

**Interactive Module 3**  
**Title- Being an Ideal Leader**

**Theme: Leader as a Person who Inspires and who is Resolute, People-centric and a Lifelong Learner**



**LEARNING OBJECTIVES –**

After completing the module, the School leader will be able to:

- i.** grow a positive attitude to facilitate all stakeholders towards efficient leadership
- ii.** develop decision-making quality
- iii.** perform different tasks in collaboration and cooperation
- iv.** nurture a spirit of learning

**KEYWORDS** - Inspiration, socially focused, experiential learning

**INTRODUCTION-**

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." -John Quincy Adams

The above quote reflects the exact concept of leadership. Leadership is the ability of an individual or a group of people to influence and guide members of an organization, society or team towards achieving a common goal. It's an attribute anyone can have, even those without leadership positions. It's a skill that can be improved over time. Leaders are found and required in most aspects of society, including education, business, politics, sports etc. Leaders are those people who make sound and appropriate decisions. They articulate a clear vision, establish

achievable goals and provide followers with the knowledge and tools necessary to achieve those goals.

In the context of school, the leader is a person who can transform the school into excellence. He/she has a clear vision about the future of the school based on which all the plans and policies are made. The leader has the decision-making ability to make an efficient decision for the school. He/she takes the views from all the stakeholders of the school and takes the best suggestion to form the decision. During the time of any difficulty, he/she remains strong and leads the school on the basis of the vision and goodwill of the school. The leader is always collaborative and supportive to the school environment. He/she is aware about the needs and limitations of the school community as a whole. He/she creates an environment of mutual trust and helpfulness. He/she learns from experiences and reflects that learning in his/her work. The leader also encourages the other people to learn every day and grow in their own area of work.

**Visionary, role model, collaborative, learning attitude, environment building, reflective practitioner**

## **CORE CONTENT-**

### **Section i: Environmental building for transformation of learning:**

Learning takes place in a favorable environment. Learning is a very deep experience which needs some sort of mindset. Learning happens effectively or poorly depending upon the environment. Students should have that concentration to learn new things but, concentration can only come to mind when there is a good learning environment. In simple terms, it says that students should not be distracted by any unwanted disturbances while in the classroom. Being a leader he/she must facilitate a sound school environment. Leaders should encourage the students towards learning new things. They must be told about the value of learning in future. Learning environment must be cooperative, innovative and friendly. Through new innovation and creativity, learning becomes more interesting as a result the whole teaching-learning process becomes fruitful. In case there is need of special class, students must be assisted with extra classes for making them learn fully.

In the realm of education, the physical environment in which learning occurs holds significant importance. It influences not only academic performance but also social interaction, emotional well-being, and overall student engagement. Recognizing this, educators and architects are increasingly focusing on environmental building principles to create

transformative learning spaces. This comprehensive approach integrates sustainability, functionality, and innovation to design educational environments that inspire and empower learners. Let's delve deeper into the various aspects of environmental building and its impact on the transformation of learning:

- a. Sustainable Design Principles:** Sustainability lies at the core of environmental building for educational spaces. Sustainable design principles encompass various aspects, including:
  - a. **Eco-friendly Materials:** Utilizing renewable, recycled, or locally sourced materials reduces the environmental footprint of construction projects and promotes responsible resource management.
  - b. **Energy Efficiency:** Incorporating energy-efficient systems such as LED lighting, high-performance insulation, and smart HVAC controls minimizes energy consumption and operational costs.
  - c. **Passive Design Strategies:** Designing buildings with optimal orientation, natural ventilation, and shading devices reduces reliance on mechanical heating and cooling systems, enhancing comfort and energy efficiency.
  - d. **Water Conservation:** Implementing water-efficient fixtures, rainwater harvesting systems, and drought-tolerant landscaping minimizes water usage and promotes conservation.
  - e. **Indoor Environmental Quality:** Prioritizing indoor air quality through proper ventilation, low-VOC materials, and daylighting improves occupant health and productivity.
  
- b. Flexibility and Adaptability:** Educational spaces should be designed to accommodate diverse learning styles, teaching methods, and activities. Flexible layouts, movable furniture, and multipurpose spaces enable educators to adapt the environment to suit the specific needs of different subjects, group sizes, and instructional approaches. This adaptability fosters creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking among students, as they have the freedom to explore and engage with their learning environment in meaningful ways.
  
