaufman et al., 2001, p. 17). Watkins and Leigh describe the various scales as "Mega" (societal), "Macro" (organizational), and "Micro" (individual or small group) (Watkins & Leigh, 2001). These are somewhat analogous to the levels I described in my scalar maturity continuum; my omission is at the societal level and I distinguish between individual and small groups while Watkins and Leigh group those two levels under the umbrella of the "micro" scale. My rationale for such alterations is based on the fact that, in my experience, educators tend to intuit or believe that their efforts are positively contributing to a movement in the direction of Kaufman's "ideal vision" in which "all adult citizens will be self-sufficient and self-reliant" (Kaufman et al., 2001, p. 71). Additionally, it was my opinion that we lacked the time to begin the process at the societal level with such a cacophony of exigent issues such as creating daily schedules, determining grade level

assignments, setting up classrooms, notifying parents about pick-up and drop-off procedures, and so on.

At the organizational, team, and individual levels I simply asserted that our goal should be interdependence. This declaration was made with an acute understanding that modeling would be an essential strategy for creating buy-in from the group. The descriptors that were utilized for interdependence included alignment with the information age, focus on effectiveness, and feedback systems. All of our plans, including the School Safety Plan, the Site Technology Plan, the Single Plan for Pupil Achievement, and our Professional Development Plan should therefore integrate the use of technology, focus on outcomes that indicate effectiveness, and utilize feedback systems for optimization and continued growth.

One of the fundamental tools of strategic planning is the use of needs assessments to determine gaps between what "is" and what "should be" (Kaufman et al., 2001; Tyler, 1949). Given our status as a new organization, there was no data available at the organizational level (i.e. student test scores) to drive any of the planning process. Instead, needs such as "we have no discipline plan, no strategies for prevention of discipline problems, no way to track disciplinary referrals" were the primary drivers in the change process. Establishment of procedures to collect data is an antecedent to data analysis; therefore our focus was necessarily on the creation of the procedures themselves. This situation could alternately be framed as practical focus on that which was "real" and present at that particular point in time.

An important strategic consideration becomes evident when William Bridges' three-part model for change is used as a filter to view the opening of a new school; Bridges suggests that transitions go through phases he labels the *ending*, *neutral zone*, and *new beginning* (Bridges, 1991). Ceremonies such as after-school parties commemorated the *ending* for staff members as

they departed their schools and, given the fact that all of the teachers were voluntary transfers, there seemed to be few complications with closure at previous schools.

Most of our time has been spent in the *neutral zone* due to the fact that there has been so much uncertainty about the specifics of the new school. Bridges describes this period as one in which "it is natural for people to become polarized between those who want to rush forward and those who want to go back to the old ways" (Bridges, 1991, p. 35). For the leader, the task in navigating the neutral zone is "twofold: first, to get your organization through in one piece and, second, to capitalize on the confusion by fostering innovation" (Bridges, 1991, p. 37). Strategies for getting through the uncertain period include: creating temporary systems, strengthening intragroup connections, and using a transition monitoring team. These strategies do not involve an overly analytic or labor-intensive planning process. The chaos of the neutral zone demands "short range goals" and intense communication networks (Bridges, 1991, p. 40). Implementing a group approach such as the "transition monitoring team" is ineffectual when there is no staff or when the staff members are not integrated. Some of the steps that I did take as the leader included articulating the fact that people should be feeling some anxiety and nervousness given our uncertain circumstances, establishing an email network to promote communication among the staff members who were working at various sites (staff members were identified in May and their assignments would change at the end of June), and establishing short-term goals. Successfully negotiating the neutral zone was instrumental in the success of our *new beginning* (Bridges, 1991).

The *new beginning* can be more effectively facilitated by incorporating four elements into the transition: 1) explanation of the basic *purpose*; 2) painting a *picture*; 3) establishing a *plan*; and 4) giving each individual a *part* to play (Bridges, 1991). At Calavera Hills the purpose for

the new school was not a source of great concern; most of the students, staff, and community members had observed or experienced over-crowded circumstances within the District. The *picture* of the future was articulated in the site mission and the plan that was utilized fits into the model proposed by Bridges that "outlines the steps and schedule in which people will receive the information, training, and support they will need" (Bridges, 1991, p. 58). One of the ways that this was accomplished was via distribution of a site communication plan, including weekly newsletters to staff and parents and routine assemblies. The *part* that individuals were asked to play included their role in terms of giving input throughout the transition process via surveys and informal networks.

The four "rules" proscribed by Bridges were also manifest in the opening of the new school. The first rule, "Be consistent," relates to the importance of modeling the desired behavior and reinforcing the message through action (Bridges, 1991, p. 61). Ensuring quick successes and symbolizing the new identity through adopting a school mascot were also instrumental in creating momentum and building a shared identity. Finally, celebrating the success of our ventures through social gatherings and award ceremonies helped to cement the "new sense of identity" as members of a new community of practice (Bridges, 1991, p. 63).

Chapter 3

Relationships

One of the other fundamental challenges in opening a new school is establishing positive relationships that reinforce the organizational identity: "The focus on relationships is also a dominant theme in today's management advice … leadership is always dependent on the context, but the context is established by the relationships we value" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 144). New

scientific models such as superstring theory and advanced quantum field theory posit that physical reality is founded on relationships between minute sub-quantum or sub-atomic phenomenon (Greene, 1999). Margaret Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers include relationships as one of the three conditions of self-organization, asserting that "without connections, nothing happens" (1996, p. 23). This section will focus on relationships internal and external to the new Calavera Hills School, including a review of the human resources systems and procedures, a summary of adult learning theory to support ongoing professional development, marketing the organization, and the role of diversity.

