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Background Leading to My Inquiry (Slide 2)

The reason behind this action inquiry project was that I had not only noticed in myself negative physical and emotional changes, but these changes were also becoming more apparent to my staff at school. These changes included gaining around 15 pounds, not smiling when walking around the building, as well as snapping at and becoming short with my friend and family outside of school. This is not the person I want to be, nor the leader I envisioned myself becoming, therefore I knew I needed to enlist a change. I strongly believe as a leader you must lead by example. If I am asking my staff to be happy and present for the students, then I must be the same way for my staff and students. Over the past few years, the stresses of running a building has led me to a more sedentary lifestyle. I no longer find myself getting to pop into classrooms all the time, or go check on kids at recess, instead I found myself hunkered down in my office more and more, which I did not enjoy.

The Purpose of My Inquiry (Slide 3)

Therefore, the purpose of this Action Inquiry Project was to provide myself with an outlet to relive stress so that I can be more productive during the day, and energized to tackle the necessary complications that arise during the normal work day. My goal as a building leader is to provide my staff an environment in which they can work and conduct themselves that is conducive to learning.

My Wondering (Slide 4)

With this purpose, I wondered if I am not at my best, how can I expect my staff to be at theirs. This led me to wonder how I could make changes that would not only have a positive impact on my personal life but also a positive impact on my staff and school. Being in my 4th year as a principal, I have reflected and made adjustments over the years, and have found that big changes does not always equate to big positive. Therefore, I was wondering how I can get the biggest positive impact out of the minimalist change.

My Actions (Slide 5)

My first step was to enlist the honest opinions from a few staff members to see if they too had observed the same negative characteristics in my demeanor and leadership. So, I spoke with my secretary, my school advisor, my health assistant, and one teacher. These individuals I knew would be able to be honest with me without worrying about a negative consequence. I pulled the group together and spoke with them all together, so that no one person felt isolated and explained that I have noticed lately I have not been the best leader I want to be. I explained that I feel that I am always cooped up in the office and I am not really present in the

building. I asked them if they agreed and if they noticed anything additionally. They explained that they typically only see me in the office, and that the students would definitely benefit from seeing me more. They also said that when they do see me in the hallways, I am always rushing off to a discipline issue and often times my frustration is very apparent on my face. After the honest feedback, I explained to the group my plan on reducing these concerns by increasing the number of steps I take each day. Getting out into the building to be more present. I told them that I was also going to ask their honest feedback as a period checkpoint on my progression towards my goal. Upon completion of meeting with my staff, I knew I needed to be more visible, however, I also knew I could not simply forgo my principal duties either. So, I decided to record for one week the number of steps I took each day to get a baseline to help establish a goal for my action inquiry project. After one week, I noticed I averaged 4950 steps per day. From here, I decided to try and increase my daily step average by 25% to a total of 6188 steps per day. Finally, I set off and began my data collection.

Data Collection (Slide 6)

In order to collect the data for my action inquiry project I used my Samsung Galaxy s7 phone and Galaxy Frontier s3 smartwatch. These two devices helped track each step that I took during the 8-week period of time that I recorded my steps (January 6th- February 29th). I also wanted to collect verbal accounts from those 4 individuals so that I could hopefully see a positive increase in my demeanor as noticed by my staff. I had the group decide amongst themselves each week who would write me a note of my overall demeanor and productivity. They would then type it up and put a copy in my mailbox each week without a name on the sheet so it was unbiased.

My Data (Slide 7-8)

I recorded my steps taken over the 55-day period spanning from January 6, 2020 to February 29th, 2020. Over this period of time, I walked a total of 475,096 steps. Which averaged out to 8,638 steps per day over the 55 days. My targeted step goal each day was 6,188 steps per day, which I achieved 47 out of the 55 days. Of the 8 days that I did not reach my goal 6 of those days fell on a weekend, which did not affect my presences in the building, the other 2 days which were school days, were comprised of mandatory meetings that made movement less than optimal. None the less during my data collection, I noticed the second half of my data collection the number of steps I was taking each day really started to increase tremendously. The positive feedback I was receiving from my staff and the overall increased energy I was experiencing caused me to naturally want to increase my performance and strive to do even more.

My Discoveries (Slide 9)

- Small steps have huge impacts.
- Obtainable and enjoyable goals increase likelihood of continuation.

“Small steps have huge impacts” over the duration my action inquiry project I noticed the following changes. I lost 8 pounds, I received multiply compliments from staff on my overall happy demeanor, and I also found being present in the building for the students and staff led to a decrease in the stresses that I took home with me that used to affect my personal life outside of the school day.

