Recruitment and Retention of Turnaround Leaders

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February 2015

Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS
at American Institutes for Research ■

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Session Goals

- Define turnaround principal competencies.

- Discuss the challenges associated with recruiting and hiring turnaround leaders.

- Identify processes and strategies for interviewing turnaround principals.

- Identify strategies to match principals to schools and provide support for continued development.

Persistently Poor Performing Schools

- How many priority and focus schools are in your state or district?

- What has been the history of leadership performance?

- What has been the history of leadership turnover?

Principal Influence
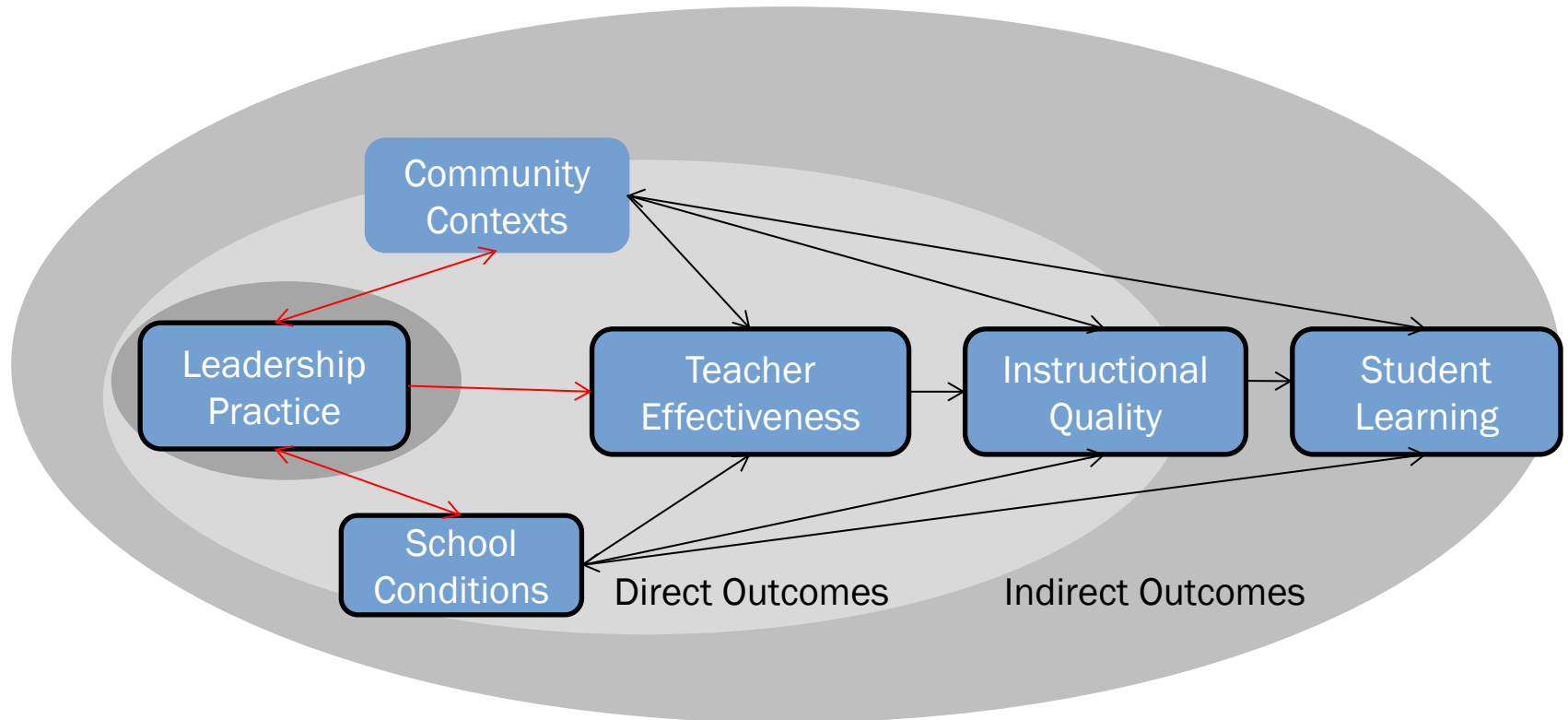
Source: Adapted from Clifford, Sherratt, and Fetters (2012, p. 7)

Turnaround Principals: What's the Difference?

Turnaround Principals: What's the Difference?

- Create a T-chart.

- List the characteristics of an effective principal.

- List the characteristics of a turnaround principal that are **different** from those of an effective principal.

Effective Principal	Turnaround Principal

Effective Principals

- Establish mission and vision.
- Focus on instructional improvement.
- Use data to continuously improve schooling.
- Act fairly and ethically.
- Engage the community.
- Advocate for better policy.

Sources: Hallinger and Heck (1998); Leithwood , Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004)

Turnaround Leader Competencies

Defining Turnaround

"Turnaround is a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing school that: (a) produces significant gains in achievement within two years; and (b) readies the school for the longer process of transformation into a high-performing organization."

