

Why is Distributed Leadership Difficult?



“It is just difficult to let it go.”

Why principals do not like distributed leadership:

- “I have been here for more than 30 years. I know **BETTER** how to manage and lead this school.”
- “ It **takes too much time** to share the information, organize group discussions and finally reach a consensus on one issue. ”
- “ My **teachers hate leadership work**. They think they only belong to the classroom.”
- “ Many brilliant ideas were killed in the process of making a consensus. It is impossible to please everyone.”

(Tian, 2011)



The Obstacles

- Single hero syndrome
- Lack of leadership training
- Lack of trust / hostile environment
- Inflexible structure
- Lack of support
- Only use external motivators (e.g. money)
- **Other ideas?**

(Tian, 2011)



Why is Distributed Leadership Important?

Session 4 Lecture 4



UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

Institute of Educational Leadership

Distributed leadership makes the organization more...

- **Sustainable** (share the leadership wisdom)
- **Economical** (through empowerment and involvement)
- **Inspiring** (connect to professional development)
- **Healthy** (trust, collaboration, peer-support, communality)
- **Ethical** (people as valuable resource, not tools)

Connecting to broad pedagogical leadership, we can find the same elements!



Broad Pedagogical Leadership

- ❖ At the centre of school's interest is **learning** not teaching.¹
- ❖ Students have the **moral right** to learning and to the learning that refers to human beings as **whole human beings**.⁷
- ❖ At the centre of principal's interest is **how teachers develop students'** learning, development and growth.²
- ❖ School is regarded as an organization whose learning manifests itself in its **culture** which either advances or inhibits learning.³
- ❖ Individual people come and go but **culture preserves** organization's knowledge, behaviour patterns, perceptions, norms and values.³
- ❖ Leadership is **direct, indirect and interactive**.⁴
- ❖ Indirect leadership enables and presupposes **distributed leadership**.⁴
- ❖ Shared leadership creates **empowerment and communality**.⁵
- ❖ Principal's central leadership is **management of knowledge and learning**⁶ and **management of change**.⁵

(Alava, 2008; Alava, Halttunen & Risku, 2012; Daft & Weick 1984³; Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Klein, 1999⁷; Fullan, 2001⁵; Hargreaves, Earl, Moore, & Manning 2001⁵; Leightwood, Janzi & Steinbach, 1999²; Macneill, Cavanagh & Silcox, 2005^{1,4,5}; Raasumaa, 2010⁶; Risku, 2011)