Human Resources

DeCenzo and Robbins propose an approach to human resource management "consisting of four basic functions: (1) staffing, (2) training and development, (3) motivation, and (4) maintenance" (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1999, p. 8). My selection as principal was the first step in beginning this four-stage process. Given the need for quick mobilization and organization of existing resources (human and otherwise), Carlsbad Unified School District opted to publicize the opening for the new principalship internal to the district. My competition was thus restricted to other existing and aspiring administrators within the District. The selection process included submission of a letter of intent and an individual interview with the Superintendent. The recommendation of the Superintendent was acted upon by the School Board to finalize the hiring process.

One of my chief tasks was to hire the requisite number of teachers for the new school. I was directed to fill as many of the positions as possible with transfers internal to the district as there was little anticipated growth and the movement of students to the new school would create situations in which other schools were overstaffed. There are two classifications of transfers:

voluntary and involuntary (("Negotiated agreement between Carlsbad Unified School District and Carlsbad Unified Teachers Association," 2001). Involuntary transfers would be less likely to be motivated and thus exert less effort to perform (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1999). A staffing process that alienates those individuals who will routinely interact with parents and community members would also have a detrimental impact on the ability of the organization to foster goodwill from the community. According to teachers who have been involved in opening new schools, overly centralized decisions regarding staffing were seen as a "restraining force" in positively developing morale that would contribute to a positive school image (Bolender, 1995, p. 19). Research from the corporate world also indicates that mass reassignment of staff typically creates a sense of shock and "emotions run high … efficiency, learning, and productivity often plummet" (Ross, 1997, p. 17).

DeCenzo and Robbins list several influences that serve as incentives or disincentives for pursuing new employment, including the image of the organization, attractiveness of the job, and internal organizational policies (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1999). Since there was no facility or school and the basic functions and organizational policies were going to be similar across schools it was important for me to begin to craft a compelling image for what the new school would become. My strategy was to implement a triune strategy that outlined three critical conditions for effective leadership in terms of promoting team performance: 1) Be accessible; 2) Ask for input; and 3) Serve as a "fallibility model" by admitting mistakes to the team (Edmonson, Bohmer, & Pisano, 2001, p. 132). I hosted a series of open forums at each of the elementary schools for staff members to ask any questions that they might have about the transfer process. To promote greater accessibility I distributed memos with my personal email address and made a conscious effort to quickly respond to messages related to transfers of staff.

I also distributed surveys to teachers around the district asking for input regarding the logistics of the interviews (i.e. Would they prefer to have an afterschool interview? Would it be better to hire a roving substitute and conduct the interviews during the day?). I attempted to demonstrate my "fallibility" by using the phrase "I don't know" when I encountered new and challenging questions.

Research indicated that many new schools ended up with a mix of enthusiastic voluntary teacher transfers and disgruntled involuntary transfers (Kennedy, 1999; Shafer, 1999). This condition is one of the primary reasons articles on opening new schools have been entitled *A Dickension Challenge* and *What Else Could Go Wrong?* (Kennedy, 1999; Shafer, 1999). Fortunately, interest in Calavera Hills School was strong among the existing teachers within the District and there were more individuals interested in a voluntary transfer than available teaching positions. Given my participative/servant leadership style, this set of circumstances created a challenge. As the sole employee of the new school, how could I use a team approach to assist with the staffing decisions? My initial plan of using an "assessment center" approach outlined by DeCenzo and Robbins in which multiple assessors evaluate candidates as they progress through multiple exercises such as interviews, case studies, group discussions, personality tests, and teaching demonstrations was deemed impractical and too costly given our fiscal constraints and short timeline for making final determinations (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1999). My solution was to have teachers serve on the interview team immediately following their interview—creating a loop in which all prospective transfers were both "interviewees" and "interviewers" during the course of the process. A rubric and interview questions were distributed prior to the interview to all of the voluntary transfer candidates. Teachers were also made aware of the fact that the majority of teachers would necessarily come from one of the schools given the fact that

it was losing some 300 students to Calavera Hills and would require a concomitant reduction in staff. As the principal, I made final recommendations to the superintendent based on the results of the interviews, my observations of the candidates as they served on the interview team, input from the site administrators, and the logistical constraints based on student movement. The net result was the positive outcome of being able to fully staff Calavera Hills with eager voluntary transfers without incurring any staff overages that would result in involuntary transfers at existing schools.

Using the DeCenzo model, the succeeding phase is "training and development" (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1999, p. 9). The first concern for the new staff would be to build relationships (socialization) to minimize anxiety and begin to co-create an organizational identity. Typically this socialization occurs against the backdrop of a unique organizational culture that includes "long-standing, and often unwritten, rules and regulations; a special language that facilitates communication among members … established customs for how members should relate to peers, employees, bosses, and outsiders" (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1999, p. 225). For a new school such as Calavera Hills there was no history or precedent to establish that shared culture—here we had a situation in which teachers from seven different schools were now expected to work cohesively together. Recall also that the entirety of the staff development budget allowed for 12 hours of collaborative time.

The book *The Social Life of Information* suggests a creative solution that addresses the challenge facing Calavera Hills at the point at which staff had been identified but there was little time or resources for formal training, teambuilding, and visioning—their suggested approach is to foster social interaction to "find their identity" (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 113) and "provide the resources for their members to learn" (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 137). The social

interactions can lead to the creation of informal ties that have been observed "speeding well ahead of the slow pace of formal contracts" and other structured relationships (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 166).

This influenced a plan in which we had an initial six-hour session that featured three hours of teambuilding games and activities designed to "warm up" the group and "invoke the use of participation in a positive manner" (Newstrom, 1980, p. xiv). To promote informal, social interaction the session began with a brief breakfast and featured a trip to a neighboring restaurant for lunch. We also took the Kiersey Temperament Sorter II (a variant of the Myers-Briggs) and used those results as a springboard for conversations regarding our similarities and differences (Kiersey, 1998). The final hours were devoted to discussing the vision for the school and using an article from Peter Senge entitled *The Industrial Age System of Education* to generate a framework for cohesive action (Senge et al., 2000).

The teachers reversed the "industrial-age assumptions about learning" (for example: "everyone learns, or should learn, in the same way" was transformed to "everyone learns in unique ways") and generated a list of action items that would demonstrate a commitment to a new approach to schooling (Senge et al., 2000, p. 39). There was a unanimous consensus that we should strive to implement the following ten action items:

1. Multi-sensory teaching and learning
2. Assessment: Pre-, formative, and summative
3. Cross-age buddies
4. Collaboration
5. Conflict resolution
6. Safe & orderly environment

7. Service learning
8. Open door/PTA
9. Cultural awareness
10. Varied Recognition

Given that this list was generated within the context of a school mission to move in the direction of interdependence and better alignment with the information age, the professional development plan for the school should incorporate these action items to promote cohesiveness and encourage continued input from staff.

This formal training and collaboration was supplemented by a series of social events to promote ongoing interaction and foster the development of relationships among the staff. Social events included happy hour, a barbeque held at my house, and a breakfast event. In the words of Rosamund and Benjamin Zander, " … the answer is the relationship. Because in the arena of possibility, everything occurs in that context" (Zander & Zander, 2000, p. 50). Systems theorists similarly emphasize informal interactions as a strategy for organizational improvement: "People need opportunities to 'bump up' against others in the system, making the unplanned connections that spawn new ventures or better integrated responses" (M. J. Wheatley & M. Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 23).

Adult Learning

Ongoing professional development should also be founded on adult learning theory. The core principles of adult learning theory are encapsulated under the umbrella of andragogy, itself consisting of six principles: 1) the learner's need to know; 2) self-concept of the learner; 3) prior experience of the learner; 4) readiness to learn; 5) orientation to learning; and 6) motivation to learn (Knowles, III, & Swanson, 1998). A solid plan for adult learning should thus be

purposeful (satisfying the "need to know"), self-directed (reinforcing the autonomy of the adult learner), and build on the experiences and knowledge of the learner. In addition, the learning experience(s) should be appropriate, problem-centered, relevant to the individual's work, and have some intrinsic value (Knowles et al., 1998).

Knowles provides a description of an "innovative organization" that embeds andragogy into the organizational structure to optimize learning and improve employee performance; many of the elements of this "innovative" organization focus on learning in the informal domain ("caring" … "warm" … "trusting") and he alludes to a focus on "interdependency" (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 208). Here the parallel with the mission statement and the drive for interdependence is evident, hinting at the possibility for integration of andragogous practice as part of the school's professional development plan.

Another prominent adult learning theory is Mezirow's theory of transformative learning (Cranton, 1994). Mezirow's theory consists of ten phases, beginning with a "disorienting dilemma" and concluding with "reintegrating into society on the basis of conditions dictated by the new perspective" (Cranton, 1994, p. 23). From the perspective of the principal of a new school, the physical relocation and placement with dozens of other co-workers, hundreds of students, and an entirely new community certainly meets the criteria for a "disorienting dilemma," indicating that there may be some possibilities for strategically implementing the other phases to promote personal transformation among the staff members. To pursue this transformation, the school plan should include the following elements: self-examination, review of mental models, "relating one's discontent to similar experiences of others," providing options, "building competence," planning, acquisition of new skills and knowledge, and "making provisional efforts to try new roles and to assess feedback" (Cranton, 1994, p. 23). These

components are consistent with the expectation that adults strive to reach an interdependent stage in their teaching and learning.

One of those important steps is the review of mental models, also known as schema or schematic theory (Knowles et al., 1998). Knowles defined schema as "cognitive structures that are built as learning and experiences accumulate and are packaged in memory" (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 140). Knowles also briefly mentions three "different modes of learning in relation to schema: accretion, tuning, and restructuring" (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 140). These three modes are analogous to Nobel prize-winner Murray Gell-Mann's model for competing and cooperative schema in which adaptation takes place at three different levels: 1) direct adaptation which requires no change in the prevailing schema; 2) change in schema based on "selection pressures in the real world;" and 3) elimination of maladaptive schema (Gell-Mann, 1994, p. 293). Gell-Mann further equates these three levels of adaptation to different time scales, which each level in adaptation being implemented over a longer period of time. Gell-Mann's three levels appear to correlate with Knowles' modes of accretion, tuning, and restructuring.

Rumelhart and Ortony propose two ways in which schema can develop and adapt: specialization (creation of subsets of schema) and generalization (combining multiple schema and reducing the schema into subsets of the new schemata) (Martin, 1994). This suggests that schema can be embedded within one another and that there may be a bi-directional approach to fostering change in schema. The fact that schema can be nested within other schema—creating a holarchical system—should then conform to the tendencies of other holonic manifestations, exhibiting increasing complexity and less frequency at the higher levels (Wilber, 1996).

Connecting Mezirow's transformative theory with the three levels of schema theory indicates that Mezirow is primarily concerned with the "restructuring" level of schema theory.

A comprehensive plan for professional development should also include the lower levels of schematic adaptation (accretion and tuning). That is, not all of the learning should be preceded by crisis and not all learning should last a long duration of time. Recall that the first plank of Knowles' theory was the "Learner's need to know" which may fluctuate over time and in different situations. Integrating andragogy, transformative learning, and schema theory we see that there should exist several components in a well-defined learning plan for adults: purpose, choice, connection with prior and current experience, intrinsic value, short-term accretion of knowledge, mid-term tuning of mental models, and long-term restructuring or transformation. Interestingly, many of these components are inherent in the change process and transitioning from the *neutral zone* to a *new beginning* (Bridges, 1991).

These components are evident in the "Teacher Performance Evaluation and Professional Development System" that is currently implemented in Carlsbad Unified School District. This process includes setting goals so that teachers can model "complex thinking, information processing, effective communication, collaboration/cooperation, and self-directed learning" ("Teacher performance evaluation and professional development system," 2002, p. 3). The five elements of the system are: 1) Teacher performance standards; 2) Needs assessment; 3) Professional development/action plan; 4) Formative assessment of teaching; and 5) Summative Evaluation ("Teacher performance evaluation and professional development system," 2002, p. 4). The standards are derived from the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) and the California Education Code. The "needs assessment" is primarily a self-reflection (one of the elements of transformative learning theory) and the individual also directs the action plan. The "formative assessment" piece includes peer coaching, planning and reflecting conferences, quarterly conferences, and review of feedback ("Teacher performance evaluation and

professional development system," 2002). The summative evaluation includes a self-reflection and a formal evaluation from the supervising administrator. The action plan provided by Carlsbad Unified School District should serve as the template for Calavera Hills School's planning form and the school plan for professional development should integrate with the District framework.

Diversity

All of the components of the human resources framework should attempt to capitalize on the increasing diversity in the American workforce. Systems and procedures that may have been effective for a predominantly white male population may need to be adjusted now that women and different racial and ethnic groups become more influential participants: "Where diversity flourishes, the potential benefits from better creativity and decision making, and greater innovation, can be accrued to help increase an organization's competitiveness" (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1999, p. 38). One author suggests that we begin this transformation by using a "different mirror" to see ourselves and one another in our increasingly diverse society (Takaki, 1993, p. 16). Capra suggests that diversity is a "source of strategic advantage" (Capra, 1996, p. 303) while Mero goes even farther and describes diversity as a "mixed strategy" that is essential for success in any system that can be analyzed by game theory (Mero, 1998, p. 54).

One of the interesting features of the Calavera Hills teaching staff is its homogeneity—all 21 of the classroom teachers are white women and almost two-thirds fit the same profile on the Kiersey Temperament Sorter. Despite the high number of individuals interested in a voluntary transfer to the new school all of the applicants were identical in terms of race and gender. This internal similarity has some advantages in terms of being able to quickly come to consensus and facilitate alignment. However, the lack of diversity is likely to adversely affect the sustainability

of the organization over a longer period of time (Capra, 1996). Future recruitments will certainly attempt to improve the diversity of the staff as our school grows and new positions become available.

Marketing

The relationships that are cultivated internal to the organization should also be extended beyond the school and into the community. The information age has changed many of the unwritten rules about schools—increasing competition and the high likelihood of increased choices among public schools, voucher schools, home schools, distance learning schools, and charter schools make "branding" a smart and pro-active strategy for educational institutions. In addition to organizational branding the "white collar revolution" necessitates individual marketing as well (a la "The Brand You") (Peters, 1999a). This section will begin with organizational efforts and move to individual branding to conclude the description of marketing endeavors.

As the principal of the new school I have been heavily influenced by the "permission marketing" wave that has accompanied the rise of the internet. Mass market strategies such as television or magazine advertising are not only economically impractical but also misdirected—schools such as Calavera Hills have a captured market of existing customers that many private companies will never have. As long as K-12 education is compulsory and residential zones determine the school of attendance there will be a "customer" for our services. The challenge is to transform those "customers" into "raving fans" (Peters, 1999b, p. 96).

Communication from a permission marketing standpoint must meet three criteria: it must be anticipated, personal, and relevant. This strategy, according the author, will help "keep customers longer and get far more … from each of them over time" (Godin, 1999, p. 61). The

Calavera Hills strategy, in other words, is to "invest in customer retention" through "creating an interactive relationship" (Godin, 1999, p. 62). Examples of actions that are exemplify the permission marketing strategy include our solicitation of parent information, including email addresses and preferences for volunteer services, and creation of a database that we can use to contact parents when the need arises. We have also created a weekly communication system for all school information, including school-wide, classroom, and student-level reports. This endeavor creates that sense of anticipation, is personal because it includes specific information about every student, and extremely relevant in that it includes notifications about events in which the student may be a participant. I also have a weekly forum entitled "Dialogue with Devin" where parents meet with me for coffee and conversation about the school. All of this is supplemented by high visibility from all staff during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up for impromptu communications. Using different modes of communication, ranging from impersonal email to group forums to individual interactions, enhances our ability to connect with the community and create a trusting relationship.

The emphasis on individual interaction is also an element of the "gonzo marketing" movement (Locke, 2001). The idea is that marketing is not an organizational responsibility but an individual duty; this approach is somewhat akin to Deming's approach to quality advocating that there should not be a "quality department" and that quality should be "everyobody's job" (Locke, 2001, p. 126). Similarly, marketing and creating trust is a responsibility that rests with each and every individual in the organization. Another theme in the "gonzo" approach is that companies must "become active participants" in the markets they are attempting to serve (Locke, 2001, p. 180). For Calavera Hills this is done by inviting the community into the school (hosting homeowner's association meetings, parenting classes, softball practice, etc.) and by going out

into the community (doing research at the local ecological preserve, visiting the fire station, etc.). Finally, "gonzo" marketing only works when the organization responds to feedback from the customers. Publicizing the results of a parent survey and acting on suggestions made by parents is one example of our efforts to be responsive to the needs of our constituents and deepen our existing relationships.

The permission marketing and "gonzo" strategies are akin to Gladwell's epidemiological perspective (Gladwell, 2000). His book (*The Tipping Point*) describes how news "spreads like a virus" and utilizes an epidemic model to analyze trends in the marketplace (Gladwell, 2000, p. 31). He asserts that a combination of three prototypes of individuals can have a profound influence on a system; "connectors, "mavens," and "salesmen" can combine their network connections, information, and powers of persuasion in synergistic fashion to optimize the results of their efforts. Personally, I fit the role of the "maven," or "one who accumulates knowledge" (Gladwell, 2000, p. 60) due to my predilection for information and the fact that I, like other mavens, "want to help, for no other reason than because they like to help … [this] turns out to be an awfully effective way of getting someone's attention" (Gladwell, 2000, p. 66). My maven tendencies are drivers in my weekly publications for staff, parents, and the superintendent—I routinely include summaries of research that I found interesting or helpful and I am most energized when assisting others to locate sources of information that will benefit them in some fashion.