- c. Biophilic Design and Well-being:** Biophilic design principles emphasize the connection between humans and nature, integrating natural elements into the built environment to enhance well-being and cognitive function. Features such as abundant natural light, indoor plants, water features, and views of greenery create a sense of calm, reduce stress, and improve concentration. Additionally, outdoor learning spaces,

gardens, and nature trails provide opportunities for experiential learning and physical activity, promoting holistic well-being among students and educators alike.

- d. Technological Integration:** In today's digital age, technology plays a vital role in education, enhancing access to information, facilitating collaboration, and promoting interactive learning experiences. Educational spaces should be equipped with state-of-the-art technology infrastructure, including high-speed internet connectivity, interactive displays, digital projectors, and wireless communication systems. Virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR) technologies offer immersive learning opportunities, allowing students to explore virtual environments and interact with complex concepts in a dynamic way.
  
- e. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement:** The design of educational spaces should be informed by input from various stakeholders, including students, educators, administrators, parents, and the local community. Engaging stakeholders in the design process fosters a sense of ownership and pride in the resulting learning environment. Furthermore, collaboration between educators, architects, environmental experts, and sustainability consultants ensures that environmental building principles are effectively integrated into the design and construction process.

Environmental building for the transformation of learning represents a holistic approach to educational design that prioritizes sustainability, flexibility, well-being, technological integration, and community engagement. By creating environments that are conducive to active learning, collaboration, and innovation, educators and architects can inspire and empower learners to become lifelong seekers of knowledge and stewards of the environment. Through thoughtful design and strategic planning, educational spaces can transcend their traditional role as mere settings for instruction and become catalysts for transformative learning experiences that shape the future leaders and innovators of tomorrow.

### **Reflective questions:**

- i. What sort of environment building strategy would you adopt in your school as a leader in school?

- ii. Would you like to take any innovative step to sensitize the local community regarding the learning environment?

## **Section ii: Decision making for shared vision:**

As a leader, a person must take a decision that is based on shared ideas or views. That means he/she should make a decision with the ideas shared by all stakeholders of the school. The leader should not take any decision without discussing it with other staff. This may lead to an imbalance in the school as it is not an adequate decision or other staff feels avoided/disregarded. Decision is taken wisely thinking about the goal and vision of the school. The stakeholders should cooperate fully in forming a good decision for the betterment of the school. They also think about the execution of the decision. What is the positive and negative outcome of the decision must be analyzed before and relative measures should be planned in advance.

In any organization, the pursuit of a shared vision is essential for driving collective effort towards common goals. However, achieving consensus and alignment among stakeholders requires effective decision-making processes that prioritize collaboration, communication, and inclusivity. This note explores the principles and strategies of decision-making for shared vision, emphasizing the importance of fostering a culture of trust, transparency, and mutual respect.

- a. Establishing Clear Objectives:** The foundation of decision-making for shared vision begins with clearly defined objectives and goals. Leaders must articulate the organization's mission, values, and long-term vision, providing a guiding framework for decision-making at all levels. By aligning individual efforts with overarching objectives, stakeholders can understand their role in advancing the shared vision and contribute meaningfully to collective success.
- b. Cultivating a Culture of Collaboration:** Effective decision-making thrives in environments where collaboration is valued and encouraged. Leaders should create opportunities for open dialogue, brainstorming, and idea-sharing among team members, fostering a culture of trust, creativity, and innovation. By soliciting diverse perspectives

and harnessing collective intelligence, organizations can generate robust solutions that reflect the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders.

