



R-r-rev Up the RPMs of Your Organization

How to make Relationships, Performance and Morale work together for forward movement and continuous improvement in your school or district

J. Bert Freeman: a brief on *Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction for Educators*



J. Bert Freeman is Founder and CEO of T.A.L.K. Associates. He has been facilitating, coaching, lecturing and instructing educators at all levels in Positive Direction Communication Skills, organizational unity and diversity since 1982. "Bert" is the originator of Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction. He is the author of *Taking Charge of Your Positive Direction* (2006) and the Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction Performance Development Manual for Educators (2010).

Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction is an essential framework for getting 'Everybody on the Same Page with Excellence on the Same Page'. This is an information brief and a learning brief.

Jan Carlzon (1987), former president of SAS Airlines, referred to every interaction with a customer as a "moment of truth". He said SAS Airlines has "50,000 moments of truth a day". The power of those statements resonates with me today, reinforcing the importance of meeting or exceeding customer requirements and expectations, everyday. Those of us who work for organizations that provide products or services to others have one thing in common: customers or students experience our efforts, either directly or through others. As educators we are a part of every moment of truth regarding students, even if the student is out of our sight. The primary direction of educational organizations is student success and growth. Our primary role is to unify our efforts in that direction. Our students require accurate and successful performance and delivery.

The success of an entire organization can be impacted by how well relationships, performance and morale work together. In the early 1990's, in a conversation with a colleague, I remember saying that performance is most important in an organization, even in life. My friend said, "Performance is only part of it. People need to be recognized. They also need to have opportunities". That conversation expanded my thinking to understand that those who work in the same place have working relationships that may impact performance. Then I thought that when I like my job or I like my working conditions, my morale can also affect my performance. After categorizing relationships, performance and morale, I learned that our **human activity** at work is in one of those three categories. I call them the RPM's of the workplace – the realities of human activity (functioning and interaction). Relationships, Performance and Morale work together best when they are the bi-product of the workplace. Rather than doing them, we experience them. They are the result of what happens. What needs to happen in the workplace for the RPM's to receive consistently high marks from everyone?

Relationships, performance and morale (RPM's) are often and appropriately thought of separately in matters of the workplace. There is any number of times on any given day when one requires more attention than the other. Imagine taking on the roles of making relationships, performance and morale work together in a way that we can have the very best performance and delivery so that we can meet or exceed the requirements and expectations of those we serve. Here are simple 'on-the-job' descriptions of each:

Relationships – The ways that two or more people or groups interact together

Performance – Efforts of participation; the measures of outcomes or efforts

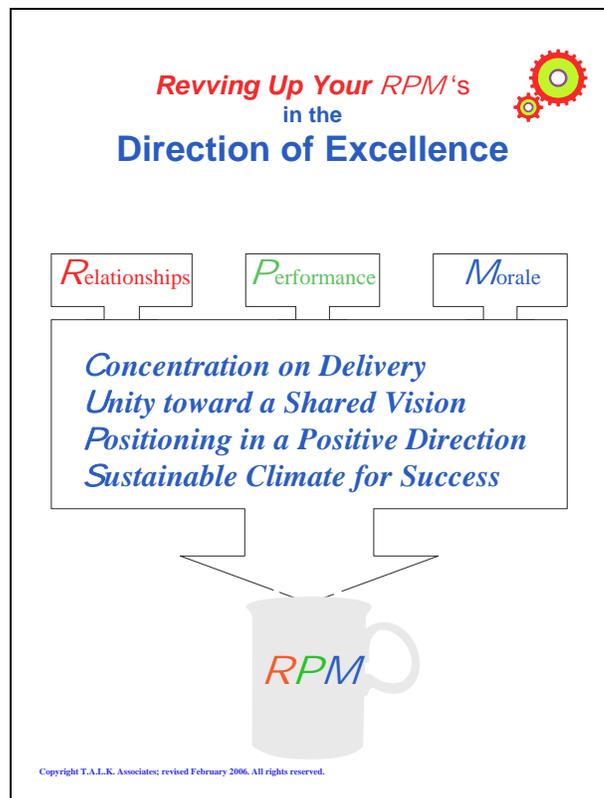
Morale – The degree of motivation to perform, participate and interact due to willingness, liking, enthusiasm or dedication

The best way for the RPM's of an organization to work together is for each of them to have the same focus: **STUDENT SUCCESS** – students meeting or exceeding grade level requirements and expectations *and* students exceeding qualifications for college and career readiness. As you categorize the *human activity* of your organization under relationships, performance or morale, make sure that the focus is on student success. Always make the student a part of the 'reason why'.

