



MERIDIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL

# The Meridian Student Leadership Challenge Guidebook

Based on the “The Leadership Challenge”  
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# Conceptual Principles



## 1 Five Practices

The Five Practices are broad concepts that we can apply in our daily routines in order to achieve our personal best and inspire those we lead.

## 3 Essentials

To excel in each commitment statement, one must master two essential drivers.

## 5 Actions

These are actions intended to incorporate the leadership practice as an ongoing and natural part of our behavioural repertoire.

## 2 Commitment Statements

There are ten commitment statements that correspond to the Five Practices. These are essential behaviours that leaders employ to make extraordinary things happen.

## 4 Recommendations

The recommendations offer practical guidance and strategies to implement each of the Five Practices. They serve to break down the broad concepts of the Five Practices into actionable steps.

## 6 Behaviour Statements

The Leadership Practices Inventory® comprises of thirty behavior statements, with six behaviour statements to evaluate each of the Five Practices.

# Five Practices



## 1. MTW: Model The Way

Commitment 1: *Clarify values* by finding your voice and affirming shared values



### Essential 1: Find your voice



#### Recommendations:

- Let your values guide you
- Say it in your own words
- Find commitment through clarifying values



#### Actions:

- Identify the values you use to guide choices and decisions.
- Find your own authentic way of talking about what is important to you.



### Essential 2: Affirm shared values



#### Recommendations:

- Give people reasons to care
- Forge unity, don't force it



#### Actions:

- Help others to articulate why they do what they do, and what they care about.
- Build consensus around values, principles, and standards.
- Make sure that people are adhering to agreed-upon values and standards.

# Five Practices



## MTW: Model The Way

Commitment 2: *Set the example* by aligning actions and shared values



### Essential 1: Live the shared values



#### Recommendations:

- Spend your time and attention wisely
- Watch your language
- Ask purposeful questions
- Seek feedback



#### Actions:

- Keep your commitments and follow through your promises.
- Make sure your calendar, your meetings, your interview, your emails, and all the other ways you spend your time reflect what you say is important.
- Ask purposeful questions that keep people constantly focused on the values and priorities that are the most essential.
- Publicly ask for feedback from others about how your actions affect them.



### Essential 2: Teach others to model the values



#### Recommendations:

- Confront critical incidents
- Tell stories
- Reinforce through systems and processes



#### Actions:

- Broadcast examples of exemplary behaviour through vivid and memorable stories that illustrate how people are and should be behaving.
- Make changes and adjustments based on the feedback you receive; otherwise people will stop bothering to provide it.

# Five Practices



## MTW: Model The Way

### Behaviour Statements:

1. I set a personal example of what I expect from other people
2. I spend time making sure that people behave consistently with the principles and standards we have agreed upon
3. I follow through on the promises and commitments I make
4. I seek to understand how my actions affect other people's performance
5. I make sure that people support the values we have agreed upon
6. I talk about my values and the principles that guide my actions

### Glossary:

- “Standards” refer to goals, expectations, objectives, values and principles. The standards must be aspirational, to bring out the best in people.
- “Principles” and “values” are more enduring than goals and serve as the basis for the goals
- A “promise” is an act of saying that you will certainly do something
- A “commitment” is a decision to do something



# Five Practices



## ISV: Inspire a Shared Vision

Commitment 1: *Envision the future* by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities



### Essential 1: Imagine the possibilities



#### Recommendations:

- Reflect on your past
- Attend to the present
- Prospect the future
- Express your passion



#### Actions:

- Determine what drives you and where your passions lie in order to identify what you care enough about to imagine how it could be better in the future, compelling you forward.
- Reflect on your experiences, looking for the major themes in your life and understanding what you find worthwhile.
- Stop, look, and listen to what is going on right now - the important trends, major topics of conversation, and social discontents.
- Spend a higher percentage of your time focused on the future, imagining the exciting possibilities.



