

End-of-Year Reflection Journal

For School Administrators

"Reflection turns experience into insight." - John C. Maxwell

Introduction

In the whirlwind world of education, you've likely encountered countless "**You Can't Make It Up**" moments throughout the year. These instances, as challenging and unexpected as they are, define the dynamic role of an educator.

This journal is designed to help you debrief and reflect on these extraordinary moments. By writing and thinking about these experiences, you can gather insights as you prepare to navigate similar, if not crazier, situations in the upcoming school year.

Use this space to reflect deeply, find humor where you can, cry or vent a little, and plan forward with renewed energy and wisdom.

***You can also use this journal as a tool to lead group discussions with others.**

The Goal: Make a very heavy load of responsibility just a little bit lighter.

Play the long game – go the distance!

Instructions for Using the Reflection Questions for Personal Use

Personal Space: Treat this journal as a private space for your thoughts.

Take Your Time: Reflect at your own pace, perhaps across several days.

Be Honest: Write openly about your experiences and feelings.

Reflect Deeply: Consider how each aspect has shaped your approach and outlook.

Instructions for Using the Reflection Questions with Small Groups

Preparation

- Prior to the session, provide each administrator with a copy of the journal.
- Arrange seating to facilitate small group discussions (4-6 people per group).

Introduction

Start with a brief introduction explaining the purpose of reflection and the importance of sharing and listening within the group.

Discussion Strategies:

Each group selects one member to read the questions, facilitate responses, and be aware of the allotted time.

Engagement in Discussion:

For each question, give group members 5-7 minutes to jot down their initial thoughts in their journals.

Then, allow 10-15 minutes for group discussion on each question. Members should share their reflections and discuss common themes and differences in experiences.

Deepening the Reflection:

Encourage participants to not only share their experiences but also discuss what they learned from those experiences and how they can apply this learning in the future.

Conclusion of Each Question:

After discussing each question, have the facilitator summarize some basic themes discussed by the group to reinforce shared insights.

Final Wrap-Up:

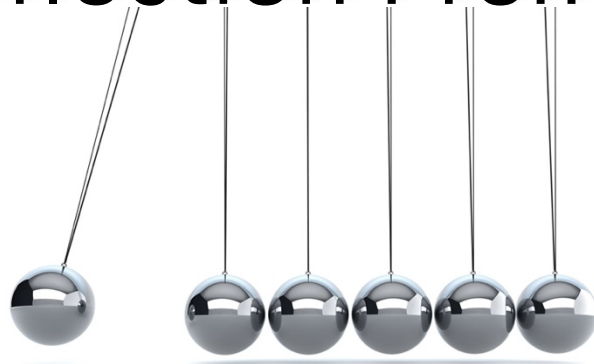
Conclude the session by asking each group to share one major insight or lesson learned with all participants. This may be something humorous, something difficult, or even suggestions for future leadership development or support. There is no right or wrong for these reflections.

Discuss as a larger group how these reflections can influence their approaches in the upcoming school year. Remember that every school year is different, and every situation offers an opportunity to build resilience, expertise, and wisdom.

Continued Reflection:

Encourage administrators to continue using the journal independently to document ongoing reflections and developments over the summer and into the next school year.

Reflection Prompts



Personal Challenges

Reflect: What was the most difficult point for you personally during the year?

Journal Entry:

Insights from Others:

Notes for Next Time:

Professional Challenges

Reflect: What was the most difficult point for you professionally during the year?

Journal Entry:

Insights from Others:

Notes for Next Time:

Persistent Concerns

Reflect: What was something you worried about longer than you wanted to?

Journal Entry:

Insights from Others:

Notes for Next Time:

Work-Life Collisions

Reflect: When did you feel your professional and personal lives collided?

Journal Entry:

Insights from Others:

Notes for Next Time:

Moments of Doubt

Reflect: Did you ever want to give up and quit this year or have a "do over?"

Journal Entry:

Insights from Others:

Notes for Next Time:

Desired Changes

Reflect: If you could change or undo one situation that happened this year, what would it be?

Journal Entry:

Insights from Others:

Notes for Next Time:

Leadership Pride

Reflect: What are you most proud of as a leader this year?

Journal Entry:

Insights from Others:

Notes for Next Time:

Rest and Rejuvenation

Reflect: How will you rest this summer so you're ready to lead again next year?

Journal Entry:

Insights from Others:

Notes for Next Time:

Closing Thoughts

As you complete this journal, reflect on the insights you have gathered about yourself and your leadership. Consider how these can influence your approach to the upcoming school year. Remember, growth often comes from reflection.

Reflect: I am a better leader now than I was a year ago because I have grown in these areas:

Reflect: I am a better leader now than I was three years ago because of these specific growth steps:

Reflect: I want to be intentional about growing in these areas and I'll reflect on my progress in a year:
