



## 100-Day Leaders: Turning Short-Term Wins Into Long-Term Success in Schools

By Douglas Reeves and Robert Eaker (Solution Tree Press, 2019)

### S.O.S. (A Summary of the Summary)

#### *The main ideas of the book:*

- ~ This book provides a framework to show educational leaders how to produce significant results in just 100 days. Yes, 100 days.
- ~ The book combines moral purpose and practical strategies to inspire you to improve your school now.

#### *Why I chose this book:*

School leaders just can't be successful today unless they know how to handle change. I appreciate the no-nonsense approach to creating change that these widely acclaimed authors present. Don't wait around for five-year strategic plans to take root. Instead, be clear about what you believe in, get rid of initiatives that don't align or don't work, and choose a few priorities.

Then, don't wait. Get everyone to roll up their sleeves and make change happen more rapidly by breaking down your priorities into bite-sized 100-day goals. These short-term wins will build momentum for larger changes to come.

Through their vast experience and research, Douglas Reeves and Robert Eaker essentially share the highest leverage actions leaders can take that will produce the most significant results now.

### The Scoop (In this summary you will learn...)

#### **Part I – Explores 100-Day Leadership including the *why* and *how* of 100-day leadership**

- Chapter 1 – How the leader's moral compass combined with the traits of effective leadership is the foundation for change
- Chapter 2 – Walks you through the six steps for implementing your 100-day leadership plan:
 

1. Identify your values.	3. Make a not-to-do list.	5. Monitor high-leverage practices.
2. Take an initiative inventory.	4. Identify 100-day challenges.	6. Specify results.
- Chapter 3 – Paints a fuller picture of the six steps by describing one example of a 100-day leader in action

#### **Part II – Describes the importance of creating the environment needed for your 100-day plan to succeed**

- Chapter 4 – Outlines the foundation needed for change to occur – a collaborative culture and effective teams
- Chapter 5 – Gets leaders to look inward and examine whether they have the beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors needed to effect change.

## Introduction – Why 100 Days?

Educational leaders are experiencing burnout more than ever before. Why? The demands on their time are increasing and yet they still have the same twenty-four hours a day they've always had. Since they can't add hours to their day, they need help learning to become more productive and focused with the time they have.

This book provides a framework that shows educational leaders how they can produce significant results in just 100 days. This doesn't mean that you should toss out your longer-term goals. Instead, having a 100-day plan will provide a boost of energy and confidence that will propel forward your longer-term plans. In fact, it can be argued that without the momentum from successful shorter-term implementation, you will have no chance to succeed with longer-term goals.

Feeling doubtful? Just take a look at history to see what other incredible accomplishments have occurred in under 100 days – for example, the U.S. Constitution was written within this time! Based on the research Reeves and Eaker have done, below are some examples of what schools have been able to accomplish in just 100 days, about a semester:

- Reduce the failure rate by 90 percent
- Reduce chronic absenteeism by 80 percent
- Reduce suspension rate by 50 percent
- Significantly transform faculty morale

What is needed to do this is a new way of *thinking* about leadership. To make changes like those above, the leader needs to first reflect and decide to focus on a few key priorities. Only then can the change process move toward successful implementation. If the Framers can create something as significant and influential as the Constitution in 100 days, you, too, can create enduring change to propel your school forward in a short period as well.

## Chapter 1 – The Foundation for Change Initiatives: A Moral Imperative and Seven Key Leadership Skills

Before you can hope to enact significant change in 100 days you need to know that the key is to start by establishing *moral authority*. Any change you have in mind – whether complex or challenging – begins with moral purpose. The moral imperative to improve student learning is why educators do what they do. The leader's inner compass provides a moral foundation for any new initiative which in turn nourishes everyone else's sense of purpose. As the authors write, "Teachers do not merely deliver content; they nurture curiosity, kindness, relationships, and lifelong learning habits." In an idyllic view of leadership, change happens naturally. However, true organizational change does not happen that way – it requires that the leader, with a strong moral imperative, build the momentum and foundational work needed for true change to occur in 100 days.

*According to research, what leadership traits lead to improved results?*

In addition to a moral imperative, the authors' synthesis of the research linking leadership and student achievement shows there are seven key components of effective leadership.

