Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

<u>Angela Kelly</u>

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

Hello, Empowered Principals, welcome to episode 89.

Welcome to *The Empowered Principal Podcast*, a not so typical, educational resource that will teach you how to gain control of your career and get emotionally fit to lead your school and your life with joy, by refining your most powerful tool: your mind. Here's your host, certified life coach, Angela Kelly Robeck.

89, that's the year I graduated, 1989. My parents and I just got off the phone and they said, "Isn't this your 30th class reunion for high school?" And I was like, "Why you got to go there?"

Hello, my Empowered Principals. Welcome to episode 89. That thought just totally popped in my head and I went rogue on there for a second. But, I want to say hello, happy Tuesday, and welcome to the episode. If you are new to *The Empowered Principal Podcast*, welcome, welcome. We are so happy you are here.

Last week, in part one of building teams, we focused on the foundational aspects of building teams in our schools, such as things like what constitutes a great and an effective team, why we need teams in the first place when we know that people are the problem. But why is it important to build teams and how we set up the stage as school leaders for building effective and great teams.

The podcast, of course, was just a highlight of where to start and it focused on the mindset around team-building and how we as school leaders can model and promote a mindset around teams that help others, our team, other members of our team see the value in working together as a team and to provide value to that team for the sake of providing even greater value to the bigger good, the bigger contribution of those outside the team.

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

So the goal is really to establish, in the mindsets of your staff, your teachers, why teams are important, how they raise our level of value that we can contribute to our school, to the students, to the greater community, to the world, and then use that synergy of teamwork to then rise up what we thought was possible for ourselves. We can make that exponentially greater through the work of teams.

And I highlighted Elena Aguilera's work on building teams. She's really focused on instructional coaches and she's ideal for learning how to coach teams, learning how to coach individuals. And when combined with my work on the self-coaching model – which I think is the missing piece, learning to self-coach through your teamwork, I feel like that combined with her experience and knowledge on building teams and instructional coaching will just raise the roof of the effectiveness of your teams. It just can be limitless.

So, today we're going to dive in more deeply into teamwork. And this time, we're going to focus on the perspective of how to maintain healthy teams and navigate the conflict that is inevitable when it comes to working with other humans.

When you think about it, the stress we feel most often comes from what we are thinking about other people. So, most of the stress in school leadership always comes back to people. We're worried about people's ideas. We're thinking about their emotional reactions. We're thinking about the way they act and approach us, the way they act and approach teaching, the way they act and approach each other, right? It feels like sometimes we're in a boxing ring putting people back into their corners.

So, no matter what the situation is – and even when something doesn't feel like it's attached to another person, such as when you worry about test scores, you're thinking about the test scores. What you're really worrying about is not the numbers on the paper. What you're worried about is what

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

those numbers mean; what they mean about us as leaders, what they mean about our students, like, "Oh gosh, the test scores are low, the students aren't going to be successful in school or life." What we make those numbers mean about ourselves as an instructional leader, like we're not doing our job well enough.

We're thinking those tests mean what our boss thinks about us, what our superintendent going to say, what they're going to criticize us – or they're going to think you're a great principal if your scores are up. The test scores themselves are just numbers on a piece of paper. But what parents, community, our staff, what they think about themselves as teachers based on those numbers, what the community thinks about us based on those numbers, what the school board and everything, all those numbers mean is what we think other people are going to make it mean about us and what we think about us in our role as a school leader.

So, just know that something that seems like it's very not people-driven is always people-driven. So just know that we are in the business of people, and what we think about others and what we think they think about us drives pretty much all of our thoughts, feelings, and actions and based on how the way we think them and how the way we think it's going to make us feel. Can you see that?

So, when we work in teams, we must be willing to reflect on how our interactions with others – which, by the way, is a neutral situation in and of itself – those interactions are neutral until we make it mean something and it impacts the way we think, feel, and act.

So, let's talk about how to navigate certain situations that might bring up some conflict when working within a group and how we can approach the situation that promotes the growth of the group and the team versus hindering that group dynamic.

