

CAPITALIZING ON THE POWER FROM THE MIDDLE: NURTURING THE MIDDLE MANAGERS IN SCHOOL

by:

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The success of an organization depends on the synergetic collaboration of its members, especially the middle leaders and managers. According to Bryan V. Hancock (2023), the global leader of McKinsey’s talent work, middle manager is somebody who has managers who sit below them and managers who sit above them. They are literally “in the middle” of the organization. They connect the higher and lower structure of the organization.

In the context of schools, middle managers can be department heads, coordinators, assistant principals or even teachers. The functions of middle managers are crucial for organizational success as they bridge the gap between senior leaders and front-line employees. They contribute to enhanced team performance and drive effective operations. They can serve as the inner circle of the school head, and partners in attaining the school’s vision, mission, and objectives.

Capitalizing on their power is tantamount to nurturing them. Here are some tips on how to effectively care for middle managers:

Provide Clear Expectations and Goals

It is important to set clear expectations and goals for middle managers, enabling them to understand their roles and responsibilities. Clearly define their objectives and ensure alignment with the organization’s strategic objectives. (Chambliss, D.F., & Rubel, W.R. 2009).

Offer Professional Development Opportunities

Middle managers should be given opportunities to enhance their skills and capabilities through relevant training programs, workshops, and coaching sessions. This helps them stay current with educational trends and improves their ability to lead teams effectively (Avolio, B. J., & Gibbs, M. 2005).

Encourage Communication and Collaboration

Foster an environment that encourages open communication and collaboration among middle managers. Encourage them to share ideas, concerns, and feedback, allowing for an open dialogue. This facilitates problem-solving, encourages innovation, and builds a sense of belonging for middle managers (Kassing, J.W., & Demir, D. 2020).

Recognize and Reward Their Contributions

Recognize and reward the efforts and achievements of middle managers. Acknowledge their contributions publicly and reward them with appropriate incentives such as bonuses, promotions, or additional responsibilities. This reinforces their importance and motivates them to continue performing at a high level (Fernandez, E., & Moldogaziev, T., 2013).

Provide Mentoring or Coaching Support

Assign mentors or coaches to middle managers to provide guidance, support, and constructive feedback. This can be a senior executive within the organization or an external mentor. Mentoring or coaching relationships helps middle managers develop their leadership skills and navigate challenges more effectively (Scandura, T.A., & Williams, E. A., 2004).

Capitalizing on the power from the middle is a good investment. It will become the best

if middle managers are properly taken care of.

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Middle managers are the heart of your company, "McKinseyQuarterly, July 2023.

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