
3️⃣ Sample Crucial Conversation---Moving from Compliance to Agency

Scenario:
A school administrator repeatedly submits board reports late. Each time, the explanation is reasonable. The pattern continues.

Version 1: Compliance-Based Leadership (What Often Happens)

Leader: "I need those reports on time."

Administrator: "I know. It's just been a heavy week."

Leader: "Okay, just try to get them in earlier next time."

Result:
Sympathy → No ownership → No accountability → Pattern continues.

Version 2: Agency-Based Servant Leadership

(Using Your Diagnostic Tool)

Leader:
"Let's talk about the timeliness of the Board reports. The last three have been late. The promise you made was to have them to me by _____ date and time by _____. They arrived _____(late). That's my reality. What is yours?"

Administrator:
"Yes, that's accurate."

Leader:
"How much were you depending on others for key elements of your report?"

Administrator:
Their input was important and timely. I underestimated the time I required."

Leader:
"What interfered?"

Administrator:
"I prioritized other issues and assumed the board would understand."

Leader:
“What commitment did you make?”

Administrator:
“That I would deliver by _____ at noon.”

Leader:
“And what is your plan to keep your word?”

Administrator:
“I’ll block time on _____ afternoons and draft them earlier. If I anticipate a delay, I’ll notify you before the deadline.”

Leader:
“By when will I see that adjustment?”

Administrator:
“Starting this week.”

Leader:
“What support do you need?”

Administrator:
“None. I just need to plan differently.”

Leader:
“Good. I’m holding you to that. We’ll review after the next two cycles.”