Leadership
Your Way!

Fresh ideas for connecting with teacher leaders, taking charge of new projects at school, and staying inspired 24/7.

BONUS:
10 Leadership Do’s and Don’ts
Build Your Social Network

Chatting with other teachers on social media lets you trade leadership strategies, swap survival tips, and share brilliant classroom ideas. Plus, it’s fun! Check out our fave follows.

Instagram Inspiration

@fairydustteaching Great ideas for transforming your early-childhood/primary learning space

@tchr2tchr Motivational quotes and daily inspiration for educators

@busymrs.b Cool posts about room organization and student encouragement

@meredithanderson_momgineer STEAM tips and games

@lessonswithlaughter Creative board ideas and classroom activities

Cool Teachers on Twitter

Giselle Santos (@feedtheteacher) Steady stream of engaging links, videos, and news about classroom tech innovations

Dan Brown (@DanBrownTeacher) Informative and inspiring education-reform feed from the author of The Great Expectations School

Rachelle Dene Poth (@Rdene915) Actionable STEAM and ed-tech ideas from a technology consultant and classroom teacher

Blogs We Love

Tween Teacher (tweenteacher.com) Project-based learning and education technology

Urban Ed Mixtape (urbanedmixtape.com) Resources for urban classrooms, teachers, and parents

Science Fix (sciencefix.com) Video science lessons and experiments
6 TED Talks Every Teacher Must Watch

Looking for fresh ideas about teaching, leadership, or just life in general? These mini-talks are worth a watch. Find them at Ted.com and get inspired!

1. Got a Meeting? Take a Walk
(by Nilofer Merchant; 3 min)
Teacher Takeaway: Move your meetings out of the box! When you need to talk through an issue with an administrator or new teacher, try strolling through the halls as you talk.

2. How to Start a Movement
(by Derek Sivers; 3 min)
Teacher Takeaway: It takes guts to stand out and be a leader, and you can show initiative by joining someone else’s movement at school too.

3. Try Something New for 30 Days
(by Matt Cutts; 3 min)
Teacher Takeaway: Is there a new leadership opportunity you’ve wanted to try? Give it a go, because 30 days will pass either way. Might as well make them meaningful!

(by Angela Lee Duckworth; 7 min)
Teacher Takeaway: Keep trying, and teach your students to persevere. Research shows it’s crucial to success.

5. Every Kid Needs a Champion
(by Rita Pierson; 8 min)
Teacher Takeaway: Never give up on your students (even the difficult ones), and definitely insist they strive to be the very best they can be.

6. How to Fix a Broken School: Lead Fearlessly, Love Hard
(by Linda Cliatt-Wayman; 17 min)
Teacher Takeaway: Lessons from a principal who turned around a troubled school by winning over her students with love, leadership, and no excuses.
Leadership Do’s and Don’ts

Keep these expert guidelines in mind the next time you head up a new project at school, pitch an innovative idea to colleagues, or volunteer for extra responsibilities.

**DO** support other teacher leaders at your school. When it’s your turn to initiate a project, those colleagues will remember you were there for them.

**DON’T** dismiss a colleague’s ideas. Give new ideas time. Reflect. Experiment. It may spark next-level teaching tactics for both of you.

**DO** ask other teachers for help. Being a leader means bringing others with you, not going it alone.

**DON’T** be afraid to admit you don’t know something. Leaders who acknowledge that they’re still learning build trust with others.

**DO** honor the requests of school administrators. Even if you’re skeptical, try it out! Making an effort will set you apart as a team player and potential leader.

**DON’T** be afraid to suggest something new. You are uniquely positioned to see micro needs in your grade level or subject.

**DO** branch out. Join a network of local teacher leaders in different buildings and districts to share ideas and learn about new opportunities.

**DON’T** underestimate yourself. Your ideas matter. Nervous about leading an initiative on your own? Ask another teacher to co-lead with you on a project.

**DO** create your own opportunities. What’s missing in your school, and are you the one for the job? Make commitments to projects that are a good fit for you.

**DON’T** say yes to everything. Adding a responsibility will force you to take the focus off your teaching, don’t hesitate to say no.
Step Right Up!

Your students are your first priority (of course!), but you can still find time in your schedule to lead beyond the classroom. These easy ideas will get you going.

**Start a teacher book club.** Pick an inspirational or professional development book and invite teachers from the whole school. You’ll build relationships with educators you haven’t met. Quick tip: Ask for professional development approval—more teachers will be likely to participate.

**Listen to students.** Start a student leadership board. Invite students from different areas of the school, and ask them to share their concerns. Encourage them to use their ideas to be student advocates with your administration.

**Sign on for summer study.** Apply for a summer grant or extra off-site training, and offer to present at a staff meeting when you get back. And while you’re at it, sign up for a program in a city you’ve never visited (bonus mini-vacation!).

**Bring parents to school.** Create programs for parent involvement during hours they are available. It can be as simple as homework labs: Parents come with their kids and work in the cafeteria on homework, with teacher support. Trade off which parents come in early and stay late. Offer Skype hours to parents who can’t make it to the building.

**Build community support.** Need something in your classroom that isn’t in the budget? Write a grant. Or set up a gofundme.com or donorschoose.org account for your classroom. People love to help schools, especially when they can see what the classroom does with the money.

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