- c. Embracing Diversity and Inclusion:** Inclusive decision-making acknowledges the unique perspectives, experiences, and voices of all stakeholders, regardless of hierarchy or background. Leaders should actively seek out diverse viewpoints and actively involve individuals from different departments, teams, and demographic groups in the decision-making process. By embracing diversity and fostering an inclusive culture, organizations can leverage the richness of varied perspectives to make more informed and equitable decisions.
- d. Communicating Effectively:** Transparent communication is essential for building trust and fostering alignment around shared vision and goals. Leaders should communicate decision-making processes, rationale, and outcomes clearly and consistently, ensuring that all stakeholders understand the context and implications of decisions. Additionally, soliciting feedback, addressing concerns, and providing opportunities for input empower stakeholders to contribute to decision-making and cultivate a sense of ownership and accountability.
- e. Balancing Consensus and Accountability:** While consensus-building is valuable for fostering buy-in and commitment, it is not always feasible or necessary for every decision. Leaders must strike a balance between seeking consensus and exercising decisive leadership, recognizing that certain decisions may require swift action or trade-offs. Furthermore, establishing clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms ensures that decisions are implemented effectively and outcomes are measured and evaluated over time.
- f. Iterative and Adaptive Approach:** Decision-making for shared vision is an ongoing, iterative process that requires adaptability and flexibility in response to changing circumstances and evolving priorities. Leaders should embrace experimentation, learning, and continuous improvement, iterating on decisions based on feedback, data, and insights. By adopting an agile mindset and fostering a culture of resilience and adaptability, organizations can navigate uncertainty and complexity with confidence and agility.

Decision-making for shared vision is a collaborative and dynamic process that requires leadership, communication, and commitment from all stakeholders. By establishing clear objectives, cultivating a culture of collaboration and inclusivity, communicating effectively, balancing consensus and accountability, and adopting an iterative and adaptive approach, organizations can make decisions that advance their shared vision and propel them towards long-term success. By prioritizing collaboration, communication, and alignment, organizations can harness the collective wisdom and energy of their stakeholders to achieve transformative impact and create a brighter future for all.

**Reflective questions:**

- i. Have you ever made a decision based on shared vision? If yes then outline the situation.
- ii. In case, shared visions are not acceptable in your view, what would you do?

**Section iii: Collaborative and cooperative practice:**

A school leader is always collaborative and cooperative. He/she is aware of the surroundings and works together with the school community. He/she is concerned about various needs and limitations of the school community. He/she works equally with other staff as a team. He/she makes a good relationship with students' parents and interacts with them frequently. He/she sometimes takes advice from them whenever needed. He/she encourages to form a sense of unitedness for the optimum growth of the school. Other institutional alliances may be welcomed for the welfare of the school. The school leader holds a very important role in dealing with different institutions/organizations in collaborative practices. The school leader also puts hand forward in other institution's needs.

Effective leadership in schools goes beyond individual authority; it involves collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders to create a supportive and thriving learning environment. School leaders who prioritize collaborative practices empower their teams, build trust, and promote shared accountability. This note explores the key principles and strategies of collaborative and cooperative leadership in education.

- a. **Building a Culture of Trust:** At the heart of collaborative leadership is trust. School leaders cultivate trust by being transparent, approachable, and consistent in their actions. They actively listen to the perspectives of teachers, staff, students, and parents,

valuing their input and fostering an environment where everyone feels respected and valued.

- b. Fostering Shared Vision and Goals:** Collaborative leaders engage stakeholders in the process of setting a shared vision and goals for the school. By involving teachers, staff, students, and parents in strategic planning and decision-making, leaders ensure that everyone is aligned and invested in the direction of the school. This shared vision provides a guiding framework for all initiatives and actions.
- c. Empowering Teams:** Effective school leaders empower their teams by delegating authority, recognizing individual strengths, and providing opportunities for professional growth and development. They foster a culture of distributed leadership, where teachers and staff feel empowered to take initiative, innovate, and contribute to school improvement efforts.
- d. Facilitating Collaborative Decision-Making:** Collaborative leaders facilitate inclusive decision-making processes that involve input from all stakeholders. They create forums for open dialogue, brainstorming, and problem-solving, where diverse perspectives are valued, and consensus is sought whenever possible. By involving those affected by decisions in the decision-making process, leaders ensure that decisions are informed, well-understood, and effectively implemented.
- e. Promoting Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):** School leaders support the development of PLCs, where teachers collaborate to improve instructional practices, share resources, and analyze student data. PLCs provide opportunities for ongoing professional growth and peer support, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and reflective practice.
- f. Strengthening Family and Community Partnerships:** Collaborative leaders recognize the importance of family and community engagement in supporting student success. They actively involve parents, caregivers, and community members in school activities, decision-making processes, and initiatives. By building strong partnerships



with families and community organizations, leaders create a supportive network that enhances student learning and well-being.

