

CHAPTER 10

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOLS

In this chapter we:

- Define what is meant by leadership development
- Consider the content of typical leadership development programmes
- Ask how leaders develop and adults learn best
- Examine how schools can 'grow their own' using their existing internal talent pool, and
- Develop a leadership for learning culture.

Introduction

There appears to be common agreement that school leaders are critically important in achieving successful schools and we are beginning to gain a better understanding of how exactly leaders operate to make an impact on student outcomes (Day et al, 2007). Yet, little is known about the scope and nature of leadership programmes that bring about the quality of leadership that leads to sustained school improvement and enhanced outcomes. Interest in leadership development in both the private and public sectors is certainly not new but there seems to be little doubt that the profile of leadership development has risen dramatically recently both in the UK and internationally.

In England, the surge of interest and growth in standing of leadership development in education has been reflected in the expansion of programmes designed by universities, local authorities, schools and others. Furthermore, the formation of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in England in November 2000, and its remit to ensure that current and future school leaders develop the skills, capability and capacity to lead and transform what exists into a world-class education system, has had a major impact on the significance attached to leadership development. Since its inception, the NCSL has become 'a very significant part of the educational landscape and a major influence, arguably the major influence, on school leadership, management and administration in England and beyond' (Bush, 2004). However, as well as providing or commissioning external leadership development programmes, the College has also given great emphasis to the role of the school in developing leaders. Schools are seen

as needing to take a more proactive stance to talent development and it is suggested that 'we need to become much better at identifying potential leaders and finding ways to accelerate their development at the school and local system levels' (NCSL, 2007a, p9).

The fervent interest in leadership development in education over the last few years has been in response to increasing reports of leadership shortages and declining numbers of applicants for school leadership posts (NCSL, 2007b). The schools sector is not alone in having a leadership supply crisis – the same is true of other public and private organisations globally. The association between leadership succession planning and the leadership development of staff is better established in commercial contexts (Hirsch, 2000) but fuelling the leadership pipeline remains a challenge. In schools, the development of leadership ability has been linked with strategies such as coaching, networking and the distribution of leadership responsibilities. Given the imperative to grow future leaders rapidly, pressure has been placed upon schools to become more proactive and to put themselves forward as training grounds for leadership development. Developing leadership talent is an essential part of capacity building to ensure that schools have sufficient numbers of high calibre leaders and that leadership development is a priority from an early stage in a teacher's career.

Leadership development and succession planning are simultaneously challenging and stimulating and the importance of the relationship between them is not yet fully appreciated by some in the education system. Hartle and Thomas (2003) set out the challenges for schools very clearly, while Tranter (2003) indicates the ways in which some other organisations set about identifying the leadership potential of their employees.

Some schools have given great attention to their staff development processes and procedures and developed ways to grow their own leaders from within. In this chapter we draw upon relevant literature from both the private and public sectors, as well as from a growing body of relevant research and writing from the NCSL to examine some of the various forms this has taken within schools. We consider both workplace - or on-the-job opportunities - and other forms of leadership development beyond the place of employment - workshops and off-the-job opportunities. We begin however by defining leadership development.

What is leadership development?

According to Bolden (2005) 'the issue of leadership development and its impact remains highly contentious'. He goes on to emphasise that, 'central to the argument about the effectiveness of leadership development is the question of whether or not you can train or develop leaders'. It is our contention that you can develop and train people to take on leadership roles but there is a need to identify those who are perceived to have 'leadership potential' and who will therefore benefit from such attention.

Day (2001: 582) defines leadership development succinctly as 'expanding the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes', whilst Bolam (2003) writing about the education sector, proposes that leadership development is:

an ongoing process of education, training, learning and support activities taking place in either external or work-based settings proactively engaged in by qualified, professional teachers, headteachers and other school leaders aimed primarily at promoting the learning and development of professionally appropriate knowledge, skills and values to help school leaders to decide on and implement valued changes in their leadership and management behaviour so that they can promote high quality education for their students more effectively thus achieving an agreed balance between individual, school and national needs.

Leadership development refers to the activities involved in strengthening one's ability to establish clear vision and achievable goals, and to motivate others to subscribe to the same vision and goals. Leadership development is critical at almost *any* level in an organization - not just the executive or senior level. Importantly leadership development can take place in either external or work-based settings.