Imagine that you have cups in your organization that are filled with servings of relationships, performance and morale. **CUPS** in an **RPM** context is an acronym for **C**oncentrate, **U**nify, **P**osition and **S**ustain - the formula that keeps Relationships, Performance and Morale working together. The effectiveness of your organization depends on how well the **RPM**s are *stirred* together and how full the cups are kept. To fill the **CUPS**:

- Concentrate **RPM**s on student-focused delivery
- Unify **RPM**s toward a shared vision
- Position **RPM**s in a Consistent Positive Direction
- Sustain an **RPM** Climate of Interaction for student-focused success.

This formula will accelerate your progress and the progress of your school or district for the success required of your students. It functions in a framework that is designed to work in any organization.



Relationships, Performance and Morale work together

The framework for this human activity is called “Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction”. It is designed for Relationships, Performance and Morale to work together to concentrate on supporting front line performance and delivery in a way that front line educators can have the very best performance and delivery so that students can have the very best education and experiences.

The Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction framework (Unity of Effort) can be applied to any organizational structure or strategy as long as there is a customer, client or student that is served by that organization. It is best applied to organizations or teams of 15 or more employees. It can be initiated and

implemented at any management level in which there is a titular leader, from the principal to the school board.

Everyone Concentrates *RPMs* on Student-Focused Delivery

This means that everyone in the entire organization concentrates on supporting the *performance and delivery* of the frontline educators. Who are considered as frontline? For example, in a restaurant it would be the waitress or waiter; in a manufacturing organization it would be a finished product machine operator and/or the sales representative; in public transportation it would be the cab, bus or train driver; in human services it might be the case manager; in education it would be the *classroom teacher*. Frontline educators are those who have the direct task of delivery of services to the student. Imagine every person in the organization knowing that one of the most important parts of his/her job is to concentrate everything he does on supporting frontline performance and delivery, in a way that teachers will have the very best performance, so that students can have the very best success and experiences.

The school is divided into two main categories: 1) the frontline and 2) everyone else. Everyone else is called the Smooth Operating System, abbreviated Smooth OpS. The Smooth OpS includes administrators, maintenance, food service, quality, medical, transportation, human resources, the school board and other support services. The biggest part of their job is to make frontline educators the very best in their performance and delivery. Once, an employee of one of my clients said to me just after attending an *RPM* session, “*If it weren’t for us, the frontline wouldn’t be able to do their jobs...*” She understood that the support employees were just as important as the frontline.



It is what the Smooth Operating System does, that makes the frontline employees most effective. Therefore, it is important to know what helps to make the Smooth Operating System most effective. For example, how should organizational changes be handled?

When key decisions or changes need to be made or when someone has a great idea, two *Core Questions* should always be asked and one optional question can be asked. These are called *Organizational Core Questions*:

- How does this impact our frontline performance and delivery, i.e. the performance and delivery of our classroom teachers and specialists?
- What support does the frontline need for successful performance and delivery?
- Optional question: What support does our Smooth OpS need to best concentrate on *supporting* frontline performance and delivery?

Most important! After each of these questions are asked, *get the answer*. Then act on it!

In counseling, personal or professional development situations, the *Core Question* is, “**What support do you need to...?**” This is called the *Direct Core Question*.

- “What support do you need to be on time from now on?”
- “What support do you need to continue your outstanding performance?”
- “What support does the team need to finish on time?”

Remember, after you ask the question, *get the answer*. Then act on it!