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

Now, I'm going to share with you some, like a couple, of different scenarios of common things that happen in teams. And I want you to think about this in twofold. One, I want you to think about it in terms of, if you were a team member dealing with this situation directly; so if you are thinking about a team that you directly work on or are in, like your leadership team meetings or your district level team meetings, something like that.

I also want you to be able to flip this information around and digest it from the perspective of how would I coach somebody who approaches me with these complaints or these concerns on a team that they are working on. So I'm going to speak to it as if you were working on the team, but be thinking, how can I coach my teachers on these ideas? And if somebody comes to me complaining about another team member, how can I coach them so them so that they can learn to self-coach and they can learn to handle the situation without me having to step in and solve it for them?

Because really, our goal as school leaders is to empower our staffs to be able to handle their own problems and solve their own problems, we want them thinking outside the box and them solving problems. So, I will speak to this as if you were the team member. Also be thinking about it in terms of coaching your members.

Alright, so number one, one of the most common complaints that come up during a staff conversation or a team conversation is somebody's dominating the conversation. And you've probably had many staff meetings like this where you have a teacher or a couple of teachers who they're the first hands to go up, they have the most comments to say. They're always doing the talking.

And I want us to think about that, break it down, what is it like to be on a team where somebody's dominating the conversation? And I want you to think about this also, like, when you're the person who's dominating and when you're the person who is not dominating or not speaking up as much

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

as you want to or think you should or you tend to be more quiet, maybe you're more introverted or something.

So, when you think about a person who's dominating the conversation during the meetings, we want to get inside their head. Their behavior is a product of their own thoughts and emotions. So instead of trying to shut them down as a fellow team member, try getting curious. Try understanding, like, what's driving this person? Are they contributing more than the average team member because they have, like, their brain just has a million thoughts and ideas and they're super excited and they're eager and want to share, they're very enthusiastic? It could be that.

Or, could it be that they need to feel seen, need to feel heard, they're looking for a stage, a platform in which to share their ideas. And this team provides them that safety, that space, that time, and attention to be seen and heard.

Or is it because maybe they are trying to control, they don't want other change or other ideas to come into play, so they're trying to get to the top of it and squelch down anything else so that they don't have to consider or be open to other ideas. There's a lot of reasons behind dominating conversationalist behavior, but it's always based on a thought.

So helping you understand why your teammate's behaving in this way and just being curious about what it is that might be driving them helps you shift your energy from being frustrated and annoyed, which you would respond in one particular way, to neutralizing their behavior.

Just trying to get your brain to a point like, "Okay, this person is talking. This person is talking again." Like, just the facts of the story, not the opinion aspect. It's simply happening and you don't have to make it mean that you're responsible for stopping them or you're responsible for interjecting or that your goal is to get them to not do what they're doing.

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

Their behavior might actually be a real asset to the team, but we have to consider what's going on, what's the end result of their dominating the conversation? So be thinking about that in terms of when you are in a situation. And if you're the one dominating, what's going on for you? Why the need to talk so much? Are you giving people a chance to be open? Are you practicing listening? Are you letting other people's ideas be heard?

Maybe you're just so excited you are not aware or realizing how much you are sharing or how much you're presenting or how much you're speaking. And if it is a control issue, what's going on there? What are you afraid of? Let's get to the bottom of that. So, be thinking about it on both sides of the fence there.

And then, if we flip this to the other end of the spectrum where, what about the people who are not dominating the conversation? Why is that person being so quiet? Again, is it because somebody's talking over them? Is it because maybe they're new to the group? Maybe they're seeking to understand before they share out. They might be a big picture thinker. They might need to hear a lot of what's going on before they come to a conclusion or want to share their summary of what's going on. Maybe they're just afraid to be seen and heard, just as the one person who's kind of scratching at the surface to be seen and heard.

Other people don't have that desire or don't want that desire. And sometimes, that fear is, you know, not a good thing, and sometimes it's appropriate. So it's interesting to be curious and understand what's going on in each of those mindsets, like, why is one person so willing to talk while another one's not?

