

Conversational Leadership

Leadership Driven by Relationships, Listening, and Communication

“The conversation is the relationship.”

—Ray Jorgensen

This chapter helps leaders understand the power of relationships to drive organizations and produce sustainable change. Perhaps the single strongest indicator of the health of an organization is the quality of the relationships within that organization. We will give practical strategies that leverage the power of conversation to strengthen existing relationships and forge new ones. The primary focus will be the relationships between school leader and professional staff, but the principles will also be applied to students, parents/guardians, and community stakeholders. We will discuss how a positive school culture leads to student engagement and connectedness. The chapter will end with a simulation that is best to be completed by your team of school leaders. This simulation will challenge school leaders to examine a difficult teacher situation and respond accordingly. The simulation is titled *The Bully Teacher*.



School Leader's Story

Listening to Student Voice

Leader: Brian Pickering (2016 New Hampshire Principal of the Year)
School: Contoocook Valley Regional High School

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Website: <http://cvhs.convalsd.net/>
Setting: Rural
Size: 759 students
Grades: 9–12
Population: 95% white, 2% Asian, 2%
multiracial, 1% African American
Poverty: 27.9% economically
disadvantaged
District: Contoocook Valley Regional
School District, SAU#1
Location: Peterborough, NH



Photo courtesy of Brian Pickering

In his first year as principal at Contoocook Valley (ConVal) Regional High School, a student asked Brian Pickering if she could get extra help from her physics teacher during advisory. She couldn't see her teacher at any other time outside of class—not during lunch because she and her teacher were assigned different lunch periods, not before school because she depended on the school bus for transportation, and not after school because she played a sport and the team was heading to the playoffs. When Pickering looked at the school schedule, he realized that, even with an advisory system, there simply was no time in the day for the student to get the help she needed.

What followed was a year-long process of out-of-the-box thinking and experimentation by an interdisciplinary group of dedicated teachers, staff, and school counselors. After conducting surveys and holding focus group sessions with students and parents, Teachers in Academic Support Centers (TASC) was inaugurated at ConVal High School in the fall of 2011.

"When we first created TASC, our primary goal was to meet the varying needs of our 700-plus student population. We wanted to make sure that students could find time for relearning opportunities, take advantage of enrichment and extension activities, and could access social and emotional supports at a dedicated time during the school day," Pickering said.

At ConVal, TASC is now an important part of the daily routine. ConVal runs on a four by four block schedule, and TASC is a half-block of flexible time in the middle of the school day. On Mondays, groups of about 15 students meet with their homeroom mentors to determine their schedules for the week. Schedules change from week to week. "A big part of TASC is students taking responsibility for their own learning," Pickering explained. "Students have a choice to engage in enrichment activities and extensions of their learning, as long as they are performing well academically."

When student performance slips, classroom teachers and homeroom mentors take over and assign students to academic interventions where they can make up a skills deficit. Homework, too, can be completed during TASC, frequently in consultation with the student's classroom teacher who can re-explain an important concept that a student may have missed in class. TASC interventions have vastly reduced the time interval between the development of a learning deficit and addressing that shortcoming. According to student surveys, on average about two TASC interventions are sufficient to bring them back up to speed. TASC has resulted in improved student learning and bolstered student agency in the learning process.

As a secondary benefit, disciplinary issues have sharply decreased. "We have noticed an over 50% reduction in disciplinary cases in the last five years. Can we attribute all of that to TASC alone? Probably not," Pickering said. "But with the firm connection to their homeroom mentors and the varied interactions between students and teachers in small groups, we believe that TASC has been a strong contributing factor to this improvement because of increased student engagement."

Other schools have taken notice of the ConVal model and introduced their own versions of TASC—iTime, the Bear Block, and PAWS, to name just a few. In all, over 100 schools in New England and some as far away as Georgia, Texas, Colorado, and California have instituted their own flexible time schedule based on ConVal's example.

"We never expected that what we were creating five years ago would make such a difference, for so many schools and so many students," Pickering said. "It is a powerful testimony to our belief, as a school, that being attentive to the needs of any individual student can have wide-ranging, positive outcomes for all."