1. **Purpose:** A leader's purpose does not come from a job description, but from passion, "Because I passionately believe \_\_\_\_\_, I am committed to \_\_\_\_\_." And it is unlikely that a written mission or vision statement will drum up a sense of purpose needed for true change. Mission statements are more often remembered by those who wrote them, and even then, just for a few days. Instead, to get teachers to improve their practices and enact any kind of change, leaders must tap into the passions of the faculty.
2. **Trust:** Leaders won't be able to accomplish any change without trust. Passion and skill amount to nothing without credibility. To develop trust, from the beginning of the 100 days leaders need to adopt the motto, "promises made, promises kept." This means at every meeting the leader should state, "Last week I promised I would do this, and here is how I have kept that promise..."
3. **Focus:** The authors' studies of over 2,000 schools have shown that those with *six or fewer* initiatives have made the greatest gains in student achievement. Unfortunately, too many schools have piled on too many initiatives and the result is that they have become *fragmented*. Particularly schools with high-poverty students, English language learners, and lots of special education students – in a noble attempt to try numerous new initiatives they have lost the needed *focus* they need to succeed.
4. **Leverage:** A staggering number of educational strategies have at least *some* impact on student achievement. However, the key in schools is to discern which are the strategies that have the *most significant* impact, that is, those that work *best*. Rather than following a dizzying array of strategies that simply raise student achievement by a percentage point or two, leaders must look for those approaches with the most *leverage*.

5. **Feedback:** Research has shown that *feedback* has some of the greatest impact on student achievement. It does no good to have an outstanding curriculum, powerful data analysis, and top pedagogical strategies if there is no effective feedback. Quality feedback is absolutely essential in ensuring that leaders achieve their 100-day goals.

6. **Change:** While it used to be common wisdom that any real change required five to seven years to take effect, the work of these authors has shown that the pace of change *can* be accelerated and achieved within 100 days. In fact, it is crucial that leaders learn to initiate and support change given that schools are constantly changing and facing new challenges each year. Today, any leader without skills in change leadership is more likely to stagnate and fail.

7. **Sustainability:** Finally, for true change to take effect, leaders need to change *practices* not introduce *programs*. It is when leaders successfully change the school *culture* – that is, the way we do things around here – that sustainable change will take root.

People won't care about the *what* of change unless you can convey the *why* – and that's why the leader's moral compass is so essential. Further, purpose alone won't carry out change; leaders need to develop their skills in the seven research-based leadership traits introduced here – purpose, trust, focus, leverage, feedback, change, and sustainability – in order to successfully move through the six steps of 100-day leadership described more fully in the next chapter.

## Chapter 2 – The Six Steps of 100-Day Leadership

Unlike other school-improvement efforts which might be reviewed once at the end of the year, the 100-day leadership process is a continual cycle of improvement. The 100-day leader will review progress and course correct at least every 100 days. This continuous cycle involves six steps which are explained in this chapter:

1. Identify your values.
2. Take an initiative inventory.
3. Make a not-to-do list.
4. Identify 100-day challenges.
5. Monitor high-leverage practices.
6. Specify results.

### *Step 1: Identify your values*

As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is imperative that the leader lead with a moral imperative. There should be no compromising when it comes to issues of safety and values. For example, consider what a leader might do if one of his core values is *Reason*: “*We teach and learn based on evidence, not popular beliefs.*” Imagine this principal observed a first-year teacher who said she wouldn't teach phonics because she had had a professor who didn't believe in it. He would respond with integrity by letting her know that because he values *reason* – evidence-based practice – the school would follow an agreed-upon body of knowledge about reading instruction, *not* personal philosophies, to ensure that all students had a strong foundation in reading.

The first step in creating change must be for leaders to identify their core values. The authors have witnessed too many well-intentioned leaders who were unwilling to weed out bad practices that violated their values before implementing new ones. By having a clear and simple set of values, the leader can identify and call out behaviors that clash with those values.

The authors do not dictate what these values are – you must choose those for yourself. But it is best to choose a few, simple values that you plan to communicate clearly and regularly with both words and actions.

### *Step 2: Take an initiative inventory*

Now that leaders have a clearer idea of the right things to do because they have clarified their values, they often get stuck because they are not willing to look honestly at all of the initiatives currently being implemented at their schools and weed out those *not* to do. For example, one particular educational leader claimed that he believed in *focus* and *prioritization* and as a result, his school only had five priorities. When the authors asked for permission to speak with the teachers to find out what instructional initiatives they were responsible for, the authors learned of *sixty-two* different initiatives! This is because teachers were continuing to implement the plans and programs of the leader's predecessor and his predecessor's predecessor, etc.

It is a challenge to truly focus on a few key initiatives at your school. This is particularly the case in schools with high numbers of students living in poverty, English language learners, and special education students. Because of their great needs, these schools often find they are piling initiative on top of initiative. To avoid initiative fatigue, schools must learn to focus.

What's the solution? A simple three-step process:

1. Take an initiative inventory: honestly count how many initiatives your school is involved with right now.

2. Create implementation rubrics for each initiative: although schools may have seven different literacy programs that are intended for the same time block, there is no way these can all be implemented *equally well*. To determine which initiatives are not being fully implemented use a simple four-point implementation rubric like the one below to rate each initiative. Note that research shows that it is *only at level 4* that there is a significant impact on student results. In other words, any initiative that scores below a level 4 isn't worth continuing.

<b>Four-Point Implementation Rubric</b>
<b>Level 1:</b> We already have the materials but we haven't begun any implementation yet.
<b>Level 2:</b> We have trained the staff but only a few early adopters have begun implementation.
<b>Level 3:</b> We have achieved full implementation by at least 90% of the staff.
<b>Level 4:</b> We have full implementation of the staff and there is clear evidence that it is having an impact on student results.