In drawing a distinction between the terms 'management' and 'leadership' development, Day (2001) proposes that the latter is 'oriented towards building capacity in anticipation of unforeseen challenges'. Because of its concern with the growth of collective organisational capacity, he also regards leadership development as a process involving each person within the organisation. Commenting on the usefulness of Day's distinction above, Bolden (2007) proposes another distinction, that between 'leader development and 'leadership development'. He regards the former as 'an investment in human capital to enhance intrapersonal competence for selected

individuals', whereas the latter is 'an investment in social capital to develop interpersonal networks and cooperation within organisations and other social systems'.

As a recent review of leadership development by Bush et al (2008, p42) notes:

Much of the research suggests that leadership development should go beyond leader development, through programmes and other interventions, to a wider focus on the school as an organisation. It is concerned with the ways in which attitudes are fostered, action empowered, and the learning organisation stimulated.

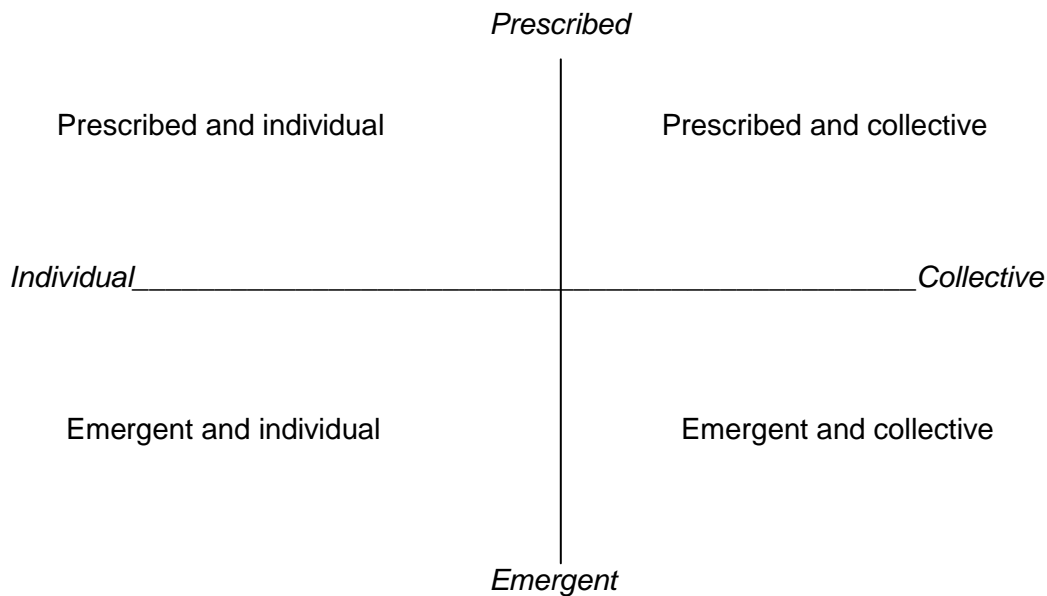
They go on to state that the term 'leadership development' is widely used but note that:

most NCSL programmes are targeted at individuals and may more accurately be regarded as 'leader development'. While preparing middle and senior leaders is important, it seems evident that the wider issue of leadership development for school improvement has been under-represented by the College. Team programmes provide for groups of staff and the evaluations suggest that, where schools provide fertile learning environments, gains can be powerful.....multiple participation provides extra school-wide benefits. (Bush et al, 2008, p87)

Lumby et al (2004) offer a conceptual model that is particularly helpful when considering leadership development. This model has two axes – the horizontal 'leadership' continuum from the individual to the collective, and the vertical 'leadership development' axis with a continuum from the prescribed (skills and competences) to the emergent (leadership as a bundle of qualities). If these two are superimposed, the quadrants emerge (see Figure 1.1).

However defined, leadership development is often considered to be part of an off-site programme or course away from the workplace. It is to such external programmes that we first turn before considering more work-based forms of leader and leadership development. The best programmes try to combine the two and benefit from the strengths of both workplace and workshop learning.

Figure 1.1: A model of leadership development (Lumby et al, 2004)



Content of leadership development programmes

School leadership and management programmes, many of which are off-site, invariably cover a number of common elements and these are likely to include notions of leadership (including vision, mission and transformational leadership); learning and teaching (or learning-centred leadership); human resource management and development; financial management; and the management of external relations. But despite the abundance of off-site leadership development programmes, there remains a significant question about their degree of congruence with the contemporary needs of schools. In a commercial context, Taylor et al (2002) argued that, 'the global changes now occurring demand approaches to leadership education that are profoundly different from those that have served well in the past'. Their contention is that these changes necessitate a reversal of six traditional priorities:

- From theory to practice
- From part to systems
- From states and roles to processes
- From knowledge to learning
- From individual knowledge to partnerships

- From detached analysis to reflexive understanding.

