

Leading A Curriculum Area: Some Approaches To Creating A Peak Performing Team.

Aims Of The CPD Session:

Middle Leaders contribute significantly to the success of the school and to the progress of individual pupils. These training materials aim to support you to build your own leadership capacity, and help to focus on the key aspects of leading a curriculum area.

As such, **the aims of these training materials are:**

- To further understand the core purpose of subject leadership;
- To reflect on where you are currently at in terms of this core purpose;
- To consider the concept of a Peak Performer in relation to your professional development & the development of your department

Resources you will need:

- Leading A Curriculum Area PowerPoint presentation - this includes notes to accompany the slides, as appropriate;
- Awareness test avi file - if using this with colleagues, please insert a link to the file to help your presentation run smoothly;
- NCSL Thinkpiece article by Tony Bush & notes;
- Representation of Subject Leadership & Traffic light evaluation - both documents are in the PowerPoint file entitled 'Peak Performer evaluation of success'.
- Leadership scenarios cards;
- What Should Middle Leaders Do? PowerPoint template for paired/group activity;
- Leading a Curriculum Area Plenary cards - PowerPoint file;
- Securing improvement: the role of subject leaders Ref: DfES 0102/2002
- The Heart Of The Matter - NCSL Leading Edge Series;

Starter Activity:

- Awareness test avi file.

Outline the aims of the session & introduce the Video starter task. The task is simple: Good teams rely on skilful teamwork, so count the number of passes made by the team in white. Please see the notes on the slide for further information.

Discussion can follow as to the range of factors which impact on the work of a curriculum leader, and the distractions which occur. But, the focus must always remain on teaching & learning.

A Reflection On Middle Leadership:

- NCSL Thinkpiece article by Tony Bush & notes;
- *Securing improvement: the role of subject leaders* Ref: DfES 0102/2002

The Thinkpiece article raises questions for discussion about the role of Middle Leaders; as such this activity builds on the ‘distractions’ identified in the starter task. Colleagues should read the article (this could be a pre session task) and work in pairs to discuss the questions posed on the Thinkpiece notes document; a question could be given to each pair in your session.

Your plenary should then identify what your group feels Subject Leadership should be about – this will link to the ‘Word Representation’ of subject leadership. This is taken from *Securing improvement: the role of subject leaders* Ref: DfES 0102/2002

Discussion should then focus on the extract from ‘The Heart Of The Matter’ which summarises the key aspects of the role of a middle leader:

- **Teaching** – make sure that the teaching delivered by those you line manage is of the highest quality.
- **Learning** – make sure that pupils achieve at least to their potential as established by baseline testing, and preferably beyond.
- **Becoming involved in, or initiating, a whole-school activity related to school improvement** – help to drive the school forward.

The next slide breaks the role of the Curriculum Leader into the eight components which will form the basis of the group activity later in the session.

Some Leadership Scenarios:

- Leadership scenario cards.

As suggested on the slide, groups of three are ideal; this allows for an observer. The groups can select several scenarios for discussion within your allocated time period, but it would be useful to summarize the response & skills onto sugar paper for each scenario. These can then be displayed around the room for colleagues to discuss in a plenary to this session.

Who Are Peak Performers?:

- *Steering My Team To Success.*

These slides consider role models & the importance of values, vision & visible results. The activities aim to steer you to evaluate your current position, and paint a clear picture of your curriculum area’s future success.

Peak Performers create a compelling purpose and translate this into a clear **vision** of success. Your team will opt-in to your vision and will make their best contribution towards achieving the goals of your department. So, be clear about your purpose, why you are following this route, and paint a clear picture of what your Peak Performing department will look like.

With so many changes at all Key Stages, it is essential that you communicate and develop a crystal-clear **purpose** for your department based on clear values to which all are committed. You then need to draw a ‘road-map’ towards reaching this goal.

What will your C21st Geography curriculum look like? It may be useful at this stage to consider the words that people will be saying eg your Year 9 pupils at the end of Key Stage 3; your year 11 pupils as they leave your last Geography lesson; the parents at a consultation evening; your line manager when they have observed a ‘typical’ Geography lesson.

Having established the vision & values, you must now focus on the **principles** which will give you the greatest chance of success. It is all too easy to forget your purpose and replace it with processes; especially when times are so busy. Retain the focus on your core purpose ie teaching & learning of the highest possible quality from your entire team. Revisit your team vision and purpose in order that you can establish strategies to achieve them ie the How you aim to reach your goals.

What Should Middle Leaders Do?

- What Should Middle Leaders Do? PowerPoint template.

Small groups of colleagues should work together to discuss specifically what Middle leaders should be doing to achieve their prime purpose of improving the quality of teaching & learning in the classroom.

The ‘To Help You’ slide provides the 8 aspects of a middle leader’s role; each aspect should have specific actions which will be done to ensure the aspect of the role is achieved – the following slides provide specific actions for your plenary & relate to the ‘Heart of the Matter’ document.

Allow time to share aspects of each presentation – you could, of course, simply give one of the eight aspects to each pair

Active Plenary To the Session:

- Leading a Curriculum Area Plenary cards - PowerPoint file;

This activity aims to make the distinction between management & leadership. What does leadership add to management? Each person is given a card which is either management or leadership; they have to find the person who has the corresponding card (examples are included in the PowerPoint).

Further reading: ‘The Heart Of The Matter’.