



Growing a Classical School: How Unified Leadership and Teamwork Creates Sustained Growth With Dr. David Seibel

Lesson 1: Foundations
of Educational
Leadership &
Institutional Lifecycles

Outline:

Foundations of Educational Leadership & Institutional Lifecycles

- Leadership is more than being a visionary and a gatekeeper and a taskmaster.
- The leadership style required to reach the prime stage of the lifecycle is the synergist who can harmonize or integrate the various instruments into a unified symphony.
- We must work with the grain of the virtues of those around us and gently sand away over time at the vice that will inhibit our institutions upright growth of character.

Obstacles to Recovering the Lost Tools of Leadership

- We have abandoned **apprenticeships**.
 - In the industrial revolution this was abandoned when centralization and standardization replaced the inefficient apprenticeship model.
 - Formerly, if you wanted to be a leader, you got a liberal arts education in the Trivium and the Quadrivium. So you were a generalist first and a specialist second.
- Another obstacle to recovering the lost tools of leadership in our schools is **longevity**.
 - The average tenure of headmasters and trustees is far too short.
 - Expanding the longevity of trustees and headmasters will increase the retention across the academy over time.
 - The sixty-twenty-twenty rule:
 - 60% of a board members industry experience and professional life will apply to the life of the school.
 - 20% will be irrelevant.
 - 20% if applied would end the school.



- One obstacle to recovering the lost tools of leadership is the **lack of training** of board and heads on how to integrate the various perspectives from the business world and the ministry world in the educational world.
 - We must form an integrated perspective on the ideal leader by acknowledging that a good leader is a generalist first and a specialist second.
 - Pragmatic business forces have historically been an obstacle to recovering the lost tools of leadership.
 - Don't let a love of earning replace a love of learning.
- The last obstacle is the **anti-institutional and overly individualistic spirit** in the United States.
 - The triune God is not anti-institutional. He has appointed three institutions for civilizing humanity: the family, the Church, and the state.
 - Your academy is a secondary institution that aims primarily to promote the work of the local church and the family.
 - Institutions are temporary means to transcendent ends, but we still need them.
 - Educational institutions last longer than their buildings and any one individual because they are built upon ideas that captivate people across generations.

Lifecycle Theory

- The lifecycle is the process that describes how all living organisms are born, grow, age, and die.
- Organizations and their subsystems follow a predictable pattern so leaders can know what to expect, which problems are normal, which problems are abnormal, and which are pathological.
- Lifecycle theory also talks about what causes those problems and what to do about them and when to do nothing about them.
- Institutional lifecycle theory is a management ideology that describes how schools externally expand and internally develop over time.
- Schools go through stages of growth and development much like human beings.
- Dr. Adizes' five distinct phases of growth:
 - Courtship
 - Infancy
 - GoGo
 - Adolescence
 - Prime



- Auguste Comte's taught that all civilizations go through three successive phases in their development:
 - Theological
 - Philosophical: good and evil, truth and falsehood
 - Scientific: have been set free from abstractions of philosophy and theology
- Despite some of the humanistic origins of lifecycle theory, the lifecycle insights for leaders can be a useful tool. We can drink in the common grace insights from lifecycle theory.