If you view the TASC example as merely innovative scheduling you missed the most powerful change—how it fortified relationships between students and staff. We believe relationship building is the number one skill needed to be a strong school leader. It's all about relationships! Relationships are at the core of what we do as school leaders. Without the ability to build positive, caring, and sustaining relationships, school leaders will struggle in their daily and long-term work.

Relationships are all about what we do; relationships are the heartbeat of a school leader's life. Our relationships connect us to our school community or pull us away from the people that make the greatest difference in the school. When our relationships are healthy, everything else is so much easier. Relating is about knowing people, trusting people, and caring for them. If you want to lead your people, you must know them and love them.

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The importance of relationships as school leaders is so key in moving a school culture forward. If relationships, at any level, are not functioning at their best, the school culture suffers and growth is hampered. The simulation at the end of this chapter will walk school leaders through a realistic and difficult interaction with a teacher that is impacting the school's culture. As the school leader, you will be asked to make decisions on how you would resolve the issue. We encourage you to complete the simulation with your team of school leaders and talk and reflect on your decision-making process.

THE CONVERSATION IS THE RELATIONSHIP

As a school leader, the ability to communicate is critical to the effectiveness of your leadership. To communicate in a caring, relational, and positive way is necessary to thrive as a school leader. Relationships are built on conversations, and in this segment we will share key ways to strengthen your conversations. We discuss how to strengthen your communication skills, how to speak from the heart, how to suspend certainty, hold space for difference, and work to slow down the conversation. This work around relationships and conversations will strengthen how you lead faculty meetings, small groups, and learning conversations with teachers.

I learned everything in this chapter from my good friend, my principal coach, and leadership expert, Ray Jorgensen of Jorgensen Learning Center (Jorgensen & Hurst, 2009). Jorgensen's work in my life has enriched me to be a stronger school leader who is committed to building relationships and learning through conversations. He likes to remind his clients that, "the conversation *is* the relationship." This is not an either-or situation. If we are going to relate and work together we must learn to talk and listen to one another well.

Listen for Understanding

First, let's take a look at listening for understanding. I know you are probably thinking, I got this skill, I'm a great listener. Well, before you skip over this section, I'd like you to consider a few key points about listening for understanding. When a school leader listens for understanding, they aren't just trying to hear what the person is saying, they are listening intently to understand what the person is sharing. When I started listening for understanding, I didn't just become a better school leader—I grew as a husband, father, and man.

Let's get the easy step out of the way: Rid yourself of distraction while listening to someone. Whether it be that cell phone buzzing with incoming

texts, daydreaming, or simply being distracted by your surroundings, make sure that you focus on the person talking. Look them in the eye, nod and give body gestures that show you are listening, and reiterate what they are saying so you check for understanding.

Even after you’ve taken these steps and physically cleared a path for listening, you’re not quite ready. For most of us the even-more difficult attention to focus is our mental attention. You can turn off the phone, close the laptop or tablet, look someone straight in the eye, and still have your own ideas and responses running through your head as they speak. The real discipline comes from truly hearing what they are saying. We’ll talk about some skills to help you do this later in the chapter.

There is no greater way to demonstrate that you care for someone, value their contribution to the school community, and share their goals for success than by hearing them. When the conversation has ended the real gift you can give is to have the person walk away and know they’ve been heard. This is how conversation becomes the relationship. At the end of the chapter, you will have a unique opportunity to listen for understanding in a simulation; take time to complete the simulation and reflect on what you learned.

Checks for Understanding

Conversations can often be misunderstood. I’m sure we all participated in the Whisper Down the Lane or the Telephone Game as a kid. By the end of the line, the statement is so mixed up that it regularly has no similarity to what was originally spoken. Have you ever talked to a teacher or a student and they heard you say something very different from what you meant? This is why I will frequently restate what I heard the person I am listening to say. For instance, let’s say a teacher stops you in the hallway to share how a student is causing them major frustration as the student constantly acts out in class. In this case, I’d probably say, “What I am hearing you say is that a certain student who is acting out is causing you frustration in your class, is that correct?” This is called a check for understanding. This one quick and easy strategy clears up so much misunderstanding you would be shocked. As we listen, we instantly filter what’s being said and we frequently jump to conclusions. We will talk about suspending certainty later, but for this section it’s key to complete a check for understanding. Below are some checks for understanding that you can use in conversations.

