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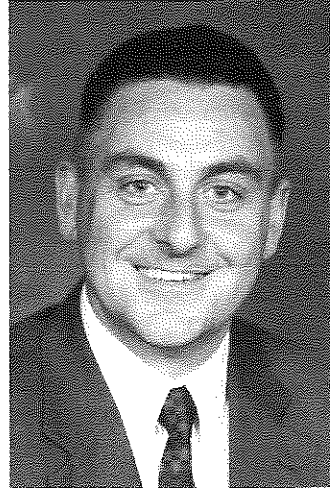
DREAM Management: Involving and Motivating Teachers

Phil Quirke and **Steve Allison** outline their DREAM model for placing teachers at the core of educational management.

Introduction

All too often in educational management we see quality teaching struggle against administrative and paperwork constraints. This paper draws upon the recent plenary presentation at the IATEFL-ADU conference in Abu Dhabi and the chapter in the upcoming University of Michigan Press book on *Leadership Skills for English Language Educators*. DREAM management is a series of principles which keeps teaching and learning at the core of education. We believe that students and learning are at the heart of everything we do in ELT, and therefore teachers, those closest to both students and learning, must be the engine of educational management.

The DREAM model we have developed over the last five years ensures the engagement of teachers in the leadership of their institution and thereby maintains a primary focus on students and learning. It reflects the beliefs we attempt to live and work by in our day-to-day management life, and this paper attempts to capture how we promote the principles among our colleagues, both teachers and leaders.

The Ten Principles

DREAM is a simple acronym which provides us with a powerful set of educational leadership principles. The principles have been developed over the last five years, so the model we present here is a tried and tested formula that has been successfully implemented, and which gives educational leaders more time to lead effectively.

The acronym of DREAM stands for:
DELEGATE responsibility to staff.
DEVELOP staff by promoting research and reflective working practices.
RECRUIT staff that fit our team's ethos and approach.
RESPECT staff as the professionals they are.
ENHANCE staff skills based on a clear, transparent system of annual appraisal.

ENJOY working with those around us and show it continuously.
APPRAISE staff, rather than evaluate them.
ATTEND to the details which affect the day-to-day jobs of the teacher.
MOTIVATE staff by supporting them professionally in every way we can.
MIMIC staff by never asking them to do something we wouldn't do ourselves.

The Cycle of Application

In order to describe how we put these ten principles into practice, the model reads most coherently when we start with the recruitment of new faculty. This gives us a cycle of application that follows the order you can see in the figure on the next page.

Recruit

The key to launching the DREAM model effectively is to recruit to the team of teachers we have. This means that a new recruit's character and skills set are as important as their qualifications and experience. Therefore, the essential steps in the recruitment process become the clarity of the job description, the accuracy of the application screening and, most importantly, the humanity of the interview and reference checks. It is the latter two which ensure that the faculty hired is not simply qualified for the position but is also an ideal fit for the character composition of the existing team. In order to do this effectively, we must be honest and frank with potential recruits so that they too know what to expect on arrival at the new workplace. We need to understand that the teacher is also discovering who we are as an institution and what we can offer them. They are interviewing and recruiting us as well, and we need to allow them to explore our institution's ethos and character. Finally, we also have to be strong enough to reject applicants when necessary in order for the current team to remain effective

and, if necessary, allow the candidate to find a position, which would suit them better.

By approaching recruitment with this human angle, we demonstrate an understanding that we recognise each new recruit enhances the existing talent pool already available within our faculty ranks, by bringing new skills to our team which should prove advantageous for everyone in the team.
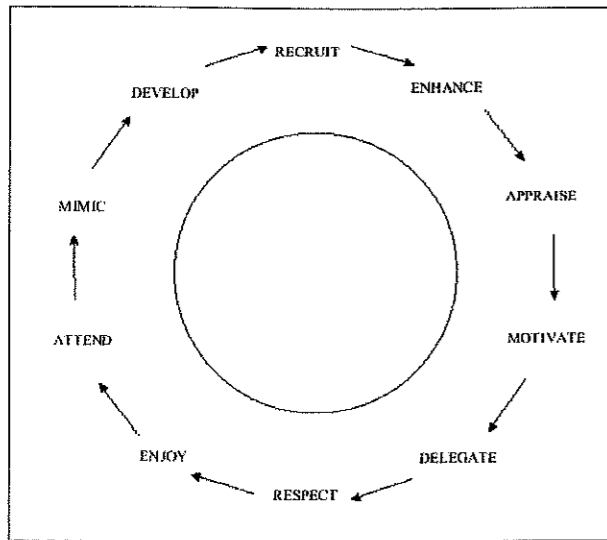
Enhance

The enhancement of faculty is essential in the DREAM model. The model's focus on professional development and appraisal must be introduced in the first weeks of a new faculty's arrival at the institute. This is done during an induction programme which presents the mission and goals of the institute and department. After the initial settling in period, new teachers are asked to draw up their own personal and professional goals and development plan under the guidance of their line manager. The manager's role is to ensure that the teacher's goals are directly aligned to the departmental goals, and that the action plan details the training and support the department and institute can provide. The action plan focuses on the year ahead and draws on the teacher's short term goals. We use a tabulated template to help new teachers and ensure they do not forget to include the training opportunities we can offer them. This approach to goal setting is, in effect, the first stage and foundation for the next principle.

Appraise

An effective appraisal system, like the Performance Enhancement Programme (PEP) at the HCT, is one that is standard and coherent and adheres to best practice and principles.
It is a process which:

- is fair to all
- is based on sound principles
- allows problems to be detected early and therefore acted upon quickly
- assures both consistency in approach and documentation when applied correctly

Such a system ensures that teachers realise they are respected and valued, and the institution transparently communicates its principles in a clear seven-stage process. Ongoing feedback to support and enhance performance is a key element of the appraisal programme and the whole DREAM management philosophy. Effective two-way feedback should not only enhance performance and morale, it should contribute to more fruitful subsequent discussions and on-going work.

In brief, the seven stages of the appraisal process are:

1. Guided Goal Setting
This stage I see as falling under the enhance principle as the teachers are helped to set SMART (succinct, measurable, attainable, realistic, time bound) goals under the headings of classroom teaching, professional development, departmental and college duties and other goals following on from the final meeting of the previous year.

2. First Meeting
This meeting also falls under the enhance principle as the line manager meets with the teacher to ensure that classroom, department and college objectives are covered as well as observations (When? Which class? Who observes? What format?) and student evaluations (When?). This meeting introduces the new teacher to the range of choice and control they have over the process – a key element in the DREAM management model. After the meeting, the teacher then sends an initial soft copy of their goals and action plan, which can be continually updated during the year.

3. Observation
There should be at least one observation every year and every observation must have a pre-observation discussion and a feedback hour (as well as a write up if the teacher wishes) or it is NOT an observation. The pre-observation meeting sets the focus for the observer and allows the observer to brief the teacher on how the observation will be conducted. Preferably the observer should know the class and even teach it beforehand. We offer teachers a choice of several observation types as well as a choice on who observes. The observer should take notes throughout the lesson with questions asked of the teacher, which they use to reflect upon the lesson and lead the feedback session afterwards. An observation write up is not required by the process but it is encouraged as many teachers appreciate it.

4. Student evaluations
Every student should have the possibility of evaluating their teachers, and the appraisal process should encourage teachers to see these as one element which they can use effectively to enhance their teaching. We also encourage teachers to continually collect student feedback during their lessons and use these to support their teaching goals. When the results are available, the line manager and teacher should discuss them. Student evaluations without this feedback and analysis are basically a waste of time for all concerned.

5. Summative write-up
This is not required by many appraisal programmes, but we recommend writing a short one page review of how we feel the teacher has fulfilled their objectives. I have found that it boosts teacher confidence when they realise just how well you know them and the work they have done during the year.

6. The Teaching Portfolio Extract (TPE)
This is the teacher's 4-6 page summary of the portfolio they have kept through the year demonstrating how they have met their goals. It must be noted that the portfolio is private and can take any form the teacher is comfortable with. It is not a public document. It is simply where the teacher stores the material they refer to in the extract and which they can access quickly if required to do so. The extract itself includes a self evaluation with reflection on teaching, reference to student evaluations and reference to line manager's comments. It must adhere to the honesty principle in that anything stated in the TPE can be supported by documentation in the portfolio.

7. The final appraisal discussion meeting and record
This meeting is held between the line manager and the teacher at the end of the year, and the record is completed during the meeting with both present. The power of this meeting is that it not only looks back and reviews the last year but also draws on that review to look forward and set goals for the coming year, in a truly cyclical process.

I have spent some time detailing the appraisal process as it is, in practice, the most visible demonstration for the teacher that we, as managers, are adhering to the principles of DREAM management. The whole process should focus on the development of our staff. We do not criticize their every move, but appraise through constructive and formative approaches. If you wish to read more on the appraisal programme please see our chapter in the recently published volume by University of Michigan Press entitled 'Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness in ESL/EFL Contexts', edited by Coombe et al.

Motivate

The most important element in motivating teachers is involving them in every aspect of the day-to-day life of the institution, whilst actively listening to them and understanding their needs and the motivational factors that drive them.
If we consider Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the highest level (5) is self-actualization or the need for self-fulfillment, a sense that one's potential has been fully realized. In our DREAM management model, we must therefore continually address this need through daily praise and a clear demonstration that we appreciate the work of our teachers.