—*Mass Insight Education* (2010, p. 3)

Emphasis: *Rapid, dramatic changes that result in significant improvement*

Eight Key Turnaround Lessons

1. Turnarounds can work.
2. ***Strong leadership is crucial.***
3. Quick, concrete, and celebrated wins are essential.
4. Mixing and matching strategies is promising.
5. Capacity building is imperative.
6. Teachers must believe in the turnaround intervention(s).
7. Connecting with parents is important.
8. Ample resources are needed for implementation.
9. Consistent organizational self-assessment is established.

Turnaround Leaders

- Leading a school through turnaround takes a different skill set than leading an already functioning school.

- Turnaround leader competencies are important.
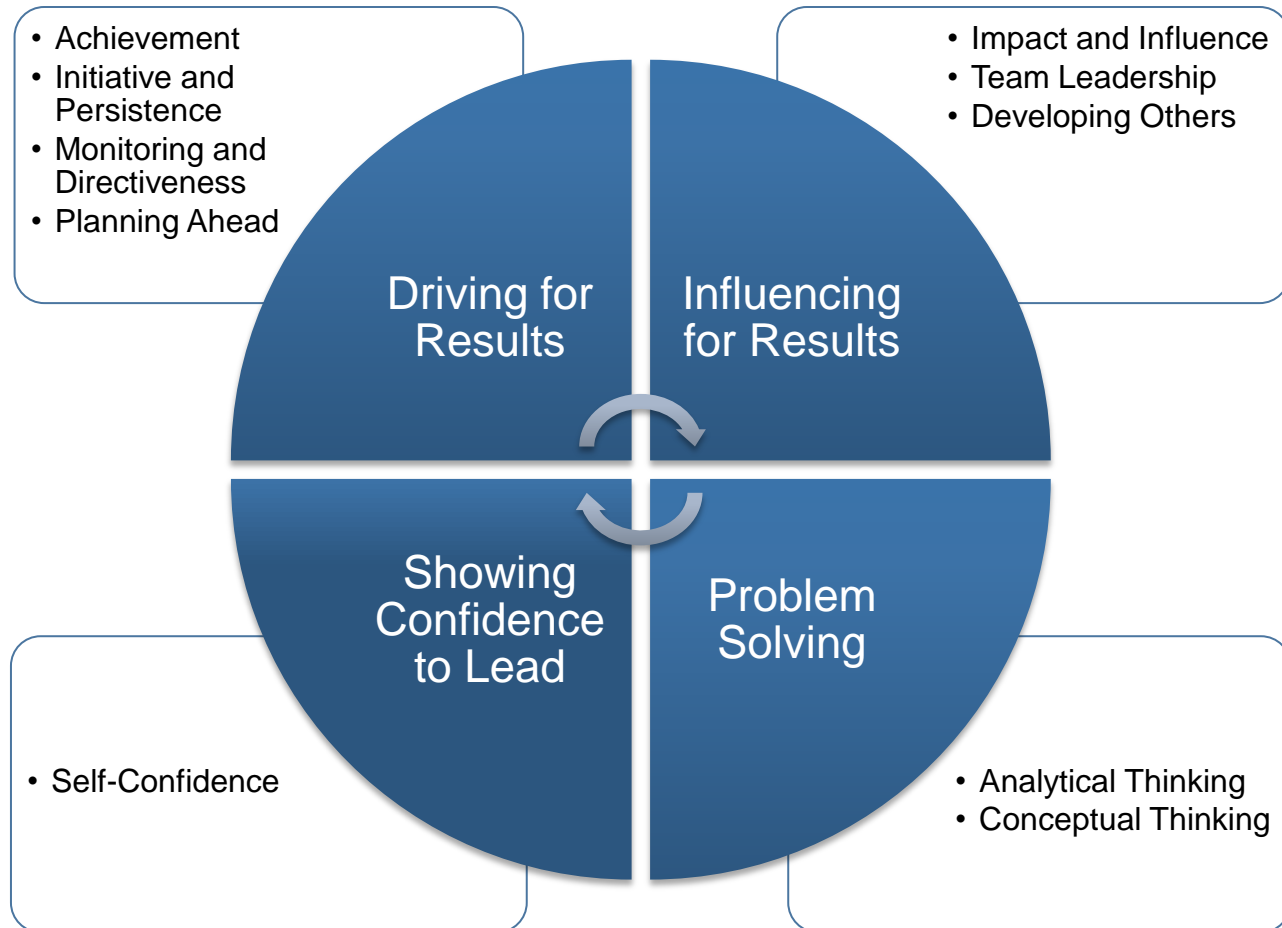
Source: Steiner and Barrett (2012)

Competency

"A competency is a pattern of thinking, feeling, acting or speaking that causes a person to be successful in a job or role."

High Level of Competency: One who regularly, without prompting, displays that competency more often, at higher levels, and at the right times to make them successful.

Source: Hassel and Hassel (2008a, p. 4).