Many times, frontline folks are the last to find out about organizational changes. Yet, the working day of the frontline educator is most critical to delivery and student success and growth. Therefore, learning the impact on frontline performance *before* a change is made, can help to make adjustments that can save thousands, even millions of dollars. Asking the core questions first and getting the answers is one of the most cost effective, *RPM* enhancing habits that a school or district can develop. This should at least be a part of every leader’s standard, from the frontline administrator to the school board. Best of all, it will help the organization’s student-focused delivery to be as good, or better, than it has ever been.

The phrase ‘student-focused’ simply means that the reason for relationships, performance and morale to work together is the student. **Student success** as the ‘reason why’ should be at the core of staff interaction – students meeting or exceeding grade level requirements and expectations *and* students exceeding qualifications for college and career readiness. Therefore, everyone *focuses* relationships, performance and morale on student success while they *concentrate* their efforts on frontline performance and delivery.

Everyone Unifies RPMs Toward a Shared Vision

Having a shared vision is essential. A vision is the one place everyone moves toward in different ways. The vision unifies the organization. The best way to unify toward a shared vision is to:

- have a vision *statement* that is easy for everyone to remember
- establish a multilevel direction of excellence
- establish a climate of respect among educators and students
- become internal partners for student success.

A great vision statement should:

- Reflect that the organization is the best or among the best at what it does
- Be beyond the current state
- Be focused on the product or service recipient
- Be concise, one sentence or less and easy to remember
- Be embraced by all

- Be measurable: If it uses terms like *great*, or *world class* or *the best*, find out what that means for your organization by either comparing it to other organizations that are similar to yours or by originating the definition yourself
- Be stated in the present tense

Here are a few vision statements that some of our client schools created through our Unity of Effort vision sessions: “A world-class school developing world class students”, “Educational excellence for every student, everyday”, “[inspiring] children to be lifelong learners who realize their unlimited potential”.

If the organizational vision statement is created by the CEO, the superintendent, the director or the principal, that leader takes a chance on whether everyone else in the organization will embrace it. It becomes *his/her* vision rather than *our* vision. When you hear phrases like the “superintendent’s vision” or the “CEO’s vision”, that is a sign to find out whether the vision is embraced by the rest of the organization. The best way to establish an organizational vision statement is to include a cross section of people at *every level*, especially including frontline folks. When every employee in the organization has been represented in establishing a vision statement, they feel empowered and take pride in making *our* vision a reality.

An organization’s quest should be to make the vision a reality rather than just a noble try. If your organization says that it is “world-class”, the first thing you want to do is to find out what ‘world-class’ means then proceed to make *world-class* a reality. If your organization says that it is the “model”, then determine what it means to be the ‘model’ and proceed at making your organization the *model* for everyone else in that field to follow. How will you know when your vision is a reality? - when your *parents* say that it is, when your school does what your vision says it does and everybody else knows it!

The Direction of Excellence – In a Unity of Effort framework, ‘excellence’ is the accurate and successful effectiveness, efficiency and execution of tasks, always in the direction of student success. Many organizations possess a high degree of excellence among their employees. Often the excellence of many goes in different directions. There are also different levels of excellence – some employees are better than others. When the organization endeavors to correct or protect the excellence of a person or task, the direction may still exist. Getting all of the excellence in the same direction makes it easier to make the correction - ***first the direction; then the correction***. That increases the assurance that the correction will be made in the direction of student success.

The Unity of Effort framework is best managed by “Synchronizing the Direction of Excellence”. The Direction of Excellence includes three components:

- The Direction of Concentration – Everyone knows where to concentrate his or her efforts
- The Direction of Support – Delivery of services and products to meet or exceed internal support requirements and expectations so that front line educators can provide the very best education for students to meet or exceed grade level requirements and expectations
- The Direction of Focus – ‘Student Success’ always being a part of the ‘reason why’

Such excellence involves everyone: leadership, finance, HR, logistics, quality, front line, food service, technology and more. Imagine the entire organization with excellence in the same direction. I call it ESP: **Everybody on the Same Page with Excellence on the Same Page.**

A Climate of Respect is an essential part of strengthening organizational unity. If you have a rule of only respecting those who respect you, you limit the opportunities to bring the best out of people. However, if you *always* exercise respect for everyone whatever the circumstances, you set yourself up to take advantage of the creativity and productive decision-making that moves things forward. When you label people, you *look* for the label that you give them. If you call someone ‘selfish,’ for instance, you may recognize that *one* characteristic in the person enough to hide other qualities or motives that may help or impress you. Take the label away. That increases your power to develop a productive relationship that works.

