



## Tips for Using *Ideas Into Action* #7: Exploring the Social Leadership Resources to Strengthen Leadership Practice

### 1. Find out what's in this resource and then focus on what you want to learn first.

Refer to the "WHAT'S INSIDE" column on page 2 which lists four main parts:

- **Part A** – The 'Personal Leadership Resources (PLRs)' section highlights the importance of the three categories of PLRs – cognitive, social, and psychological – in the effective enactment of the leadership practices of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF).
- **Part B** – 'Digging Deeper' offers a sampling of research to provide an evidence base for the three social PLRs – perceiving emotions, managing emotions and acting in emotionally appropriate ways.
- **Part C** – suggests 'ten proven strategies' that include one or more approaches for developing and strengthening our social PLRs.
- **Part D** – provides an annotated list of relevant resources for further reading.

### 2. Become familiar with the evidence base and then apply the strategies to real-life leadership scenarios.

One way to learn about the approaches suggested in the ten strategies is to try them out by applying them to actual leadership scenarios. Page two of this tip sheet offers ten possible approaches. Work on your own and/or find a partner or two to collaborate on the application.

**Scenario One:** Projected enrolment figures at ABC Elementary School have not materialized and have serious budget and resource implications. The school superintendent is meeting with the school principal to address the situation in ways that will help ensure that the school's improvement priorities are met.

**Scenario Two**<sup>1</sup>: A principal of a small rural secondary school worries about not giving thorough, honest feedback. The principal made some mistakes during his first year, behaving "like a bull in a china shop." As a result, several staff members, some of whom were beloved by the community, left the school. Now the principal is hesitant about giving feedback and talks with a trusted colleague about what to do as he enters his second year at the school.

#### Exploring the Social PLRs

**Purpose:** Gain an understanding of evidence-based perspectives of the social PLRs by applying strategies to leadership in real-life contexts

**Process:**

- Read the scenario.
- Identify the problem.
- Decide who is involved and what their roles are.
- Try out one or more of the approaches listed on page 2 with the goal of finding possible solutions to the problem.
- Assess the outcome(s).
- Reflect on how the social PLRs can contribute to a positive outcome and what you learned.

<sup>1</sup> This scenario is adapted from '... CAREER CONFIDENTIAL (Phyllis L/ Fagell) which is a regular feature in *Kappan*.

### 3. Write Your Own Scenario:

- What's an event or issue you're facing right now? Why is it a problem?
- Who else is involved and how? What are their roles?
- What are the circumstances that led to the problem?

**Try these approaches to test their effectiveness in using your social PLRs to bring about a possible solution to the problems in the scenarios.**

1. **Cultivate Emotional Intelligence:** What would it look like to you if you focused on yourself, on others, and on the wider world while in the process of solving the problem in the scenario? Pages 10 to 11
2. **Strengthen Emotional Leadership Styles:** Which of the six emotional leadership styles are in your repertoire and to what extent? Which ones do you anticipate will work best to resolve the situation in the scenario? Pages 11 to 12
3. **Become More Mindful:** Which of the strategies that Langer offers to become more mindful will help you develop the emotional self-awareness you need to effectively address the problem in the scenario? Pages 12 to 13
4. **Grow and Maintain Trust:** Of the 13 character- and/or competence-based behaviours that Covey argues build trust, identify those you think will be needed to ensure that those involved in the problem will be open to finding a solution? Pages 13 and 14
5. **Promote Positive Inner Worklife:** Which of the four categories of events that directly impact inner work life – respect, encouragement, emotional support and affiliation – do you need to provide in order to solve the problem and why? Pages 14 to 15
6. **Savour Positivity:** To what extent is positivity needed to resolve the situation? Which of the sample strategies that Frederickson offers would contribute most to building positivity in yourself and others in the scenario? Pages 16 to 17
7. **Grow Your Mindset:** Reflect on your interaction in resolving the problem in the scenario. What was your mindset at various points in the interaction – “growth” or “fixed.” Page 17 to 18
8. **See with Appreciative Eyes:** What opportunities are there for you to use one or more of the five core strategies – inquiry, illumination, inclusion, inspiration, and integrity – to bring about a positive outcome to the problem? Page 19
9. **Bring Emotions Out into the Open:** How will conveying your own sense of vulnerability provide the basis for understanding one another in the scenario and in turn help to resolve the situation? Pages 20 to 22
10. **Take Care of Yourself:** Ginsberg and Davies provide advice on how to strengthen your social PLRs. Which of their eight suggestions are relevant to your leadership in resolving the problem? Page 10 to 23