

A Better Way To Plan My Day

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Background That Led to Your Inquiry:

Hello. My name is Randy Maurer and I am not professionally organized. (We love you, Randy). Now that I have admitted it, maybe I can take the steps to organizing my tasks and make sure I meet my appointments and deadlines. Obstacles in the way of being better organized are "free principal access," me saying yes to everything, not keeping an accurate calendar or planner with my secretary, and an array of other reasons. While these are challenges no different than what every other administrator faces, I find this difficult to do them effectively. It effects me as a leader to my teachers and staff. It effects me as a husband and father. It effects my corporation. Therefore, the purpose of my action research was to better organize my day and create an effective model of organization for me to keep my appointments and be in classrooms more.

Statement of Your Wondering:

With this purpose, I wondered how can I balance or organize my schedule to allow proper classroom visits, teacher observations, evaluation meetings, keep appointments, and be more visible in the school? How can I do all of this and still allow some "Free Principal Access?"

Methods/Procedures:

To gain insights to my wonderings, I shared my Google Calendar with my secretary and assistant principal. I had never done that before. This was eye opening for us because we were also tracking where I got to visit classrooms and how often. We collected data in the form of appointments I took that were never scheduled, appointments I met, and reasons for changes to my schedule. This was as simple as highlighting appointments that were changed and stating a reason why it was missed. After a month of data collecting, we came to some interesting conclusions. We decided to set aside one hour each day for each other to be out in the classrooms. While one was out in the classrooms, the other would be in the office in the event we needed to handle any discipline issues.

Stating Your Learning and Supporting it with Data:

As a result of analyzing my data, three important things I learned include: 1) I had very few reschedules (less than 15% of my scheduled appointments). Most common reason for a reschedule was student discipline (80% of my reschedules were because a student was referred to the office). 2) I was actually in the office more than I had hoped and not in the classrooms. 3) And, the majority of my tasks that I did throughout the day were due to "free principal access" of staff and parents (Approximately 65% of tasks presented to me "in the moment" I gave my immediate attention to). Sharing the calendar with my secretary increased me completing tasks I had scheduled because she would remind me regularly. And, being out in the classrooms allowed my assistant principal and I do get our observations completed in a timely manner and be able to meet with teachers.

Providing Concluding Thoughts:

By creating a calendar that is shared with others and creating specific times to be in the classroom, something special happened. I was able to keep more appointments because I had someone else helping meet them. I was able to get my observations completed in a timely manner. More importantly, I was spending more time with teachers and students. Recently my superintendent has given us new guidelines for our observations for this next school year. I am very interested to see how our plan plays out in a full school year calendar rather than a shorter term for this project.

References:

N/A