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LEADERSHIP EDGE

Coaching in Schools



We are exhibiting at the ASCL National Conference and the Buckinghamshire Academy and School Leadership Conference this week. Please do come and say hello!

The Monthly Coach - March 2023

"Make Do and Mend"

Ever feel like you're scrabbling around for scraps of cloth to cover the needs of the school? You are not alone. We have been speaking with lots of leaders in schools who feel this way. Some are spending two hours every morning sorting cover, absorbing colleagues' full-time roles due to sickness, driving around the houses of persistent non-attendees, providing above-and-beyond support to colleagues who really are not suited to their role but it's better to work with them try to find someone else, and wiping lunch tables.

There seems to be an endless list of the causes for current shortages: staff absence, recruitment issues, workload pressures, the approach of exam season, national pupil attendance figures, and ever-increasing strain on SEND provision, to name a few. These challenges can lead to a frustrating lack of consistency and challenging behaviour in the classroom to be addressed; and to make matters worse, there is the ever-impending Ofsted window and, of course, diminishing budgets.

It may be feeling like a time of crisis, with personal resilience and ingenuity being constantly tested. If so, it may be helpful to adopt a 'make do and mend' attitude, similar to that taken during the Great Depression and the Second World War, when materials were scarce.



Try taking a breath, looking around, and really noticing the resources around you. By doing this, you'll probably find there's a way through. One school leader we work with has coined his own mission statement "Seek excellence. Embrace imperfection". Another has whittled down all her 'wants' to a short list of 'non-negotiables'.

School leaders, at all levels, need to be intentional to prioritise the things which really matter with the current limitations. By pausing to consider how the resources at your disposal can be put to best use may not only unearth unimagined solutions, but perhaps even create a thing of beauty.

For example, delegating a task to a colleague who previously has not had such an opportunity could help them to flourish; connecting departments/colleagues to share their tasks could spark new relationships; meeting with support staff to explore how to make their roles easier could create new, more efficient systems and processes.



We invite you to take a few minutes to consider these questions:

- What are the minimum, non-negotiable requirements of my role?
- Where are my energies best directed to ensure the colleagues I lead have the most significant impact on the school and children?
- Who can help me develop creative solutions?

We cannot think creatively while we are busy simply getting things done. Coaching, including self-coaching, provides you with dedicated thinking time to route through the "haven'ts" and "can'ts" to find the "haves" and "cans". Once you have seen these, you can start mending the parts of your school which need the most attention and you may well end up feeling rather satisfied by what you and your team produce.

Best wishes

Catherine Hulme

Director
Leadership Edge

PURE coaching with Leadership Edge: Purely YOUR thinking space.

If you have enjoyed this think-piece, you can find our back-catalogue [here](#)

We invite you to take our **free 3 minute self-reflection quiz all about you** and what's stopping you from being the best you can be! Results direct to your inbox:
<https://assess.coach/leadershipedge>

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