Gladwell also drives home the message that unified groups have a power beyond the sum of the individuals: "small, close-knit groups have the power to magnify the epidemic potential of a message or idea" (Gladwell, 2000, p. 174). This reinforces the "gonzo" ethic in which marketing is a part of each and every person's functions as a member of an organization. It is

also inspirational in that it purports the possibility of expanded influence beyond the scope of a singular institution or organization.

Another approach to marketing is to consider the individual, "Brand You," level. Vance Caesar uses the phrase "You, Inc." and reinforces the idea that "Everything counts … Your friends; the clothes you wear; what you read; the exercise you get; even what and where you eat—all play a role in your success" (Caesar, 1999, p. 14). Given my role as a public figure and the first employee of the new school, I have been particularly careful to pay attention to my appearance, social calendar, and associations. Additionally, I have employed some of the strategies outlined by Tom Peters, particularly in terms of "important new additions to my Rolodex" (Peters, 1999a). I sent an email query to about a dozen experts in organizational theory regarding my position as the principal of a new school to solicit advice and input regarding strategies for creating an identity that would improve our ability to meet student needs. I received responses from noted figures such as Margaret Wheatley, John Holland (the "father" of the genetic algorithm and complexity theoretician), Michael Cohen (professor at the Center for Complexity Studies at the University of Michigan), Daniel Wilson and Veronica Boix-Manzanillo (both from Harvard University), and Fritjof Capra (author of *The Tao of Physics*). I have also had communications with Myron Rogers (formerly Kellner-Rogers—co-author of *A Simpler Way* with Margaret Wheatley) that led to a lunch meeting and several phone conversations. I have maintained email dialogue with these individuals during the last few months and their input has certainly contributed to more effective leadership on my part. These individuals have served as an informal "board of directors" and provided me with very honest feedback, in the process reinforcing the value of Peters' suggestion that one "contact, cultivate,

nurture like-minded souls who are higher up the food chain than you are … it's worth the effort" (Peters, 1999a, p. 167).

The value of the marketing efforts in terms of professional development is two-fold: organizational marketing generates connections that increase resources and new opportunities for professional growth and individual marketing generates connections that also increase resources and new opportunities for professional growth. For example, as a result of our school-wide efforts we secured a $15,000 grant for library books from Wells Fargo Bank. Superficially that may not seem to be related to parent communication, yet the connection becomes apparent when the fact that the regional manager for Wells Fargo happens to be a parent of a student at our school who read about the book shortage in one of my weekly letters to parents. An example of the school-wide marketing efforts generating opportunities for professional growth is the fact that a parent who is a neuroscientist will be offering free training for staff members on the functioning of the brain as a result of a conversation that occurred at one of the weekly parent forums. Individual branding efforts also generate learning opportunities; it is likely that Myron Rogers will come to our school and work with the staff on creating a shared vision and a set of agreements about how we relate to one another. Although his normal fee is $10,000 per day he intends to conduct our staff development for travel and lodging costs. This would not be feasible were it not for the personal connection that evolved from implementation of a basic "Brand You" marketing strategy.

Chapter 4

Information

Information is the third element of the self-organizing organization (M. J. Wheatley & M. Kellner-Rogers, 1996). In the living systems model information is akin to the "nutrient" of the

organization and that the flow of information can create "the emergence of fast, well-integrated, effective responses" (M. J. Wheatley & M. Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 23). This chapter will focus on the use of information as a learning tool, including the utilization of technology and the way that evaluation systems will generate data that will better inform strategic and operational decision-making.

Technology

One of the important considerations during conversations about technology is to recall that computers, the internet, digital cameras, and all of the other technological innovations are not a panacea for organizational improvement: "some of the people driving us all hard into the future on the back of new technologies appear to assume that if we all focus hard enough on information, then we will get where we want to go most directly. This central focus inevitably pushes aside all the fuzzy stuff that lies around the edges—context, background, history, common knowledge, social resources … the stuff around the edges is not as irrelevant as it may seem" (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 1). While Brown and Duguid admit that "information is critical" they also urge a greater focus to avoid "social and moral blindness" (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 31). They make a strong case for the benefits of informal, social interaction to support the expansion of shared knowledge. In their view, this emphasis on the social domain is even more essential now that technology has dramatically increased the volume and accessibility of information: "as the abundance of information overwhelms us all, we need not simply more information, but people to assimilate, understand, and make sense of it" (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 121). Their research supports findings from other researchers who have identified limitations to distance learning models (Gilmore & Fritsch, 2001).

Understanding that genuine learning is not likely to occur given an efficient and state-of-the-art technological infrastructure, it may seem odd that the new Calavera Hills school is outfitted with the latest and greatest CAT-5 cabling, high-powered Dell rack servers, and enough new desktops to maintain a ratio of 3.6 students per computer. This is due to the fact that, although technology in and of itself is unlikely to positively impact learning (for students or adults), a "blended" approach with an awareness that learning systems must include social networks as well as data networks can be extremely effective (Brown & Duguid, 2000; Hicks, 2001). Additionally, the use of technology to improve operational efficiency can "create" additional time for interactive learning (Mero, 1998).

