

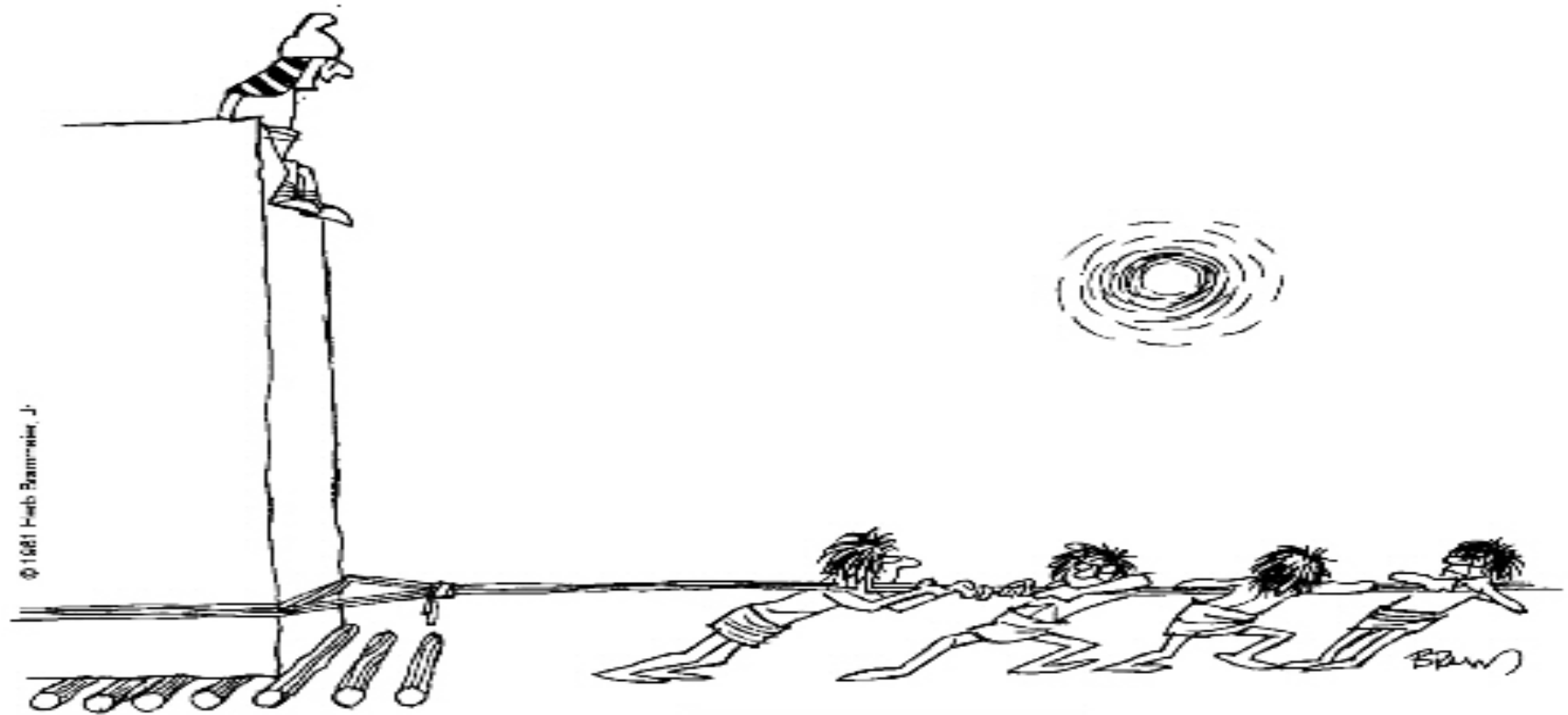


Reading 4.7

Shared and distributed leadership in schools.

By Patrick Duignan





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"Believe me, fellows, everyone from the Pharaoh on down is an equally valued member of the team."

Pg 105:1a

Schools need to think differently about the quality and depth of their leadership if they are to respond effectively to the types of challenges and tensions that shared leadership may present.

- Some schools take leadership in isolation which brings about a much narrowed view of leadership and often finds others totally (teachers) ignored.
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Pg. 105:1b

Whereas...

To generate a more ethical view on decision making principals need to tap into the expertise and wisdom of his/her colleagues...

Pg 105:2a

- *Generates greater ownership of the decisions*
 - *Invites others to share in the decision making*
 - *'Diversity matters' (Surowiecki, 2005) and there is wisdom of the 'crowd' mentality*
 - *Further adds better/diverse perspectives on the decision process rather than a single point of view*
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Pg 106:1a

BUT

Grouping only 'experts' or 'smart people' doesn't always work well because all seem to process the same/similar understandings on decisions in other words they may mirror each other and therefore not necessarily a diverse view.