- g. Celebrating Success and Sharing Accountability:** Collaborative leaders celebrate successes and achievements, both big and small, recognizing the collective efforts of the entire school community. They also promote a culture of shared accountability, where everyone takes ownership of the school's successes and challenges. By fostering a sense of collective responsibility, leaders build cohesion and resilience within the school community.
  
- h.** Collaborative and cooperative leadership practices are essential for creating a positive and effective school culture. By building trust, fostering a shared vision, empowering teams, facilitating collaborative decision-making, promoting PLCs, strengthening family and community partnerships, and sharing accountability, school leaders can cultivate an environment where all stakeholders feel valued, supported, and motivated to achieve their fullest potential. Together, they can work towards creating a school community where every student thrives academically, socially, and emotionally.

**Reflective questions:**

- i.** Explain any collaborative practice you have executed as a leader in your school.
- ii.** In case you don't receive a positive response from a collaborating organization, what step would you take to bring them into your practice?

**Section iv: Culture of continuous learning:**

The leader creates a culture of learning every day. Learning is not limited to anyone and hence he/she encourages all the stakeholders to learn something useful every day. As a leader an individual should have diversified knowledge and expertise. To attain these, the leader must study or be involved in numerous activities. He/she keeps their mind open every time and observes situations through which knowledge comes to him/her. Students are always encouraged to study more and increase their area of knowledge. A leader not only learns from higher authority, rather learns from any member of the school fraternity right from top to bottom level. The leader understands that knowledge is power through which any organization can smoothly be directed to its vision and hence he/she always learns. In today's rapidly

changing educational landscape, effective leadership requires a commitment to continuous learning and growth. School leaders who embrace a culture of lifelong learning inspire their teams, foster innovation, and adapt to evolving challenges and opportunities. This note explores the principles and practices of cultivating a culture of continuous learning in leadership within educational settings.

- a. Embracing Growth Mindset:** At the core of a culture of continuous learning is a growth mindset, the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication and hard work. School leaders model this mindset by demonstrating a willingness to learn from successes and failures, seek feedback, and embrace new challenges. By cultivating a growth mindset among their teams, leaders create a culture that values resilience, curiosity, and perseverance.
- b. Providing Professional Development Opportunities:** Effective leaders prioritize professional development opportunities for themselves and their teams. They invest in ongoing training, workshops, conferences, and online courses to enhance their knowledge, skills, and competencies. By providing access to high-quality professional development resources, leaders empower their teams to stay abreast of best practices, research-based strategies, and emerging trends in education.
- c. Creating Learning Communities:** Leaders foster learning communities within their schools where teachers, staff, and administrators can collaborate, share expertise, and learn from one another. These communities may take the form of professional learning communities (PLCs), study groups, or peer mentoring programs. By creating a supportive environment for collaboration and knowledge-sharing, leaders promote collective growth and innovation.
- d. Encouraging Reflection and Feedback:** Continuous learning requires self-reflection and feedback. School leaders encourage reflective practice among their teams, providing opportunities for educators to analyze their teaching practices, set goals for improvement, and reflect on their progress. Additionally, leaders solicit feedback from stakeholders, including teachers, staff, students, and parents, to gain insights into areas for growth and enhancement.

- e. **Promoting Innovation and Risk-Taking:** Leaders foster a culture of innovation by encouraging experimentation, creativity, and risk-taking. They create a safe space for educators to try new approaches, explore alternative solutions, and learn from their experiences. By celebrating innovative ideas and initiatives, leaders inspire their teams to push boundaries, challenge the status quo, and embrace change as a catalyst for growth.
  
- f. **Leveraging Technology for Learning:** Technology provides valuable tools and resources for continuous learning in leadership. School leaders leverage digital platforms, online communities, and social media channels to access a wealth of educational content, connect with thought leaders, and engage in professional discourse. By harnessing the power of technology, leaders expand their learning networks and stay informed about emerging trends and innovations in education.
  
- g. **Leading by Example:** Ultimately, leaders must lead by example and demonstrate a commitment to continuous learning in their own practice. They actively seek out opportunities for growth, model curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and share their knowledge and insights with their teams. By embodying the values of lifelong learning, leaders inspire and empower others to embark on their own learning journeys.