3. Apply the rubrics in every school and in every class: to determine the actual implementation levels of each of your initiatives, you will need to conduct interviews, surveys, observations, and focus groups. And be careful – even when you find initiatives that are not at level 4 and clearly should be cut, there will always be *some* champion for it no matter how expensive it is. To determine which initiatives to cut will require great courage on the part of the 100-day leader.

### Step 3: Make a not-to-do list

While every leader has a to-do list, how many actually have a *not-to-do list*? When first pressed, many leaders will feel that everything is important and they can't take anything off of their lists. However, upon closer inspection, all leaders have items to be cut, it's just that they might not be aware of them. For example, all leaders could find ways to cut down on their processing of emails (and texts and phone calls) by delegating; decrease their meeting time by eliminating those items that could be shared in an email; and could get rid of instructional practices (like homework and worksheets) that research has shown are ineffective.

### Step 4: Identify 100-day challenges

Once leaders have a solid moral foundation and have cleared out unnecessary or ineffectual initiatives, then they are ready to outline some short-term goals. It is through a few simple, 100-day goals that leaders can successfully build credibility and confidence toward some longer-term results. The authors do not prescribe what these goals should be, but they should resonate with the community, teachers, and other stakeholders. Below are examples of goals that show how schools examined the reality of the previous year or semester and aimed to improve results.

- “Last year 35% of students were engaged in extracurricular activities. Due to our strong recruitment efforts, we now have 55% engagement in clubs, sports, and activities this semester. Our goal is to have 100% of students engaged in at least one activity by next semester.”
- “Last year 40% of our students read at grade level. This semester it's slightly higher at 48% but we are implementing a schoolwide literacy program, so next year we aim to have 60% of students reading at grade level.”
- “We will build positive relationships with every student. In our first 100 days, every teacher will know at least one thing about students outside of academics and we will place this information in the students' portfolios.”

When teachers see that there can be improvements in student performance, engagement, attendance, and behavior with short-term goals like those above, they will be motivated to continue pushing toward longer-term goals. And when 100-day leaders choose to focus on a few 100-day challenges like those above, this will bring a great deal of focus to everything they do. When they walk through the halls and observe classes they will know exactly where to focus their attention and efforts.

### Step 5: Monitor high-leverage practices

In order to achieve these short-term, 100-day goals, the leader must now look for high-leverage strategies. As mentioned earlier, while many strategies have at least *some* impact, the key is to choose those strategies that research has shown have *significant* impact. For example, the authors' research has pointed to the effectiveness of PLCs, feedback, and nonfiction writing. By choosing those strategies that have a significant impact, leaders will find it is easier and clearer to shut down those initiatives that may be popular, but which just aren't leading to results. To clearly communicate the impact certain strategies are having on results, the authors suggest a science-fair type display like the one below to show the change that has occurred over 100 days. Displays like these also help schools celebrate the conclusion of each 100-day cycle with a clear visual of what worked and what still needs to be improved.

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Results</b>
Too many students are failing 9 <sup>th</sup> - grade math.  Almost all failures are due to missing assignments and students giving up late in the semester.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shift practice from homework to in-class practice.</li> <li>• Change grading scale from 100 points to A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0.</li> <li>• Determine final grade based on student <i>proficiency</i> not average of semester grades.</li> </ul>	<p>The number of students getting Ds and Fs improved from 44 students last year to zero this year.</p> <p>Final exam scores increased, indicating higher levels of student learning.</p>

### Step 6: Specify results

Educational leaders are used to looking to standardized test scores as a way to measure the results of initiatives. However, there are a number of serious problems with looking to test results that measure students' achievement against a standard or compared with other students. Instead, the authors propose using *interim assessments* to determine success toward 100-day goals. These assessments allow the leader to examine the same students with the same teacher and the same curriculum during the same year and will more accurately reflect student growth. Further, 100-day leaders must go beyond interim assessment results to also examine attendance, behavior, teaching practices, and leading practices. True results will come from a holistic understanding of all of these elements.

## Chapter 3 – The 100-Day Leaders in Action

Now that you've read a description of the six steps 100-day leaders take, this chapter will paint a picture of one 100-day leader in action – Dr. Marissa Johnson. Dr. Johnson is a fourth-generation educational leader with deep roots in her community. Upon becoming the superintendent of the district where she grew up, she was well aware of persistent inequity problems in the district. For example, there was an overrepresentation of African American students among truants, dropouts, and special education students and the advanced placement and International Baccalaureate classes were mostly white. To begin to address these deep-seated problems, she embarked on the six steps of 100-day leaders.