And if you are that person, again, like what's going on for you? Just being aware of why you're doing what you're doing, whether you're talking a lot or you're talking very little, understanding why you do that in a team. And again, if you are the leader of a team or somebody comes to you as part of

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

another team saying, "Hey, this person's never showing up or never talking," just get to understand what's going on because if you think about if you were that person, having somebody force you into talking when you're not ready or you're uncomfortable or you're scared, getting pushed – encouragement is one thing but forcing them or telling them there's a bad consequence that will come up if they don't speak or they don't stop speaking, that is not going to enhance the growth of the team. It's not going to promote evolvement of that team. It's going to hinder that team. It's going to squelch what's going on.

So before we come up with norms and we hold people accountable to those norms, we want to understand, like, what's going on here and is this in the overall good of the team or not?

A third consideration is for those people – I think this is probably the second complaint that I get besides people dominating all the time is the people on the team who don't follow through or they don't contribute. So, you've seen this in your classroom where you set up collaborative learning environments, whether they pick who is going to play what role or not, the kids, even if they're assigned a role, they're going to assume a role.

And you have your natural leaders, you have your natural speakers who want to get up and they want to speak. You have other kids who naturally like to lead and organize the group. And you always have the kiddo who kind of sits back and watches and maybe doesn't – not so much just in contribution verbally, but not in contribution, like in effort or in concern or just not as engaged.

So I'm talking about those people, like when somebody comes to me as a school leader and says, you know, "Blah-blah's grade level team, teacher Smith is not showing up to the meeting or she sits there and does nothing or she complains the whole time or we all share and she never brings

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

something to share." I'm talking about that kind of a person, who's kind of resisting being engaged in the group.

So, once again, as I shared before, trying to coerce a team, you cannot get into other people's STEAR Cycle and get them to think, feel, and act a different way, but you can seek to understand it in terms of curiosity as to why they're showing up that way. Maybe they don't feel valued. Maybe their contributions haven't been acknowledged or recognized. Maybe they don't feel like what they have to share is that important. So just being aware of what that contribution has or doesn't have or what they're making their contribution mean can really have an impact.

When, if it's you that's in this situation, it's based on a story. So let's go this way; if you are the person who is complaining about somebody not contributing enough, it's usually based on a story that things should be fair, everybody should contribute, we should say something to them and try and get them to change the way that they're approaching this team.

We want to make the team feel good to us all the time so whether somebody is contributing a lot or a little, our brain is trying to get back to the status quo, the blueprint of how we think things should be. And that can really impact how you show up.

So if you're the person who's upset about somebody else not contributing, ask yourself a few questions. Number one, what is it that you want them to do? How is it that you want them to act? And what is it that they're not doing or that they are doing that they should or shouldn't be doing, and why. Like really get down to why are you feeling this way about them? What is it about what they're doing that you want them to do or not do?

And then second of all, what would be different if they did act this way? If they did everything you wanted them to, what would be different about your team? How would it be better? And then the flipside of that would be, like,

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

what would be the same? If they did contribute and show up or if they did follow through, what would be the same? What would be different? Ask yourself that. Dig a little deeper into what's going on for you when you think about this person's behavior.

And then I want you to ask yourself this; how do I want to feel? How do I want to show up? How do I want to feel about over-delivering? If you believe that you're showing up to a team and you're giving it 100% and you are contributing and giving value and you're over-delivering, is that a good thing or a bad thing?

In my eyes, I want to be in control of how I show up and how much I deliver and I always want to be the person who's giving as much value as I can. Some teams, I can give tons of value, other teams, I'm learning more and I'm having to take a little bit of value. It feels like I'm contributing less. But it feels I'm giving as much as I can and I want to show up feeling amazing about who I am on that team, the contributions I am.

And even if I'm new and I'm 100% learning and gaining insight from the other people on the team who are contributing, in that way, I'm showing eagerness, attention. Maybe my contribution is I'm just acknowledging all of the contributions of other people. But what I'm saying is that how you show up and over-delivering on a team is not bad.

