

Ep #230: Mentoring Vs. Managing



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 230.

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.

Hello, my empowered leaders. Happy Tuesday. Welcome to the podcast. So happy you are here. This is a very short and sweet podcast that is a healthy reminder to all of us who are in school leadership, and that is this. We're going to talk about the difference between mentors and managers. I'm going to be very honest and mindful and authentic, and I'm going to say this out of love for each and every one of you.

We are not better because we are in a position of authority. We are mentors. We are here to guide our teachers and our staff. We are here to coach them, to love them, to support them. We aren't in this position because we are smarter or better people. We are here to lead. Using positional authority to create leadership leverage is coming from some lack of belief in yourself.

When you believe that I'm the principal therefore they have to do what I say, what you're saying is that I don't believe in my ability to inspire and lead them on my own accord. So I have to rely and lean on my title to generate my power in order to lead versus leaning on your beliefs about yourself and your team and your goals to generate power that inspires.

When you want people to follow your lead because you hold a certain title, you are missing the point. What you're asking for is for them to blindly follow you, to not question you, to not push back, to not challenge, and to not have agency over their career and their teaching style.

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You were not hired as the school leader to come in and be the hero and save the day, even if your district told you that was your job. You are here to mentor. Mentors want their students, and that's what your teachers are to you. They are your students. They are looking up to you to lead them, to coach them, to guide them, to teach them.

You want your students to ask questions, to challenge your theories, to poke holes in the concepts that you're offering so that they can deepen their understanding. And so that you as the leader can further develop your vision. Every time they ask you a question it deepens your understanding of your own vision.

Our ideas and our input as a student are equally valuable to those of our teachers. You are a student of your mentors, your bosses, your maybe college professors out there, and your teachers are mentees of you. You are mentoring them. You want them to ask questions and to be curious and to push back and to show you where there are holes in the vision, where there are gaps where we need to fill the spaces in order to make things run smoother.

We don't want to believe that we're here to save the day and to tell people what to do, and that we know all the answers and we know all the solutions and that they should do what we say because we said so. We don't want to be treated like that by our superiors. Our teachers don't want to be treated like that by us. When they ask questions or challenge a decision, what they are doing is helping us to further clarify and strengthen our leadership skills, our vision, our purpose, our commitment to our mission for our school and our leadership style.

People don't follow leader because they've been assigned a title or a position. You aren't granted respect simply because you have a title. You are required to earn it. This means you have to humble yourself. We all

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have to humble ourselves. We have to listen and pay attention and honor and validate and be willing to do anything we ask our staff to do.

That was a hard core value for me as a school leader. I would never ask a teacher or a staff member to do something that I wouldn't do, which is why I was out doing bus duty and doing yard duty and washing down lunch tables between lunch sessions and cleaning up vomit sometimes.

I went and did the gross things because I believe boots on the ground I would not ask anybody to do anything I wasn't willing to do myself. There were times I didn't love it. There were times I was scared. I'd have to go and talk to some stranger on campus and I was afraid. But I did it because I wouldn't do anything I wasn't willing to ask of myself and others.

Please consider trusting your staff, giving them the benefit of the doubt, showing them compassion and understanding, hold space for the learning curve of teaching and classroom management. There is a huge learning curve. Teaching's hard. There is a lot to know about the art of teaching and the art of classroom management. They aren't going to know it all at once right away.

Let's not pretend that they should know everything in their first year or their second year. Or that even if they're a veteran that they should have figured it out by now. We don't want to come in with an attitude and a chip on our shoulder.

That's exactly why people feel like it's us versus them when we're talking about teachers and administrators. We're on the same team. They have equal value to us as a person. They are equally worthy. There's nothing that anyone can do that makes a person more or less worthy. Worthiness is just by right 100% worthy.

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People follow leaders not because they have a title, but because they believe in them. They trust them. They like them. They want to follow them. They choose to follow them. People follow people who feel real to them, who embrace them, and share their humaneness with them. People are much less likely to follow and trust a leader who puts themselves on a pedestal above other people.

Think of your own leaders? Do they think they know more than you? Do they lead with fear and intimidation? Do they leverage their positional authority? Do you feel comfortable with them? Do you trust them? Do you like them? Are you inspired by them? Or are you afraid to make a mistake? Think about how you feel about your leaders and your mentors.

I know education has been founded on a hierarchy of power. It has been ingrained in us and we have been conditioned to believe that there's a very top down approach in education. Universities leverage their public image and prestige and claim to be better than smaller universities or smaller colleges or trade schools. High schools will say students are failing because of the lack of preparation in middle school. Middle school says the same things about elementary preparation. It all trickles down, right.

The same is true in terms of the positional authority in education. District officials sometimes will feel that they know better than their subordinates and their principals or than their teachers. We've been raised in our schools to believe that title and power and status equals the entitlement of being right.

I want to invite you to consider an alternate belief system around leadership. Our capacity to lead impactfully is based on what I've designed as the trust triad, our belief and trust in others, our belief and trust in ourselves, and our belief and trust in our approach and the leadership process. When you build trust in these areas, you build up your leadership triad, influence, Impact and legacy.

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Your job as the school leader is to increase your influence and impact through the process of evolving your understanding of what leadership is based on the trust triad. We are never better than another human on the planet. We are all valuable, all worthy, all capable 100%. We all have something to offer.

See yourself as a mentor, not a manager. You were not hired to manage other people's lives, other people's decisions, and other people's actions. You are there to inspire them and to mentor them. You are there to lead them as an equal member of the team. Have an empowered week. I will talk to you next week. Take care bye.

If this podcast resonates with you, you have to sign up for the Empowered Principal™ coaching program. It's my exclusive one to one coaching and mentorship program for school leaders who believe in possibility. This program is designed for principals who are hungry for the fastest transformation in the industry. If you want to create the best connections, impact, and legacy for yourself and your school, the Empowered Principal™ program was designed for you. Join me at angelakellycoaching.com/work-with-me to learn more. I'd love to support you in becoming an empowered school leader.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *The Empowered Principal™ Podcast*. If you enjoyed this episode and want to learn more, please visit 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.