*Step 1. Identify your values:* Dr. Johnson knew that developing a mission, vision, and values was often the result of a strategic planning process that took over a year. She felt too strong of a sense of urgency to do this. Instead, she decided to work from the district's existing values:

- Equality of opportunity for all students
- Excellence in all that we do
- Respect for people, property, and law
- Safety for children and staff

Instead of creating new values she decided to examine, “How close are we to living our values?” However, there was an overwhelming belief among stakeholders that they *were* living by their values. So Dr. Johnson sought out other alternative voices. She went everywhere from skateboard parks to church basements to listen and learn about the lived reality of these four values: equality, respect, excellence, and safety. She found students who graduated without knowing how to read, boys punished for fighting by being relegated to special education classes, unsafe hallways, and numerous other examples of the district's values being undermined.

*Step 2. Take an initiative inventory.* Expecting to find few programs for underserved students, Dr. Johnson was shocked to find they had everything from antibullying programs and intervention programs to antiracism programs; eighty-two initiatives in all! And no one had assessed the effectiveness of these programs; they just purchased them on the claim that they were “research based.”

*Step 3. Make a not-to-do list.* On a whiteboard Dr. Johnson created a list of all of the tasks the superintendent was responsible for. She could see that the culture of the district was for the superintendent to respond to board demands rather than address the needs of students and parents. It was also surprising to see the amount of time the superintendent was expected to attend meetings – her predecessor logged over thirty hours a week in meetings! In order to focus on what was most important, she created a *not-to-do* list that included the following items:

- She will only respond to emails for 30 minutes at the beginning and end of each day. No more. To do this, she will enlist her assistant to help with any cc'd emails, by unsubscribing to email lists, and by creating one single message when she notices a theme among emails.
- She will not attend or conduct any meeting that focuses on information sharing (which could be an email). Instead, she will only attend meetings that involve *deliberation* and *decision making*.
- She will eliminate dog-and-pony superintendent school visits and instead conduct unannounced visits.
- She will not meet with parents or staff until they have *first* brought their issue to the person most responsible for it (the principal or teacher, for example).
- She will not do any tasks that her capable assistant can accomplish.

*Steps 4 and 5. Identify and monitor 100-day challenges.* Dr. Johnson decided to focus on just three 100-day challenges:

**1. Attendance:** The school was not prioritizing attendance, so Dr. Johnson created a new procedure. Rather than the robocalls about attendance that were ignored, she initiated a *sixty-second meeting* at each school. One minute after the late bell each morning, every staff member who was not teaching would make personal calls home, including Dr. Johnson, “This is Dr. Johnson from Oak Grove School District. We missed your daughter this morning – is there anything we can do to help get her to school on time?” The schools clearly had larger problems with curriculum, assessment, and feedback, but by focusing on getting students in their seats, Dr. Johnson helped the schools reduce lateness and absenteeism by 80 percent within 100 days and provided proof that real change could occur.

**2. D and F rates:** To address abysmal passing rates such as the 36 percent pass rate in ninth-grade science, Dr. Johnson decided to start common quarterly assessments within 100 days. She also required science teachers to give an early final exam so if students passed that exam, they got to end the class early and had ten days of freedom. Within 100 days, the pass rate went from 36 percent to 69 percent on the same exam!

**3. Literacy performance:** Dr. Johnson knew the research behind teaching nonfiction writing so she had every student in every grade complete a nonfiction writing assignment once a month. There was no complex, six-point rubric. Instead, the faculty simply looked for claims, evidence, and credibility of that evidence in science, social studies, literacy and math. To help her monitor progress in literacy and in reducing failure rates, she asked for a four-line email at the end of every collaborative teacher team meeting that would report the following:

- *Learning – What do we want students to learn?*
- *Assessment – How will we know if they learned it?*
- *Intervention – What will we do if they have not learned it?*
- *Extension – What will we do if they already have learned it?*

6. *Specifying results.* Dr. Johnson made it clear she was not waiting for years, but wanted results within 100 days. As she said, “Stalin had five-year plans, and that didn’t work out very well...” To achieve this, she shared her goals with all stakeholders for what she expected to happen within 100 days, but also made it clear this was a starting point, not an end point. For example:

“We will improve average daily attendance from 83 percent to 90 percent. That’s not good enough for me, but it’s a start.”

Now that you have a picture of the six steps 100-day leaders use to make initial changes and gain buy-in and build momentum, the second part of the book describes the environment every 100-day leader needs to create in order to be successful.

## Chapter 4 – A Strong Foundation

If you were looking for help from a professional for a problem, you would want that professional to rely on the most proven practices whether in the field of law, medicine, or any other field. The same is true in education. If we want to improve our schools we need to rely on research and the research is clear: the fundamental practices used in the PLC process are the ones *most likely* to lead to higher levels of learning for *all* students. Instead, we tend to chase fleeting fads in education. The authors have some strong words for the education community:

“The research-based practices embedded in schools and districts that function as PLCs are powerful. In fact, they are so powerful that leaders would be committing educational malpractice if they failed to use them.”

