

Change Leader: Learning to Do What Matters Most

Fullan, Michael

2006 ♦ Jossey-Bass

ISBN: 978-0470582138

Program and Leadership Knowledge: Books

DESCRIPTION

Change Leader: Learning to Do What Matters Most, by Michael Fullan, presents a seven step solution for leaders wishing to effect lasting change with practice as the driver. Fullan argues that the most effective leaders try to figure out what is working, identify what could be working better, and then look to research and theory to find what might help them to support and develop others. Day-to-day leaders must focus on a small number of key things, do them well, and be transparent about both practice and progress.

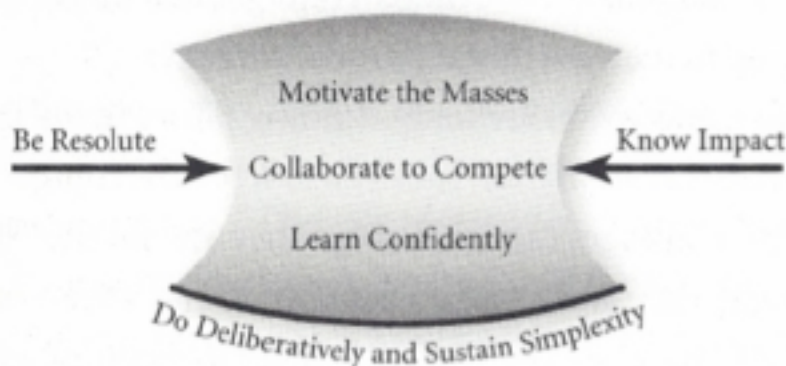


Chapter 1, “Practice Drives Theory,” describes growing research on how the brain works and how that research leads to the idea that “doing is the crucible of change.” Day-to-day practice is the best source of learning because only experience can engage and reshape the brain and is crucial to the idea that effective leaders use practice to create lasting change. Subsequent chapters provide a framework for fostering deliberate practice and call on leaders to liberate practice to drive improvement. They focus on the following topics:

- Chapter 2: Be Resolute
- Chapter 3: Motivate the Masses
- Chapter 4: Collaborate to Compete
- Chapter 5: Learn Confidently
- Chapter 6: Know Your Impact
- Chapter 7: Sustain ‘Simplicity’

The change leader framework illustrated below is a tool to foster deliberate practice:

Figure 1.1: The Change Leader



STAGE 2 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Change Leader: Learning to Do What Matters Most, by Michael Fullan, supports stage 2 leadership development of specialists interested in knowing and modeling leadership skills. Leading through practice as described in this book supports the work of a mathematics specialist providing services to individuals, schools, or even districts. Asking the questions “What do people do every day?” and “How can we improve it?” are valuable to the specialist building knowledge and to the specialist leading others to build knowledge. The philosophy of Fullan, that effective leaders use practice as their learning ground, supports the idea that a math specialist builds from strength and models being a lifelong learner. Math specialists wishing to effect change in the practice of others to improve student achievement will find this framework a valuable resource. Being a leader is not easy, and being a mathematics coach, a mathematics leader in a school, is not easy. Fullan outlines six practices – Earn Trust, Fine-Tune Focus, Develop Others, Know Your Impact, Embrace Complexity, and Hope No Matter What – that a math coach will find valuable. Leading a school toward the principles described in The PRIME Leadership Framework, NCSM requires knowledge of equity, teaching, learning, curriculum, and assessment and also requires skill in being a change leader.

In addition to the book, coaches may read an unpublished article from <http://www.michaelfullan.ca> called “Learning is the Work” (July, 2011), which provides examples of changing schools focused on issues of equity and student achievement.