The fourth level in Maslow's hierarchy refers to the need to develop self-esteem through personal achievement, as well as social esteem through the recognition and respect we get from others. Therefore, we must support teachers in the setting of attainable goals and publicly recognise their attainment of these goals.

Maslow's third need is the sense of belonging that refers to an individual's need for love, affection and interaction with other people. By focusing on an institutional ethos of enjoyment as the central tenet of our DREAM philosophy, we can ensure that teachers have a strong sense of belonging.

The lower two elements of Maslow's hierarchy are safety and physiological and involve the need for a secure and stable environment with basic biological needs such as food, clean air and water and adequate shelter. These needs should be satisfied by the terms of the contract, but the DREAM manager must always demonstrate to their teachers that they are concerned for the basic welfare of their staff and be responsive to any concerns that are voiced.

We should promote teacher leadership in addressing these needs by encouraging faculty initiatives. A few examples we have supported in the last few years include the development of a spouse's social club, a college family day, staff gym hours, college support for conference presentations abroad, teacher activity exchanges over college funded lunches and rewards for long serving faculty.

These are simple ideas, and we would expect your teachers to come up with their own activities and events that are as motivating and innovative as these.

Delegate

We all use many excuses for not delegating, and most of these are usually unfounded. In our experience, teachers are always ready to help you if you approach them in the right way. The PEP appraisal process outlined earlier allows teachers to indicate what professional development paths they would like to follow and express their preferences about further responsibilities they would like to take on. The most effective way to delegate is to use your teachers' goals and development plans to inform your decisions.

Respect

We must respect all our staff as professionals by allowing them to do the job we have recruited them for. This refers to how we, as managers, appreciate the professional standing of our employees and how we, as managers, rely fully on their input in their areas of expertise. This means that we allow our teachers to do what they do best – TEACH.

We believe, in our DREAM philosophy, that there are eleven keys to demonstrating our respect of staff in all our communications with them. In every communication, be it verbal, email, notice or presentation we should:

- Be decisive
- Be appreciative
- Be clear
- Smile - and we cannot emphasise enough how important this is
- Empathise, respecting the personal situation of each and every one of our staff
- Pose questions – and listen to the responses
- Praise
- Delegate
- Share
- Support
- Give thanks.

It may seem a tall order to do this in every communication, but start trying it in your daily e-mail exchanges and you will be surprised just how many of these keys you are able to accomplish in one short message. Phil's research into teacher development exchanges and student journals supports the claim that we can provide real motivation when we keep these keys in mind.

If, in addition to this, we truly involve teachers in all aspects of the institute's day-to-day working life, give teachers choices wherever possible, for example in observations and student evaluations, and consult them throughout the decision-making processes, we can demonstrate continually the deep respect we hold our teachers in.

Enjoy

In the introduction to this chapter we noted that we enjoy working with those around us and show it. E for ENJOY is the central letter of DREAM and the central theme of DREAM management. This emphasizes our belief that happy staff create the environment that is most conducive to effective learning for our students.

Most of us would agree that happiness comes from the inside and is generated by ourselves as individuals. Therefore, individuals control their happiness. If this is true, we must give our staff control if they are to be truly happy.

So, we must use our personal and professional development plans to set clear goals for teachers which allow them to take control of their classes and teaching as well as other tasks we delegate to them. We must appraise them with daily motivational recognition and allow them to take control of their professional lives. In this way we can create the environment for staff to be happy, and we can emphasise this every morning with simple greetings and the smile that shows we too enjoy coming to work.

Attend

We attend to our teachers by ensuring we create the time to work on the day-to-day issues which make a difference to their working lives. This means we must know our teachers well and understand what does make a difference to them. This can be as simple as ensuring they can find a parking place easily or that they know you are available to cover the first five minutes of a period when they have been held up in traffic when dropping the kids at school.

To do this is far easier said than done, and it does require very good time management. We promote the use of a good calendar system and a weekly check that you have spent time with each of those teachers or staff under your direct line management. I also use a Weekly Update to keep all staff informed of what the management has been doing during the week and what we are doing on the issues that are most important to them. This simple attendance to minor details can make a huge impact on teachers and create an environment of caring and sharing that is at the core of DREAM management.

Building on the importance of time management, we have used Covey's Time Management Matrix (1989) to examine how we balance our leadership and management skills. We have concluded that the DREAM management model has allowed us to develop more effective management processes, which in turn has enabled us to spend more time on issues of leadership.

Mimic

The motto of this principle is: "Never ask anyone to do something you would not do yourself."