You get to be whoever you want on that team, regardless of how other people show up. You could be the only person on that team delivering and giving value and contributing. That's cool, just be that person just because you choose to be that person. Don't step back or step down or be less or be frustrated and then show up in a different way just because you don't agree or approve of other people's ways of showing up. Like, be the person you want to on this team, regardless of how others show up.

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

Now, what if you're the person who is approached and somebody says, "Hey, you're not following through or following up or you're not fully engaged, what's going on with you?" And they're calling you out and they're sharing with you their opinions on your behavior.

Now, this is what I do for myself, and I invite you to consider this. Number one, when you get that kind of feedback, step back and just listen. Notice that it's their opinion. It's not right or wrong. There's no judgment about you. It's just words. Let them say the words. Say, "Thank you for your input. I'm going to process this." And then let yourself have time to think through what they're saying. You're going to have emotions that come up about the feedback; that's okay. But really ask yourself, what's going on here for me?

See if you can find any truth in their statements. What's going on for me? Is there something holding me back? How do I feel about this team? How do I feel about what's been said? How is that impacting my input? Is there truth in any of this at all?

And here's the thing; you've got to get really true with yourself because if that feedback bothers you in any way, shape, or form, I am here to tell you, that is because there is a piece of you that is resonating with what was said. I'm not saying that they're right, I'm not saying that you're wrong. I'm saying that somewhere in your body or in your brain, there's a part of you that's like, yeah, I can kind of see where that's true, or there's a piece of me that really connects with what you're saying.

So if you have an emotional response, positive or negative, there is something that is connecting to what was said. Just know that, okay. And then you can explore that a little more and you might be able to see something, like, "Yeah, I guess you're right. I've been really distracted by something going on at home lately, I haven't been doing this work. I apologize. I'm going to follow up."

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

Or maybe it's like, "Guys, you know what, I should have been more forthright. There's this thing going on. I'm going to have to take a step down. Can somebody else pick up the ball for me right now? I will join you when I am fully capable of stepping back in fulltime."

You have to really reflect on what's going on for you and just notice, notice what's been said, notice the impact it may or may not have on you and other people. And if you can find any truth in it, I think that that person was there for a purpose, it was said for a purpose, and it was really just to create awareness within you, okay, that's all it was.

Now, if you reflect deeply on it and you just don't feel a connection or it feels very neutral to you, that other person's statement, you can allow them to have that opinion, you can listen to their concern, take it into consideration, and thank them for being honest and open and simply continue to show up in the way you want to show up, basically.

You can take somebody else's input and feedback and opinions and you can decide, no, what feels good to me right now, the way that I'm currently contributing is what I'm capable of or it's what I'm capable of in this moment, it's what I can contribute right now.

And something else to just keep in the back of your mind – first of all, it's okay to have a difference of opinion, and sometimes, you'll have someone on the team who is a super overachiever and they want you to be at their level. They expect you to work around the clock in the name of teamwork and they're going to call it out in the name of teamwork or in the name of the kids. That's not teamwork. That's one person's need to achieve and be noticed and be recognized, and it overrides the team's goal.

So, the key is to really search for the truth in their opinion. And if, after that searching, you don't really see a connection or you're feeling very comfortable with who you are on the team and where you're at, and then

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

decide from an empowered state the level to which you are going to contribute and give to that team. And the same holds true if you're coaching another teacher or a different team member on this topic. Just coach them the same way that you would coach yourself on this topic

One last issue that we want to address before getting into how to navigate specific conflicts is that you can have communication or talking protocols in place, and I definitely recommend, one, having them, creating them together on the regular to keep staff meetings fresh, but I want to caution you on overusing cooperative learning tools and tools that you want to see in classrooms.

I mentioned this a little bit last time and kind of joked about it, but in reality, adults tend to feel pretty placated and talked down to when we treat them like children. I have found that most adults ultimately would prefer to have open and honest dialogues about what they want in terms of communication and conversation protocols.

