

PAUL BAMBRICK-SANTOYO



A PRINCIPAL MANAGER'S GUIDE TO

LEVERAGE LEADERSHIP 2.0

How to Build Exceptional Schools Across Your District

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Praise for *A Principal Manager's Guide to Leverage Leadership 2.0*

“If your goal is to become a more strategic practitioner in your conversations, learning experiences, and mentorships, you must have *A Principal Manager's Guide to Leverage Leadership 2.0* in your library! It provides educational leaders at all levels with practical tools to accelerate learning outcomes for students. This book emphasizes what we already know: the real work is done before you even step foot in the classroom! This book has transformed the way I support my school leaders.”

—**Celeste Douglas**, assistant superintendent, District 18,
New York City Public Schools

“Paul has few peers in the crusade to ensure school leaders have high-fidelity, high-priority practices critical to grow the capacity of their teachers so they can ensure student growth. His latest book fills another void: a clear, detailed map principal supervisors and coaches can use to travel further down the road toward student growth. Inspiring . . . and our school leaders are so thankful!”

—**Rosemary Perlmeter**, founding director,
Master's in Urban School Leadership,
Southern Methodist University (SMU);
cofounder, Teaching Trust; founder, Uplift Education

“Working with Bambrick-Santoyo and the content of this book has been a defining event in my professional life and has made me stronger and better (faster). Following the guidance and protocols set forth in *A Principal Manager's Guide to Leverage Leadership 2.0* helped me strengthen my practice and build the capacity of the leaders I support. Now principal managers have a common language and tools to have a laser-focus on improving the teaching and learning, which can profoundly affect student achievement—as it has for us.”

—**Jeanine Zitta**, network superintendent, St. Louis Public Schools

“Whether you are new to supervising principals or have been in the role for years, Paul's work is an invaluable resource to ensuring school leaders get the coaching, tools, and guidance needed to accelerate their schools and take your network of schools to the next level.”

—**Sean Precious**, high school instructional superintendent,
Denver Public Schools

“The call has been finally been answered. For years principal managers have been searching for the book that helps them prioritize what they should be doing, when they should be doing it, and how often that should occur to have the maximize impact on moving student achievement at schools. Paul has answered these questions and so many more in the most practical and easy-to-understand way. Studying successful leaders across the county, Mr. Bambrick-Santoyo has found a way to make their practices, schedules, routines, and techniques so visible on the pages and in video clips. The trainings and coaching I received from him have shifted my practice more than any other professional development received in my seventeen years in education. The resources in this book changed the way I approached my work in the most profound way possible. My leaders and I were not the same after integrating these practices.”

—**LaKimbre Brown**, chief of schools,
Lorain City Schools, Avon Lake, OH

“Paul’s powerful insight empowers leaders to overcome challenges and achieve results in manners they did not know was possible. Our partner districts and school systems across the country demonstrate the student impact of leveraging Paul’s learning—and this book on principal managers will ignite system changes and results at an even greater scale.”

—**William Robinson**, executive director,
Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education

“Our journey with Paul Bambrick-Santoyo began five years ago, when our school district had six out of the ten worst-performing schools in the state. Paul’s first book, *Driven by Data*, became our district bible for school turnaround, followed soon after by the implementation of the seven levers shared in *Leverage Leadership*. Guided by the expertise and experience Paul shares in his books, teachers and leaders have transformed our school district. Now, with this latest book Paul shows more clearly than ever how educators can drive learning through true instructional leadership. I highly recommend this book to anyone who strives to lead a school not as an evaluator, but as a coach.”

—**Sandy Coroles**, superintendent, Ogden School District, Ogden, Utah

“Over the years, Paul Bambrick-Santoyo has written a playbook for the world’s most difficult job: school and school system leadership. In *A Principal Manager’s Guide to Leverage Leadership 2.0*, he shares this playbook and—more important—explains *exactly* how to use it. If you and your team care about teaching and learning, you’ll want this book and you’ll use it every single day.”

—**Charlie Friedman**, founder and head of school,
Nashville Classical Charter Schools

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DVD Video Content

Here is an overview of the video clips for your quick reference.