- Important elements to note:

- Engage in dialogue with other stake holders
 - Essential to listen to diverse points of view
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Pg106:4b

There lies the challenge:

Build organisation cultures that promote and support greater sharing and distribution of leadership



SHARED LEADERSHIP

- Educational leaders need to create sharing cultures where others willingly participate in and are rewarded for the successful performance of their leadership responsibilities.
 - *Not merely a 'distributing of tasks' approach*
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*It requires Principals to adopt the
'letting go'
mentality.*

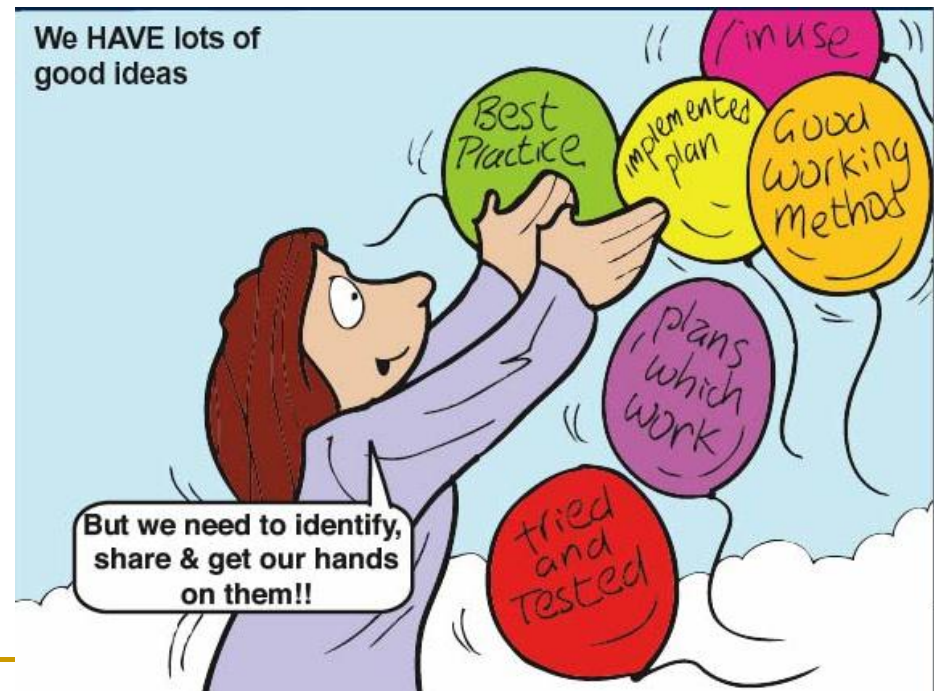


Pg 107:1b

- This requires authenticity on the part of leaders
 - Authenticity and genuinely shared leadership, in turn, provide excellent modelling for students of healthy, communal ways of living.
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A contemporary outlook..

- Requires energy
- Commitment
- Contributions of all



Pg 107:4a

Leadership is equated with formal roles and this mindset can prove an obstacle to sharing.

- Leaders expect decisions to be accepted because of their role or rank and they are surprised when their colleagues will neither follow a poor decision, nor explain why they think it was not a good decision.

Pg 107:4c

Such leadership can be seen as authoritarian or a power play based on positions of leadership.

Pg 110:3a

- Sharing leadership in the context of the school as a learning community, involves growing, nurturing and supporting competent and capable teachers to become key leaders, especially of curriculum and pedagogy.

Key argument in a shared approach to leadership is that it needs to be widely distributed across key stakeholders, NOT JUST TEACHERS (Pearce & Simms, 2002)

DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Pg 110: 4c

- Vertical leadership (appointed team leaders) *verses* distributed leadership (within the team) . *Simms & Pearce*

Concluded that a distributed approach to leadership can improve practice and by making the school more transparent.

Pg 111:3a

- Distributed leadership engages the contours of expertise
 - Distributed leadership is not collaborative work by teachers alone
 - Distributed leadership must be a whole school approach focussing on change, improvement (larger than collaborative for its own sake) and with a clear purpose in learning and teaching.
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Pg 111:4a

■ The challenges:

- Distributed leadership is not easy to establish and maintain in practice
 - Distributed leadership is not always predominant characteristic of many contemporary schools
 - Traditional practice emphasises on privacy, individualism and idiosyncratic institutional practiceq makes collective action difficult (Harris, 2002)
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- Principals has to have the capacity to share leadership, to ~~let go~~so that teachers'voices can be heard.
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Finally...

Pg 112:3

The National College for School Leadership in England (2004) proposed five pillars of distributed leadership in schools:

- Self confident and self effacing headship
 - Clarity of structure and accountability
 - Investment in leadership capability
 - A culture of trust
 - A turning point
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Questions for reflection

- What assumptions underpin a shared or distributed approach to leadership?
 - Can leadership actually be shared and/or distributed?
 - Can influence be shared/distributed?
 - How about power/authority/responsibility/accountability . can these be shared?
 - What changes to position, status and personal and professional relationships might be brought about by sharing or distributing leadership?
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