

In the early 2000s, Dr. Lee Shulman, the President of the Carnegie Foundation for Teaching, wrote about the need to focus on our habits. He spoke about three habits in particular: Habits of Head, Habits of Heart, and Habits of Hand. Those three habits intertwine to support successful and impactful changes people could make to progress in any field—but especially in teaching and learning. Let us look at what they mean and why they are important to the work of a campus leader.

**Habits of Head** relate to thinking, mindset, knowledge, how we understand what we know about our content area, what we have learned about the skillsets of our teaching position, and the depth of our content knowledge related to instructional adjustments that can be made to support a more diverse group of students. How we need to think differently about what we are doing *when what we are doing does not work*. How do we recognize that we do not always know everything and could learn additional information, new ways of knowing, new techniques?

**Habits of Heart** relate to our passion about our work, what we hold dear, and how our work spurs us forward to support changes in what we do. For example, it is why many educators work in Title I schools or with students who require greater levels of support. Teachers have a passion to support the progress of students and learn how to change education systems for the better. The heart gives us the courage to move forward with changes that make our students excel and education systems improve. We take pride in those improved outcomes – they are our outcomes, too.

**Habits of Hand** are about our actions, what we do, how we develop and practice our teaching, how we design and deliver our work, and how we adjust and adapt with feedback. Our hands will implement the work of **p**lanning, **d**oing/teaching, **s**tudying outcomes, and adjusting our actions (**PDSA Cycles**).

It is likely you can tell that Habits of Head, Heart and Hand cannot be separated – just like parts of you cannot be separated – each facet impacts the other. We can focus on one Habit at a time but all work together in the final analysis. What we can do is ask ourselves “**Which Habit is my initial focus? Then what comes next? How do I make the components connect?**”

Some initial considerations that leaders may ponder are provided below in the form of questions:

Do my staff need to adjust their mindset and/or acquire a greater level of expertise related to teaching techniques or content knowledge?

(This is a Habit of \_\_\_\_\_ ). **As a leader, how will I do that?**

Do my staff need to re-energize their passion for fulfilling the needs of the students we serve, to get fired up about my instructional changes that lead to improved student outcomes, to share the joy of change?

(This is a Habit of \_\_\_\_\_ ). **As a leader, how will I do that?**

Do my staff need to make adjustments to the schedule so that content that sticks together for more robust learning is taught side-by-side, do my staff need to grade papers in different colored pen to nurture student success, do I need to complete my walk-throughs more often to encourage my teachers?

(This is a Habit of \_\_\_\_\_ ). **As a leader, how will I do that?**

You may wish to continue creating an Action Plan/PDSA Cycle for Priorities and Supports. Perhaps responding to the next two questions can help you begin.

1. **Which one of the three Habits will you or your staff prioritize? Head? Heart? Hand? How will you accomplish your goal? Which strategies will you incorporate?**
2. **How will you support your campus to integrate their thinking about these three habits as they engage in campus improvement?**

It may help you to see a note-taking guide to help you visualize where you and your team are in the process.

**Activity: Please work on the following PDSA template to help you and your campus with your thoughts, those of your leadership team, and your campus improvement plan.**

## Habits of Head, Heart, and Hand PDSA Cycle Note-Taking Guide

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| 1. <b>What do you need to prioritize to improve the campus?</b>  |
| 2. <b>Which of the three Habits – Head, Heart, Hand – is the initial priority?</b> Describe it.  |
| 3. <b>PLAN</b> – Explain what your plan is to address this priority.   |
| 4. <b>DO</b> – Explain what you will do to ensure that you meet this priority.   |
| 5. <b>STUDY</b> – What evidence do you need to collect along the way so that you can decide on the success level of your PDSA cycle? How will you study that evidence? How will you decide?                |
| 6. <b>ACT</b> – What actions will you take as the campus moves forward? Will you and your staff continue to address the priority, change your tactic, stop your activities? Why did you make the decision? |
| 7. <b>Repeat</b> the content of the template for another priority – ensure that you address each of the three habits as you learn to demonstrate this process.   |

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