Now, being adult and owning our adult emotions and our adult actions does take some accountability. It is not always comfortable, especially in the beginning. And I know people don't like to hold other adults accountable, we just wish that they would do it themselves, but when you agree to norms and you utilize them as a tool to help everybody be the best version of themselves on this team, the more often that happens, the more openness occurs and the more accountability just becomes the norm itself.

So trying to sidestep norms and avoid talking about them over input or under-input diminishes the capacity of the team and their ability to achieve goals. So you want to raise awareness about the desired and current patterns of communication. That's the first step. And once you've created that awareness through conversations and you've practiced analyzing communication and using the norms to guide them, it really will help the members of your team become more comfortable with being open and

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

sharing and providing feedback to one another and discussing what's working, what's not, and what you want to do differently.

So, a little side note to that, but I really feel it's important to address this whole idea of norms. People can think, norms, roll their eyes and not want to do norms again. But the only reason that people don't like them is when they have to go through the work of creating them but then they don't get used. So if you use them for everybody involved, it will really help the team have a way to hold those conversations.

So let's get into navigating conflict. I'm just going to give a few tips on how to navigate conflict and they're probably not brand new, but I want to say them again. So, number one, you want to look inward, always, always. I will say it a million times, check in with yourself first when you're feeling others are resisting, when others aren't contributing, whatever it is you're feeling, when you're starting to feel negative as a team member, check in with yourself.

The thought that others are resisting or the others aren't doing something is going to generate an emotion for you that impacts the way you show up in the group, you really want to get to the bottom of what you're thinking and why you're thinking that. And does that thought serve you and does it serve the team?

Two, when there is resistance in the team, somebody's not wanting to engage in some way, just know that that resistance is generally based on fear. So if you have a teacher who is very resistant to playing nice on a team, know that if they had to choose love or fear, they're choosing fear. And fear is just the fear of not knowing how to do something, not wanting to be perceived as incompetent, not wanting to not be good enough. You know, some people really want to be seen as the top of their game, and if they have to expose themselves, there will be some imperfections and they're very uncomfortable with that.

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

And I love how Elena, in her book, differentiates the difference between resistance and disagreement. So, resistance is when people are being very passive and restrained. They're just not engaged. You can see the nonverbal cues kicking in. And when people are resistant, they're not typically outwardly saying, "I'm feeling resistant to this." They don't do that. They show it in the form of not speaking, closing up, declining ideas. So remind yourself that they're simply feeling some level of fear and it's showing up through their actions.

Disagreement, on the other hand, is active and open. People are open to dialogue. They're open to hearing difference of opinions and stating that they disagree with it. So it's a very active role versus resistance as a more passive role.

So just notice how people are choosing to show up and how they're choosing to engage. And just know that when you see that resistance, it is based on some fears. And especially when a change is forced upon somebody or they feel like it's being forced upon them, they're definitely going to be in more resistance than when they feel they have the option to have time to process the change or they want to better understand the change or they need time to implement a change. So keep in mind the difference between resistance and disagreement.

Thirdly, trust reduces resistance. So, the more HOW you are, that's my process of being honest, open, and willing, the more HOW you can be with your team, the more trusted you will be as a leader. So when you feel people being resistant, there is something in their brain that is not trusting a piece of the puzzle, that's not trusting either a part of the team dynamic or the process or the outcome. There's a link that's missing.

And what you want to do is try to find out which link is missing and then give them time to build some trust for that piece of the puzzle. And the

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

more trust you build as a leader, the less amount of conflict and resistance you're going to have to navigate.

And finally, knowing this will be very helpful and it will help you drop your own resistance when it comes to navigating conflict with teams. Not everybody is going to be on board. That's just the way it is. Not everybody has the exact same ideas, the exact same opinions, the exact same experiences, or the exact way they believe is the best approach.

Not everybody wants to be in agreement. Some people just choose to be in conflict over agreement. I even have a friend who said, "I just like to stew and be mad sometimes." I'm like, what? Why would you do that? But she thrives on it, so that's okay. Some people are just more like that. They like to really get into the nitty-gritty. They like conflict. They like confrontation. They like to be in that space.