School Turnaround Leader Competencies

- Achievement
- Initiative and Persistence
- Monitoring and Directiveness
- Planning Ahead

- Impact and Influence
- Team Leadership
- Developing Others

Driving for Results

Influencing for Results

Showing Confidence to Lead

Problem Solving

- Self-Confidence

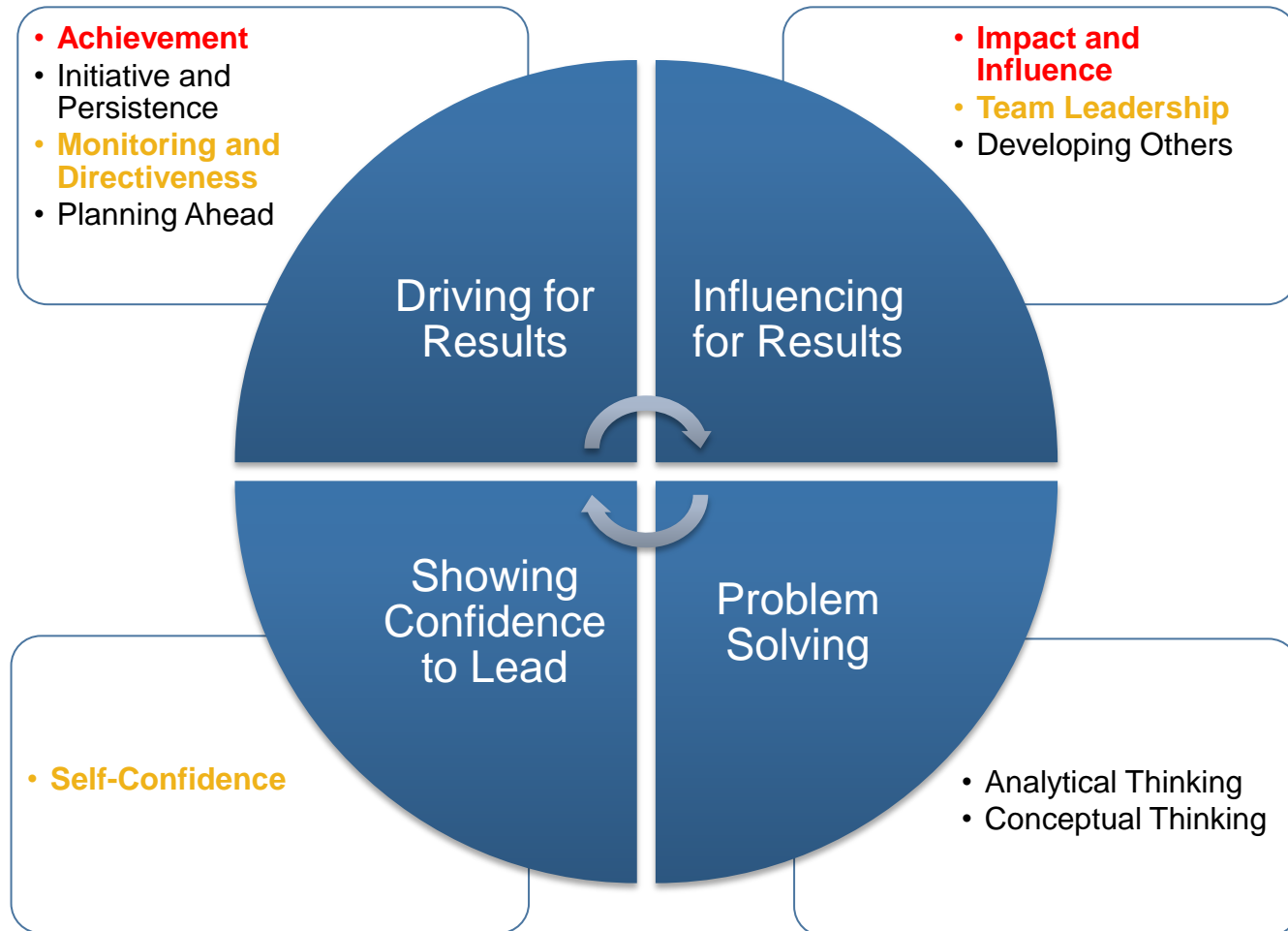- Analytical Thinking
- Conceptual Thinking
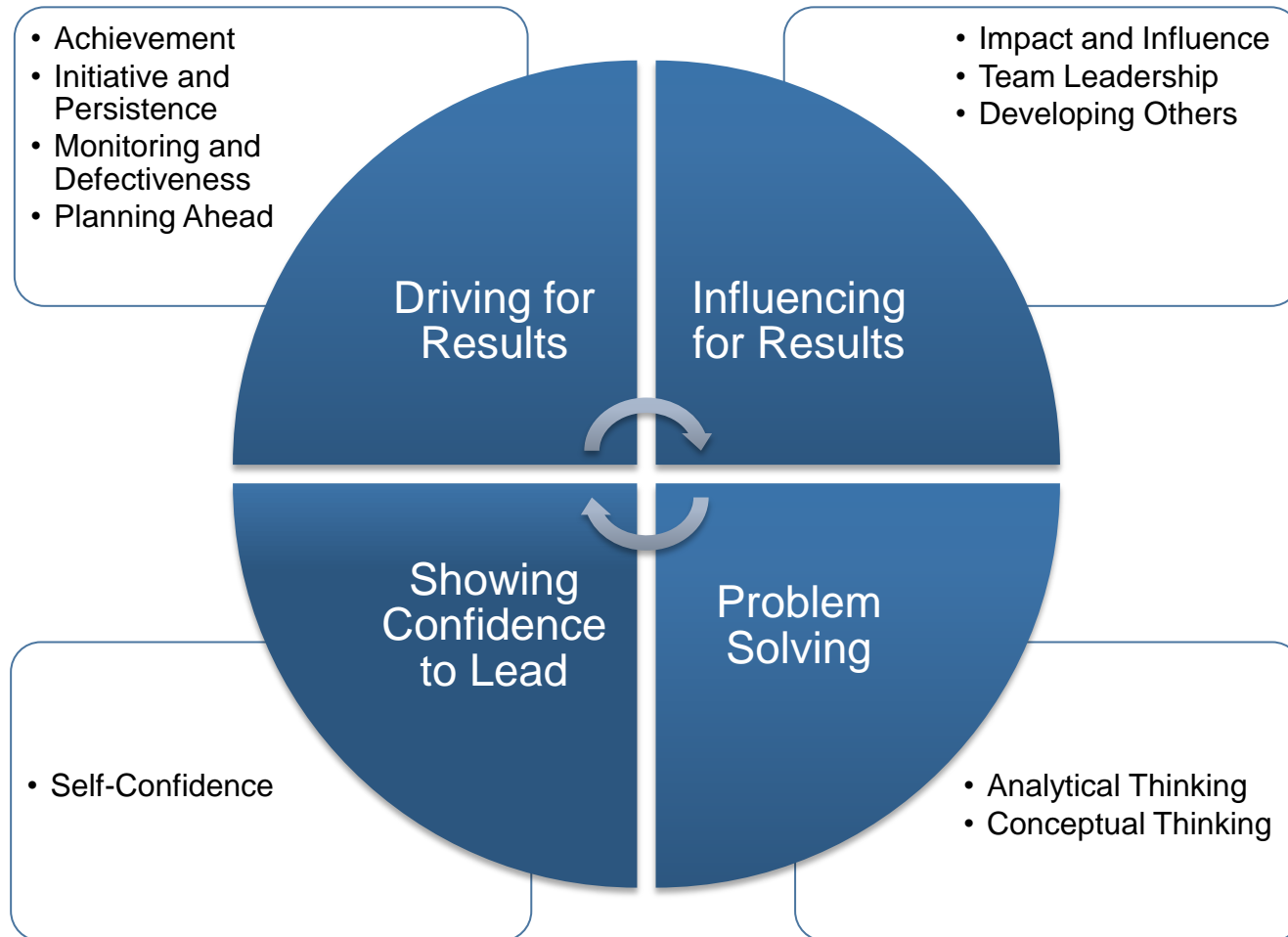
Unpacking the Competencies