Table 1.1 illustrates how this impacts upon programme structure and content.

Table 1.1 Key trends in leadership development programmes

<i>Key trends</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
The Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prescribed course ▪ Standard ▪ Theoretical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study programme and real issues ▪ Customised ▪ Theory in context
The Time-frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-off event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A journey with ongoing support
The Mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lecturing/listening ▪ Conceptual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participatory, interactive and applied ▪ Experiential and conceptual
The Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individuals within a group, for a purpose
The Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supplier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner, co-designer, facilitator, coach

Source: Bolden (2007)

In education, a recent review in the USA of the leadership preparation literature (Darling Hammond et al, 2007) points to a number of important features of leadership development programmes, including:

- Research-based content that is aligned with professional standards and focused on instruction, organizational development, and change management
- Curricular coherence that links goals, learning activities, and assessments around a set of shared values, beliefs, and knowledge about effective organizational practice
- Field-based internships that enable candidates to apply leadership knowledge and skills under the guidance of an expert practitioner
- Problem-based learning strategies, such as case methods, action research, and projects, that link theory and practice and support reflection
- Cohort structures that enable collaboration, teamwork, and mutual support

- Mentoring or coaching that supports modeling, questioning, observations of practice, and feedback
- Collaboration between universities and school districts to create coherence between training and practice as well as pipelines for recruitment, preparation, hiring, and induction.

The best programmes made good use of the workplace as a site for leadership learning but how do leaders learn best and develop their skills as leaders?

How do leaders learn and develop?

In 2001, the National College for School Leadership set out a national framework for leadership development which provides a professional development route for the preparation, induction, development and regeneration of school leaders. The framework identifies five stages of school leadership:

- Emergent leadership – when a teacher takes on management and leadership responsibilities for the first time
- Established leadership – experienced leaders e.g. assistant and deputy heads, who do not intend to pursue headship
- Entry to leadership – a teacher’s preparation for and induction into a senior leadership post in the school
- Advanced leadership – mature school leaders (after 3-4 years in the role)
- Consultant leadership – able and experienced leaders taking on the training, mentoring and coaching of other headteachers (NCSL, 2001).

Despite not being a linear system, these five stages have encouraged members of the profession to think in terms of progression routes for teachers aspiring to headship. The establishment of a national framework has encouraged exploration of new and innovative ideas around leadership development e.g. distributed leadership; leaders as lead learners, and collaborative leadership. These five stages and the leadership development opportunities available within each are outlined elsewhere (Bubb and Earley, 2007).

It makes little sense to discuss ways of developing leaders or stages of school leadership without also considering the manner in which leaders learn. Speck and Knipe (2005) provide an overview of what is known about the characteristics of professional development that lead to high levels of adult learning. They found that adult learners:

- will commit to learning when they believe that the objectives are realistic and important for their personal and professional needs;
- want to be responsible for their own learning and should therefore have some control over the what, who, how, why, when, and where of their learning;
- need direct, concrete experiences for applying what they have learned to their work;
- do not automatically transfer learning into daily practice and often benefit from coaching and other kinds of follow-up support to sustain learning;
- need feedback on the results of their efforts;
- come to the learning process with self-direction and a wide range of previous experiences, knowledge, interests, and competencies.

The Centre for Organisational Research (2001) identified a number of principles embodying high-impact leadership development systems or approaches that help leadership learning. It found leadership development programmes made use of action and experiential learning to make the learning process 'real'; they encouraged leaders to take responsibility for planning and implementing their own learning experiences to meet their needs; development was encouraged at three levels: self, team and organisation; they had a core mission statement or all-encompassing purpose around which the system and programmes were built, which drives all initiatives and behaviours, is aligned with corporate strategy and is clearly communicated to all staff. The Centre also found that effective leadership development programmes provided a culture that was supportive of leadership development at all levels and they encourage multi-disciplinary experiences 'to drive breakthrough thinking and innovation' (through such activities as job rotations, global assignments and development assignments). They also made use of mentoring to help leaders develop leaders and they assessed the development of leaders from a number of different perspectives (e.g. peer reviews, review by superior and subordinates). Finally, they found that high-impact leadership development systems or approaches made good use of technology and e-learning.