You are not going to be able to change them, so whether or not they like the emotions that come with conflict and disagreement and resistance, they are going to behave in that way. If that is a dopamine hit for them, then they're going to go that way. So just know, not everybody is going to be on board. There are going to be people who love to disagree. They do not want to agree to disagree. They want to argue about it, and that's fine. Know that.

And there will be people on your staff who choose to be cynical, resistant, and they're not open to coaching. So instead of spending all your energy attempting to change their minds, I want you to find a way to self-coach on their behavior, redirect any inappropriate behavior as necessary, but continue to go on and focus on the people who are enthusiastic, who are fun, who want to change.

Don't waste all of your time and energy focusing on – it's like focusing on the one hater versus the 200 people who love you. Like, don't focus on the

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

one person that's trying to ruin it for all. And if you have to, you can use your positional authority to have conversations with them, to remove them from a group if it's not working, if they're really causing the greater good of a team to be impacted, you can take those steps. But start with analyzing yourself, your own feelings about them, and then what it is you'd like and why you'd like it and communicate that to them.

So, finally, let's talk about decision-making processes as a team. So, once you've built the culture of how your team wants to communicate, what the purpose of the team is, you've got the energy going behind it, you've got the norms built, and you want to decide ahead of time what you're going to do as a team with resistance and conflict – because it's a part of the human experience it will come up – then you want to move on and get onto the business of making decisions as a team because this, after all, is really one of the primary tasks of a team.

So, you set up the foundation. You decide how you're going to handle conflict. You self-coach on anything that comes up for you when the team is in conflict or you don't like the way another team member is behaving, and then get into the business of getting something done, taking action. Knowing how to effectively make group decision is a key in achieving the team's goal.

So, number one, you have to understand how you personally make decisions as a leader. Do you tend to make decisions on your own? Do you prefer to ask people for input? Do you want full consensus before moving forward? Do you make decisions very quickly or do you spend a lot of time collecting information and pondering over the pros and the cons and analyzing your decisions?

Think about how you've made decisions in your past, like how did you choose your career? How did you choose your partner? How did you choose your home? How did you choose your car? How did you choose all

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

these things, your pets, whatever, your children? How do you make decisions?

Are you quick to make a decision? Do you ponder a decision? Do you collect a lot of evidence? Do you collect little evidence? What is your decision-making process on the personal level?

And then number two, keep in mind that the reason you decide anything – so every decision you make is because of how you believe it's going to make you feel. The way you decide stems from how you prioritize the six basic human needs.

So, the six basic human needs are certainty and uncertainty, or spontaneity. They are love and belonging and significant. They're almost like opposing, which I find so interesting, like the need to be certain and have consistency, continuity to know what's coming up, that's what the brain loves. It loves certainty.

But we also love spontaneity. We love surprises. We love the unknown, the unexpected. We love solving hard problems. We love that uncertainty. That's the spectrum of life. The same holds true. We want to be loved and belong. We want to be a part of the social team. We want to be accepted. We want to be recognized.

But we also want to be significant. We want to feel important. We want to stand out in the crowd. We want to be unique. We want to be highlighted as being different or special, so we have that contrast, where we want to fit in and belong. We also want to feel different.

And then we want to contribute to the greater good, but we also want to have value within ourselves. So there's this, like, basically these external rewards we want to have, and then these intrinsic rewards that we want to

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

have. We want to contribute and give value, but we also want to personally be aligned as an individual.

So, when knowing that, do you value certainty over spontaneity? Do you value being accepted and belonging or do you prefer to stand out and be unique as an individual? Do you lean towards personal growth and being personally evolving, or do you lean towards contributing to the greater cause? And knowing the importance that you place on each of these needs determines how you approach your decision-making and what types of decision-making process feels most comfortable to you.