Check for Understanding Examples	
What I hear you say is . . .	Thanks for sharing from your heart about . . .
What I heard you share is . . .	Restate something and ask, “Is that correct?”

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Checks for understanding slow down the conversation for true understanding to take place. Checks can be done as the listener or the sharer. After I learned this skill from Jorgensen, when I was working with my son and daughter, I would ask them, “What did you hear me say and what does it mean for you?” I realized that these two simple questions clarified what I was saying and it helped me make sure they were hearing what I wanted them to know and what it meant to them. Now, my own kids know this and will often smile when I ask it. These checks for understanding are essential when we are having learning conversations about walk-throughs, observations, meetings, or informal conversations. Whether you are the listener or the one sharing, make sure to use a check for understanding. Now, you don’t need to use these in every conversation but once you begin to use them, they will feel more authentic and helpful. I must admit, it was a little awkward at first; but once I got used to it, I found this strategy so helpful. I will regularly use these checks for understanding when I am listening to students, staff, and parents. It’s important to me that I understand what the person is saying and that I value their viewpoint by working to understand it.

Tell Me More

In addition to a check for understanding, one of my favorite conversation tools is to say, “Tell me more.” During a conversation, as I listen for understanding I will ask the person to “tell me more” when they come to a pause. Let’s take the teacher that was having the problem in their class from the story above, after the teacher shared that this student was frustrating them because they were acting out in class, I’d follow up the conversation by asking them to “tell me more.” If needed, I’d ask clarifying questions like, “What specifically is the student doing that frustrates you?” When they share the behaviors, I’d ask them to tell me more. This one simple phrase, “tell me more,” extends the conversation and allows the person to open up. It shows you are listening intently and are serious to learn more about the conversation. Below are some more “tell me more” phrases that you can use.

Tell Me More Examples	
I’d like to hear more about . . .	Please expound on . . .
Talk to me more about . . .	Share some more about . . .

When we focus and extend the conversation, deeper understanding is more likely to take place. This is extremely helpful when someone who comes to you is agitated, frustrated, or angry; it slows down the conversation as

you check for understanding and ask them to tell you more. Frequently, listening, checking for understanding, and asking them to tell you more can de-escalate their emotions so they can begin to think and speak more clearly. Slowing down the conversation is important; take your time. Allow the person to vent; let them get it off their chest; and don't interject, interrupt, or try to convince them that their thinking is skewed. Instead, slow down the process, allow them to share, listen intently, check for understanding, and ask them to tell you more.

Speak From the Heart

If you work with middle school students you know they have a “Spidey” sense with their ability to tell if someone is genuine and speaking from the heart. They can see right through someone who is not being real with them. As we converse with others, it's important that we speak from the heart. Don't be afraid to speak from your heart, because this is how you truly build sustaining relationships anchored on trust. Let's take the teacher example again: When that teacher is sharing with you, be sure to be in the moment, check for understanding, ask them to tell you more, and speak from the heart. You could share a personal story with the teacher about a similar situation where a student had you at wit's end because of their behavior and how you were able to work through it.

We need to make our conversations more heartfelt, more genuine, and more nurturing. Even when I need to give someone bad news (e.g., discipline, suspension, dismissal), I do so in a caring, respectful, and heartfelt manner. All of us have to hold tough conversations with teachers about their performance, students about their negative behavior, or even parents over their actions, but I always strive to do so while speaking from my heart in a caring, loving, and respectful way. These conversations are tough, real tough, but I found that when you do this in a “speak from the heart” kind of way, people respect and hear you more. Trust me, this isn't easy; it takes practice and intention. It's so easy to get pulled into the cold, distant, and professional talk that says the same thing but is received so differently. Even if I need to expel a student, I work with the students and parents, and talk with them. I also follow up by giving all parties my cell phone number and encourage them to call me if I can ever help in any way.

Speaking from the heart is not something you will learn in a college class, and not many books speak about it, but I can tell you that this is one of the most transformational things that we can do as school leaders when in conversations with others. We need to realize the teacher you are talking to is someone's spouse, the student is someone's child, and the parent is someone's family. I find myself working to treat them like I would

want the school leader treating my kids or wife. We need to surrender the tough-guy mentalities and embrace the need to care, love, respect, and nurture those we come in contact with hope and inspiration.

