

Question: We've all been trained to recognize our strengths, but knowing our weaknesses is just as important. What are your leadership voids?



Procrastination. I am an ambivert and sometimes experience overwhelming anxiety in new situations and with new people. I also know that I am a procrastinator, which stresses everyone around me but often results in some of my best work. I also have a difficult time asking for help, because I see how hard everyone is working and don't want to burden them.

—Amy Denney (@AmyADenney), Perry Creek Elementary School, Sioux City, Iowa



Sharing the burden. I can't take on everything myself. I need to learn to delegate and use others to assist with certain tasks.

—Heather LeeMaster Anguiano (@tresanguianos), Hartford Sylvia Encinas Elementary School, Chandler, Arizona



Asking the right questions. Offering solutions instead of asking the right questions of others, doing it myself instead of delegating or growing teacher and student leaders, and working very long days that lead to poor self-care. I am aware of these blind spots and have accountability partners keep an eye on me, too.

—Stacey Green (@usd271sgs), Stockton Grade School, Stockton, Kansas



Delegating. I need to learn how to delegate effectively.

—Aqila Malpass (@TeachOnPurpose), Rocky Ridge Elementary School, Hoover, Alabama



Prioritizing. It is difficult to prioritize every day and ensure you are addressing everything that needs to be done. Sometimes I get sidetracked by competing demands, and it takes away from opportunities to visit classrooms and be fully present for students.

—Amy Mason (@AMasonPrincipal), Madison County Elementary School, Gurley, Alabama

Setting boundaries. As a leader, I need to recognize when to say “no” and how to set healthy boundaries for work and life balance.

—Mandy Ellis (@mandyeellis), Dunlap Grade School, Dunlap, Illinois

Offering feedback. Giving honest feedback to the adults I need to lean on. Avoiding the hard conversations to try to “insulate” from big feelings weighs me down and prevents others from getting the chance to grow. I’m working on knowing that feedback doesn’t mean that I’m bossy, but is essential to being a leader.

—Jessica Hutchison (@jesshutchisonAW), Washington Elementary School, Park Ridge, Illinois

Confrontation. I have to work on those “difficult” conversations. Although I’ve learned great strategies from colleagues and experts in the field, I still have lots of room for improvement.

—Amie McCaw (@TLIMPrincipal), Sunset Lake Elementary School, Vicksburg, Michigan

Creating balance. My leadership voids include balancing time commitments, knowing what my “monkey” is and which monkeys are not mine, and using data as well as I should.

—Garrett Dukette (@MrDinCanterbury), Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School, Canterbury, Connecticut

Communication. Communication was a weak point when I started as a principal. I focused on it as an area to improve nine years ago, and I now I feel that clear, concise communication is a strength of mine.

—Edward Cosentino (@PrincipalECos), Clemens Crossing Elementary School, Columbia, Maryland

Sharing instructional leadership. I found that I need to provide more opportunities for teacher-leaders and not take on every task.

—Stephanie Morrow (@smorrow_morrow), Annie Belle Clark Elementary School, Tifton, Georgia

Chaining myself to the desk. Availability and visibility. I can find it too easy to get trapped in the office and react instead of proactively getting out around those I lead.

—Justin Swope (@JustinSwope), Lee Elementary School, Springdale, Arkansas

Thinking ahead. I am still growing in the area of planning and timing. As a person who gets creative under pressure, I need to think ahead and plan better so that others can plan better.

—Marla Turpin (@marlaturpin), Bay Springs Middle School, Villa Rica, Georgia