Cultivating a culture of continuous learning in leadership is essential for fostering growth, innovation, and excellence within educational organizations. By embracing a growth mindset, providing professional development opportunities, creating learning communities, encouraging reflection and feedback, promoting innovation and risk-taking, leveraging technology for learning, and leading by example, school leaders can create an environment where everyone is empowered to learn, grow, and thrive. Together, they can navigate the complexities of the educational landscape and drive positive change for the benefit of all stakeholders.

**Reflective questions:**

- i. How would you develop a culture of continuous learning in your school?
- ii. Have you ever tried to intervene in the learning gap of the students in your school?

## **Case study:**

Principal Jagat Saikia leads Janakpur High School, Kamrup (M), Assam, a public institution nestled within a suburban community known for its diverse demographics and unique challenges. Despite grappling with financial constraints and navigating the complexities of student diversity, Saikia's steadfast leadership ensures that the school continues to uphold its commitment to providing quality education and a nurturing environment for all students. Saikia's leadership style is characterized by his unwavering dedication and collaborative approach. He sets an example for the entire school community through his tireless efforts and impassioned advocacy for educational excellence. With a vision firmly rooted in inclusivity and empowerment, Saikia fosters an environment where every member feels valued and supported. Central to Saikia's leadership philosophy is his ability to inspire others. His infectious optimism and enthusiasm motivate students, staff, and parents alike to strive for greatness. In the face of challenges, Saikia remains composed and resilient, providing a steady hand and a sense of reassurance to the school community. One of Saikia's key strengths lies in his ability to build meaningful relationships and foster a sense of belonging. He actively seeks out the input and perspectives of students, teachers, and parents, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and respected. This commitment to inclusivity cultivates a culture of collaboration and teamwork, ultimately leading to greater student engagement and academic success. As a lifelong learner himself, Saikia leads by example, encouraging a culture of continuous growth and development within the school. He actively seeks out feedback from stakeholders and embraces new ideas and innovations in education. Through professional development opportunities and mentorship programs, Saikia empowers staff to enhance their skills and knowledge, thereby enriching the learning experience for students. Under Saikia's guidance, Janakpur High School has experienced remarkable improvements across various metrics. Academic performance has surged, student attendance rates have increased, and overall morale within the school community has soared. Graduation rates have reached new heights, with more students than ever before pursuing post-secondary education or confidently entering the workforce. The positive school culture cultivated by Saikia has fostered a sense of pride and unity among students, staff, and parents, positioning Janakpur High School as a beacon of excellence in the community. Saikia's leadership exemplifies the qualities of inspiration, resilience, and a deep commitment to the well-being of the school community. Through his visionary leadership, Saikia has transformed Janakpur High School into a thriving educational institution where every student has the opportunity to succeed.

**Reflective questions:**

- i. Do you think that Principal Jagat Saikia possesses a good leadership skill? If so, why?
- ii. Would you suggest some other ways that could enhance the Principal's leadership skill?
- iii. After reading this case study, what sort of strategy could you execute in your school to enhance leadership?

**SUMMARY-**

Leader is a person who can transform any organization to its better version. Leader is always a guiding force to the organization. He/she does all the work for the betterment of the school, not for his/her personal affair. He/she can find a solution to a problem by discussing it with all staff members. He/she decentralizes the decision making process. There is no egoistic nature prevailing in his/her character. He/she is conscious about the needs of the school community and tries to interact with any person associated with school. During the time of adversity, he/she keeps himself/herself firm and moves ahead with all staff as a team. The leader learns every day something new and utilizes the knowledge in constructive work of the school. He/she also encourages everyone right from top to bottom level to study, learn and bring some innovation to bring the school into its next stage of excellence.

Hence, through this module it is tried to express that a leader is a very responsible person in any school. He/she has that personality through which people can get inspired and modify their behavior and reflect it in their works in school. And as a result, school becomes a place of complete human resource development centre.

**REFERENCE-**

<https://www.techtargget.com/searchcio/definition/leadership>

**ADDITIONAL READING-**

- i. Bokul Phoolor Dore by Mrinal Kalita (Book)
- ii. Totto-chan by Tetsuko Kuroyanagi (Book)