I especially like to think of hope when talking to someone who is struggling. Hope focuses on the future and doesn't limit someone to their past mistakes. I work to speak hope into students, parents, and staff members. By doing this, I'm working to inspire them to move forward through difficult times and to see that their future is bright and promising.

Suspend Certainty/Judgment

Jorgensen, my school leader coach, knows this is one of my hardest skills to work on. Too frequently, as someone is talking to me, I am jumping to conclusions, trying to solve their problem, or coming up with my own outcome. He would tell me to slow down the process and to suspend certainty. By doing this, I find now that I am more able to listen intently to the conversation without jumping to a conclusion. It also allows me to keep an open mind and allow for various conclusions, rather than the one that I quickly thought up.

Let's go back to the teacher who is frustrated because the student is acting out in their class. I have had this conversation many times, and before being coached by Jorgensen I would find myself either solving the problem in my mind, thinking of strategies I want to share with the teacher, thinking about how I could work with the student, or I would begin to make judgments about the teacher or student. Now, I work to suspend my own certainty and to suspend judgment. This allows me to listen as the teacher shares and it provides an opportunity for the two of us to work collaboratively toward a common goal.

Think about it: How many times have you been talking to someone when you find yourself thinking, "If they would only do this," "I could solve this problem," "I can't believe they didn't think of . . .," "That's a great idea," or "This is a dumpster fire." I caution you to slow down the conversation and to suspend certainty and judgment. When we suspend certainty and judgment, it allows the conversation to further develop, the relationship between both parties to strengthen, and true collaboration around a common idea or goal to emerge.

Here's another aspect to consider: It's dangerous to want things for other people; it's vital to allow people to self-discover or collaborate together toward a common goal. Many times, school leaders are trying to be helpful and are constantly giving out recommendations and ways to improve when it's best to allow the person to self-discover. However, when the person self-discovers they are more likely to implement the action than if you told them

how to do it. This heightens the need to suspend certainty and judgment when talking with others. It's very similar to the way we want students to own their learning instead of simply supplying answers for them.

From personal experience, I can tell you this isn't easy. I consciously remind myself during conversations to not come to my own conclusions, to suspend certainty and judgment. But, I can tell you, when you practice these on a consistent basis, your conversations and outcomes become so much stronger and richer.

Hold Space for Difference

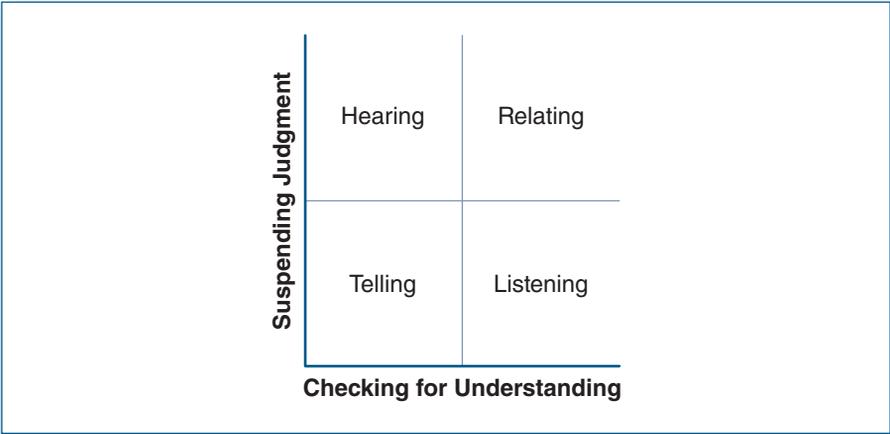
During conversations, you will inevitably disagree or see a different perspective at some point. Holding space for difference is the skill of respecting someone's viewpoint even when you don't agree with it. It's also allowing for differences of opinion to come up in conversation and not working to convince someone of your viewpoint. School leaders need to know when to allow the space for difference. Take our teacher again. You are conversing with the teacher about the student and how they are demanding the student be taken out of their class because the student is frustrating them so much that they can't focus on their lessons. As a school leader, you believe it's important that the teacher learns to work through this challenge and that the student remains in the class. Allow space for differences and work to provide support for the teacher to thrive in the situation. Provide the teacher with strategies, connect them with a coach, or you coach them with classroom management strategies. Offer to schedule a meeting with the teacher, student, and student's parents to work toward a resolution.