“Obtainable and enjoyable goals increase likelihood of continuation” I found that during my action inquiry project setting a goal of 25% increase in the number of steps taken each day was very obtainable. I know that some people shoot for 10,000 steps right off that bat, however, this number would have been a daunting task, that I would have struggled to naturally hit. I did ultimately hit 10,000+ steps a day on a number of occasions towards the end of my data collection, however it was a progression to that level, not simply something right out of the gate. The balancing act of pushing myself out of my comfort zone (increasing my steps) but making it obtainable (25% increase = 6,188 steps per day) was key to my success.

Where Am I Heading Next (Slide 10)

Upon completion of this action inquiry project I have gained insight and learned a few important truths about myself and my school. My school is a family, a family that strives to help those in need and pick those up who are struggling. I learned from my family that despite the fear of telling your boss that he looks unhappy, or that the staff and the students miss seeing him, because he is in the office all the time, it is important to have those honest conversations and be open about areas of needed improvement at all levels. “To be an effective leader, you must understand your own motivations, strengths and weaknesses.” (Schooley, 2019). Regardless of your position, I have been reminded that we ALL can grow, and should grow. Growth is not always comfortable or easy, however the end result is definitely worth the effort. One of the areas I was most concerned with was getting feedback from my staff. However, I found that to be one of the best take a ways from this project. Schooley (2019) states that “A true self-assessment of your leadership can be difficult, so mentors, fellow professional and even your own staff are invaluable in evaluating your effectiveness. I plan on continuing to ask for feedback about my demeanor and leadership as it make me more aware and allows me to continually grow and improve.

Bibliography (Slide 11)

- Schooley, S. (Aug. 26, 2019). 10 Ways to Become a Better Leader. Retrieved from <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/4991-effective-leadership-skills.html>

TAKING STEPS TO BECOMING A BETTER YOU!

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Background Leading to My Inquiry

- **Staff and personal observation of my demeanor being less welcoming in the following areas has lead to this Action Inquiry Project.**
- **Physical Changes**
 - **I have gained around 15lbs in the past few years due to my increased sedimentary lifestyle due to the high demands of a building principal.**
 - **I have had staff mention that I am not smiling, or I look angry throughout different times of the school day.**
- **Emotional Changes**
 - **I have found myself having less patients and snapping at my friends and loved ones due to the stress level that has carried over from the school day.**

Purpose of My Inquiry

- **The purpose of this Action Inquiry Project was to provide myself with an outlet to relive stress so that I can be more productive during the day, and energized to tackle the necessary complications that arise during the normal work day. My goal as a building leader is to provide my staff an environment in which they can work and conduct themselves that is conducive to learning.**

My Wondering

- **If I am not at my best, how can I expect my staff to be at theirs.**
 - **How can I make personal changes to my daily routines that would have not only a positive impact on myself but also a positive impact on my school?**
 - **How can I make a small change to my day to gain the greatest impact on my life?**

My Actions

- **First, I spoke with 4 individuals at my school (My Secretary, School Advisor, Health Assistant, and a Teacher) to elicit honest feedback on my demeanor and overall presences in the building. Trying to validate if my observations matched up with those of others. (They did)**
 - **"Not always present".**
 - **"Seems upset at times".**
 - **"Always in the office".**
- **Next, I explained my plan to be more present and increase my overall demeanor, and reduce the amount of stress I was under.**
- **Then, I spent one week recording my daily steps taken to establish a baseline for my data collection, and to help set a goal to which I would strive to obtain each day.**
 - **December 16-22nd**
 - **12/16 – 5012; 12/17 - 4987; 12/18 - 4889; 12/19 - 5140; 12/20 - 4990; 12/21 – 4591; 12/22 – 5547**
 - **Average 4950 steps per day**
 - **Targeted Goal**
 - **25% increase in average daily step total**
 - **Targeted number of steps per day: 6188 steps**
- **Finally, I put my new plan in place and recorded my findings.**

Data Collection

- **Steps were recorded daily (Monday-Sunday) and logged in an Microsoft Excel document.**
 - **Steps were tracked beginning on Monday, January 6th, 2020**
 - **Steps were tracked ending on Saturday, February 29th, 2020**
- **Steps were tracked using both the Samsung Galaxy S7 Edge Smartphone and Samsung Galaxy Frontier S3 Smartwatch.**
- **Weekly unbiased accounts on my demeanor and productivity from one of my staff members. (Secretary, School Advisor, Health Assistant, Teacher)**
 - **Staff member would type up a response and put it in my mailbox. They decided amongst themselves who would respond each week, so I was unaware.**