McCall (1998) identified 16 different developmental experiences that were found to have significant impact on leader development. These are shown in Table 1.2 grouped under four headings: early experiences/assorted; hardship and setbacks; other people; and other events. McCall's list comprises a wide variety of activities, other than formal training programmes, capable of impacting on the development of leaders. His work also highlights the importance of presenting these leadership development opportunities at an early stage in people's careers.

Table 1.2: Developmental experiences with impact

<p><i>Early experiences/assorted</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assignments• Early work experiences• First time supervision• Building something from nothing fix it/turn it around• Project/task force• Increase in job scope <p><i>Hardship and setbacks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ideas failure and mistakes▪ Demotions/missed promotions▪ Subordinate performance problem▪ Breaking a rut▪ Personal traumas <p><i>Other people</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Role models (superiors with exceptional qualities)▪ Values playing out (snapshots of senior leadership behaviour that demonstrates corporate values) <p><i>Other events</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Coursework (formal course)▪ Purely personal (experiences outside work)
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Source: McCall (1998)

Drawing on research involving managers in companies outside education, Thomson et al, (2001) refer to a range of leadership development methods which are perceived to be effective. These

methods include: on-the-job training and in-house training; coaching and mentoring; the use of consultants; formal induction; and job rotation. Similarly, a study by Sandler (2002) of around 400 organisations worldwide found that leadership capability was enhanced using external and internal leadership programmes; temporary 'stretch' assignments; international assignments; external consultants; job rotation; demanding assignments to develop management skills; and formal mentoring. There would appear to be clear implications from these research findings for school leadership development, not least the low ranking of formal training.

High levels of adult learning about school leadership can occur as a result of attending an off-site training programme or because of the learning opportunities created within the workplace, using a range of the above methods. Indeed the best leadership development is that which makes use of several in a complementary and reciprocal manner. For example, when heads were asked what they perceived to be the *single* most powerful development opportunity of their career in helping to forge their understanding of school leadership, both 'on-the-job' development opportunities such as working with others, especially a good role model, and 'off-the-job' development opportunities, such as postgraduate study, were noted as highly significant (Earley and Weindling, 2004). But is enough being done within the workplace to ensure the development of the next generation of school leaders? Are schools increasingly taking on this leadership development role and what should they be doing to ensure the leadership pipeline does not dry up?

Approaches to leadership development: Growing your own

A growing body of research has shown that certain approaches to leadership development have a positive effect on the progression of staff professionally. Storey (2004) suggests that most leadership development experiences offered *in-house* can be classified into four types:

1. Learning about leadership and organisations: primarily involves classroom and workshop methods to present leadership theory and research.
2. Self/team analysis and exploration of leadership styles: a series of methods e.g. psychometrics, 360 degree feedback, coaching, to raise awareness of self and others and how this impacts upon leadership styles.
3. Experiential learning and simulation: approaches that emphasise the importance of 'learning by doing' e.g. action learning, role-play.

4. Top level strategy courses: executive development courses designed for senior managers often taking place off-site and associated with prestigious business schools and qualifications.

Hartle (2004) attempted to consider best practice in leadership development and apply it to the education sector. He proposed a six-step approach that schools can adopt to develop future leaders. The six steps are:

1. Create the culture for growth
2. Audit – where are you now?
3. Define the kind of leaders you want
4. Identify what talent you have got
5. Assess how well individuals are doing
6. Grow your leadership talent.

The first step – creating a growth culture - underpins the whole process and is both ongoing and developmental but it is the last step - ‘growing leadership talent’ - that we wish to focus on.

Hartle argues that the experiences that have the most leadership development potential are four fold: on the job assignments; working with other people; hardships and set backs; and other experiences such as formal developmental programmes and non-work experiences. He suggests school-based activities that are relevant to the development of leadership talent can be grouped under three headings and include:

- a) Organisational (e.g. rotating leadership roles; chairing working parties or change initiatives; ‘internship’ exchanges between schools; involving all staff in school improvement);
- b) Interpersonal (e.g. pair staff with more experienced staff to fulfil leadership roles; encourage potential leaders to lead aspects of school’s work);
- c) Personal (e.g. match tasks to individuals’ ability and experience not seniority; invite teachers to work in pairs on a specific CPD outcome; encourage staff to identify their needs; provide a termly programme of CPD).

