

Changing Voice, Changing Perspective: The Psychological Journey of Administrators

Michael Thompson,, SAIS, June, 2022

- I. Moving from teaching to administration involves important psychological growth.**
 - A. Change in constituency: moving from managing and motivating children to managing and motivating adults.
 - B. A change in voice: from “I” to “we.”
 - C. A change in boss: from students and colleagues to the head of school.
- II. Moving from ambivalence about power to the exercise of power**
 - A. Teachers are generally unclear about power
 - B. What is power? A has something that B wants.
 - C. Using strong power methods: overt, direct, rational
 - 1. Some teachers use weak power methods: covert, indirect and irrational.
- III. Experiencing a change in relationships**
 - A. The power to hire and fire changes everything
 - B. It is “lonely at the top.”
 - C. Changes in family life, friendships, spouse’s relationships
 - D. Changes in marriage: the call of school
- IV. The focus on the relationship with the head of school**
 - A. Supporting decisions with which you don’t agree
 - B. Getting to know and filling in for someone else’s weaknesses
- V. Seeing the school through the eyes of outsiders: critical parents and the board**
 - A. Developing emotional distance
- VI. Developing courage**
 - A. Doing the things “...you think you cannot do.”
 - B. Firing an old friend (whose spouse is close to your spouse)