One of the critical uses of technology at Calavera Hills is as a tool for internal communication. All of the staff members, from teachers to custodians, have easy access to a networked computer configured with an intranet program ("First Class") that provides email accounts, newsgroup postings, a calendar, and chat rooms. Using this technology for announcements and internal memos has allowed us to reconfigure staff meetings so that they are strictly for professional development and growth. This is a dramatic departure from the conventional elementary school staff meeting that typical consists of a series of announcements related to special events. According to Harvard researcher Daniel Wilson, the strategy of using technology for announcements and information items has been effective at other schools in that it "uses technology to create time" for meaningful learning (Wilson, 2002). To date we have been able to identify priority standards in language arts, review current assessments and complete a standards-aligned assessment process in the few staff meetings that have occurred. A recent survey of the teachers indicated high rates of satisfaction and a general feeling of productivity with the new format of staff meetings.

We also have networked digital copiers distributed throughout the campus so that we can print to remote locations when we distribute information to students or parents. This is one of the ways that we can improve operational efficiency—others include more effective fiscal monitoring, creation of databases to track resources, and access to CAD maps of our new facility. This allows office staff more time for proactive projects that improve efficiency and increase morale throughout the school. Effective use of technology at this early stage in the history of our organization is likely to create a positive feedback loop and generate increasing returns in the future (Fullmer, 2000).

Daniel Wilson also encouraged using technology to create "feedback loops" that would improve performance (Wilson, 2002). Moving our monthly surveys to an online format (Zoomerang) has minimized delays in the data collection process and improved our responsiveness to concerns and suggestions for improvement. I have also implemented a suggestion from *The 10-Second Internet Man@ger* and I now have multiple "short, intense bursts" of email activity every day (Breier, 2000, p. 45). I have also distributed a school policy on the use of email for communication implementing many of the suggestions from Breier's book, including a limit on the number of emails on a certain topic without a resolution and criteria for "when not to send e-mail at all" (Breier, 2000, p. 57). Recently I have started using software programs for teacher improvement plans and periodic evaluations to improve my timeliness in generating documentation to reinforce my verbal interactions. All of these efforts have helped to improve my use of time and giving me additional opportunities to pursue "Quadrant II" activities that are important but not as time-sensitive (Covey, 1989).

Interestingly, "technologies may do a better job on the conventional campus than on the virtual one" (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 227). For Calavera Hills School, technology is utilized

to improve operational efficiency and create time for more interactive learning opportunities. While it has yet to be used for online learning programs, the use of networked communication systems has had a positive impact on our learning efforts and improved the efficiency and effectiveness of office staff and the site administration.

Evaluation

My initial thinking was that the evaluation of professional development at Calavera Hills would consist of a multi-leveled sequence integrating key elements from influential theoreticians in the field such as Tyler, Gagne, and Kirkpatrick. The following table summarizes the first draft of the plan and the succeeding narrative provides further detail:

Table 5

Potential Evaluation Model

Sequence Number	Action	Theorist(s)	Specifics
1	Identify standards	Tyler	California Content Standards (Language Arts, Mathematics, etc.)
2	Determine summative measures and collect pre-assessment data	Tyler Gagne et al Kirkpatrick	Enduring Understanding Performance Assessments
3	Control for inputs	Gagne et al	Aptitude (student variables): socioeconomic status, English Language Learner, Gifted and Talented, Special Education Support (teacher variable): Level of formal education, Years of Teaching Experience
4	Formative assessment	Gagne et al Kirkpatrick (Level 1)	Reaction Surveys Reaction Interviews
5	Summative assessment	Tyler Gagne et al Kirkpatrick (Level 2)	Enduring Understanding Performance Assessments
6	Behavior and attitude assessment	Kirkpatrick (Level 3)	Self-Assessment: Teacher Performance Standards Rubric

7	Results assessment	Kirkpatrick (Level 4)	Academic Performance Index (California Standards Test and CAT-6) Exit Surveys: Students and Parents Attendance statistics
8	ROI	Watkins et al	Cost-Consequences Analysis

Identification of standards is a critical decision in terms of an evaluation plan for teachers. Although norm-referenced tests "are specifically excluded as tools for teacher evaluation" (Townley, Schmieder, & Wehmeyer, 1999, p. 69) it is perfectly legal to evaluate teachers with respect to "progress of students toward established standards of pupil achievement" (Townley et al., 1999, p. 68). The recent shift to a criterion-referenced system for school accountability using the California Content Standards Test, coupled with internal efforts to use standards-aligned performance assessments, can provide rich data to verify student progress in terms of "clearly defined" objectives that can drive an evaluation system (Tyler, 1949, p. 113).

However, if we are attempting to gauge teacher improvement we need baseline data in the form of information from the previous year. This is problematic due to the fact that the California Content Standards Test (CCST) scores are only reported in summative fashion based on a year-end test and last year was the first year that the results were distributed to school districts. Therefore we cannot say if a student improved his or her performance on the CCST until the results from this year are compared with the last.

Additionally, this is the first year that we are implementing the Priority Standards Performance Assessments in a systematic fashion, meaning that there is no data from previous years. These limitations create a situation where we cannot compare the teacher effectiveness in previous years with this year based on student data. If the goal is continued improvement in the effectiveness as a result of professional development, we need to be able to state something to the effect of "student performance in classroom 'n' improved by 'x' percent this year and 'y'

percent last year, indicating an improvement/decline in teacher effectiveness." At the end of this academic year we will merely be able to state that "student performance improved by 'x' percent this year" without any comparison to past years, meaning that we cannot draw any conclusions about improvements or declines in teacher effectiveness. The only statement that we will be able to make is "student performance improved by 'x' percent this year and the average classroom improvement was 'z.'" This comparative conclusion demonstrates nothing about individual teacher growth.

Gagne, Briggs, and Wager encourage the use of formative and summative data along with controlling for variables that may influence the evaluative outcomes (Gagne, Briggs, & Wager, 1992). They refer to aptitude and support variables that should be controlled (or accounted for) in the evaluative study. For example, evaluating teacher effectiveness should consider aptitude variables among students such as socioeconomic status, English Learner status, Gifted and Talented populations, and special education needs. Teacher variables such as level of education and years of teaching experience should be considered in the support domain.

