

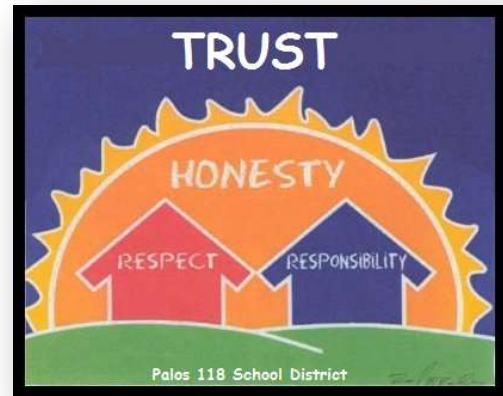
Get Schools to the Next Level of Performance

How to Improve Grade Scores by Designing a Trusting Environment

A high performing school got to the top 5% by measuring trust on all levels of their district. Once they defined baseline, they were able to adjust to improve trust (from the superintendent to the student) in their relationships. They produced outstanding results.

The Situation

Many [educational leaders](#) desire their student bodies to achieve higher scholastic scores and grades. Palos District 118 is one of those school districts that has worked diligently to make it to the top. Caridas Consulting International (CCI) [education consultants](#) assisted Palos move from the top 10% to top 5% of Illinois Elementary and Middle Schools. In this case study, we will look at how they got there. The process in this case study applies to all levels of education and deserves serious attention by all education administrators.



The administration believed that creating “Flow in the Workplace” was a great tool for improving school rating based on test scores. Utilizing a Participative Management Approach was another tool that would garner the best results for their school district.

CCI helped Palos 118 move to the next level of performance by measuring what they thought was critical to their success. Dr. Rosemarie Carroll was a creative thinker and in addition to Flow and Participative Management, fostering trust in her school district was key to improving test scores. The CCI team designed an assessment with a trust metric. The lead (intangible) indicator was **trust** (amongst admin, teachers and students) which was found to be highly relevant and correlated to the lag (tangible) indicator, which was **test scores**.

The Process

We began with coaching Dr. Carroll on how to improve the performance of her management team. To do so, we administered an assessment to give us a performance baseline using our **Ten Indicators of Superior Performance**:

- 1) **Control** – People have a strong need to make reasonable decisions regarding their personal life and work. Effective managers provide their employees with the right balance of direction and freedom. People need interaction with their colleagues, proper tools, and a comfortable work pace to reach optimum performance. This is the most critical component of all the indicators because it impacts productivity and health more than anything else.
- 2) **Learning** – Optimal learning occurs when people have clear goals and timely feedback to course correct. Enhanced learning occurs when people are allowed to create solutions for themselves and their organization.
- 3) **Variety** – People need to avoid boredom, stress, and fatigue by working at a comfortable rhythm. People are enthusiastic about their work when they can master multiple aspects of their work.
- 4) **Mutual Support and Respect** –Heightened engagement occurs when people feel connected to one another. This is a powerful driver and people choose to remain in their jobs when these elements are present.
- 5) **Meaningfulness** – People have a strong innate desire to be engaged in activities that are worthwhile to them, their organization, and the community. They want to be a part of something larger than themselves.
- 6) **A Desirable Future** – People want to grow. People look for careers that offer skill development and help them achieve their personal goals.
- 7) **Preferred Life Interests** – People will remain in their jobs if the work involves one or more of their profoundly ingrained interests. For example, if a person loves to work with computers, they get to work with computers as part of what they do every day. If they enjoy selling, they are given opportunities to develop that skill set.
- 8) **Challenges That Match & Stretch Individual Skills** – People need work experience that is manageable, equal to their skills with opportunities to extend their abilities.
- 9) **Concentration & Focus** – When people are allowed to target their focus then the opportunity to improve that activity is enhanced.
- 10) **Fun** – Work can be fun and enjoyable! People have an innate need to experience fun in all its forms.

Next, our consultants assisted the administration with the implementation of their goals by designing an effective strategy and metrics process tracking progress continuously throughout the year while getting everyone involved in the process.

The Results

The “Flow Model” and The Participative Management Model were a success in the field of education. We partnered with a very innovative superintendent of Palos 118. Dr. Carroll was such a joy



to work with, and I learned just as much from her as she did from me.

- Caridas Consulting helped Palos place in test scores from the top 10% to top 5% of Illinois Elementary and Middle Schools within a year. This was quite an accomplishment since they had already achieved such an excellent performance.
- We facilitated a process that effectively dealt with resistance from the staff and showed them the benefits of implementing the trust metrics, Participative Management, and “Flow”.
- The design of metrics for tangible (lag) and intangible (lead) indicators for the specific purpose of measuring trust and how that impacted test scores. Trust is an example of a lead indicator (intangible), test scores is an example of a lag indicator (tangible).

The “Flow Model” is based on over 28 years of solid research and field testing, and the “Participative Management Model” is based on over 40 years of solid research and field testing. It is faster to implement, more effective and gets people to take responsibility in solving their productivity issues.

The combined business models are the key to implementing consistent high performance in companies and organizations.

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