

Visit us →

LEADERSHIP EDGE

Coaching in Schools



The Monthly Coach - June 2023

“The greatest adventure is what lies ahead.” – JRR Tolkien

The educational landscape is continually changing. Each school is an intensely complex microcosm of what is occurring in our local, national and international picture. Sometimes it's difficult to prioritise looking outward when there is so much to look at inwardly.

This month we consider the benefits of being an outward-looking practitioner, be that from the perspective of developing your own teaching practice, leadership approach, school policy or curriculum, resource allocation, engaging external suppliers and partners, connecting with your local community, neighbouring or similar schools, developing MAT growth strategy, or simply networking from a place of curiosity. There is so much to discover.

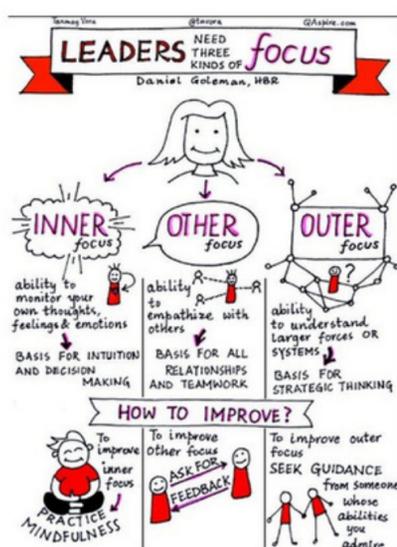


At a recent [MAT growth conference](#) in London being outward-looking emerged as a key theme of the day. The appetite for collaboration rather than competition was tangible. Similarly, the recent [Warrington ResearchEd](#) provided me with another reminder of the benefits of learning from other passionate education leaders and practitioners.

“Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much” – Helen Keller

Of course we should heed the words of Mary Myatt in filtering any new ideas with the question, “What do our pupils need?” ([Taking an evidence-informed approach to school improvement: My College](#)), ensuring that we fully consider the specific context of our school community before applying a new initiative or approach. So can we be both inward- and outward- facing at the same time?

In 2020, I lead a series of online consultations to develop the strategic vision of the school where I was a long-standing governor. After discussion groups with parents, staff, children and governors, the ideas seemed to be falling into 3 categories. I borrowed and adapted Daniel Goleman's three focuses of emotional intelligent leadership to sure-up these findings. In his book 'Focus', Goleman argues that leaders need to hold 3 kinds of focus simultaneously:



As Governors, we created our 3 Lenses: Looking Inwards, Looking Outwards, Looking Forwards; these formed the [basis of our strategic vision](#). In a conversation with the Deputy Headteacher last week, she shared her sustained belief in this vision and approach. It is vital that our schools are adaptable, responsive and keep in step with the bigger picture if we are to provide our young people with the best school experience and future life chances.

“I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious” – Albert Einstein

Living amongst social media also provides an accessible opportunity to reach out, share and learn from each other. It can be a very reassuring space to connect with others experiencing similar challenges. However, there is a risk that we sit comfortably within an echo chamber, corroborating and persisting our existing attitudes, assumptions and narratives.

So today, we invite you to objectively consider:

What benefits could be brought to yourself, your colleagues, your children and your school or trust by taking a more proactively outward-facing approach?

In what ways could you do this?

What are the risks if you do not do this?

At Leadership Edge, we ourselves are committed to staying afloat of developments and continuing to learn from professionals across the wide range of roles within our schools, trusts and the coaching industry across all sectors. We are also committed to sharing what we learn and encouraging others to ‘listen to understand’ and to take action so that, together, we can create an experience for our pupils and staff which is happy, healthy and high-performing. You can hear me talk about how coaching supports this mission [here](#).

We are also out and about at conferences again this term. Please let us know if you'll be at any of these, too, and would like to have a conversation ☺

Birmingham 8/9 June: [Home - Inspiring Leadership Conference 2023](#)

London 29 June: [Driving an Efficient and Sustainable Trust - London | Optimus Education \(optimus-education.com\)](#)

Berkshire 6/7 July: [13th Festival of Education | Festival of Education \(educationfest.co.uk\)](#)

Cheshire 8 July: [researchED Cheshire | ResearchED](#)

“Great leaders are always out front with a banner, instead of behind with a whip” – John Wooden

We are all leaders. We can all play our part in flying the banner of what education could, and should, be. Let's get out there and fully participate in this greatest of adventures.

Best wishes

Catherine Hulme

Director

Leadership Edge

PURE coaching with Leadership Edge: Purely YOUR thinking space.

If you have enjoyed this think-piece, you can find our back-catalogue [here](#)

We invite you to take our **free 3 minute self-reflection quiz all about you** and what's stopping you from being the best you can be! Results direct to your inbox:

<https://assess.coach/leadershipedge>

You have been sent this email because you are a member of Leadership Edge coaching programme, or have subscribed to our newsletters. If you no longer wish to receive our Monthly Coach please email us info@leadershipedge.org.uk.

Visit us →