Activity:

- Driving for Results Cluster (pp. 10–18)
- Influencing for Results Cluster (pp. 19–25)
- Problem Solving and Self-Confidence Clusters (pp. 26–33)

▪ Read your assigned pages, make note of what makes a person with this competency stand out from the average principal, and note it on your folded paper.

▪ As a group, teach each other about your cluster(s).

Cluster	Competencies	Descriptors	Behaviors
Driving for Results	• Achievement • Initiative and persistence • Monitoring and directiveness • Planning ahead	Set challenging goals, reach high standards despite barriers, do more than is expected, hold others accountable, plan to derive future benefits.	Choose challenging goals based on cost-benefit analysis, take significant risk to launch new venture or attempt unlikely change, take multiple actions to ensure success, bend organization norms to accomplish work objective, publicly monitor performance against standards, confront people with performance problems, rid organization of low performers, identify future needs and opportunities.
Influencing for Results	• Impact and influence • Team leadership • Developing others	Act with the intent of affecting the perceptions, thinking, and actions of others, assume authoritative leadership to benefit the organization, influence with the intent to increase other's effectiveness.	Engage in a complex set of maneuvers with many people to obtain desired impact, obtain resources and people needed to perform, motivate staff and stakeholders with charismatic communications, provide training to develop new skills and capability, give full responsibility for challenging work to others, promote others as a reward for development.
Problem Solving	• Analytical thinking • Conceptual thinking	Solve and simplify complex problems, break things down in logical ways, recognize cause and effect, see patterns in seemingly unrelated things.	Understand several possible causes and results of events, break apart complex problem or process into categories and steps, analyze difficult problem from different perspectives, use complex data to make decisions, see most important issue in complicated situation, crystallize complex data into simple findings.
Showing Confidence to Lead	• Self-confidence	Stay focused, committed, and self assured, believe in ability to accomplish tasks.	Express positive feelings about challenging assignments, make decisions despite disagreement with those in power.

Primary Critical Competencies

- **Achievement**
- Initiative and Persistence
- **Monitoring and Directiveness**
- Planning Ahead

- **Impact and Influence**
- **Team Leadership**
- Developing Others

Driving for Results

Influencing for Results

Showing Confidence to Lead

Problem Solving

- **Self-Confidence**

- Analytical Thinking
- Conceptual Thinking

What competencies are most critical for your state or district?