Hold your ground because it's important that you stand for what you believe. But make sure you follow the above steps of the conversation that we shared earlier. Allow space to come back and discuss the topic again, reflect, take time to ponder, and marinate on the ideas. When we hold space for differences, we are willing to not convince the person to our viewpoint but we are able to reflect, take a step back, and support them where they are.

This can also be a challenging skill in conversations because school leaders like to find resolution or consensus around a topic or discussion. It can be difficult to hold space for differences, but it's mission critical. Plus, it builds trust, respect, and relationships that are sustaining. Figure 1.1 shows a matrix that can help focus your work with the skills we discussed and turn conversation into your most powerful leadership tool.

As you complete the simulation at the end of the chapter, use Figure 1.1 to see how you are doing in developing meaningful conversations with your staff.

Figure 1.1 Meaningful Conversations



MORE MEANINGFUL MEETINGS

School leaders are constantly leading meetings, conferences, faculty meetings, and conversations with groups of people. To be a successful leader you need to run meetings in a manner that is collaborative and focuses on an outcome that is clear, attainable, and focused.

Before starting any meeting, it’s meaningful to start with a Check-In. A Check-In allows each person’s voice be heard in the group, and it engages each member of the meeting in a quick, personable, and conversational way. The Check-In is a simple question that each member is asked collectively as a group and then asked to share out with the group, depending on its size, or with a partner(s).

The Check-In works best when it’s related to the topic of the meeting, but it doesn’t always have to connect. Sometimes the most powerful Check-In opportunities are more group building in nature and allow people to refocus their attention from the dozens of thoughts running through their mind as they assemble for the meeting.

To provide focus and clarity in the meeting, I like to use the Context, Purpose, and Outcome strategy (see Figure 1.2). This is another skill my coach has worked with me on to strengthen my ability to run meetings. I found that by using this skill, meetings are more efficient and focused.

It’s important to set the Context before the meeting. The Context sets circumstances around the topic or situation that is being discussed. Let’s imagine that you are running a faculty meeting about state testing procedures that have been revamped by the state. The state is now mandating that all schools administer their exams online. The Context might be, “As you may have heard, the state is now requiring us to administer the state

Samples of Check-Ins	
Tell us what you think the most important aspect of classroom management is . . .	The one thing I'm thinking about the most after reading this article for today is . . .
High-stakes testing has resulted in . . .	I am most inspired by . . .
The event (home or work) I'm looking forward to in the next few months is . . .	Where does this article "square up" with your own experiences as a leader?

math and ELA exams online. In light of that mandate we will have to seriously consider the gaps in our technology infrastructure.” The Context describes the background or current situation and it provides the setting or framework for why the topic is being discussed.

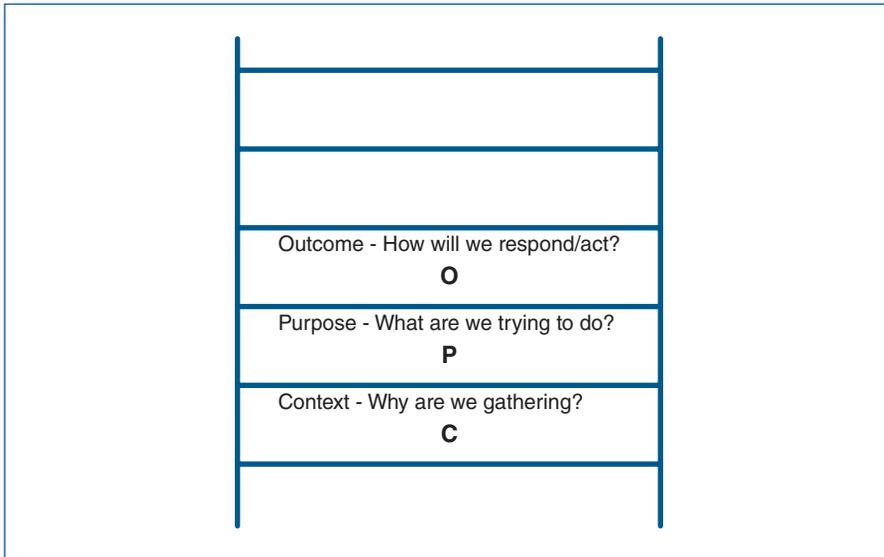
The next piece to highlight is the Purpose of the meeting. This explains the reason behind the meeting. Using the state testing mandate, the Purpose may be, “The purpose of today’s meeting is to discuss and review the state’s mandate on math and ELA testing and come up with a plan to address our wireless network.” The Purpose provides a laser focus on the intent of the meeting and it serves as a guide throughout the meeting to keep the participants on topic. If the meeting begins to get off point, the school leader can guide the meeting back to the purpose simply by saying, “Let’s get back to our Purpose for today’s meeting.” It’s always good to write down the Purpose for others to see.

