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**TOOLS FOR TRANSFORMATION**

**P**ast issues of Learning Forward's newsletters have emphasized strategies that help schools and systems on their journeys to improve teaching and learning. See several recent issues for valuable tools and examples.

**Tools for Schools** Winter 2011

In "4 key strategies help educators overcome resistance to change," learn how principals have succeeded in moving transformation efforts forward. Accompanying tools help educators communicate about change, assess a school's readiness for initiatives, understand resistance, and sustain change over time.

[www.learningforward.org/news/issueDetails.cfm?issueID=318](http://www.learningforward.org/news/issueDetails.cfm?issueID=318)

**Tools for Schools** August/September 2009

Read "Leadership teams create lasting change" to understand how leaders bring educators together in community to sustain school improvement efforts. Tools include a leadership self-assessment and a force-field analysis to examine influences.

[www.learningforward.org/news/issueDetails.cfm?issueID=279](http://www.learningforward.org/news/issueDetails.cfm?issueID=279)

**The Learning System** March 2009

Explore how those willing to challenge their thinking, and the thinking of others, can make a difference in "Competing values form obstacles to change." Dig deeper with a tool that encourages leaders to identify their personal barriers to change.

[www.learningforward.org/members/issueDetails.cfm?issueID=267](http://www.learningforward.org/members/issueDetails.cfm?issueID=267)



**LEAPING INTO THE FEAR**

"The job isn't to catch up to the status quo; the job is to invent the status quo."

— Seth Godin

**A**uthor Seth Godin writes in his new book, *Poke the Box* (2011, The Domino Project), about the importance of starting: starting that new initiative, taking the leap, getting going on your big, new idea. Having good ideas isn't enough. Starting them is essential.

In a free accompanying PDF, Godin asks a series of questions and provides prompts to help readers get going. He acknowledges that fear plays a big role in halting us from trying new ideas or taking a risk. As part of the reflection process to learn to start more often, he asks readers to consider:

- What is your biggest fear about starting?
- What would happen if that fear came true?
- Would it stop you from trying again?
- Consider what you aren't starting. What would it take to help you take a leap?

**Source:** Godin, S. (2011). *Start now (Poke the box: The workbook)*. The Domino Project. Available at [www.thedominoproject.com](http://www.thedominoproject.com).

Free to succeed

**idea** "We never know where the next great innovation will come from, but it is far more likely to come from people freed to do meaningful work within a commonly shared purpose than it is from a mandate or directive."

**Source:** "To tackle new problems, we're going to need new solutions," by Robert Davidovich, p. 42.

**SUPPORTING STUDENTS ON THEIR JOURNEYS**

According to the new *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Preparing Students for College and Careers*, a substantial majority of teachers, parents, and Fortune 1000 executives believe that one of the nation’s highest priorities in education should be preparing secondary students for college and career success.

- Teachers believe that one of the highest priorities in education should be strengthening programs to help diverse learners with the highest needs meet college- and career-ready standards.
- Teachers in schools with more than two-thirds minority students are more likely than those in schools with one-third or fewer minority students to support common core standards (English: 68% vs. 55%; math: 69% vs. 52%).
- Both students and parents report that establishing a college-going school culture appears to make the most difference in predicting student success.



- In addition to setting expectations and providing appropriate information to students and parents, schools with such a culture also excel at preparing students in core subjects as well as the interdisciplinary areas that build global awareness.
- Unfortunately, most of the schools with college-going cultures serve students who traditionally are more successful. Schools with strong college-going cultures include fewer diverse and low-income students and English language learners.

**Learn more in the complete survey.**

Links for current reports and the entire MetLife Teacher Survey series are available at [www.metlife.com/teachersurvey](http://www.metlife.com/teachersurvey).

**Power principles for promoting change**

To increase the chances for success in change efforts, understand that:

<b>1 Strategizing will help us evolve and reshape ideas and actions.</b>
We need strategy and strategic ideas, but above all we need to think of the evolution of change plans as a process of shaping and reshaping ideas and actions.
<b>2 Pressure means ambitious targets. Support involves developing new competencies.</b>
Large-scale reform requires a careful balance and integration of pressure and support — systems include a great deal of inertia, which means they require new forces to change direction.
<b>3 Knowledge of the implementation dip can reduce the awkwardness of the learning period.</b>
Since new change involves grappling with new beliefs, skills, and understandings, changes will not go smoothly in the early stages of implementation, and all involved should know this is part of the process.
<b>4 Mastering implementation is necessary to overcome the fear of change.</b>
At the beginning of the change process, losses are tangible and gains are still theoretical. Implementation is necessary for gains, but that takes time.
<b>5 It is necessary to identify the distinction between technical problems and adaptive challenges.</b>
Existing knowledge is sufficient to solve technical problems, while adaptive challenges require a more complex response. Learn more about this on p. 42.
<b>6 Engaging others in change requires persistence to overcome the inevitable challenges.</b>
Because change is complex, difficult, and frustrating, the change process requires pushing ahead without being rigid, regrouping despite setbacks, and not being discouraged when progress is slow.

**Source: Fullan, M., Cuttress, C., & Kilcher, A. (2005, Fall).** 8 forces for leaders of change: Presence of the core concepts does not guarantee success, but their absence ensures failure. *JSD*, 26(4), 54-64. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/articleDetails.cfm?articleID=88](http://www.learningforward.org/news/articleDetails.cfm?articleID=88).