Internal Partnering for Student Success and Growth

In a Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction framework, all internal relationships and human connections, including relationships and connections with the front line, are considered internal partnering for student success and growth. **Key elements of Internal Partnering include:**

- **Support** – e.g. Smooth OpS delivery to internal Partners in a way that best concentrates on supporting frontline performance and delivery
- **Performance Expectations** – e.g. job requirements, meeting/exceeding performance objectives, task completions, appropriate behavior, timeliness, ‘accuracy and success’, safety
- **Cooperative Performance Obligations** – e.g. meeting compliance requests/requirements, response to administrative requests, info for record accuracy, timeliness
- **Communication and Information** – e.g. talking to each other, providing clarification, using Core Questions, sharing data & info (Accelerates Progress)
- **Support Requirements** – e.g. services or goods required by Internal Partners from Smooth OpS branches or individuals to best support frontline performance and delivery (can be required by frontline or Smooth OpS)
- **Helping people to ‘PLAY’** instead of making them pay – Focus on what people need to do successfully rather than to dwell on making them pay for what they did or are doing; e.g. educate about correct behavior, help to manage compliance, be invitational instead of confrontational, provide guidance, ask Core Questions

A *Unity of Effort* framework requires a leadership consistency that enables an environment for student success to thrive. Administrators become adept at coordinating leadership practices in ways that are driven in the *direction* of every student’s success. For example, getting answers to the core questions helps them to more easily make organizational decisions or adjustments.

A few years ago, one of my clients hired a new teacher; we’ll call her Sue. Sue showed excellent promise. However, after one month she wanted to resign. The ‘*Unity of Effort*’ savvy administrator realized the impact of recruiting, hiring and training another teacher compared to asking a simple question, “*What support do you need to continue working for us?*” The administrator *got the answer*. Sue said, “*I need adequate training about my job. I need to know what to do and how to react when I’m faced with...*” She went on to explain in detail the unique situations that she had encountered in the month that she had been working there. After that conversation, the administrator arranged for Sue to receive additional training in the areas that she expressed she needed more strength. Sue stayed and quickly became more confident in her role within the organization.

The *Unity of Effort* framework equipped the administrator to *know what question to ask* and to *get the answer*, possibly saving thousands of dollars and months of recruiting, interviewing and hiring someone to replace an already excellent choice. That core question had an impact on the *RPM*s experienced by the new teacher. It helped to keep the *RPM CUPS* full.

The Direct Core Question, “*What support do you need to...?*” is vital when an organization is considering changes of any kind. However, even if the decision has already been made, ask the core questions and get the answers *anyway*. By doing so, you may get information that could show the necessity to make an adjustment that will keep frontline performance and delivery as good, or better than it already is. Your question could make a positive difference in relationships, performance or morale, making you like oil to an engine, keeping the system working smoothly (Smooth OpS). Additionally, asking and answering the core questions could lead to significant cost advantages while still keeping your staff intact and in excellence.

Unifying Relationships, Performance and Morale toward a shared student-focused vision requires a collective effort. The **vision statement** points everyone into the same direction. The **Direction of Excellence** connects all efforts to the front line and the students. **Complete Respect** among educators and students helps everyone to work together. **Internal Partnering** accelerates progress and facilitates teamwork. Your role is vital for every element of unity to work most effectively. You share the vision statement with everyone. You can identify *your* direction of excellence in the direction of the student. You have the abilities to always exercise Complete Respect. As an internal partner, you know who you support and their support requirements; you know who supports you; you know your performance expectations, your performance obligations and the difference between them. You are well equipped for organizational unity of effort.

When *Unity of Effort* includes the T.A.L.K. Associates signature program, **CONSISTENT POSITIVE DIRECTION™**, it becomes even more effective.

