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LEADERSHIP EDGE

Coaching in Schools



The Monthly Coach - February 2023

“I ain’t got no money, but I am rich on personality.” - Prince

As members of the largest UK teachers’ union strike to protest against a chronic shortage of funding and a national recruitment and retention crisis, let us reflect this month on one of the most challenging aspects of school leadership, at all levels: managing budgets.

Tight budgets and lack of resource can mean it is not only difficult to make the desired, and sometimes essential, investments in your school and your staff, but also that you carry a weight of decision making which can rest extremely heavily on your shoulders and in your heart.



One [soaring cost is supply](#). With staffing typically making up [70-80% of budget](#), accounting for these additional costs can indeed be eye-watering. And there is extra pain in that we would all prefer to have a full and healthy staff body providing consistency for our children.

So we return to the recruitment and retention issue. The vocational callings of ‘make a difference’ and ‘give something back’ don’t appear to be enough right now. But the reason is not just money. Study after study shows that leaders, teachers and support staff are burning out.

Last year, in their [global study into wellbeing of employees across all sectors](#), Gallup found the biggest causes of burnout to be:

1. Unfair treatment at work
2. Unmanageable workload
3. Unclear communication
4. Lack of manager support
5. Unreasonable time pressure

Whilst lack of resource can certainly impact each of these, that is largely out of your control. Instead, focus on what is within your control: systems, processes, communications, prioritisation, vision and values, and so on, and use these to protect personal wellbeing, develop professional capacity and attract new recruits. As Gallup concludes, “Organizations need to think about the whole person, not just the worker.”

We invite you to take some time to reflect on the following questions:

To what extent do you know the level of morale and wellbeing of staff in your school?
What strategies are currently in place to avoid staff experiencing the 5 biggest sources of burnout?
How could you expand or enhance these to embed a culture of wellbeing across all levels/areas of your school?

It’s no secret that spending decisions keep many school leaders awake at night. However, it’s important to remember that you have so much to give, in non-material form. Leading and managing with compassion, appreciation and clarity can go a long way to creating that fair treatment which is the basis of wellbeing for your biggest resource: your people.

In the words of Judy Garland, "I can live without money, but I cannot live without love."

Warmest wishes

Catherine Hulme
Director
Leadership Edge

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