



Strategies to Support a Positive School Climate Communication

Communication entails the exchange of thoughts, ideas, attitudes, and emotions, and is critical to the development and maintenance of strong workplace relationships (Adu-Oppong & Agyin-Birikorang, 2014). In the school setting, effective communication consists of the relay of information and encompasses formal and informal exchanges. It should include an understanding of feelings, ideas, and values, as well as their opinions and feelings regarding school related issues (Yao et al., 2020).



Why is it important?

- Effective communication practices contribute to mutual understanding, trust, and positive interpersonal relationships (Valentine, 1981).
- Successful communication between administrators, teachers, and other key stakeholders supports a thriving school organization (Lunenburg, 2010).
- Adopting strategic communication practices can positively impact psychological empowerment, job performance, and affective commitment (Yao et al., 2020).

In Practice

Schools can support effective communication practices by ensuring that staff are regularly informed about key organizational changes or decisions.

What can schools do?

Use the following strategies when addressing school staff:

- Provide clear, concise, and timely communications about school affairs that directly affect school staff.
- Give careful consideration to the multiple perspectives of school staff when developing messaging.
- Inform employees about organizational changes prior to other stakeholders and afford the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns.
- Keep staff informed of changes in regular meetings and reiterate those points in follow up e-mails, phone calls and other methods of communication.

When staff perceive concern, encouragement, and support from school leaders, they will be more willing to make considerable efforts to work towards common goals.



Leader Reflection

School leaders can develop effective communication practices that empower staff by:

- Developing an organizational culture where individual perspectives and skill sets are recognized and embraced.
- Giving daily updates on school affairs. Consider using the school's newsletter, Learning Management System platform, website, or even social media to create awareness within the school community.
- Avoiding misinformation and miscommunication by providing detailed explanations, with supporting documentation, about organizational changes or decisions.
- Focusing on the positive, as well as areas for development within communications. There will always be areas where you can improve, but also acknowledge the successes along the way.
- Giving employees a say in school affairs to build a shared sense of responsibility and identity with the school.

Effective communication helps create a school culture where decisions are driven and supported by all staff.

References

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