- Achievement
- Initiative and Persistence
- Monitoring and Defectiveness
- Planning Ahead

- Impact and Influence
- Team Leadership
- Developing Others

Driving for Results

Influencing for Results

Showing Confidence to Lead

Problem Solving

- Self-Confidence

- Analytical Thinking
- Conceptual Thinking

Discussion

- How could you use the Turnaround Competencies in discussions with principal preparation programs?

  - To develop statewide clearinghouse of eligible candidates?

  - To begin discussions in taking a shift in thinking to not treating hiring and placing principals as a one-size-fits-all approach?

Hiring a Turnaround Leader

Recruiting and Hiring Turnaround Principals

Although all districts have hiring procedures for principals in place, research provides little insight on districts' hiring procedures. How districts hire principals, what information is weighed, and how information is weighed remains unclear.

Sources: Spanneut (2007); Whaley (2002)

Recruiting and Hiring Turnaround Principals: AIR's Survey of Midwestern Superintendents

Marketing Outlets

- The majority (87 percent) of districts use multiple methods of recruitment.

- About 4.4 percent use an executive search firm.

- Districts tend to act independently, with little assistance from state departments of education.

Difficulty

- Sixty-six percent of the respondents rated principal recruitment as hard or very hard.

Yield

- Fifty-five percent of the respondents said they considered fewer than 10 percent of the applications reviewed to be qualified applications.

*Source*: Clifford, Brown-Sims, Condon, and Drill (2010)

Recruiting and Hiring Turnaround Principals: AIR's Survey of Midwestern Superintendents

Hiring Process

- A four-step process is used: recruitment, paper screen, job interview, and building walk-through.

- Eighty-five percent of the respondents do not require principals to perform leadership tasks as part of the process.

- The selection criteria are not typically documented.

- The superintendent is the decision maker.

Investment

- Most districts spend approximately two months and less than $1,000 on principal recruitment and hiring.

Source: Clifford, Brown-Sims, Condon, and Drill (2010)

Hiring a Turnaround Leader

BEI = Behavioral Event Interview
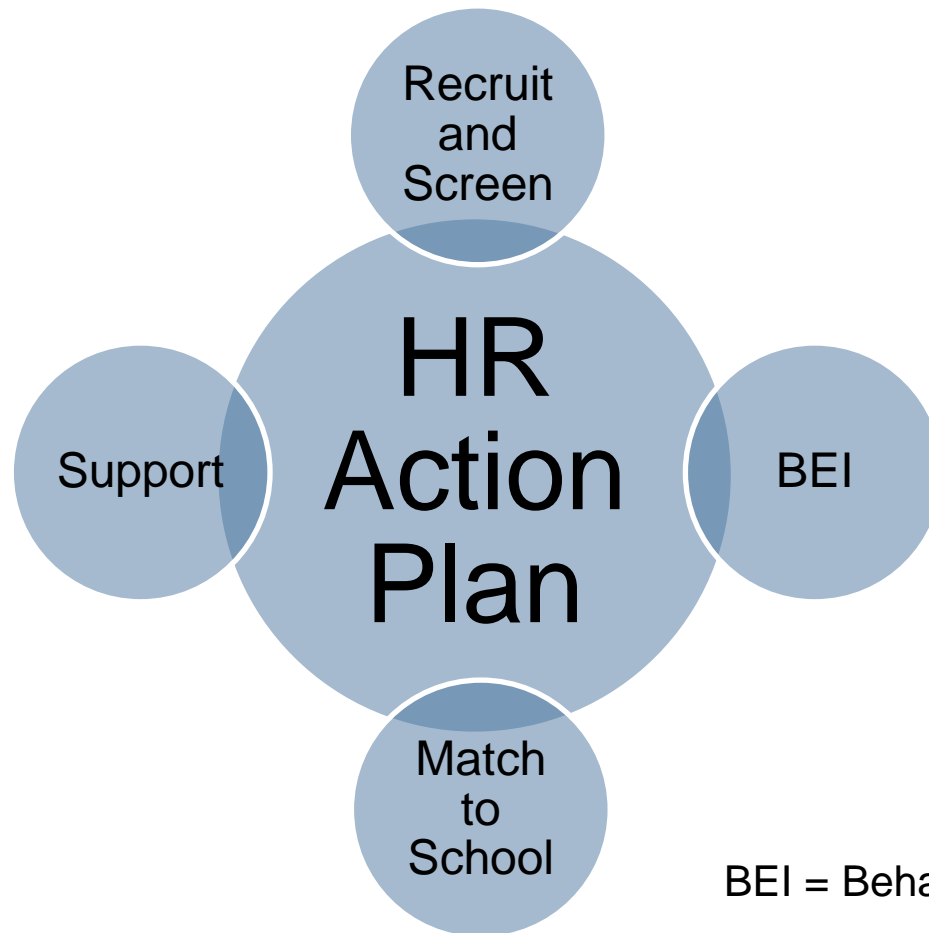
Up-Front Decisions

- What are your district/school needs for leadership based on current data? Which competencies are the most important for each district/school with opening(s)?