So just know that about yourself because every time you're on a team, part of that team is going to be making decisions and you'll want to know how you approach decision-making. Ask others in the group to understand how they make decisions and then share with each other, like, "Boy, I really like to make decisions as soon as possible. I like to be very decisive. I get the information I need and boom."

Or, you might be a person that's like, "Nope, I've got to get the research, analyze, I've got to ask for input. I really want to know other people's opinions before I make a decision. Sharing that with one another will really help you when it comes time to choosing a decision-making process.

Number four, you want to clarify the decision-making process that's going to be used at the meeting. So different types of decisions call for different types of decision-making processes. Determine ahead of time the process of how decisions will be made in this particular moment and communicate that decision-making process very clearly ahead of time.

I can tell you, from painful experience, that the times I did not communicate how I was going to make a decision to a team that I was on or as a school leader at large made a huge impact on that decision's ability to be accepted and successful.

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

When I was very explicit and clear about my decision-making process, it was very much more helpful. So, nobody wants to be on a team and go through a process only to find out that the decision was made in a different way. That is so, so frustrating. So when people say it's going to be consensus and it ends up being top-down, that is like the kiss of death. People lose faith, they lose trust, they don't want to be on the team.

So, gathering input when the decision is top-down is not going to build trust, nor is it going to build fans. People are not going to follow you again because they're not going to trust that what you say is what you'll do. It just doesn't buy any gain and or traction.

So be clear and honest about your decision-making process and if possible, explain why that process in particular was chosen. It really helps people wrap their heads around it. They might not agree, but they will appreciate your openness and honesty.

And finally, be very clear when a decision moment is happening. Have you ever been to a meeting where you're like, what just happened? Did we just decide on XYZ?

So make sure that people are very aware when a decision moment is in progress. Make sure people know ahead of time what's coming up, that a decision is going to be made, what the decision-making process is, and that people who are involved in that decision are present, have a specific process, explain it clearly, allow your ideas to be exchanged, and make certain that all voices are heard. No dominating or no silence. Even a simple agreement of some form is possible.

You want to get some kind of feedback from the team in some way that they are on board. That's really important because if you allow the silence to be – especially during a moment of decision-making – if somebody's not speaking up, you want to get to the why, what's going on for you? What's

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

your mind thinking? What are you feeling right now? What are your thoughts about this?

Because somebody might be dominating and telling all of their side so that they can quiet somebody else. And on the flip, if somebody's not talking, they're not completely sold. So you want to make sure that you are getting that feedback you need prior to that decision being final, and then you want to come to a decision with full closure and highlight what was decided and what are the next steps. Clarity is key when it comes to this decision-making process.

So, I know these were a little bit longer podcasts. The next couple, I promise, we'll try and be shorter. I try to keep it to 30 minutes or less for your commute. But building a team is so huge, there's so much more information out there, guys. There are tons of books and resources. But I want you to think about it in terms of the mental and emotional space that you need to be in as a leader and as a teammate and when you're building teams and when you're supporting teams on your campus, you need to be aware that that self-coaching piece is really critical in the wellbeing of your teams.

People need to understand themselves in order to understand how to be on a team and how to function within a team. So if you have more questions about how to build teams, how to navigate team dynamics or how to support conflicts within teams and getting them to be effective and great teams, please reach out. I offer tons of professional development and training opportunities on topics just like this.

Have an amazing week and I will talk to you guys next week. Take care, bye-bye.

If you are enjoying the podcast and want to learn how to apply these concepts at a deeper level in real time, then you have to check out what

The Empowered Principal Podcast with Angela Kelly

Ep #89: Maintaining Your Team

Principal Empowerment can do for you. It's my personalized coaching and professional development program where we take concepts from the podcasts and we apply them to your specific situation.

This is how you become the most empowered version of yourself; not just as a leader at work, but in all areas of your life. Join me today to become an *Empowered Principal*.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *The Empowered Principal Podcast*. If you enjoyed this episode and want to learn more, please visit www.angelakellycoaching.com where you can sign up for weekly updates and learn more about the tools that will help you become an emotionally fit school leader.