Identifying the Right Action Steps (Chapter 2)

Clip	Technique	Description	Page
1	See It and Name It—Manager Feedback Meeting	“What is the purpose of plan before practice?” Jeanine Zitta works with Principal Glass to analyze a gap in the facilitation of the principal’s feedback meetings, ultimately prompting the leader to identify a final action step to implement in the immediate future.	28

Coaching Data-Driven Instruction (Chapter 3)

Clip	Technique	Description	Page
2	See It (Exemplar)—Weekly Data Meeting	“This is a meaty standard.” LaKimbire Brown leads her principal team to unpack a third-grade math standard around multiplication.	72, 107
3	See It (Gap)—Weekly Data Meeting	“Using the language of the standard . . .” Juliana Worrell works with principal Jacobi Clifton and his third-grade teachers during a weekly data meeting to determine the highest-leverage gap, utilizing the charts of the standard and the exemplar to target and fix the conceptual misconception.	108

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Clip	Technique	Description	Page
4	See It and Name It—Weekly Data Meetings	“I would add something else.” Juliana Worrell asks principal Na’Jee Carter to analyze the standard and the exemplar, prompting Na’Jee to fully unpack the characteristics of his own written exemplar in order to prepare him to lead the same data meeting with his teachers.	108
5	Do It (Plan)—Weekly Data Meetings	“Now it’s time to spar.” Juliana Worrell plans a reteach lesson side by side with Na’Jee Carter, and then they compare their plans to determine strengths and next steps.	108
6	See It and Do It—Coach by Doing	“What are the actions that you would want to see replicated?” Juliana Worrell leads principal Andrew Schaeffer to fully unpack his school’s exemplar for guided reading before determining the highest-leverage gap across several guided reading classrooms.	110, 111
7	Name It—Coach by Doing	“Reflect on the process: your key takeaways are . . .” Juliana Worrell pauses her modeling of a literacy weekly data meeting with principal Na’Jee Carter to ask him to reflect on key takeaways and name his action step for his upcoming data meeting.	112
8	Follow Up—Manager Feedback Meeting	“I am going to send you the third-grade analysis meeting.” Julie Jackson works with principal Jennifer Wong-Den to list all of the time-bound next steps at the conclusion of the meeting.	113

Coaching Student Culture (Chapter 4)

Clip	Technique	Description	Page
9*	Do It—Practice Clinic	"Take one minute to read the technique." Hannah Lofthus's principals lead a morning practice clinic to improve teacher actions before the school day begins.	128
10	Do It—Roll Out to Staff (Principal Clip)	"Handshake, high-five, or hug . . ." Tera Carr begins her student culture rollout by presenting the model to her staff.	131
11	See It and Name It	"Here's what you are going to see me do." Hannah Lofthus presents a model for her principal to compare to his own implementation, prompting the principal to name both his coaches' action step and his own.	131
12	Do It (Coach by Walking)	". . . and then we are going to go upstairs and do it." Jesse Corburn asks principal Ashley Anderson to practice the planned real-time feedback before their school walkthrough.	137
13	Do It (Coach by Walking)	"Whisper to him that you're going to watch for . . ." Jesse Corburn provides Ashley with several opportunities to practice real-time feedback aligned to her action step.	137
14	See It and Name It (Coach by Meeting)	"What is the gap between [what you described as the ideal] and what we saw today?" Hannah Loftus pushes her principal to identify the exemplar procedure for her dean to follow when receiving a student, and then they determine the gap in the current implementation coupled with a final action step.	139
15	Do It (Coach by Meeting)	"She'll be able to implement that within the next thirty minutes." Hannah Loftus practices the principal action step with her leader during a feedback meeting.	140

*This clip is an additional resource that was created after the creation of the DVD. To access it, use the following Vimeo link: <https://vimeo.com/264996206>.

Coaching Teams of Principals (Chapter 5)

Clip	Technique	Description	Page
16	See It and Name It—Leading Leadership Teams	"In your own words, tell me your action step." Teresa Khirallah works with leaders in Dallas to determine the highest leverage gap to close in their own implementation of weekly data meetings.	167
17	Do It (Plan)—Leading PD	"Who can share a piece of feedback they just got from their partner?" Jesse Corburn asks a group to write exemplar responses to prework questions during PD.	168
18	Do It (Practice)—Leading PD	"What did they do well, and what could they improve?" Kelly Dowling leads a PD with instructional leaders, giving clear directions before practice with several opportunities for specific feedback.	170

DVD Additional Materials

Here is quick overview of additional materials available on the DVD.