- What type of recruiting will gain access to best recruits? How are you going to attract prospective leaders? Do you have an incentive plan? What is the timeline?

- How are you going to screen and interview? Who will be involved? Trained? When?

Interview Process

- Research indicates that typical interview processes rarely uncover competencies that predict future success.

- Candidates usually focus on what they could do or would do. Such responses do not indicate a pattern of behavior.

- Candidates can put on a "dog and pony" show.

Turnaround Leader Selection

- Most widely used method is a Behavioral Event Interview (BEI).

- Ascertain past successes in their work life: What they have done to achieve success predicts how they will work to achieve success in the future.

See information at http://publicimpact.com/?s=turnaround+leader+hiring

BEI: Competencies

- Screen all candidates for the five critical competencies. These competencies are:
  - "Particularly important to success in the turnaround leader role,
  - "Harder than other competencies to develop quickly (so that selecting for them is important), and
  - "Predictive of other competencies, because a leader can only reach the higher levels of these competencies by using other important competencies (e.g., Level 4 of the Achievement competency, *Prioritizes Goals and Tasks Based on Cost-Benefit*, requires the competency Analytical Thinking and Planning)"

Source: Hassel and Hassel (2008b, p. 6)

Primary and Secondary Competencies

Primary Competencies:

- Achievement
- Impact and Influence

Secondary Competencies:

- Monitoring and Directiveness
- Team Leadership
- Self-Confidence

Elements of the Behavioral Event Interview

- Ask candidates to recall past events/situations at work.

- Candidate describes the event in detail (at least 15 minutes).

  - Candidate provides brief summary of what led up to the situation and the "headlines" of the event.

  - Candidate is then asked to walk through the event step-by-step and probed to ensure an exact recount of what he or she did, said, thought, and felt—as well as how others responded.

  - Only what the person was doing, saying, feeling or thinking at that past time is valid. Comments about the candidate's current thoughts are not used.

- Candidate is then scored based on his or her responses.

BEI Process: Scoring

Red Flag Zone: Red flag behaviors indicate a severe mismatch for this role.

Neutral Zone: These levels do not indicate a match if they are the highest levels of behavior shown.

Potential Hire Zone: These behaviors enable some level of success in this role.

TH = Threshold behaviors are needed for moderate success.

S = Superior performers use these behaviors when the situation requires.
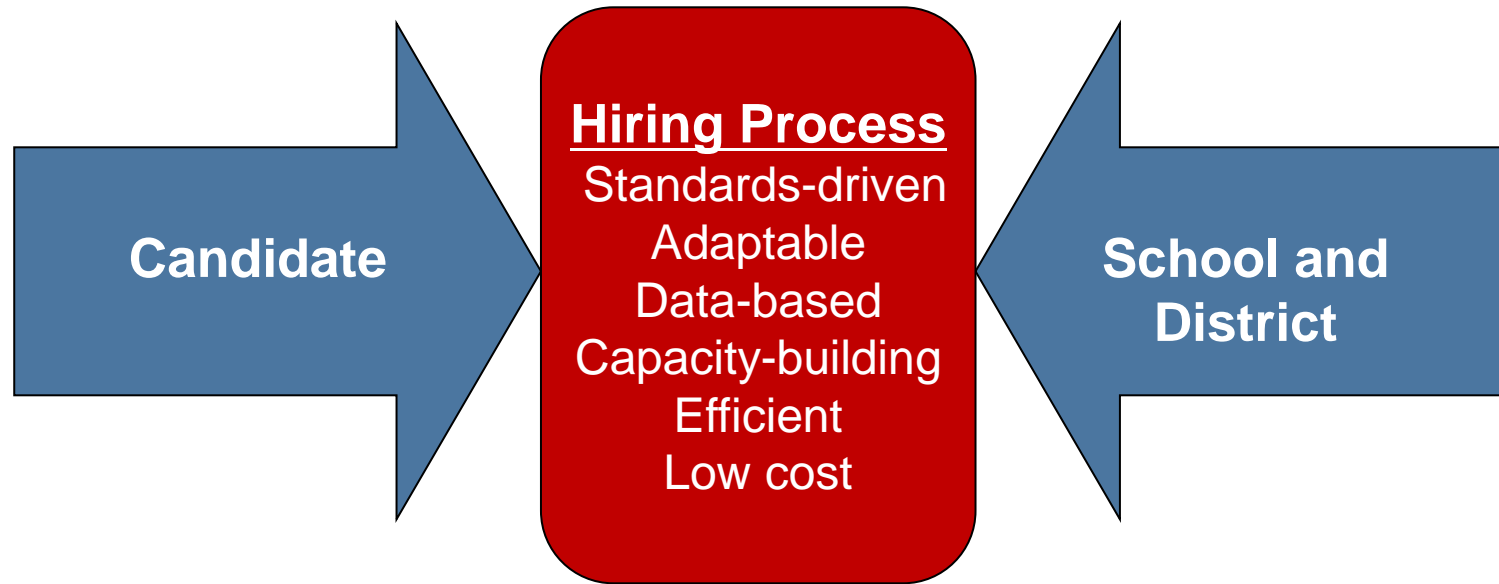
BEI Process: Ranking

- When ranking candidates, consider which of the competencies are most important for an individual school.

