LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING HIGH-TRUST AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOL CULTURES

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Abstract: Based on a varied and relevant literature overview, this paper discusses the close connection between leadership and organizational culture; analyzes the types of organizational cultures and signs of a strong healthy organizational culture; provides several leadership strategies with regard to improving understanding of organizational culture; and gives guidelines to building high-trust and effective school cultures.

Keywords: leadership, organizational culture, types of organizational cultures, leadership strategies, and high-trust and effective school cultures

The Close Connection between Leadership and Organizational Culture

The connection between leadership and culture is so close that "leadership and culture may be two sides of the same coin" (Senge, 2000, quoting Edgar Schein).

There are four major ways to change an education organization: strategy, culture, human processes and structures. All of these are important for transformative change for 21st century education (or beyond), and all of them depend on leadership. That is probably the reason why leadership development is the No. 1 priority worldwide of top organizational leaders inside and outside of education.

Leadership is about leading -- but within the context of an organization. Leaders arise out of the culture of the place in which they lead, and do not exist separately from that culture. If leadership involves leading, the same must be true of leaders within organizations. Individually and together, these leaders comprise the core leadership of the school district—that group of individuals hired or promoted out of the culture of the organization itself with targeted responsibility for forwarding the purpose and performance of the organization. Once in place, these leaders—again individually and together as a core leadership team—begin to influence the culture of the organization they lead.

In the educational organization, it is the leadership team that entertains and decides upon the kinds of strategy, structural and human process changes that will flavor the future character and capacity of the education system-- always while influencing the culture of the organization in place. The "edge" is in surfacing the connection between leadership strategies and school cultures.

The Types of Organizational Culture

Terence E. Deal and Allan A. Kennedy (1982) in *"Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life"* clarified four types of culture, which are *Through-Person; Work Hard/Play Hard; Bet Your Company; and Process*. As we, all know, since the organizational cultures changed a lot during recent 20 years, this clarification of cultures is not descriptive and inclusive enough as far as the present organizational cultures are concerned. Therefore, to learn more about the organizational culture profiles in recent research is very necessary for studying educational leadership.

As many researchers, like Edgar Schein, Terry Deal and Rob Cooke suggested that within organizational culture is the often hidden sets of norms and expectations that underlie what people 'expect' and see as 'expected of them' when they come to work or study. It is the set of often unspoken interactions, relationships and expectations that spell out 'how we do businesses around here. It also indicated that every organization might have their own special organizational culture, depending on what national cultures they are from, what individual personalities they have, and what kinds of area their organization belongs to. Therefore, it is not easy for clarify organizational culture "styles" or types of culture in details.

The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire-- Rutgers Secondary (OCDQ-Rs), a revision by Kottkamp et al. (1987) of the original OCDQ developed by Halpin and Croft (1963), was used to measure teacher perceptions of the climate in their schools Organizational Climate. The climate subscales are categorized as *Supportive Principal Behavior, Directive Principal Behavior, Engaged Teacher Behavior, Frustrated Teacher Behavior, and Intimate Teacher Behavior.*

While, Kathy Ohm (2006) categorized types of organizational culture differently, as stated in her paper "Leadership and Culture":

- *Constructive organizational cultures* promote achievement, self-actualization and mutual encouragement.
- *Defensive organizational cultures* can be passive or aggressive.
- *Passive defensive organizational cultures* promote low effort, and show a negative correlation with high performance and innovative solutions.
- *Aggressive organizational cultures* promote bullying, hierarchical thinking, and long hours spent on very narrowly defined objectives.

As we can see, there are so many different ways and there must also be many other ways to interpret the types of organizational culture, and this provides students and teachers in the field of educational leadership a good direction and opportunity to do further research.

Signs of a Strong Healthy Organizational Culture

As a leader, culture in an organization provides the framework within which you work every day. Healthy cultures with positive interactions, important traditions and avenues to celebrate the organization make it joyful to go to work. However, what are the signs of a strong healthy