

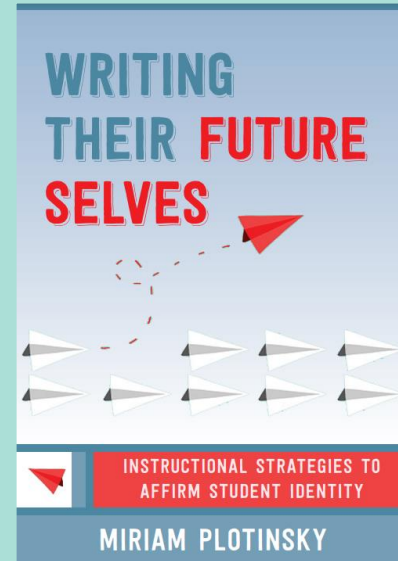
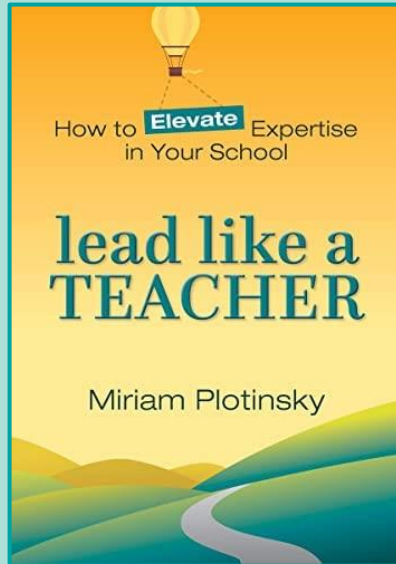
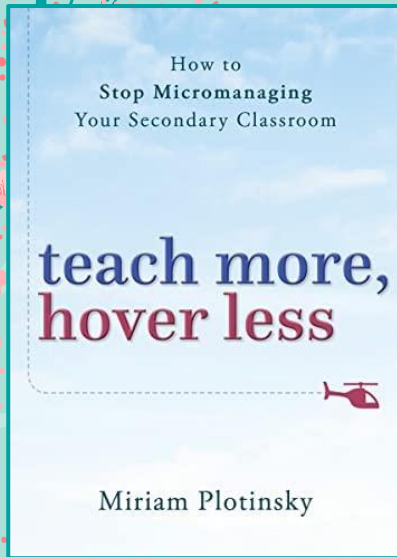


Closing the Empathy Gap

**Empowering Leaders to Elevate Micro-School
Outcomes by Incorporating a Teacher Perspective**

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Click on the books to learn more!

SESSION AGENDA



01

DEFINING

What is the “Empathy Gap?”

02

ACTIVATING

What do I already know about elevating micro school outcomes?

03

EXPLORING

Three areas of “micro” leadership to enact immediate change

04

APPLYING

Select one area for practical and immediate application

05

REFLECTING

Take time to think and determine next steps





The "Empathy Gap"

Defining the Concept





Forest...or Trees?

An “empathy gap” occurs when individuals in leadership positions gradually lose a stronger connection to classroom instruction.

Generally speaking...

- Administrators and leaders have a “big picture” look.
- Teachers tend to be more details-oriented.

BOTH ARE IMPORTANT.

The Lens of Instructional Leadership

*Lead Like a
Teacher*
(p. 8)

Teacher Lens	Leader Lens
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administrators have no idea what I do all day.• Nobody listens to me or respects my opinions.• I don't have the time to go to this meeting and hear about one more thing they expect from me.• I'm doing the best I can, but my principal doesn't get it. Nobody can force kids to come to class and do the work.• Administrators really need to go back into the classroom and get a reality check.• My planning time is precious and I need it. Do not make me give it up for any reason.• All leaders care about is PR and appearances.• Nobody cares about what we think. Teachers are not asked for genuine input.• I am so tired of being micromanaged. Just let me do my job!• I wish leaders would hear me more.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers are so uncooperative and set in their ways.• I wish teachers would respect my opinion more. I used to be a teacher!• We need to change the way we do this work. Across the board, students are not successful. This is a crisis.• Why do four teachers in the same content area and grade level have such different results?• How can we best improve outcomes for our underserved student populations?• Time for professional development is nonnegotiable.• How can we get beyond surface-level conversations and make real change?• Why can't teachers be more open-minded about the work we're trying to do?• I am so tired of people not doing what I ask them to do.• I wish teachers would listen to me more.

Turn and talk.

Which of these thoughts have you had yourself?

Which have you heard others express?

What can be done to change some of these beliefs?

Activator



- Think of one area of instructional leadership within your locus of control. What is it? Who helps you maximize this area to its fullest? Do they inhabit job roles and perspectives that differ from yours?
- Consider one instructional area in which you have less control. How might teacher voice and expertise play a role in this area?

