

ARKANSAS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



Volume 7, Issue 1

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2000

ACADEMY NOTES

Exciting things are happening at the Arkansas Leadership Academy:

- The institute for principals will conduct its third session February 16-18, with 47 participants.
- Participants in all Individual, Team, Teacher, and Principal Institutes for the year 2000, and the Coaches Training session have been identified/nominated.
- Other states continue to request information about the Academy's Organizational structure.

Special "thank-yous" are in order for:

- Paula Cummins, Sharon Williams, Jim Koeninger, and Bill Donnell, our staff facilitators.
- The Arkansas volunteers and their schools and organizations who make the Academy successful.
- The Academy's 44 partners.
- Coaches, Knowledge, and Skill Building leaders, Electronic Learning Environment facilitators and AETN staff, committee members, Facilitators in Training, Cluster Coordinators, Participants, Peer Learning Coaches, Teacher Learning Coaches, Seminar Organizers

TEAM SUPPORT

A regional support network is being initiated to offer follow-up and to assist the work of teams trained at the Leadership Institute for Teams. UALR and each Co-op have identified a Cluster Coordinator, who will convene a Design Team in each area of the stage. These teams will develop methods and strategies for engaging in the area resources and providing team support in each region.

A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING

Richard Farson encourages leaders to think "beyond the conventional wisdom...to understand how the ways we think shape what we see, and how paradox and absurdity inevitably play a part in our every action." *Management of the Absurd: Paradoxes in Leadership* (Simon and Schuster, 1996) includes sections on human relations, communication, management, organizational predicaments, and the section we will discuss in this issue "Dilemmas of Change." Farson's style is to make statements that violate the conventional wisdom—then explain the errors inherent in the conventional thinking.

• *We think we want creativity or change, but we really don't.* We stifle creativity by playing intellectual games, judging an devaluating, dealing in absolutes, thinking stereotypically, and not trusting our own experiences (and training our employees not to trust theirs).

• *We want for our selves not what we are missing, but more of what we already have.* This, of course, keeps us from having to make significant changes in our personalities, habits, behaviors.

• *Big changes are easier to make than small ones.* Small changes are resisted just as actively as large ones, and the gradual change which may result is relatively insignificant.

• *We learn not from our failures but from our success—and the failures of others.* Farson contends that we should fail regularly—if we are operating at the margin of our abilities—but that we do not really examine our failures in order to learn from them. However, we do pay attention to our successes and

continue the behaviors that led to that success.

• *Everything we try works, and nothing works.* Workers are conscientious and will keep and organization going regardless of the "changes" make by management. Most of will produce positive effects, but the effects will be short lived if not sustained by the sound management principles practiced on a continuing basis.

• *Planning is and ineffective way to bring about change.* Planning assumes that we can predict the future, which we usually can't. Farson points our problems with planning but suggests that it is an effective means of assessing the present and providing the basis for organizational readiness and flexibility.

• *Organizations change most by surviving calamities.*

• *People we think need changing are pretty good the way they are.*

The better managers try to fix situations, not people by making structural changes in the organization, they recognize that, in general, people want to perform effectively. "They prefer to do good work, to cooperate, to meet objectives. They prefer harmony over conflict, action over inaction, productivity over delays."

Farson's point is that life is full of paradoxes and absurdities. Our lives and organizations are complicated because we *do* before we *think*. Effective leadership will come through careful consideration of all issues involved, no matter how paradoxical or ab-



Dealing with Change

A new book by Spencer Johnson, *Who Moved My Cheese?* (Putnam, 1998), is similar in style and length to his earlier *The One-Minute Manager*. Johnson offers the following advice for dealing with change:

- Change happens—consider it to be normal.
- Anticipate change.
- Monitor change—keep track of those things in which suggest that change is imminent.
- Adapt to change quickly—the sooner you let go of the old, the sooner you can enjoy the new circumstances.
- Change—don't be overly resistant.
- Enjoy change—savor the adventure.
- Be ready to change quickly and enjoy it again—realize that the process is relentless.

Transforming Leaders

Bernard Bass and Bruce Avolio describe "transformation leaders" in *Improving Organizational Effectiveness Through Transformational Leadership* (Sage, 1994). Such leaders employ four main tools:

- Individualized attention to recognize the differences among followers and allow for their developmental needs.
- Intellectual stimulation to turn the attention of followers to goals, aspirations, and new ways of doing things.
- Inspirational motivation to help followers find meaning in their work.
- Idealized influence to provide a role model for followers.



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QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"When you're through changing, you're through."

- Bruce Barton

"There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done."

- Peter Drucker

"It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."

- J.K. Rowling

Institute Schedule

INDIVIDUAL

July 16-21, 2000.....Tyson Management Development Center
December 10-1, 2000.....Tyson Management Development Center

TEAM

April 9-14, 2000.....Conference Center
July 23-28, 2000.....Conference Center
October 1-6, 2000.....Conference Center
November 5-10, 2000.....Conference Center

PRINCIPAL

February 16-18, 2000.....Conference Center
June 20-22, 2000.....Conference Center

COACHES TRAINING

May 1-3, 2000.....Conference Center

TEACHER

February 27-29, 2000.....Forum VI Session 3
April 2-4, 2000.....Forum VI Session 4

INTERESTED IN ATTENDING? WE WANT YOU. WE NEED YOU.

Please contact the Academy office to place your name or organization on our waiting list.

Academy Staff

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