Everyone Positions RPMs in a Consistent Positive Direction

The power is within you to control the *direction* of what comes out of your mouth. Your tongue can steer you in the direction closer to the success that you want or farther away. If you want success, then *talk* success. If you want teamwork, then *talk* teamwork. If you want trust, then *talk* trust. Let the language of *Consistent Positive Direction* navigate you to the success that you want; the achievements that you want; the results that you want; the goals, objectives and/or accomplishments that you want. This introduction helps to show the power of positive direction in a Unity of Effort framework.

Consistent Positive Direction is speaking, writing, learning and approaching the realities that we face, day-to-day, in the direction of the outcomes, the results and the successes that we want – the positive direction. It increases the assurance of forward movement and continuous improvement by the direction of our verbal activity. That direction can be short term or long term, forward or reverse, up or down. In our personal lives, it could be anything from getting across the street to getting an ‘A’. In our professional lives, it could be anything from getting along to getting promoted. In a Unity of Effort framework, the direction of success and results always includes the direction toward the student/customer –student success or growth, student achievement, customer satisfaction.

‘Positive thinking’ became one of the most significant learnings in the twentieth century. *Consistent Positive Direction* takes you into the twenty-first century with the language to identify and use positive *direction* in your thinking, speaking *and* attitude. The emphasis is on *direction*.

In a conversation that I had with a school district administrator one day, she talked about how she was working on a project and that another person that she had to work with was, “slowing things down and didn’t seem to want the project to be successful.” She said that she could only do so much because the person outranked her. My response was that rather than to focus so much on the differences between her and the other person, make the other person an ally. In other words, create the circumstances that will cause the person to *want or feel a need* to help you so that the project can be a success. “Also,” I said, “instead of predicting how the person is going to act, create the circumstances that may produce a better relationship. That means that *you* may have to do something different too.” I saw her about a month later and she said that she did what I had suggested and it worked. She said she focused more on making the other person an ally to her and the project. She also made some changes in the way she acted, which created more favorable circumstances for them to work together. They even became friends, she said, and the project was working even better than she could have imagined. In **CONSISTENT POSITIVE DIRECTION**, that is called **PC Upgrade** – going from **Prediction** to **Creation**. This is just one of the skills and approaches that are great for improving organizational relationships, performance and morale.

Even in the most demanding situations, you can use **CONSISTENT POSITIVE DIRECTION** to move things forward and get things done. It takes practice and the more you practice the better you get. Here are some of the core skills and approaches for rev-v-ing up the **RPM**’s in your school or district.

- **Reality** – Interact more about the reality that you want to ‘move toward’ instead of the reality you want to ‘get away from’.
- **Start Options** – Talk more about what needs to ‘**START**’ rather than what needs to ‘stop’, especially when you refer to ‘working together’.
- **PC Upgrade** – Create the circumstances that need to occur for success, instead of predicting the way that people will act to take away from success.
- **Verbal Positive Approach** is the core language of Consistent Positive Direction. It is the use of everyday neutral and positive language in talking and writing that increases the assurance of moving things forward and getting things done. You can always be yourself. You can always say what needs to be said. Here are some examples.
 - **INSTEAD OF SAYING:** If we don’t order the books in time, the students will get behind.
YOU CAN SAY: We must order the books in time for the students to continue their progress.
 - **INSTEAD OF SAYING:** We will not be successful if we don’t change the way we communicate.
YOU CAN SAY: We need to change the way that we communicate to be successful.
or
Using Consistent Positive Direction increases our chances for success.
 - **INSTEAD OF SAYING:** Don’t forget.
YOU CAN SAY: Remember.
 - **INSTEAD OF SAYING:** That is wrong.
YOU CAN SAY: That needs to be corrected.
 - **INSTEAD OF SAYING:** This is difficult.
YOU CAN SAY: This is going to take some effort.
or
I need to spend some time on this.
or
This will really test your skills.
or
We will have to really concentrate.
 - Verbal Positive Approach is used in all of the advanced skills and approaches. That way, you can use positive direction to handle the most compelling situations as well as everyday conversation. The language of Consistent Positive Direction is designed to be used in all of your communication skills, every minute of every day. It is important to note that you are in charge of *your own* positive direction rather than the positive direction of others.
- **Helping people to ‘PLAY’** instead of making them pay
- **Exercise Complete Respect in a Positive Direction** – Expand your organization’s ability to accelerate progress in diversity, inclusion, individuality and organizational unity.
- **TOLLing (Total Open Listening and Learning)** – Practice listening skills and approaches that help to connect positive direction to our critical and everyday experiences.
- **Attitudinize yourself, your team and your organization in a positive direction** – Just as people possess different attitudes, teams and organizations possess different attitudes. Attitudes are often reflected in relationships and morale either of which can impact performance. *Attitudinizing in a positive direction* means to express attitudes in the direction of the successes or results that are required or desired. Whatever feelings you have, you can always express them in a positive direction. A team may feel that, “Nobody gives us the recognition that we deserve for the work that we do.” In a positive direction the team can say, “We need to be recognized for the work that we do. We want to be able to receive awards and opportunities like others in our organization!” The meaning and feeling can be just as intense. By using the forward focused language of *Consistent Positive Direction*, you influence more agreement and action toward the desired or required results.
- **Attitudinize your circumstances in a Positive Direction** – Skills and approaches to assure forward movement and steady progress when making changes, corrections or adjustments, even in the most compelling situations.