To successfully embark on 100-day goals, leaders need to first have the following five items in place, explained below: (1) the four pillars of a PLC, (2) a collaborative culture that supports PLCs, (3) aligned teams across the school/district, (4) teacher teams that focus on learning, and (5) regular efforts to monitor and celebrate the work of teams. It is the PLC process that provides the needed structures so leaders can successfully accomplish short-term goals within 100 days.

### 1. *The Four Pillars of a PLC*

To build a solid foundation for a PLC, teachers and administrators need to collaborate and come to consensus on their: **mission, vision, values, and goals.** They need to ask and grapple with the following questions:

**Mission - “Why do we exist?”** The mission provides the bedrock upon which all decisions are made. When 100-day leaders want to initiate change, rather than starting with *what* or *how*, they need to start with *why*. Leaders must continually connect actions and behavior to the *why*, “Here’s what we are doing and here’s why it’s important.” Starting with a clear and compelling purpose, the leader must align all behaviors and expectations to set the stage for change.

**Vision - “What must we become in order to accomplish our fundamental purpose?”** In order to drive change, there needs to be a collaborative process to outline a more compelling and attractive future than the current reality.

**Values - “How must we behave to create the school that will achieve our purpose?”** It’s not enough to have a clear purpose and a compelling future. To create true change educators need to collaboratively make commitments to each other in order to become the school or district they hope to become. This way change will come about less from top-down power but from a moral commitment staff have to each other to start behaving in different ways.

**Goals - “How will we know if all of this is making a difference?”** It is through creating goals that educators set the targets and timelines to accomplish short-term, 100-day priorities. Teams must make sure to set realistic goals that can be done within 100 days and connect these goals to the larger mission and vision they have outlined.

## 2. *Creating a Culture of Collaboration*

Nothing will affect the success of 100-day initiatives as much as the quality of *collaboration* at your school. And while it is far easier to make structural changes like altering the school schedule or job descriptions, it is far more important to make changes in the *culture* that lead to support for collaboration. Developing a culture of collaboration is key to ensuring that 100-day initiatives lead to longer term more systemic change.

Leaders know they cannot do it alone if they hope to enact significant change. They need to create a culture of continuous improvement and that only happens when teams work collaboratively. This means the leader must ensure that everyone knows what it means to collaborate *successfully*. It is about much more than relationships, communication, and cooperation. Collaborating successfully involves the following as was set out in the original definition outlined by DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker:

“A *systematic* process in which people work together, *interdependently*, to analyze and *impact* professional practice in order to improve individual and collective *results*.”

Doing meaningful work is motivating, but doing meaningful work in collaboration with others is even more likely to get people to move toward 100-day goals. For this reason, the leader needs to support and pay attention to the degree and quality of collaboration in teams. The truth is that many people *believe* collaboration is important, but when it comes to *practice*, there is an enormous gap between the acceptance of this ideal and the practices we see in teams. The culture of most schools is still mostly characterized by *isolation* not true collaboration. Because of this, leaders need to support collaboration from their first 100-day cycle until it becomes a norm in their school or district.

Educators are often unwilling to fully support collaboration because *the leaders* have not created a structure for them to successfully do so. 100-day leaders must do more than simply *encourage* collaboration, they need to put into place systematic structures and daily procedures that *ensure* there is deep collaboration focused on improving student learning. Expectations for collaboration must be woven into the daily life of the school and district. Four important structures leaders must insure are in place include:

- (1) an effective team leader,
- (2) time for collaboration,
- (3) collaboratively developed norms, and
- (4) a principal committed to enhancing the performance of each team.

School leaders can best learn about these structures by experiencing them themselves, that is, by being a part of their *own collaborative team*, as described below.

## 3. *Aligning the Work of Teams Districtwide*

The best way to learn the principles of effective collaboration is by *doing*. This means *doing* collaboration across the entire district in teams at all levels. If the success of 100-day cycles of improvement depends on collaboration, this collaboration cannot be happening only at the teacher level. If teachers should not be allowed to work in isolation, why do we still have school and district leaders working in isolation?

This means that we need to establish teams at the district level (a school board team, a central office team, a team of principals across the district) as well as teams within schools (the school leadership team, teacher teams, and support staff teams). At each level, the teams will work through continuous cycles of improvement and use their learning to influence other teams. They all should be engaged in:

- Collaboratively developing norms or shared commitments for how they will function
- Engaging in data-based decision making and creating SMART goals for each 100-day cycle
- Creating a shared knowledge base of best practices
- Celebrating successes

When the leaders at the district level engage in this type of collaboration, they will be better equipped to support the effectiveness of teams across the district and will also be “walking the walk” when it comes to supporting collaborative work. This may involve re-imagining what it looks like to meet as a district team or a team of principals across the district. Rather than sharing announcements and updates, it will involve a deep commitment to shift the focus to student and adult learning. With this focus, the district teams will be practicing the work they will be expecting at the school level.