### Essential 2: Find a common purpose



#### Recommendations:

- Listen deeply to others
- Make it a cause for commitment
- Look forward in times of rapid change



#### Actions:

- Listen deeply to what is important to others in their future and to what gives their lives meaning and purpose.
- Involve others in crafting a shared vision of the future. Don't make it a top-down process.

# Five Practices



## ISV: Inspire a Shared Vision

Commitment 2: *Enlist others* in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations



### Essential 1: Appeal to common ideals



#### Recommendations:

- Connect to what's meaningful to others
- Take pride in being unique
- Align your dream with the people's dream



#### Actions:

- Talk with your constituents and find out about their hopes, dreams, and aspirations for the future.
- Make sure your constituents know what makes their products or services unique and special.



### Essential 2: Animate the vision



#### Recommendations:

- Use symbolic language
- Create images of the future
- Practice positive communication
- Express your emotions
- Speak genuinely



#### Actions:

- Show constituents how enlisting in a common vision serves their long-term interests.
- Be positive, upbeat, and energetic when talking about the future of your organization, and make liberal use of metaphors, symbols, examples, and stories.
- Acknowledge the emotions of others and validate them as important.
- Let your passion show in a manner genuinely expressive of who you are.



# Five Practices



## ISV: Inspire a Shared Vision

### Behaviour Statements:

1. I look ahead and communicate what I believe will affect us in the future
2. I describe to others in our organization what we should be capable of accomplishing
3. I talk with others about a vision of how things could be even better in the future
4. I talk with others about how their own interests can be met by working toward a common goal
5. I am upbeat and positive when talking about what we can accomplish
6. I speak with passion about the higher purpose and meaning of what we are doing



# Five Practices



## CTP: Challenge The Process

Commitment 1: *Search for opportunities* by seizing the initiative and looking outward for innovative ways to improve



### Essential 1: Seize the initiative



#### Recommendations:

- Make something happen
- Encourage initiative in others
- Challenge with purpose



#### Actions:

- Do something each day so that you are better than you were the day before.
- Seek firsthand experiences outside your comfort zone and skill set.
- Always be asking, "What's new? What's next? What's better?" and not just for yourself but also for those around you.
- Find a significant purpose for addressing your challenging and most difficult assignments.



### Essential 2: Exercise oversight



#### Recommendations:

- Look outside of your experience
- Listen to promote diverse perspectives
- Treat every job as an adventure



#### Actions:

- Ask questions, seek advice, and listen to diverse perspectives.
- Be adventurous; don't let routines become ruts.

# Five Practices



## CTP: Challenge The Process

Commitment 2: *Experiment and take risks* by constantly generating small wins and learning from experience



### Essential 1: Generate small wins



#### Recommendations:

- Build psychological hardiness
- Break it down and accentuate progress



#### Actions:

- Create opportunities for small wins, promoting meaningful progress.
- Set incremental goals and milestones, breaking big projects down into achievable steps.
- Keep people focused on what they can control in their work and commit to in their lives.



### Essential 2: Learn from experience



#### Recommendations:

- Be an active learner
- Create a climate for learning
- Strengthen resilience and grit



#### Actions:

- Make it safe for people to experiment and take risks by promoting learning from experience, debriefing successes and failures, capturing lessons learned and disseminating them broadly.
- Emphasize how personal fulfillment results from constantly challenging oneself to improve.
- Continuously experiment with new ideas through small bets.

# Five Practices



## CTP: Challenge The Process

### Behaviour Statements:

1. I look for ways to develop and challenge my skills and abilities
2. I look for ways that others can try out new ideas and methods
3. I search for innovative ways to improve what we are doing
4. When things don't go as we expected, I ask, "What can we learn from this experience?"
5. I make sure that big projects we undertake are broken down into smaller and doable parts
6. I take initiative in experimenting with the way things can be done



# Five Practices



## EOTA: Enable Others To Act

Commitment 1: *Foster collaboration* by building trust and facilitating relationships



### Essential 1: Create a climate of trust



#### Recommendations:

- Invest in trust
- Be the first to trust
- Show concern for others
- Share knowledge and information



#### Actions:

- Extend trust to others, even if they haven't already extended it to you.
- Spend time getting to know your constituents and find out what makes them tick.
- Show concern for the problems and aspirations others have.
- Listen, listen, and listen some more.