- **The Positive Direction Power Principle™** is a decision-making tool to help the school ‘behave’ its way to a required/desired success. It was inspired by Kurt Lewin’s concept, “Force Field Analysis” (www.valuebasedmanagement.net) which identifies organizational strengths, based on the dominance and potential of driving or restraining forces.

Using The Positive Direction Power Principle, for each category of organizational relationships, performance and morale, ask two questions: **1)** What will take the organization closer to the success that needs to be accomplished; **2)** What will take the organization farther away from the success that needs to be accomplished. Answers can come from any number of groups using simple brainstorming processes. After answering those questions, you will be better equipped to effect the access, the activities and the behavior that move you closer to your goals. Plus, you will be able to help yourself and everyone else to stay motivated by sharing and celebrating successes along the way. When you identify attitudes that take you farther away from your goals, you will know how to translate those attitudes into positive direction activities that also bring you closer to your goals. Your attitudinizing skills will accelerate your forward movement, when you encounter situations that are particularly demanding.

Everyone Sustains a Climate of Interaction for student-focused success.

Over the years, I have been associated with a number of great organizations and I have had many experiences in education, business and industry and in life. I learned what it takes to sustain a marriage, as well as to build and sustain a business. I learned a lot about being the best and *wishing* that I was the best. I also learned that, just when you think you ‘passed the test’, you will be tested again and again. I learned that on any given day a person will have differences and agreements about someone or something. Sometimes, just when you think you have things all figured out, they change. It is important to develop a readiness for change.

One of the most rewarding experiences that I have had with *Unity of Effort* and *Consistent Positive Direction* is the realization that “*We can do something about things!*” and “*We can make things work!*” The next level then, is sustainability. How do we make it *last*? The answer: put a Climate of Interaction into place that makes it easier for everyone to function *for student success*. Here are twelve factors to include in that Climate. They are called the **CI Factors**:

- **Communication and Information** – Talking to each other; sharing knowledge (using positive direction communication skills, this accelerates progress)
- **Creativity and Innovation** – Allowing new/old ideas to build toward the required reality
- **Consistency and Inclusiveness** – Reliable, uniform daily effort and *everyone’s* perception that he/she is a valuable participant in the organization’s function and success
- **Collaborative Involvement** – Participating by combining work and ideas; everyone partnering for student success, including collaboration with parents
- **Continuous Improvement** – Building on the progress that has already occurred; being as good as we are and better than we were
- **Cooperative Interdependence** – Managing, understanding and coordinating the dependence and the impact of our actions on one another and being open to listen and learn and to share similarities and differences, to sustain success
- **Cultural Infusion** – Establishing key interactions, relationships and processes as organizational standards, policies, procedures and/or practices
- **Cost Inducement** – Streamlining efforts, and resources to concentrate most efficiently and effectively on supporting frontline performance and delivery, in ways that financial stability and growth increasingly and inherently contribute to relationships, performance and morale working together in the direction of student success
- **Classroom Inclusion** – Classroom teachers gaining clear understanding of every student’s experience with their delivery, to improve/accelerate achievement