Previously, it has been a problem for principals to expect teachers to engage in activities – like collaboratively analyzing data to drill down on student learning – that they had never done themselves. By engaging in this type of collaborative work *themselves*, school leaders develop the necessary skills to help support teams and team leaders.

#### 4. Focusing Teacher Teams on Learning

The key task of 100-day leaders is to ensure that collaborative teams focus their work on *student learning*. To do this, they must have teams center their work around the four essential questions of a PLC (below). It is by addressing these four questions at the heart of all true PLCs that teams will get all students to perform at high levels:

- **Learning** – What do we want students to learn?

In order for teachers to have a clear sense of what they want students to learn, they must outline the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students should obtain from each unit, course, and grade level. This involves teams collaboratively understanding what standards would look like in student work (“What would proficiency look like?”), and creating a pacing calendar to map out the skills needed to reach proficiency. Collaboratively, teams of teachers plan units to improve their thinking and to ensure consistency. That is, each team needs to work collaboratively to develop a *guaranteed and viable curriculum*. It is the work of the 100-day leader to create a culture of transparency so each team feels comfortable sharing their unit plans with each other online.

- **Assessment** – How will we know if they learned it?

In order to monitor student learning, teams must collaboratively develop common formative assessments. Using formative assessments is such a powerful tool in monitoring *and* improving student learning that 100-day leaders do not simply *hope* teams will implement them, but instead *expect* teams to do so. Further, they expect teams to collaboratively analyze student data and student work to provide actionable information for improving teaching and learning. To do this well, teams are expected to examine student work in addition to assessment results.

- **Intervention** – What will we do if they have not learned it?

In any given unit, some students will struggle to learn. In most schools, teachers *individually* attempt to help those students, but any one teacher only has so much capacity. Instead, 100-day leaders work to collaboratively develop a schoolwide system of interventions to address student struggles during the school day. Students are *required*, not invited, to receive these interventions

- **Extension** – What will we do if they already have learned it?

More than ensuring that students meet the minimum requirement for learning, 100-day leaders work to push students further and have teams systematically plan ways to extend the learning of those students who have already demonstrated proficiency.

#### 5. Monitoring and Celebrating the Work of Teams

The final element 100-day leaders must have in place to structure teams for success is a plan to monitor and celebrate the work of teams. 100-day leaders can monitor the work of teams by reviewing student data and results and also by examining the products that teams produce (curriculum guides, unit plans, common formative assessments). And to support teams, leaders should provide *exemplars* so teams understand the level of quality leaders expect their products to meet. Finally, leaders must proactively plan to celebrate the accomplishments of teams publicly. This should *not* be an afterthought. Celebrating the small wins of teams sends a powerful message about what can be accomplished within a short time when people work collaboratively. Overall, it is by establishing a *collaborative culture* that 100-day leaders are able to successfully set the stage for creating change in schools.

## Chapter 5 – Examining the Leader’s Own Beliefs, Assumptions, and Behaviors

Before being able to positively lead staff in carrying out 100-day initiatives, the leader must examine his or her own beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors. Leaders who hope to model the behaviors and beliefs needed to create change must first look *inside* and ask, “Am I prepared to demonstrate the same attitude and behavior that I will expect others to show?” This chapter provides a series of rubrics that leaders can use as self-assessments to determine how prepared they are – based on their beliefs and their actions – to lead this type of change.

To begin, leaders might ask themselves the following questions:

- What things will I be tight about – what are my non-negotiables?
- What assumptions do I have about leading others and human motivation? Given these, how can I lead most effectively?
- What assumptions do I have about those with whom I will be working? What assumptions do I have about human interactions?
- What assumptions do I have about the organization’s core purpose and what it should become?
- What assumptions do I have about students, their parents, and the larger community?
- What assumptions do I have about monitoring, publicly recognizing, and celebrating the success of others?

Next, what follows are six rubrics leaders can use to rate themselves from 1-4 on a number of traits in six aspects of leadership: resilience, personal behavior, student achievement, decision making, communication, and learning. Note that the book has a full rubric with detailed descriptions for each of these six traits that can be found on pp.105-119 or at [go.SolutionTree.com/leadership](http://go.SolutionTree.com/leadership).

**Excerpt of Rubrics to Assess a Leader's Preparation to Lead Change**  
(See pp. 105 – 119 or go.SolutionTree.com/leadership for a free reproducible of the entire six rubrics.)