### Essential 2: Facilitate relationships



#### Recommendations:

- Develop cooperative goals and roles
- Support norms of reciprocity
- Structure projects to promote joint effort
- Encourage face-to-face and durable interactions



#### Actions:

- Structure projects so that there is a common goal that requires cooperation, making sure that people understand how they are interdependent with one another.
- Find ways to get people together face to face and increase the durability of their relationship.

# Five Practices



## EOTA: Enable Others to Act

Commitment 2: *Strengthen others* by increasing self-determination and developing competence



### Essential 1: Enhance self-determination



#### Recommendations:

- Provide choices
- Structure jobs to offer latitude
- Foster accountability



#### Actions:

- Take actions that make people feel powerful and in control of their circumstances.
- Provide people opportunities to make choices about how they do their work and serve their customers.
- Structure jobs so that people have opportunities to use their judgement, developing both greater competence and self-confidence.



### Essential 2: Develop competence and confidence



#### Recommendations:

- Educate and share information
- Organize work to build competence and ownership
- Foster self-confidence
- Coach



#### Actions:

- Find a balance between people's skills and the challenges associated with their work.
- Demonstrate your confidence in the capabilities of constituents and colleagues.
- Ask questions; stop giving answers.

# Five Practices



## EOTA: Enable Others To Act

### Behaviour Statements:

1. I foster cooperative rather than competitive relationships among people I work with
2. I actively listen to diverse points of view
3. I treat others with dignity and respect
4. I support the decisions that other people make on their own
5. I give others a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work
6. I provide opportunities for others to take on leadership responsibilities



# Five Practices



## ETH: Encourage The Heart

Commitment 1: *Recognize contributions* by showing appreciation for individual excellence



### Essential 1: Expect the best



#### Recommendations:

- Show them you believe
- Be clear about the goals and the rules
- Provide and seek feedback



#### Actions:

- Maintain high expectations about what individuals and teams can accomplish.
- Communicate your positive expectations clearly and regularly.
- Create an environment that makes it comfortable to receive and give feedback.



### Essential 2: Personalize recognition



#### Recommendations:

- Get to know your team members
- Be creative about incentives
- Say "Thank You"



#### Actions:

- Find out the types of encouragement that make the most difference.
- Don't assume. Ask. Take the time to inquire and observe.
- Be creative when it comes to recognition. Be spontaneous. Have fun.
- Make saying "thank you" a natural part of your everyday behaviour.



# Five Practices



## ETH: Encourage The Heart

Commitment 2: *Celebrate the values and victories* by creating a spirit of community



### Essential 1: Create a spirit of community



#### Recommendations:

- Celebrate accomplishments in public
- Provide social support
- Have fun together



#### Actions:

- Find, and also create, occasions to bring people together to publicly celebrate accomplishments.
- Take actions that demonstrate that you "have people's backs" and ensure they feel "part of the whole."
- Make fun a portion of your work environment - laugh and enjoy yourself, along with others.



### Essential 2: Be personally involved



#### Recommendations:

- Show you care
- Spread the stories
- Make celebrations part of organizational life



#### Actions:

- Get personally involved in as many recognitions and celebrations as possible. Show you care by being visible in the tough times.
- Never pass up an opportunity to relate publicly true stories about how people in your organization went above and beyond the call of duty.
- Calendar celebrations and look, as well, for spontaneous opportunities to link shared values with victories.

# Five Practices



## ETH: Encourage The Heart

### Behaviour Statements:

1. I praise people for a job well done
2. I encourage others as they work on activities and programmes
3. I express appreciation for the contributions that people make
4. I make it a point to publicly recognize people who show commitment to shared values
5. I find ways for us to celebrate accomplishments
6. I make sure that people are creatively recognized for their contributions

