

## **Leadership Development: Case study for analysis**

### **The Superintendent's Directive**

Educational administrators are bombarded by requests for innovation at all educational levels. Programs to upgrade math, science, and social science education, state accountability plans, new approaches to administration, and other ideas are initiated by teachers, administrators, interest groups, reformers, and state regulators. In a school district, the superintendent is the key leader; in an individual school, the principal is the key leader.

In the Carville City School District, Superintendent Porter has responsibility for 11 schools—eight elementary, two junior high, and one high school. After attending a management summer course, Porter sent the following e-mail to the principal of each school:

*"Please request that teachers in your school develop a set of performance objectives for each class they teach. A consultant will be providing instructions for writing the performance objectives during the August 10 in-service day. The deadline for submitting the performance objectives to my office is September 21."*

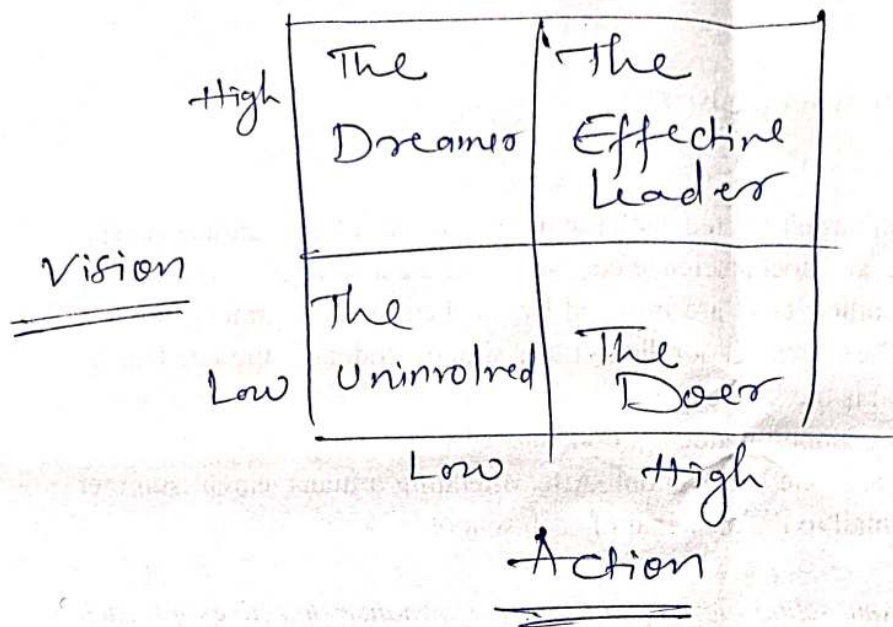
Mr. Weigand, principal of Earsworth Elementary School, forwarded Porter's email to his teacher's with the following message:

*"Please see the forwarded e-mail from Superintendent Porter. As he explains, you will need to write performance objectives for each course you teach. These are due from one month from today. This afternoon, during the in-service meeting, you will receive training on how to write these performance objectives."*

After receiving this e-mail, several teachers at the elementary school responded with a flurry of hastily written e-mail responses. One well-respected and talented teacher wrote the following e-mail, accidentally sending it to Mr. Weigand instead of her colleagues:

*"This is nonsense! I should be spending my time focused on the lesson plan for the new advanced English class the board of education approved. Porter is clueless and has no idea the demands we are facing in the classroom. We never even hear from him until he wants us to complete some empty exercise. I am going to start looking for a school district that values my time!"*

Mr. Weigand was stunned by this e-mail, wondering if he was close to losing a valuable teacher who was admired by her peers and others in the school system. He knew this e-mail had been written in haste and that this teacher would be embarrassed to know that he had received it. He was concerned that other teachers may have reacted in similar ways to his e-mail. He also wondered how to respond to the angry e-mail and how to improve morale at the start of a new school year.



# Intimacy ↔ Interactivity ↔ Inclusion ↔ Intentional

# John C. Maxwell's Levels of Leadership

① Position

— Rights —

People will follow you because they have to



② Permission

— Relationships —

People follow you because they want to

③

Production

— Results —



## **Role Play Setup: "The Rescheduling Request"**

### **Characters**

**Program Chair (PC)** – Responsible for maintaining rules and reporting to higher authorities. Tries to appear helpful but is under pressure.

**Faculty Member (FM)** – Senior, respected, sensitive about autonomy and recognition. Takes things personally if authority seems questioned.

**Context:** The institute has a policy: classes could only be rescheduled in cases of medical emergencies or official duties. A faculty member, however, requested that a session be moved due to a personal reason without mentioning the specifics. The office referred the matter to the program chair, who, feeling accountable to higher authorities, called the faculty member before granting approval. The Program Chair calls the Faculty Member to discuss the rescheduling request.

### **Discussion Points**

What is the trigger point?

What is the Listening Style of both the characters?

Explore strategies to de-escalate while still upholding institutional rules.