Rating (1 – 4)	<i>Six Aspects of Leadership</i>
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<p><i>Resilience</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Constructive reaction to disappointment and failure</li> <li>2. Willingness to admit errors and learn from them</li> <li>3. Constructive handling of disagreement with leadership and policy decisions</li> <li>4. Constructive handling of dissent from subordinates</li> <li>5. Explicit improvement of specific performance areas based on previous leadership evaluations</li> </ol>
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<p><i>Personal Behavior</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrity</li> <li>2. Self-control</li> <li>3. Compliance with legal and ethical requirements in relationships with employees</li> <li>4. Compliance with legal and ethical requirements in relationships with students</li> <li>5. Tolerance of different points of view within the boundaries of the organization's values and mission</li> <li>6. Organization of calendar, desk, office, and building</li> </ol>
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	<p><i>Student Achievement</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning and goal setting for student achievement</li> <li>2. Student achievement results</li> <li>3. Student achievement reporting to students, parents, teachers, and other leaders</li> <li>4. Use of student achievement data to make instructional leadership decisions</li> <li>5. Understanding of student requirements and academic standards</li> <li>6. Understanding of student performance levels based on consistent assessments that reflect local and state or provincial academic standards</li> <li>7. Decisions in teacher assignment, course content, scheduling, and student curriculum based on specific student achievement needs</li> </ol>
_____ _____ _____ _____	<p><i>Decision Making</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Factual basis for decisions</li> <li>2. Clear decision-making structure</li> <li>3. Decisions linked to vision, mission, and strategic priorities</li> <li>4. Decisions evaluated for effectiveness and revised where necessary</li> </ol>
_____ _____ _____	<p><i>Communication</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Two-way communication with students</li> <li>2. Two-way communication with faculty and staff</li> <li>3. Two-way communication with parents and community</li> </ol>
_____ _____ _____ _____	<p><i>Learning</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Personal understanding of research trends in education and leadership</li> <li>2. Personal professional development plan</li> <li>3. Professional development focus</li> <li>4. Application of learning</li> </ol>

Looking at one's beliefs and actions is just a start. True 100-day leaders have the courage to act, and to act for the right reasons. They act and they encourage those around them to act out of a moral obligation in a life and death matter – educating students. Students who fail to graduate from high school have an unemployment rate of over 50 percent. Clearly, we have far too many students falling through the cracks. 100-day leaders have the skills and the passion to show those around them that change is not only necessary, but it is possible *not* within years, but within shorter time periods – counted in days – than we ever thought was possible now that we have a 100-day plan.

## THE MAIN IDEA's PD suggestions for 100-Day Leaders

Below are activities for an individual leader or a team of leaders to think through and plan a 100-day challenge.

### I. Introduction to 100-Day Leadership

**A. Reflect on your reactions to the idea of creating change within 100 days.**

Take some time to reflect on your own in a journal or with a colleague. What is your initial reaction to the idea of creating change within 100 days? What excites you about this? What obstacles come to mind? What are some of the big issues are your school that you are eager to dive into?

**B. Explore the seven research-based aspects of leadership.**

In Chapter 1, the authors describe seven research-based aspects of leadership that are of tremendous help in carrying out change in your school – purpose, trust, focus, leverage, feedback, change, and sustainability. These seven aspects are discussed in more detail in another book by Douglas Reeves, *From Leading to Succeeding*. Consider reading The Main Idea's summary of this book and discussing it with a colleague.

**C. Rate yourself on seven research-based aspects of leadership.**

Another way to reflect on these seven leadership traits is to conduct a self-assessment to determine your strengths and areas for improvement:

Seven Research-Based Aspects of Rating	Self-Rating (1-4)
1. Purpose: I have a clear sense of my values and what I am passionate about.	
2. Trust: I have purposefully built up trust with my actions such as keeping the promises I make and acknowledging when I have made a mistake.	
3. Focus: I know that having fewer initiatives is linked to higher student achievement so I have reduced our initiatives so we only prioritize a few of the most effective ones.	
4. Leverage: I know how to identify and prioritize strategies that have the highest impact on student achievement.	
5. Feedback: I know how to give and receive feedback effectively.	
6. Change: I know how to manage the change process effectively.	
7. Sustainability: I know how to think and plan for the long-term success of my school/district.	

### II. Bringing the Six Steps of 100-Day Leadership to Life

This section provides one professional learning activity for each of the six steps to create a 100-day plan. As a leader you can go through these six activities on your own, or find another leader to serve as a thought partner and do these activities together.

**Step 1: Identify your values -- create your own moral compass.** [[only add moral compass part if I add a 2<sup>nd</sup> part for otro steps David Brooks writes in his piece in *The New York Times* entitled, “The Moral Bucket List” (<https://nyti.ms/2TC878W>) “It occurred to me that there were two sets of virtues, the résumé virtues and the eulogy virtues. The résumé virtues are the skills you bring to the marketplace. The eulogy virtues are the ones that are talked about at your funeral — whether you were kind, brave, honest or faithful.” Consider reading this article and then doing the following to identify your own values (eulogy virtues) and create your own moral compass by which to lead 100-day initiatives.

- Circle 10 of the values in the box below that are important to you in your work (you can add others if you want).
- Then think about it, and cross out 4 that are lower down in what's most important to you.
- Then cross out 2 more that are important, but aren't the *most* important. The remaining four are your top values to guide your work as school leader. Write these four values on the four corners of the compass below the box of values.