The final piece is to identify the Outcome of the meeting. This is the result, product, or final decision from the Context and Purpose. Staying with our state testing example, the Outcome could be, “The team will design a testing protocol and testing schedule for administering the online practice test before the state assessment window begins.” The school leader needs to come back to the Outcome and work to reflect on it with all participants. The strongest outcomes are ones that are collaborative, team centered, and personalized for each member. Each member of the meeting needs to play a role in the Outcome for it to be owned and implemented.

Creative Tension

The difference in where your organization currently exists and the condition you would like it to attain creates a useful dissonance that researchers identify as creative tension (Senge, 2006). Another way to illustrate this is with the simple question, “Where are we, and where do we want to be?” One research study speaks of creative tension and notes, “The researcher is not suggesting the creation of an atmosphere, climate, or culture that places unhealthy expectations or environments upon administrators,

Figure 1.2 CPO Ladder



teachers, or students. The desired tension is a positive, cognitive, visionary tension that exists when one is keenly aware of their own practice, an authentic, systemic need, and how their improved practice could become a vital part of the creative, continuous improvement to address that need” (Ramage, 2007). This sense of aspiring to be better, to be something else, can lead to fertile innovation and creativity. We’ll talk more about the use of questioning to assist this process in Chapter 6.

SCHOOL CULTURE

School culture rises and falls on the relationships that are built in it. If school leaders want to engage all learners, inspire teachers, and encourage parents they need to be highly relational. My good friend and colleague Matt Saferite, former Breaking Ranks principal of Bentonville High School and now director of assessment, says, “Culture is everything, it’s the core of your school and where true learning is nurtured and takes place. Without a positive and caring culture, your school can’t move forward.”

When a school culture is relational, caring, nurturing, and respectful, all students and adults in the school community are free to live out the core mission, vision, and core values of the school. A relational culture is a safe place to engage all learners (students and adults) and work to connect each person to the larger community.

Never underestimate the power of frequent, focused, and meaningful conversations to grow the kind of culture you want for your school. Culture doesn't happen by accident because relationships don't happen by accident. It's why we start the book with this chapter, and why it underpins all other aspects of the work we will discuss. We encourage you to treat our ideas as ongoing conversation. We will listen for understanding as you participate in online opportunities that will expand our conversation. Our intention is to have that ongoing conversation, not for you to endure a 10-chapter lecture and walk away. It's an exciting time to be a school leader, and if we are going to be successful we all need to keep talking to one another.

We encourage every reader to participate in ongoing conversation at www.chaselearning.org. This site allows us to slow down the conversation, check for understanding, and build the kind of professional relationships needed for our collective success—success that ensures our students, families, and communities gain the kinds of learning opportunities needed to thrive in their future world.

Take time at the end of this chapter to participate in an online simulation that will challenge your leadership skills and provide some thought-provoking dialogue and reflection for you and your fellow school leaders.