So, if teachers are in class until nine o'clock at night ensure that there is also a management presence and that you are there yourself at least a couple of times a month as teachers leave their rooms. We are ardent believers in that educational managers and leaders should be seen to teach and we have always done a few hours teaching every week. This ensures we have first hand experience of our students and classrooms and can react knowledgably to teacher issues. This is especially true in areas such as technology in the classroom and student discipline. Having first hand

experience allows the manager to approach the relevant support teams with the correct information and get issues resolved without teachers having to take up more of their own time dealing with such issues. Teachers appreciate not only the fact that management are in the classroom the same as everyone else, but also that they are willing to go the extra mile to make life easier for all concerned.

Educational managers should teach alongside their faculty, provide cover as they expect their teachers to cover and be available at the same hours that they expect teachers to be on-site. In other words, support, share and show you are there for the teachers.

Develop

This principle is attained by ensuring the institution has a clear and supportive approach to professional development. In our institution we have focused on a programme of Action Learning and Research Groups.

The goal of this approach is to develop a self-managing program, which operates under the control of the teachers themselves. It encourages teachers to define the issues and problems that they encounter in the classroom and to address them collaboratively through a process of Action Learning Research. Teachers who share similar classroom and professional interests engage in critical reflection on their teaching practices which leads to the formation of an action learning project. These teacher-driven research groups have goals which are tied to departmental goals through the appraisal process outlined earlier, and we therefore ensure that individual research complements the needs of the institute.

We have found that one of the most evident outcomes to this approach to professional development has been the enthusiasm of the teachers to share their findings with the wider EFL community through both publications and presentations at international conferences.

If you would like to read more on Action Research and Learning Groups, Julian Edge's TESOL publication on Action Research is an excellent place to start.

The Result of DREAM

We claim that there are six major outcomes from implementing the DREAM management model.
1 – Empowered, and we would hope happier, teachers.
2 – Increased innovation throughout the institute, and especially in the classroom.
3 – A different appraisal in line with the non-quantitative science that teaching is.
4 – Professional development which is relevant to both individual teachers and the needs of the institute.
5 – More proactive responses to issues in and out of the classroom, which means that we have

6 – more effective management allowing more time for quality leadership.

Future plans for DREAM

In a previous presentation on DREAM Management, one of the audience suggested that we should include DREAM principles for teachers to adhere to as well. The following principles have been suggested by faculty we have been working with and, this year, we will be exploring their effectiveness. Within the DREAM Management philosophy teachers should:

Discuss and communicate openly with management, colleagues and students.
Reflect on their classroom practices and other aspects of the job
Enjoy J
Activate their ideas through professional development and research
Move with the times and towards management by being proactive.

Conclusion

DREAM management was conceived as the realization dawned on us that there ought to be some way of defining what we believe to be the best practices employed at our institution. By focusing on the issues and the feedback received from our college community, it was evident that there was a clear need for us to implement a recognized approach to teacher development and involvement at all levels of the college community. The formulation of DREAM has allowed this to take place, but it is by no means complete. It is a fluid process due, in no small part, to the constant change prevalent in the education sector.

The principles of DREAM are available to all and have been recognized as a successful approach to teacher development. Through a constant dialogue with our teachers and teachers from other institutions we are continuously refining the model. This is not so that it becomes a model to fit all circumstances, rather it is so that there is a practiced model in place that other practitioners can attune to and implement in their own institutions.

We warmly welcome feedback on the DREAM model and would encourage you to contact us with your questions and suggestions so we might consider them as we continue to refine the model. You can check my website (http://www.philseflsupport.com) if you would like further information on DREAM Management, and feel free to contact us by email (pquirke@hct.ac.ae and sallison@hct.ac.ae) A far more complete description of the DREAM management approach is also now available in our chapter in the forthcoming *Leadership Skills for English Language Educators* book edited by Christine Coombe et al from the University of Michigan Press.

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Suggested Resources

http://www.getmoredone.com : An interesting site that inspired the section on delegation.

http://www.thewisdommeme.com/Articles1/happystaff.htm : A good site focusing on the importance of happiness at the work place.

http://www.umich.edu/~busfin/docs/BF_Values_with_Behaviors_Fi.pdf : A good example of a site which reflects the respect principle of the DREAM model.

Dr Phil Quirke is Director of the Madinat Zayed College, Higher Colleges of Technology in the UAE. He has been in ELT Leadership positions for over a decade and is now implementing DREAM at his new college. He has published on areas as diverse as face, action research, appraisal and journalling.

Steve Allison is the Chair of Academic Programmes at the Centre of Excellence for Applied Research and Training, Higher Colleges of Technology in Abu Dhabi, UAE. Steve has worked in the Gulf for fifteen years and is currently doing his doctorate on training effectiveness with Glasgow University.