Examples of Important Values for School Leaders						
Patience	Kindness	Growth	Balance	Efficiency	Justice	Forgiveness
Integrity	Courage	Listening	Authenticity	Humor	Leadership	Nurturing
Optimism	Gratitude	Respect	Responsibility	Order	Empathy	Zest
Perseverance	Generosity	Openness	Community	Integrity	Personal growth	Appreciation
Fairness	Collaboration	Communication	Connection	Productivity	Commitment	Joy



**Step 2: Take an initiative inventory: list and evaluate every one of your existing initiatives**

Follow the steps in the summary to narrow down the number of initiatives your school/district will continue to implement.

- First, make a list of all initiatives currently being implemented. Don't just rely on yourself -- ask staff to list initiatives because there may be some that were started before you arrived that you don't even know about! Consider sending out a survey to all staff.
- Next, for each initiative determine how thoroughly it is being implemented using a rubric like the one below.

<i>Four-Point Implementation Rubric</i>
<b>Level 1:</b> We already have the materials but we haven't begun any implementation yet.
<b>Level 2:</b> We have trained the staff but only a few early adopters have begun implementation.
<b>Level 3:</b> We have achieved full implementation by at least 90% of the staff.
<b>Level 4:</b> We have full implementation of the staff and there is clear evidence that it is having an impact on student results.

**Step 3: Make a not-to-do list: create an actual list of tasks you will no longer do**

It will take courage, but to be successful implementing a few 100-day goals, you need to stop doing less effective tasks.

- First, cut out those initiatives that score lower than Level 4 in the rubric above!
- Next, make a list of all other potential tasks you could cut out or at least minimize such as: emails, tasks that your administrative assistant can handle, meetings that could be memos, meetings with parents or staff when they should be speaking with someone else first, and other tasks that you feel are less important. Consider sending out a survey to ask what stakeholders see as non-essential tasks that you typically engage in (like visits to classrooms that are really just dog-and-pony shows).
- Once you have created an actual list of items you will no longer do and share this list with your administrative assistant and other staff. Ask for their help in getting you to stick to this list!

**Step 4: Identify 100-day challenges: look at examples and choose no more than three 100-day challenges for your school**

In this step, you will choose a few goals to meet within 100 days. In Chapter 3, Dr. Johnson decided to focus on increasing attendance, lowering D and F rates, and improving literacy. In the introduction to the book, the authors shared the following real-life examples of goals leaders have been able to accomplish within 100 days:

- Reduce the failure rate by 90 percent
- Reduce suspension rate by 50 percent
- Reduce chronic absenteeism by 80 percent
- Significantly transform faculty morale

Take a look at these examples and then choose no more than three 100-day challenges for your school. Remember, they should resonate with the community, teachers, and other stakeholders. Write these challenges in the chart in the first column below. Here is an example of how you might phrase it: "We will build positive relationships with every student. In our first 100 days, every teacher will know at least one thing about students outside of academics and we will place this information in the students' portfolios."

100-Day Challenge (the goal)	High-Leverage Practice to Address the Challenge (the intervention)	The Tools to Examine Results (the assessments)	The Impact (the results)
1.			
2.			
3.			

**Step 5: Monitor high-leverage practices: research high-leverage practices and decide how to monitor them**

In this step, you will look for high-leverage strategies and monitor the implementation of those strategies. For example, in Chapter 3, Dr. Johnson chose common formative assessments to lower D and F rates and required monthly nonfiction writing assignments to improve literacy. Research shows that formative assessments and nonfiction writing have a significant impact on student achievement.

- Take a look at some resources such as Robert Marzano's *The Art and Science of Teaching* or *Classroom Instruction That Works* or John Hattie's *Visible Learning for Teachers* (see The Main Idea's summary of this) and outline the high-leverage practices you've chosen to implement in the second column of the chart in Step 4.
- Next, think about how you intend to *monitor* the progress teachers are making with these strategies. Dr. Johnson asked for a four-line email at the end of every collaborative teacher team meeting that would report the following:  
*Learning – What do we want students to learn?*                      *Intervention – What will we do if they have not learned it?*  
*Assessment – How will we know if they learned it?*                      *Extension – What will we do if they already have learned it?*

**Step 6: Specify results: plan how you will assess and share results**

- First, do not wait for standardized test scores to assess your 100-day initiatives. Instead, plan to examine a combination of interim assessments, attendance, behavior, teaching and leading practices. List your assessment methods in the chart in Step 4.
- Finally, be sure to share the results of these 100-day challenges with all stakeholders. Consider the idea the authors proposed -- create a science-fair type display like the one below and plan a celebration for all!

Challenge	Intervention	Results
Too many students are failing 9 <sup>th</sup> -grade math.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shift practice from homework to in-class practice.</li> <li>• Determine final grade based on student <i>proficiency</i> not average of semester grades.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of students getting Ds and Fs improved from 44 students last year to zero this year.</li> <li>• Final exam scores increased, showing improved learning.</li> </ul>