- Rarely will you find someone in the "Superior Zone" in most competencies. If you do, recruit and hire them!

- A red flag in any competency is a "no hire" even if the person has other great strengths. (They may be a better fit in a non-turnaround situation.)

- Use levels to help break ties.

BEIs Are Not Everything

- **BEIs do not screen for certain knowledge and skills:**

  - Data analysis task

  - Knowledge of Common Core State Standards

  - Professional learning communities

  - Other program or school-specific initiatives

- **Other elements can/should be added to the screening/interviewing process:**

  - Written samples

  - In-box tasks

  - Observation and feedback simulation

AIR's Quality School Leader Identification

Candidate →

Hiring Process
Standards-driven
Adaptable
Data-based
Capacity-building
Efficient
Low cost

← **School and District**

AIR's Quality School Leader Identification

We use a 4-step process for hiring principals, and we train district staff to facilitate the process.

Step	Smarter Process
1. Forming a hiring committee, setting priorities	1. Using school performance, culture, and other evidence to set hiring priorities against the principal evaluation framework.
2. Screening applications	2. Training the committee to look for traits and experiences.
3. Conducting the interview	3. Using multiple stakeholders, standards-aligned questions and scenarios.
4. Conducting an on-site screening and ranking the finalists	4. Using authentic tasks and assessments.

QSL- ID Materials

- **Principal Selection Guidebook**
  - Hiring Committee meeting agendas
  - Setting expectations of hiring committee

- **Toolbox**
  - Principal Qualities Priority Setting Chart
  - Data Analysis Exercise
  - Interview Question Bank
  - Scoring/ranking rubrics

Setting Hiring Committee Expectations

- 1.1 Recruit the Hiring Committee

- 1.2 Assign Duties for the Hiring Process

- 1.3 Set Working Procedures for the Hiring Committee

- 1.4 Set Priorities for the Hire

Where Do We Start?

- 1. Do you know what a local hiring committee is and how it can contribute to the

- hiring of a school principal?

- 2. Have you decided *not* to use a local hiring committee for this hire?

- 3. Have roles and responsibilities for recruiting and hiring tasks been assigned?

- 4. Have you created a record-keeping system to adequately document hiring

- decisions, protect candidate confidentiality, and avoid legal or other conflicts?

- 5. Have you established protocols for ensuring candidate confidentiality?

- 6. Do you know the legal do's and don'ts of hiring?

- 7. Do you, your district administrators, and others involved in hiring the new

- principal have a strong sense of what *instructional leadership* means?

- 8. Have you assessed the leadership needs of the school in which the new principal

- will work?

- 9. Have you assembled an updated school and district profile that includes student

- and staff data?

- 10. Have you and your hiring committee members worked with data to set leadership
priorities?

Find Your Starting Point

- Questions 1–2: If the answers to these questions are "yes," you may want to adapt or skip Task 1.1 which focuses on recruiting a local hiring committee and understanding team roles.

- Questions 3: If the answer to this question is "yes," you may want to adapt or skip Task 1.2 which focuses on specific duties of hiring committee members and other stakeholders.

- Questions 4–6: If the answers to these questions are "yes," you may want to adapt or skip Task 1.3 which helps you establish procedures for managing the hiring process.

- Questions 7– 10: If the answers to these questions are "yes," you may want to adapt or skip Task 3.1 which helps when setting priorities for principal qualities and skills.

Discussion

- What are the similarities/differences between a "regular" interview and a BEI and task performance interview?

- What are the challenges to implementing or integrating a BEI approach?

- What are the policy implications for your state or district?