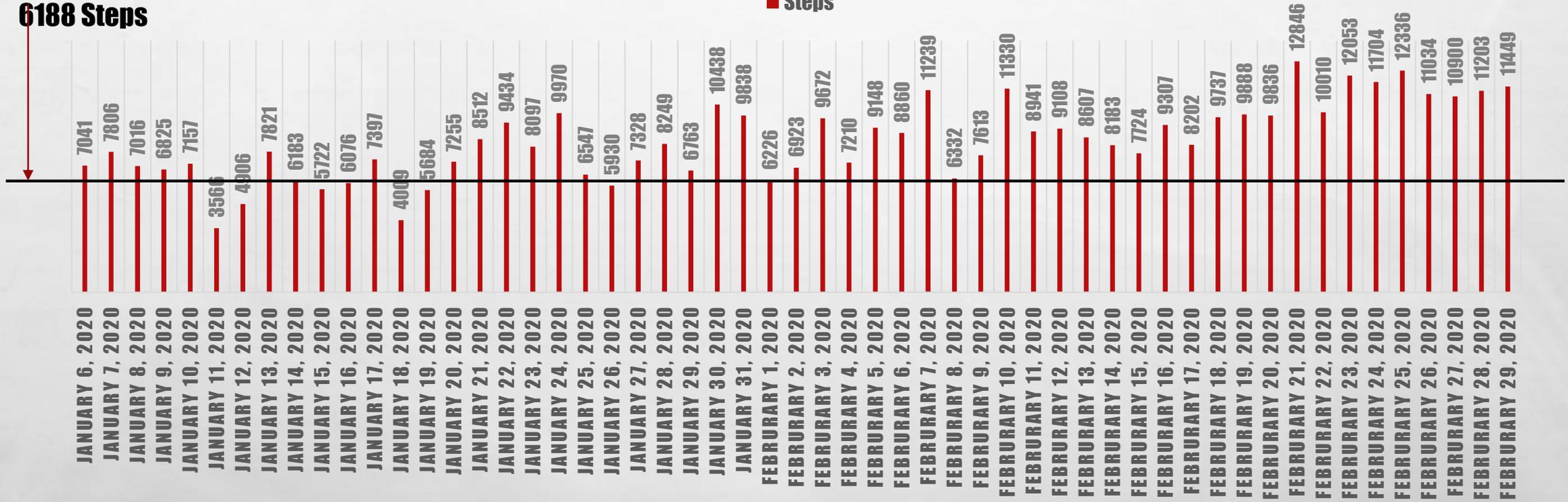


My Data

Step Target
Goal Line :
6188 Steps

STEPS

■ Steps



Total Steps: 475,096

Days: 55

Avg. Steps Per Day: 8638

Days Goal Met: 47/55

My Data

Week 1

"Jon seems to be making a conscious effort to get out and about more often. His increased presences in the hallways is welcomed but a little surprising."

Week 2

"Jon's constantly stating I need to get my steps, as he looks at his watch. He must have set himself reminders to keep moving."

Week 3

"Each morning Jon comes in with a smile on his face. He seems to be well rested and seems to have more energy."

Week 4

"Jon's increased movement is no longer a shock, myself and all the other teachers enjoy him coming in and checking on us more often and the kids are really benefitting from seeing Mr. Evers outside of the office."

Week 5

"Jon seems to be everywhere, the students are constantly saying there goes Mr. Evers."

Week 6

"Jon is happy!"

Week 7

"I think it looks like Jon has lost some weight, not that he had much to lose. I am exhausted watching him move around as much as he is."

Week 8

"I never would have thought that simply increasing your steps would have had such a positive impact on someone's overall demeanor, but it has for Jon."

My Discoveries

- **Small Steps Have Huge Impacts:**
 - **Weight Loss: Lost 8lbs during the 8 week period of time.**
 - **Setting manageable goals increases overall likelihood of success.**
 - **Received multiply compliments from staff about my overall Happy Demeanor.**
 - **Being present in the building not only was good for myself, but also my students and staff.**
 - **Positive Relationships: I was not snapping at my friends and family outside of school.**
- **Obtainable and Enjoyable Goals Increase likelihood of Continuation:**
 - **Never set yourself up for failure, realistic goals are key.**
 - **Enlisting the support of others increases the success of the task.**
 - **Pushing yourself out of your comfort zone is important but it is a balancing act.**

Where I Am Heading Next

- **Continued presence in the building, not only for myself, but for the students and staff.**
- **My staff and my school is a close knit family that is always there to help pick you up and help get you back on the right track.**
- **Honest and Open Conversations are a must at ALL levels.**
- **Asking for continued feedback from my staff on not only my demeanor but also my leadership**

Bibliography

- **Schooley, S. (Aug. 26, 2019). 10 Ways to Become a Better Leader. Retrieved from [HTTPS://WWW.BUSINESSNEWSDAILY.COM/4991-EFFECTIVE-LEADERSHIP-SKILLS.HTML](https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/4991-effective-leadership-skills.html)**