Use of Kirkpatrick's framework, including four levels of evaluation (reaction, learning, behavior, and results) was also a part of my initial evaluation plan (Watkins, Leigh, & Kaufman, 1998). Reaction surveys (level 1) from students and parents could provide formative assessment data while student achievement data would indicate learning outcomes (level 2). Level 3 evaluative data focuses on attitudes and behavior and should be completed at a pre-determined time after completion of the yearly professional development plan. This would take the form of an attitudinal self-assessment that would be administered to teachers regarding their level of interest and enthusiasm with regard to professional development opportunities. Level 4 information targets the organizational level and data from exit surveys, attendance statistics, and

Academic Performance Index rankings are examples of consistent with macro-scale information that typifies this level (Watkins et al., 1998). Finally, a "return on investment" analysis could be conducted to address the "mega" level through a cost-consequences analysis. Elements of this process would include a determination of the costs of the training opportunities and an estimation of the opportunity costs (Watkins et al., 1998).

Despite the intellectual attraction of this eight-stage theoretical model, it is entirely impractical at this point in time. Foremost is the challenge of incomplete historical data that makes year-to-year comparisons incongruent or implausible. The entire evaluation model for a training or professional growth program should compare "pre-treatment" baseline data with "post-treatment" summative data. As we are now in the crux of yet another shift in the predominant measurement system for public schools we cannot legitimately extract this data and there is no other contiguous assessment (even the infamous SAT9 norm-referenced test is no longer administered). One option would be to consider teacher performance data relative the teacher standards—this would certainly not be aligned with the mission statement to have a "student-centered" learning community and it would be akin to evaluating a coach on the basis of his behaviors without consideration for the performance of the team. Ultimately, this complex evaluation system is also not realistic in terms of implementation given the fact that evaluation is "frequently shunted aside in favor of more urgent demands" (Townley et al., 1999, p. 67). Collecting and analyzing all of the data, including aptitude and support variables, seems less of a priority when the sole site administrator is also responsible for student discipline, safety procedures, supervision of ongoing construction, and so on.

In addition to the difficult practical aspects of a multi-stage numeric model, my existentialist tendencies pull me toward a more qualitative, reflective technique for determining

effectiveness. The evaluation system should also align with the mission statement for the school. The scalar maturity continuum should be used as a framework for assessing progress at the individual, team, and organizational level toward the goal of interdependence. This could be accomplished through an anonymous self-assessment asking individuals to rate their current level, their assessment of their team's level, and their assessment of the organization's developmental level. Portfolio documents such as photographs, personal reflections, and journal entries could be used as supporting evidence.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Reflections

Effective implementation of a plan for teacher professional development that aligns with a mission statement that rests on three phrases ("student-centered," "learning community," and "interdependence") is a challenging task. Considering the framework using the three lenses of living systems theory (identity, relationships, and information) and analyzing the various components within those spheres provides some perspective with regard to the various levels of complexity in aligning systems with a desired outcome. One of the great insights in this process was the realization that there is great benefit to having a measurable vision when aligning a measurement system with the organizational objective. Kaufman, Watkins, and Leigh state that one should "be sure to remember the following: a clear, unambiguous statement of desired or required results … precise, rigorous criteria to measure actual results … an Ideal Vision is the measurable, long-term statement" (Kaufman et al., 2001, p. 69). How does one measure placement on the maturity continuum? How does one assess the degree to which the organization resembles a "learning community?"

On the other hand, Kouzes and Posner suggest using "images and word pictures … examples people can relate to … speak with passion and emotion" in terms of promoting a common vision (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 128). It is difficult to imagine the staff rallying around the pursuit of a number and, more to the point, how does one capture "the big picture" with a succinct measurable statement. The "Basic Ideal Vision" that is presented as an exemplar for a measurable vision is not easily summarized (Kaufman et al., 2001). Kotter reinforces the idea that the vision should be "easy to communicate" (Kotter, 1996, p. 72). Vance Caesar went so far as to claim that one should be able to put "a word in the box" encapsulating the essence of the organization (Caesar, 2002). Examples he provided were that Disney's word would be "happy" and Coca-Cola's word would be "tradition." Is it possible to have a measurable vision that can be simplified to a single word?

Another complication with professional development is that teacher performance is not the end result that our organization is attempting to achieve—our school is attempting to be "student-centered" institution where student outcomes are the primary focus. The link between teacher performance and student performance is complicated by variables beyond the scope of the classroom; Senge lists students, parents, principals, superintendents, school boards, support staff, other teachers, student peers, community organizations, and world events as other influential factors to consider (Senge et al., 2000). How then does one effectively determine the degree to which teacher training efforts are impacting student achievement in light of the abundance of other influences? There is wisdom in the fact that the California Education Code does not solely restrict the evaluation of teacher performance on student outcomes and includes "instructional techniques and strategies; adherence to curricular objectives; [and] establishment

and maintenance of a suitable learning environment" as additional criteria (Townley et al., 1999, p. 69).

The current climate of school accountability and the hypersensitivity to measurable outcomes from norm-referenced tests is, in my opinion, profoundly flawed due to the complicated relationship between student learning and teacher performance. Additionally, the establishment of incentives and consequences attached to the test scores diminishes the role of truly meaningful goals such as promoting individual, team, and organizational development in the direction of increased interdependence. It is my hope that striving for a more compelling outcome than a chiral shift in normal curve equivalents will have the parallel consequence of increasing those very measures that may well determine my current and future employability as a school leader.