Hartle (2004) offers a series of practical actions schools can adopt as ways of developing leaders – as ways of developing the repertoire of developing activities in the school so that the cultural norm is an expectation of professional growth and challenge (e.g. mentoring-coaching, critical friendship, shadowing, project leadership; action research; structured reflection, inter-visitation, networking and courses, workshops and HE programmes). Organisations need to identify those individuals who have potential for senior level leadership. He suggests using a performance/potential matrix to assess talent but there is a need to spot it at an early stage and to try and develop it in various ways using the means outlined above.

For decades, the tradition in schools has been for staff to take responsibility for their own career development and for headteachers and governing bodies typically not to appoint from within. In general, growth in staff leadership expertise has been to the advantage of the next school rather than to the existing one. Some schools for example became known as ‘breeding grounds for future heads and deputies’. Whilst acknowledging this altruistic gesture to the profession as a whole, many schools have continued to provide leadership development opportunities for staff to become leaders in other schools. But some are asking if it is reasonable to expect increasing investment in development that will benefit others? Increasingly however, in times of recruitment difficulties, schools (often in collaboration with their local authorities and/or university partners) have begun to focus on growing their own leaders by providing bespoke development programmes.

In their research report ‘*Growing Tomorrow’s School Leaders: The Challenge*’, Hartle and Thomas (2003) found examples of organisations who were attempting to ‘grow their own leaders’ in a systematic way. They had been almost forced to adopt this strategy because of the paucity of school leaders. Schools’ vital participation in growing their own leaders needs to be seen in the context of workforce reform; school culture and the growth of system-wide responsibility.

In *Greenhouse Schools* (NCSL, 2007c), examples are given of how school leaders actively encourage and secure future leadership capacity by identifying, nurturing and developing leadership potential in their schools. Despite being based on information from only three case studies, worthwhile approaches did emerge. For example, when asked to highlight ways in

which their schools identify leadership potential, action was taken at two levels – prior to appointment and following appointment.

Table 1.3: Greenhouse Schools – developing potential

<i>What schools did prior to appointment</i>	<i>What schools did post-appointment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess the potential of final practice students at the school in relation to future opportunities for employment ▪ Adopt a policy of wording advertisements so that potential applicants were aware that they were being invited to ‘teach and learn at...’ ▪ Focus the recruitment process upon specific criteria, one of which was ‘an ability to learn and share’. ▪ Trawl applications for evidence of prior leadership experience when short-listing in order to identify people who have actually shown some interest in leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct pre-determined, day-to-day informal observations of colleagues at work: assess how they work with others and respond to different situations. ▪ Attach senior leaders to departments as internal consultants to aid their professional knowledge of leadership potential. ▪ Provide opportunities for teachers to try out leadership in the context of, for example, a specific project or task. ▪ Carry out less formal career chats in addition to performance management. ▪ Monitor classroom practice. ▪ Observe contributions at meetings. ▪ Track staff participation in leading extra-curricular and voluntary activities.

Source: NCSL (2007c)

Having identified leadership potential, the three case study schools nurtured and developed them by:

- Providing leaders with space to try things out and learn from their efforts.
- Offering support but encouraging independence.
- Enabling leaders to operate within a no-blame, yet accountable culture of trust and autonomy.

- Offering external professional development opportunities, e.g. Masters programmes, outreach work, international visits, NCSL's programmes.
- Providing internal training and development such as:
 - school-based middle management programmes;
 - training plans for teachers produced in consultation with line managers;
 - outstanding teacher programmes. One school offered a twilight immersion programme run by staff and offering outreach work both locally and abroad;
 - in-house leadership courses aimed at those aspiring to either middle or senior leadership;
 - external consultants supporting in-house leadership programmes and self-evaluation;
 - induction programmes for new teachers providing basic training and the allocation of a mentor;
 - formalised opportunities for discussions focused on leadership. One school supported these with academic articles or think pieces;
 - opportunities to carry out research projects.
- Provide internal role development opportunities such as:
 - funded temporary acting up opportunities;
 - other acting up opportunities, e.g. in response to headteacher secondment;
 - shared leadership opportunities, e.g. the appointment of joint post-holders;
 - bespoke posts to match specific areas of leadership potential;
 - opportunities to participate in working parties.
- Offer coaching and mentoring such as:
 - shadowing postholders;
 - constructive feedback on leadership actions;
 - pastoral mentorship for new staff members into school or post;
 - professional mentorship, usually the line manager, for all staff;
 - peer coaching;

- buddy systems to allow teachers to develop leadership skills by working with other colleagues.