Resource	Description
Principal Manager Quick Reference Guide	<p>Key one-pagers and guides to support the coaching of principals; these can be printed and formed into a small reference guide for each principal manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage Leadership Sequence of Action Steps for Principals• Principal Manager Check-In one-pager• Managing Principals to Results one-pager• Weekly Data Meeting one-pager• Giving Effective Feedback one-pager• Real-Time Feedback one-pager• Student Culture one-pager• Leading PD one-pager• Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence of Action Steps
Leverage Leadership Quick Reference Guide for Principals	<p>Key one-pagers and guides for every lever; these can be printed and formed into a small reference guide for each principal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weekly Data Meeting one-pager• Giving Effective Feedback one-pager

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Resource	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real-Time Feedback one-pager • Student Culture one-pager • Leading PD one-pager • Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence of Action Steps • Get Better Faster Coach's Guide
PD Session: Data-Driven Instruction for Principal Managers	<p>All the materials needed to lead a professional development session for instructional leaders on data-driven instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session plan • PowerPoint presentation • Handouts • One-pagers
Implementation Materials for Data-Driven Instruction	<p>Key handouts to support the implementation of data-driven instruction, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network dashboard sample • School dashboard sample • Managing Principals to Results one-pager • Weekly-Daily Data Meeting one-pager • Principal Manager Check-In one-pager
PD Session: Leading Student Culture for Principal Managers	<p>All the materials needed to lead a professional development session for instructional leaders on student culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session plan • PowerPoint presentation • Handouts • One-pagers
Implementation Materials for Culture	<p>Key handouts to support the implementation of student culture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-Day Playbook • Student Culture Rubric • Student Culture one-pager

Resource	Description
Implementation Materials for Finding the Time	<p>Key handouts to help principal managers find the time for what matters most, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Schedule Template
Leverage Leadership Evaluation Rubrics	<p>Leverage Leadership Instructional Leadership (non-principal) Rubric Leverage Leadership Principal Evaluation Rubric</p>

For leaders of leaders: your children are my children.

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Gaby: twenty-one years and it still feels fresh and new. I'm so excited to spend another twenty-one years together—and then some. Here's to warmth, bright skies, and getting old together.

Thank you to each and every one of you. This book is a tribute to you all.

About the Author

Paul Bambrick-Santoyo is the chief schools officer for Uncommon Schools and the founder and dean of the Leverage Leadership Institute, creating proof points of excellence in urban schools nationwide. Author of *Driven by Data*; *Leverage Leadership*; *Great Habits*, *Great Readers*; and *Get Better Faster*; Bambrick-Santoyo has trained more than twenty thousand school leaders worldwide in instructional leadership, including multiple schools that have gone on to become the highest-gaining or highest-achieving schools in their districts, states, and/or countries. Prior to these roles, Bambrick-Santoyo cofounded the Relay National Principals Academy Fellowship and spent thirteen years leading North Star Academies in Newark, New Jersey. During his tenure at North Star, the schools grew from serving fewer than three hundred students to over three thousand while at the same time making dramatic gains in student achievement. North Star's results make them among the highest-achieving urban schools in the nation and winners of multiple recognitions, including the US Department of Education's National Blue Ribbon Award. Prior to his work at North Star, Bambrick-Santoyo worked for six years in a bilingual school in Mexico City, where he founded the International Baccalaureate program. He earned a BA in social justice from Duke University and his MEd in school administration through New Leaders from the City University of New York—Baruch College.

Introduction

By any metric, John Williams is an iconic creator of music. In a career that spans five decades and counting, Williams has composed some of the most unforgettable film scores of all time, including six *Star Wars* films, three *Harry Potter* films, and the chill-inducing “dah-dah—dah-dah” of *Jaws*.¹ His notes shaped these stories into the masterpieces we know them as today, making his mark on cinematic history as indelible as his mark on music.

This legendary skill of composing is combined with Williams’s skill in leading others to perform. He served as the conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra for thirteen years, and continues to occasionally serve as conductor for the Pops, at the London Symphony, and at the Hollywood Bowl.² These performances are extraordinarily popular—not only because of Williams’s fame as a composer but also because of his work as a conductor. He excels at leading other musicians to perform memorable music—sometimes his own art, but sometimes music crafted by others—in a breath-taking way.

Step back and think about Williams’s impact in the moment he lifts a conductor’s baton. He doesn’t play a single instrument; he doesn’t offer a single bit of sound to what

is produced. Yet there is no performance without him. Even as he hands the task of making the music over to other artists, the audience depends on Williams to thrill them with wonder, terror, or delight.

The same is true of every principal manager. You're no longer in the classroom, and you're no longer in one school every day. You're no longer welcoming a student body in the morning or holding regular feedback meetings with teachers, but you work daily to make sure every school succeeds.

Just like a conductor, you no longer make the music—but there is no performance without you.

Core Idea

As the conductor, you no longer make the music,
but there is no performance without you.