Given the complications arising from a qualitative, immeasurable vision and a focus area that is only one of many contributing factors to the desired outcomes, is it legitimately possible to "actualize" the vision in implementation of the professional development plan for the school? From the perspective of a pragmatic/existentialist servant/transforming leader who sees things from a systems perspective, the connection between professional development and the vision of an interdependent learning community is very clear—adult pursuit of learning helps to create a fractal quality and gives the organization integrity in terms of promoting self-similarity at different levels. As the leader, I have the opportunity to actualize the vision with every interaction that I have with adults and children: "Leaders understand that they can bring shared values to life in a variety of settings, from daily group meetings, one-on-one conferences, telephone calls …" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 221). All of my encounters with staff, ranging from hallway conversations to formal observations and quarterly conferences, positively or

negatively reinforce the actualization of the vision. This requires great "personal mastery" and consistent "private victories." Personal mastery is described a dual awareness of current reality and personal vision and is reminiscent of the Zen quest for mindfulness (Cleary, 1999; Senge, 1990). Covey describes private victories as including the practices of being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, and putting first things first (Covey, 1989). Understanding principles such as the chaos theory precept of sensitive dependence, Gladwell's epidemiological model for change, and other network models for system interactions has helped to realize the power of the "little things" that make a big difference (Capra, 1996; Gharajedaghi, 1999; Gladwell, 2000; Gleick, 1987). Modeling is therefore a primary component in actualizing the vision, a process that begins with me as the leader and extends to the staff through our interactions. Having teachers model the pursuit of lifelong learning may seem like a little thing; "Few leaders realize how much how little will do" (Heider, 1985, p. 85).

Considering the importance of modeling, approaching relationships with intention via coherent human resources systems and reinforcing identity through external interactions consistent with sound marketing strategies is an important and powerful strategy for actualizing the organizational vision. Utilizing learner-centered learning approaches such as andragogy and the pursuit of schematic tuning also models best practices that will positively affect student achievement and assist in the creation of a learning community.

Future Directions

Although this document centers around training and development, performance appraisals, employee relations, and communications are also addressed and reasonably defined. Additional work needs to occur in the recruitment and selection phase of the human resources cycle as the Calavera Hills neighborhood appears to be a high-growth neighborhood in the

immediate future. The procedures used for initial recruitment among existing teachers within the District will need to be modified to best identify and select teaching candidates from a much wider geographical and experiential set. Using permission and "gonzo" marketing tactics is likely to enhance and strengthen current relationships with parents and community members to build on the organizational identity and also provide resources that can be directly utilized to positively contribute to employee learning.

In the information domain, use of technology to improve efficiency and provide additional time for learning is a powerful strategy to influence professional growth. Strategic use of informal networks through social interaction is an important component in the larger scheme of technological usufruct. Technology can also be used to shorten feedback loops and minimize delays to allow for greater organizational responsiveness. Although it is not pragmatic to implement an exhaustive evaluation process at this point due to gaps in historical data, a semi-structured process for self-assessment using the scalar maturity continuum will also help to gauge individual, team, and organizational progress on the developmental scale in pursuit of interdependence.

My assessment is that my vision has been successful in getting the school through the crises associated with opening a new institution and that its use in terms of driving creative tension and generating productive action will have a short shelf life as our organization matures. Ultimately, my aspiration is that this pursuit of alignment in terms of the vision and professional development systems is a temporary endeavor to provide organizational integrity and create a positive school climate for deeper and more profound work that will have even greater influence on student and adult learning. As Senge notes, "visions based on authority are not sustainable. They may succeed in carrying a school or a school system through a crisis … [but] they will

never know the potential that comes from creating a shared vision" (Senge et al., 2000, p. 72). Therefore one of the next steps is to begin the process of creating a shared vision that will help to "build a sense of commitment together" (Senge et al., 2000, p. 73).

Paradoxically, it may be through professional development that we best approach the task of working toward a shared vision. As individuals assess themselves and engage in the process of working in the direction of a desired personal state for the future and collaborate with peers it is likely that structural coupling will occur and an acausal emergence may occur that defies conventional analysis but leads to a higher developmental state for the organization (Gharajedaghi, 1999). Margaret Wheatley equates shared vision with a quantum field that permeates and is co-created by all of the agents within a system. In her view, "morphogenetic fields grow and develop form because of what is occurring *at the level of the individual* who is acquiring new skills and knowledge" (Wheatley, 1992, p. 56—italics added for emphasis). In other words, the transformation of individuals is the driving force for generating a shared vision. In this view, professional development is not a subset of a larger vision but instead drives the evolution of the shared vision.

The task of creating a sustainable shared vision will be easier due to the experiences and resources that have resulted from the efforts of the past few months. After all, at some point one must "let go in order to achieve. The wise leader demonstrates this" (Heider, 1985, p. 43). As the site principal, my goal is to now move away from a leader-directed vision to an emergent vision that will manifest itself in terms of increased commitment to any and all strategies and activities that will positively impact students. I believe that my leadership style will move more in the direction of servant leadership as the shift occurs, allowing me to behave in a manner more congruent with my ideals and optimize my strengths as a leader.

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Appendix A

Bifurcation Diagram

Class list

ED 700 Leadership of the Human Endeavor	Dr. J. David Bowick
ED 714 Management of Human Resources	Dr. Yolanda Robinson
ED724 Ethics and Society	Dr. Bob Paull
ED 729 Communication and Information Technology	Dr. Kaye Davis
	Dr. Laurie Walters
ED 730 Research and Evaluation	Dr. Farzin Madjidi
ED 734 Data Analysis and Interpretation	Dr. Farzin Madjidi
ED 753 Administration/Management	Dr. Vance Caesar
ED 754 Legal/Economic/Socio-Political Theory	Dr. June Schmieder-Ramirez
ED 755 Adult/Lifespan Learning	Dr. Ruth Johnson
	Dr. Monica Goodale
ED 756 Education Program Development and Evaluation	Dr. Doug Leigh
ED 757 Public Relations and Marketing	Dr. Vance Caesar
ED 758 Project Consultancy	Dr. Ronald Stephens
ED 762 Transforming Organizations	Dr. Doug Leigh