School Leader's Story

Building Authentic Relationships

Leader: Dr. Sanée Bell
School: Morton Ranch Junior High School
Website: <http://www.katyisd.org/campus/MRJH>
Setting: Suburban
Size: 1,200 students
Grades: 6–8
Population: 53.8% Hispanic, 21.1% white, 17.3% African American, 4.8% Asian, 2.9% multiracial, 0.1% Native American
Poverty: 62.89% economically disadvantaged
District: Katy Independent School District
Location: Katy, TX



Photo courtesy of Sanée Bell

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Dr. Bell shares that visibility is key for every school leader. “Visibility is really important—high visibility and an open-door policy.” She understands this sounds simple and cliché but admits that so many school leaders devalue the power of visibility in building relationships. Dr. Bell is passionate about building relationships and hearing from students. She shares the value she places on relationships saying, “Nothing significant can take place without a trusting and collaborative relationship.” To build relationships she hosts a student roundtable to hear from students on ways she can support them and get feedback on the school. The students on this roundtable serve as her advisory group to hear how they can work to improve the school. She also hosts new-student lunches to welcome them to the school. During these lunches she asks the following questions:

- How are things going at our school?
- What do you wish we did differently?
- Do you have any ideas or suggestions to improve our school?

Dr. Bell follows up the student lunches by calling their parents to welcome them to the school and to solicit their feedback.

Most recently, Dr. Bell started “Student Feedback Cards” to ask students what are the two things they are most proud of with their school. On the back of the card they share ways that the school can improve. She and the staff review every card and work to celebrate the areas of pride—and strategize to strengthen the areas needing improvement.

Dr. Bell also serves as a mentor to one of the students on her school campus. “This provides me the opportunity to invest in the student’s life and to coach them to success and growth.” Connecting with a student to mentor, encourage, and advise them is a powerful way to build relationships that make a real, lasting difference.

“My success is rooted and grounded in my ability to build authentic relationships with teachers, students, and parents that inspire them to become something greater collectively that would not otherwise be possible alone.”

—Dr. Sanée Bell

Key Chapter Takeaways

Every school has dreams of what they can be, aspirations for their future. The relationships between the leaders and everyone involved will be a key element in how successful any school will be in reaching their hopes and dreams for

the future. This chapter shows the power of conversation for the critical work of leading. The work of Peter Senge, Ray Jorgensen, and Margaret Wheatley reminds us to keep the conversation going. The simple act of turning and talking with each other is at the heart of building, and growing, relationships. These relationships are central to nurturing the culture we want to create (Jorgensen & Hurst, 2009; Senge, 2006; Wheatley, 1994).

Make time to have focused conversations with the skills and tools highlighted in Chapter 1. We use these strategies and we've seen them make a substantial difference in our own teams and schools. One of the great by-products of this process is how each person involved will feel when they've truly been heard. This simple act of listening to each other is at the heart of conversational leadership.

RELATE, INNOVATE, INVIGORATE ACTIVITIES



Relate

- Design a Content, Purpose, Outcome (CPO) strategy for the next meeting you will be facilitating.
- Design a Check-In for your next meeting.
- Practice listening for understanding in your next faculty meeting using this exercise:

Break the group into pairs. Give this prompt to the group: “What got you into education? And what keeps you here?” Each person will have two minutes to answer the prompt, and two minutes to listen to their partner. While listening you may only say two things: “Tell me more” and “I don’t understand.” Debrief with the group and focus on the experience of listening and being heard.



Innovate

- Consider a Check-In that has a direct connection to the content of the meeting instead of a more “relational” or ice-breaker style.
- Focus on doing a check for understanding at least three times today.
- Use Figure 1.1 to reflect on a recent conversation. Do a self-assessment of where you think that conversation lands on the grid.



Invigorate

- Speak From the Heart – Share your passion, speak the truth, and let your staff see your heart.

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- Speak Words of Encouragement – Be intentional today about encouraging three students and staff members.
- Suspend Judgment – Pause before judging or drawing conclusions.



Team Talk: Relate

Meet with your core leadership team and share stories of people who inspired your leadership style and made a difference in your leadership. Go to www.chaselearning.org/TeamTalk to share your story (in 100 words or less) of what you learned or experienced through this Team Talk activity.



SCHOOL LEADER SIMULATION (SIM): THE BULLY TEACHER

Go to www.chaselearning.org to access the SIM.

This School Leader Simulation (SIM) is a web-based activity that will challenge school leaders to work together as a team to solve a realistic scenario played out on the web. This SIM will challenge your communication and decision-making process. It is best completed by a team, discussing various options, decision making, and thought processes. It is our hope that you will find this SIM engaging and thought provoking.

Continue the conversation with us on Twitter at [#chaselearning](https://twitter.com/chaselearning).