A study of the 20 most reputable global companies for leadership (Hay Group and CEO Magazine, 2005) revealed important lessons which, when applied to a school context, serve as valuable guidelines. They noted how important it was to: make leadership development a priority and create a culture of leadership; hold leaders throughout the school (system) accountable for creating high-performance work climates; provide development for intact leadership teams and not just individual leaders; focus development for individuals on the things that have the greatest impact; start early, make time and ground leadership development in the real world; and use objective assessment and feedback to focus development in the areas that make the greatest difference. The study drew attention to the importance of role profiling and the need to consider different leadership roles and the preparation that each requires, for example strategic leadership role, hands-on or delivery role and the networking role.

Developing a leadership for learning culture

It is imperative that schools should generate their own unique learning ethos for both staff and students. Only by doing so can schools hope to establish a suitable context for learning and personal growth. In the current climate, schools more than ever, are expected to build leadership capacity to support them in managing change and in bringing about sustained improvement. The NCSL's (2002) model of capacity is made up of two components:

- the professional learning community, which they define as the personal, interpersonal and organisational dimensions of the school;
- leadership capacity, described as the means for generating the moral purpose, shared values, social cohesion and trust.

The College's study of *Greenhouse Schools* (NCSL, 2007c) suggests that the strategies the schools had put into practice to develop leadership potential could be transferred. However, their effectiveness or otherwise would be dependent upon a school having some or all of the following eight factors:

- an understanding of its own context and state of readiness;
- a headteacher with a vision for leadership development;

- a critical mass of those within the school community committed to the development of such practices;
- leaders with the capacity to develop and implement appropriate strategies;
- an ethos that encourages and is receptive to innovation;
- trusting relationships;
- a collective sense of responsibility; and
- a willingness to share and learn and consider how external practices can transfer to a new context.

The report goes on to list ten strategies for growing tomorrow's leaders and these are shown in Table 1.5.

Table 1.5: Strategies for growing tomorrow's leaders

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start at the recruitment and selection stage to identify potential leaders – consider how your school's procedures reflect a focus on leadership and offer candidates an opportunity to demonstrate these. 2. See in-post identification as a mixture of formal and informal processes, and raise awareness that everyone is a leader and that culturally developing this is on the agenda. 3. Know what you are looking for in developing leadership potential. Develop clear role profiling to aid this. 4. Offer opportunities for aspiring and developing leaders to take a lead and/or step up within the school and learn from this through reflection and feedback. 5. Provide systems such as buddying, mentoring, coaching, shadowing or team-based working to support professional growth. 6. Provide local solutions in collaboration with others, e.g. schools or external bodies, or alone, to provide a structured development pathway of leadership opportunities. 7. Promote an ethos that makes a clear statement about investing in the individual. 8. Develop support structures such as training plan discussions that enable individual and team growth.

9. Look beyond the school for local, national and international opportunities for leadership development.
10. Plan strategically, both within and across individual schools, to allow for the development of internal capacity and succession, whilst at the same time taking into account individuals' career needs and those of the system.

Source: NCSL (2007c)

Conclusion

This chapter has been written on the premise that successful schools are underpinned by high quality leadership but a leadership that is concerned about the development of others as well as themselves. What is less clear is how school leaders acquire the key skills and attributes they need in order to become highly effective in the role. The literature related to leadership development is wide-ranging but it is clear that developing leadership potential is crucial for the continuing success of schools and the education system as a whole.

Leadership development opportunities and programmes should be tailored to fit the shifting needs and contexts of those for whom they are designed. Programmes designed to develop leadership capability for individuals and teams should be logical and coherent and provide continuity for participants in terms of their professional and career development. The approaches to leadership development should be personalised and as far as possible match the preferred learning styles of participants. An appropriate combination of school-based and externally-provided developmental opportunities and experience should be provided. This may mean providing individuals not only with leadership development opportunities within school but also, for example, 'offering them the chance to work in a range of different contexts – urban, rural, multi-ethnic, large, small – so that they emerge as leaders with a breadth of expertise & experience' (NCSL,2007b, p9). The best leaders develop leadership capacity in themselves as well as others, their schools become known as training grounds or greenhouse schools nurturing and spotting talent, developing the next generation of school leaders.

Recommended further reading

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