Principal Placement and Support

Turnaround Principals:
The Matching Approach

Turnaround Competencies

Knowledge and Skill

Performance
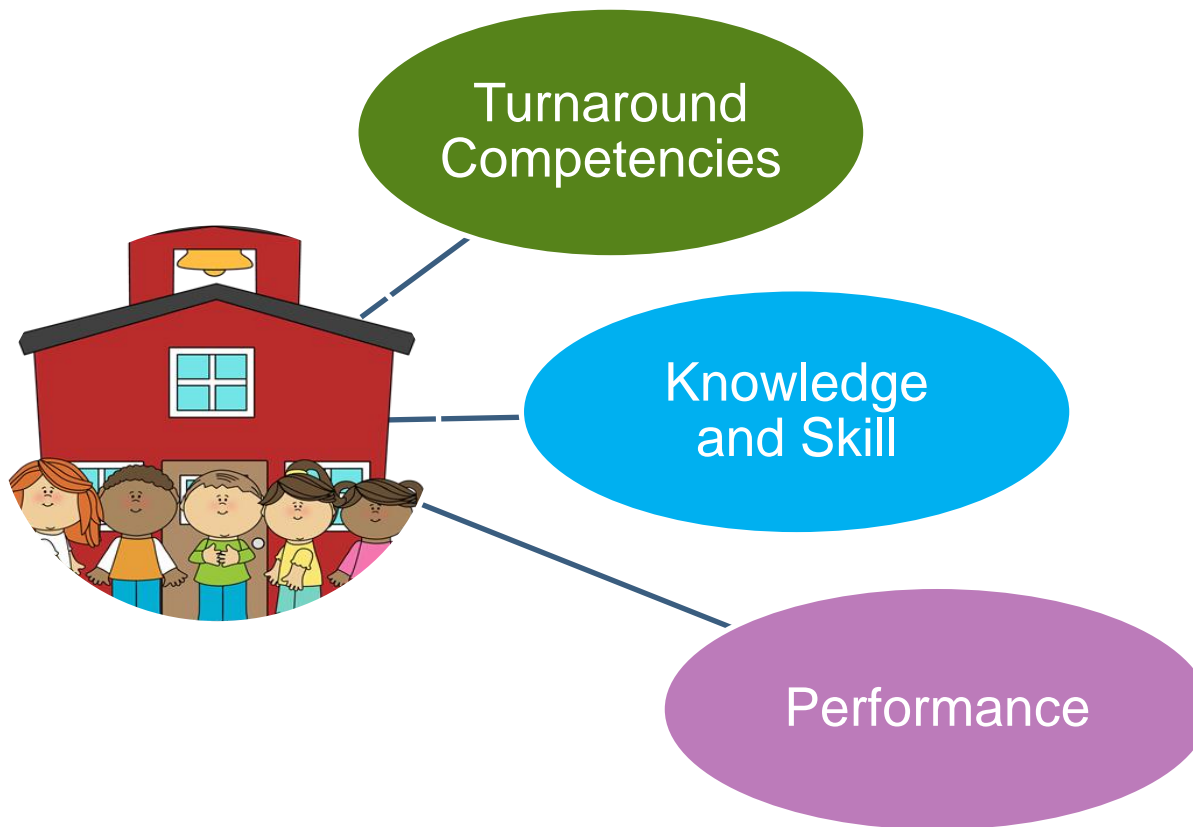
Principal/School Matching Process

- Interview results from candidate

- Survey results from stakeholders (i.e., teachers, parents, students)

- Leading and lagging indicators for past three years for each school

- Any other significant data from district such as:

  - Demographic data

  - School environment

  - Community perceptions

  - School facilities and resources (including staff)

District Leadership Staffing Profile

	School Status	Student Attendance	Discipline Incidents	Truant	Teacher Attendance	Distribution of Teacher by Performance	Identified Competencies	Other
Ben Franklin Elem. School	Priority	94%	Disorderly/ Disruptive=357 Offenses against others=65	3%	82%	Tier I=13% Tier 2=24% Tier 3=63%	• Driving for Results • Team Leadership	School closing at the end of the year
John Adams Middle School	Priority	92%	Disorderly/ Disruptive=422 Offenses against others=105 Alcohol/Drugs=1	1%	80%	Tier I=11% Tier 2=57% Tier 3=32%	• Driving for Results • Influence	4 principals in last 5 years
Thomas Jefferson High School	Focus	88%	Disorderly/ Disruptive=386 Offenses against others=297 Alcohol/Drugs=54	33%	82%	Tier I=5% Tier 2=12% Tier 3=83%	• Influencing • Monitoring	Gang activity in community

District Leadership Staffing Profile

- What would be included in your district leadership staffing profile?

- What would be the challenges to implementation?

- How would this approach change the way a district approaches assigning leaders to schools?

Principal Development Tool

	Driving for Results	Influencing Others	Problem Solving	Confidence to Lead	Coaching Frequency	Coaching Activities	Assigned Coach	Coaching Goal
Principal Smith	Threshold 3	Threshold 3	Threshold 3	Threshold 3	Daily	Modelling, observation and feedback	Franklin	principal will develop a walkthrough schedule and rubric to monitor instruction
Principal Jones	Threshold 5	Threshold 3	Threshold 3	Threshold 6	4 days per month	Observation and feedback	Lincoln	principal will establish a school leadership team focused on high academic achievement
Principal Clooney	Threshold 4	Threshold 4	Threshold 4	Threshold 4	2 days per week	Modelling, observation and feedback	Adams	Principal will work with PLCs to develop SMART goals for student achievement

Principal Development Tool

- What would be included in your Principal Development Tool?

- What would be the challenges to implementation?

- How would this change the way a district approaches providing professional development and support to school leaders?

Recruiting Turnaround Leaders

Recruiting and Hiring Turnaround Principals: Role for States and Associations

- **Support for turnaround principal development, training, and recognition**
  - Identification of strong turnaround leaders by using state-level data
  - Documentation of turnaround leader practices
  - Support for turnaround leader training and coaching
  - Advanced or specialized certification

- **Support for turnaround principal hiring**
  - Central clearinghouse for districts and candidates
  - Training on hiring procedures

What have other districts done?

- **Fort Worth (Texas) Independent School District PEAK [Public Educators Accelerating Kids] Program**
  - Hiring Incentives: stipends and working conditions
  - Cut the "red-tape"
  - Reward pay

- **Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina) Schools**
  - Allowed principals to bring a team with them
  - Achievement Zone schools went to the front of the line
  - Compensation was adjusted for the additional challenges

Questions?

State Team Working Time

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