



Leading Systemic, Transformational Change A Framework for Continuous Learning

Too many students in schools are deprived of a thinking curriculum, and have limited access to a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment. This unequal distribution of resources, known as the opportunity gap, disproportionately impacts underrepresented students and families (Noguera, Darling-Hammond, & Friedlaender, 2015), most specifically, communities of color. We believe that this challenge extends to the adults who serve these students, as they often operate independently with limited opportunities to experience high quality learning aimed at continuously growing their practice. While research clearly demonstrates that effective instructional leaders have a measurable effect on student and adult learning (Marzano, 2019), we believe that this impact can be maximized through ongoing, inquiry-based professional development.

At New Tech Network (NTN), we firmly believe that school and district leaders can and must lead the work of closing the opportunity gap by cultivating learning-centered conditions that directly disrupt systemic inequities. This equitable and inclusive vision for continuous learning implores us to co-design our schools and districts as learning organizations. To this end, the *shared purpose of NTN and its partners is to co-design school/district systems as learning organizations where each individual, students and adults, regularly experiences deeper learning that is authentic, active, relational, responsive and complex. Our schools and districts must serve as hubs for this type of learning -- where “people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together” (Senge, 1990).

Undertaking this kind of systemic, transformational change requires leadership that is relentlessly focused on our shared purpose through the intentional alignment of learning-centered processes, policies and practices, the development of a safe, supportive and inclusive learning-centered culture, and the cultivation and distribution of learning-centered leadership. Keeping these components in alignment depends on the leaders' ability to actively support and sustain inquiry-based professional growth and development. The recurring practice of inquiry animates the learning while simultaneously reinforcing these key components, making it an essential element of the system. The Learning Organization Framework below represents how NTN builds the capacity of a system to continuously adapt in the ongoing pursuit of College and Career Readiness for each student.

NTN's Learning Organization Framework: Shaping the System for Continuous Learning



This framework represents how NTN **builds the capacity of a system to adapt** in the ongoing pursuit of **College and Career Readiness for each student**.

- > The **interior** represents a structured cycle of inquiry and process for improvement in relation to a specific focus. A focus is the specific thing about learning that a school wants/needs to change in pursuit of *our shared purpose*.
- > The **sides** of the triangle represent key components (and indicators) that *enable or impede learning and improvement* at the organizational/system level.
- > Taken **as a whole**, the framework provides a way to organize the work so that they have the capacity to learn their way out of problems they didn't anticipate, while simultaneously improving short-term performance around strategic objectives.

Leading Systemic, Transformational Change

A Framework for Continuous Learning

Components	Leadership Principles	Key Indicators
<p>Learning-Centered Culture:</p> <p>A safe, supportive, & inclusive environment that reflects our *shared purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Leaders support and reinforce an asset-based approach toward teaching and learning. → Leaders reinforce high expectations for <u>each</u> learner. → Leaders establish the school as a Learning Organization. 	<p>Psychological Safety: The level of comfort individuals feel in expressing their honest thoughts (including sensitive issues) about the work at hand</p> <p>Relational Trust: Interpersonal social exchanges in a group setting - respect, personal regard for others, competence & integrity</p> <p>New Ideas: The willingness and desire of the organization to entertain new ideas, even ones that conflict with existing values and norms</p> <p>Reflection: The deliberate act of translating experience into meaning</p> <p>Feedback for Growth: Regular and efficient peer/supervisory feedback for supporting ongoing professional development</p>
<p>Learning-Centered Structures:</p> <p>Processes, policies & practices that are aligned with our *shared purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Leaders ensure all processes, policies and practices support “deeper learning” for <u>each</u> learner. → Leaders build organizational coherence around achieving outcomes that matter for <u>each</u> learner. → Leaders support inquiry-based, reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of teaching and learning and the pursuit of justice and equity. 	<p>Inquiry-Based Professional Growth & Development: Equity-based protocols and procedures support adult learning through collaborative inquiry and analysis</p> <p>Time and Space: Adequate time and space for ongoing inquiry, reflection, and analysis</p> <p>Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Develop and support job-embedded communities of practice that use evidence (authentic data) and equity-based protocols to drive continuous learning</p>
<p>Learning-Centered Leadership:</p> <p>Cultivation & distribution of leadership that reinforces our *shared purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Leaders serve as the organization's lead learner. → Leaders develop a collective, laser-focus on “outcomes that matter” for <u>each</u> learner. 	<p>Alternative Viewpoints: The willingness of formal leaders to seek alternate points of view and the expectation that all members of the organization will exercise judgment in the best interests of the mission</p> <p>Sound Judgment: Care for the organization’s mission and future that transcends specific roles and titles and responds to the best interests of the school’s mission and vision</p> <p>Cultivation & Distribution of Leadership: Concrete structures and practices designed to cultivate and distribute leadership capacity in order to respond to change implementation</p>

Source for Learning Organization Framework (modified): Garvin, Edmonson, Gino. (2008) [Is Yours a Learning Organization?](#) Harvard Business Review.