

## 21ST CENTURY LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO CONSIDER

*by:*

**Danah Mae D. De Padua**  
*Head Teacher III, Payangan IS*

The term 'leadership' can call to mind a variety of different things, counting on the types of leaders you have been exposed to in the past. If you cast your mind back over some time at school as a student and your years of teaching, you'll be able to identify a range of school administrator leadership styles. Some of these were more effective than others, and there are likely some leadership models you hope to emulate. There is always something to be gained from the past but preparing teachers and learners for the longer term requires forward-thinking, 21st Century leaders.

21st Century school leaders enthusiastically face the challenging task of preparing young minds for the longer term, and that they think strategically about the goals and systems that will support this task.

There are variety of different traits, skills, mindsets, and habits that outline 21st Century leaders.

Personal qualities like curiosity, persistence, resilience, flexibility, responsibility and diligence are as important as ever for leaders. Whatever changes come, these principal leadership qualities are always the key to success. Remember, also, that no-one is born with all the qualities of an effective school leader fully realized. A part of being a leader is having the will to work on personal growth and improving yourself constantly.

The way you think can change your life and your school. A positive mindset causes you to be confident and encourages you to take risks when needed and to think outside the box. To start with, are you even improving about yourself as a leader? Too often,

people forget to give some thought to the school principal as leader. You ought to be truly nurturing yourself as a leader, not getting caught up in administration and the small details.

You should also cultivate a global perspective and avoid the temptation to think small. Approaching everything with a view of sustainability and wellbeing and therefore the big picture, you will help create a culture that encourages teachers and learners to try to do the same. Leading and managing change in school is far less overwhelming with these big touchstones remaining constant.

Focus may be a fundamental skill for everybody in the information age, but especially for busy people with demanding roles. This includes focus within the moment – being able to stop checking your emails and immerse yourself in deep work – as well as focus on a broader scale – knowing what the key values and goals are, personally and for your school, and keeping them central.

Build healthy habits that make a framework to help you perform at your best. From getting enough sleep to carving out uninterrupted time together with your family, these non-work habits support your work. Search for things that aren't working in your life and try new ways of solving the matter. If your solution works, make it a habit so you'll stop giving it so much time and attention.

Today, however, the education landscape is shifting too rapidly, especially in light of the pandemic. What worked yesterday isn't applicable today. Being a pacesetter in the 21st century requires a shift in mindset. 21st-century leaders have to adopt agility of own approach to leadership and management, be active, and hunt down opportunities that will enable you and your team to grow and develop.

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