- **Critical Inputs** – In addition to learning the skills and approaches, *using* the skills and approaches makes it work. That increases your capability to accelerate progress. Growth creates more growth; possibilities create more possibilities.
- **Concentrated Interventions** – Improvement actions, processes or programs that are used to specifically correct or adjust organizational, system or individual behaviors, *in the direction of student success*. They are conducted in alignment with the skills, approaches and practices of the “Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction” framework. This factor focuses strongly on assurance of accuracy, success and efficiency rather than prevention (‘moving toward’ rather than ‘getting away from’).
- **Cycle of Influence** – Leaders influence workplace consistency; faculty and support staff influence leadership consistency all in the direction of student success.

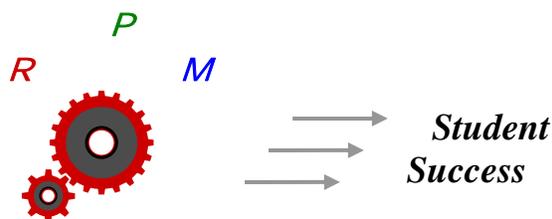
Before I realized that it took all twelve factors that are listed here for an organization to sustain a Climate of Interaction for success, I thought that Cultural Infusion was all that was needed. However, when the other factors exist in a school, the chances of successful sustainability are increased.

Unity of Effort Leadership

The combination of ‘*Positioning* in a Consistent Positive Direction’ and ‘*Sustaining* a Climate of Interaction for Student-focused Success’ takes your school and district to the next level called *Empowered Learning Communities™*. This extension of *Unity of Effort* expands the mastery of an organization to practice minute-to-minute excellence: effectiveness, efficiency and superb execution in the direction of every student’s success. Leaders become adept at enabling student-focused climates of interaction that help students grow and thrive. Leaders learn and use organizational skills and approaches of *Consistent Positive Direction* that *accelerate* progress for moving forward and improving forward. Leadership teams can increasingly enable a climate of trust in an environment of differences. Attitudinizing is a team effort as well as an individual effort. The school becomes increasingly self-directed in sustaining student-focused climates of interaction that empower success.

It Works Because You Use It

With the *UNITY OF EFFORT* framework, schools and districts become focused and flexible. The entire organization concentrates on supporting the performance and delivery of its front line so that the student will have the very best education and experience. Student success will always be the *reason why*. The skills, approaches and practices of the *UNITY OF EFFORT* framework also provide the flexibility needed for day-to-day, minute-to-minute functioning of the organization as well as implementing and executing strategic plans. Sometimes you may need to put more of the day’s energy into either one of relationships, performance or morale. As highly effective educators, you will know where to put your energy. In a highly effective school, all three work together using the *Unity of Effort* framework – keeping your *RPM CUPS* full. Keep your organization in high gear by *r-r-revving* up your *RPM*s for student success.



***Student Success* = Students meeting/exceeding grade level requirements and expectations and students exceeding requirements for College and Career Readiness.**

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J. Bert Freeman and T.A.L.K. Associates have been providing staff development to educators since 1990 in these matters of organizational unity. They help schools and districts implement, develop and sustain the 'Unity of Effort in a Positive Direction' Framework. Uniquely, T.A.L.K. Associates is the only organization development and professional development company whose facilitators use the language, skills and approaches of Consistent Positive Direction in everything that they do. They are practitioners as they teach. J. Bert Freeman is a positive direction facilitator, coach and professional speaker. He is the author of *Taking Charge of Your Positive Direction* (2006) and the *Unity of effort in a Positive direction Performance development Manual for Educators* (2010). He is a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Toastmasters International, and the ASTD. He has a reputation for practicing the Consistent Positive Direction that he teaches, in his professional life and his personal life. He can be reached at jbtfreeman@unityofeffort.com. For book and manual availability, courses and free downloads go to the T.A.L.K. Associates website at www.positivedirection.net.

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