Use the provided post-its to jot down your thoughts as you complete the activator.

Then, post your ideas on the wall!





Micro Exploration
Topic #1



Observation and Evaluation

Accepted Tenets of Observation

What do we already do?

Why do we do it?

How do teachers feel about it (and does it matter)?



Narrative Conferences

How is narrative questioning more powerful than traditional conference questioning?

Traditional Conference Question	Leaning Into Narrative
How do you feel this lesson went?	Tell me about your relationship to this class. What sets it apart from others you teach?
What would you change about this lesson?	What did your process for developing this lesson look like?
How did you assess student progress both during and after class?	What do you know about the kids in this class and what they need to work on?
What is your professional goal this year?	Tell me about your core educational beliefs, and how you work to exemplify them.

Take a few minutes to role play a narrative conference question or two with someone across the room. What do you notice about a narrative protocol?

Turning Passive Practice into an Active Reset

What can we do differently to actively highlight instructional expertise?

Passive Practice	Active Reset
Observe teachers in order of urgency with the understanding that teachers who are not causing undue concern may not be observed	Develop a <i>separate</i> rotation plan for teachers who need more immediate support; apply the regular observation schedule to teachers who are not flagged for under-performance
Step into the classroom and conduct a typical observation	Step into the classroom, allow the teacher to leave and observe a colleague's class while the leader teaches that period; debrief afterward
Provide the teacher with feedback after the class that contains both pluses and areas for growth	Offer to co-teach a class with the teacher to model strategies for addressing areas of growth
Observe each teacher once or twice a year	Set up a classroom invitation system via online form to encourage teachers to invite leaders into their classes to see specific lessons
Conduct longer formal observations and shorter informal observations	Talk to teachers casually at every opportunity (hallways, meetings, small talk near the bathroom) about what they are teaching; observe what sounds exciting for the time it takes



Micro Exploration
Topic #2

Feedback



"Feedback on Feedback" Protocol

How do we avoid the feedback hole and make the process meaningful?

- Be open to new ideas – truly.
- Don't ask if you don't really want the answer.
- It's okay to gather feedback only sometimes.
- Follow through!

Feedback on Feedback: Sample

At our February staff meeting, you shared...

Suggestions:

- Please group more discussions by grade level
- Continue work with ABAR strategies for reading instruction
- Would love a “learning the basics” session on the new data platform
- Would love to see more energy toward retaining teachers who are burning out

As a result:

- Today, we have designated discussion time within your grade-level teams
- This meeting includes professional learning on updated resources to ensure that literacy instruction remains grounded in the ABAR lens
- Next meeting, data specialists will visit to provide additional training in the platform
- We are going to gather suggestions about increasing staff morale – help wanted!



Recognizing and Maximizing Opportunities for Feedback

Where do opportunities already exist for gathering effective feedback?

Where might you begin to make some adjustments in this area?

Take a few minutes to jot down some feedback questions that you might share at an upcoming meeting with colleagues. Your resource document includes some samples.





Micro Exploration
Topic #3

Instructional Coaching

Coaching Goals

Setting goals is a collaborative process. Here is what it could look like:

Goals (Ranked)	Things to Try	Evidence of Progress
1. Equitable calling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wheel of names• Random calling generator• Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tally of student participation
2. Station rotations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turning agenda parts into stations• Trying different configurations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student work in each station• Evidence of on-task behavior
3. Incorporating literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choice of articles• Tier II vocabulary words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student performance on formative assessments

Coaching Scenario

Read the provided scenario in our resource document.

Then, discuss:

1. What should the assistant principal in this situation do? Think about the options that would be best and share your rationale.
2. What factors might influence the strategies we select for coaching this teacher?
3. How can these two individuals collaborate for a more meaningful coaching experience?



The background features a stylized landscape with rolling hills in shades of teal and light green. In the foreground, there are pink mountains and a large red sun partially obscured by a hill. Cherry blossom branches with pink flowers and falling petals are positioned on the left and right sides.

Application: Workshop

Choose Your Own Adventure!



Observation & Evaluation

Group #1

Feedback Protocols

Group #2

Instructional Coaching

Group #3

Pick a group!

Questions for Application and Reflection



Discuss the following:

How would you apply the tools presented today?

What ideas for incorporating teacher voice can you share that will decrease the “empathy gap?”

How will you share this work at your school?



Leading for Change

Summarizer: "Stand n' Share" Takeaways

- What will you take back with you from this session to share with your colleagues?
- Identify ONE possible change to make in your school. What is it?
- What lingering questions do you have?





Feedback and Closure

Please take a moment to provide some feedback on this session via [this link](#).



Thanks!

Stay in touch!

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