As principal managers, we can sometimes lose sight of the power of the conductor's coaching. We can get so mired in the complexities of multischool leadership that we can feel distant and ineffective—and sometimes that feeling becomes a reality. Yet a new generation of principal managers shows that this does not have to be the case: people like LaKimbre Brown in Washington, DC; Hannah Lofthus in Kansas City; Teresa Khirallah in Dallas; Jeanine Zitta in St. Louis; and Serena Savarirayan and Juliana Worrell in Newark, New Jersey. All of them had significant success as principals, but what is more remarkable is the success they now have as managers. Between them, they have worked with nearly every type of school—small and large, district and charter, schools in turnaround and schools moving from good to great. In each context, they have changed the lives of whole communities of students. No matter what the odds or difficulties, principal managers can indeed make the difference in the schools they manage, creating amazing music by guiding and coaching the musicians.

How do they do it?

That is what this book is all about.

A PARADIGM SHIFT: FROM ADMINISTRATION TO INSTRUCTION

What makes education effective? Great teaching.³ What makes great teaching possible across an entire school? Great principals.

Leverage Leadership 2.0 was built to codify the practices of the most effective school leaders across the country. But in the process of working with schools leaders in every type of district, another question emerged: What does it actually look like to make great schools possible at scale? More specifically, what do the best principal managers do?

For most of us who have risen to the role of principal manager, we got there by being a good principal. But just as being a good student doesn't prepare you to be a good teacher, neither does the work of being principal fully prepare you to manage other principals. Think again of John Williams: the skills he engages when he stands up to conduct are fully different from those he uses when he plays an instrument.

Among principal managers whom I've met along my journey, a common refrain is, "Nothing prepared me to be a principal manager. In all honesty, I don't really know if what I'm doing is making any impact." In large measure there is a void in the field: there is little training offered to guide us in being principal managers. That's where this book comes in.

Just as student learning won't change if we don't improve instruction, our work as principal managers won't change until we make the shift from being administrators to serving as instructional leaders. Why? Because at its core, being an instructional leader means believing that principals can get better. They aren't born great; they can grow into becoming great. This entails a paradigm shift: moving from simply monitoring or evaluating school leaders to coaching them.⁴

Core Idea

The purpose of principal managers is not to monitor or evaluate school leaders but to develop them.

Good principals don't have to be born great; they can become great.

Obstacles to Effective School Management

As promising as this shift sounds on paper, there are many obstacles that make it challenging to put into practice. Here are a few of the most fundamental ones.

- **A fixed mindset about schools—and school leaders.** For many of us who were principals before we became principal managers, we never got any feedback as a principal. We found our own way. That experience can leave us believing that the next generation of principals can do the same. Once they know about teaching, surely

they can figure out how to lead, right? This mindset leads to deprioritizing giving principals the feedback and information they need to grow. It can also lead to a more dangerous proposition: the belief that a struggling principal will never be able to get better, and thus that principal's school is destined to fail. Only when we shift from this fixed mindset to a growth mindset about our schools' leaders can we begin to change our actions to coach principals to mastery. (The terms *fixed mindset* and *growth mindset* were coined by Carol S. Dweck in her seminal book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*.)

- **A focus on compliance and administration.** One of the largest stumbling blocks principal managers face today in their journey to becoming instructional leaders is the sheer volume of noninstructional work placed on their shoulders—nearly the exact problem principals face at the school level. All too often, principal managers find themselves focused on a host of tasks far removed from directly improving instruction and learning: attending district meetings, learning the latest around compliance, planning a budget or managing non-school-based staff, just to name a few. This work is not going to disappear, and often principal managers are evaluated more for getting that work done well than they are for their schools' results. Such tasks have led some to argue that a great superintendent or principal manager should focus on being good at these things and leave instructional leadership to principals and coaches. However, what I saw in exceptional principal managers was an insistence on being instructional leaders. No matter the other responsibilities they had on their plate, a focus on teaching and learning always rose to the top.
- **Firefighter syndrome—letting the urgent crowd out the important.** When you lead multiple schools, there will always be something urgent that pushes you to abandon every well-laid plan. You have multiple “fires” to extinguish—from disciplinary hearings to personnel challenges to occasionally things far worse. You end up rushing from one fire to the next, yet you arrive unprepared and ill-equipped to address them. And with each fire, instructional leadership falls even further into the shadows.
- **Flying at too high an altitude to effect real change on the ground.** Many times principal managers try to manage from far away. They create plans and roll them out, but they do not follow up with “boots on the ground” to actually manage, model, and monitor the implementation. Redefining management as on-the-ground support makes the difference between running great schools in theory and making that a reality.