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### Leadership, the Neglected Skill

“Leaders do not need to know all the answers. They do need to ask the right questions,” write Ronald A. Heifetz and Donald L. Laurie, “The Work of Leadership,” *Harvard Business Review*, January-February 1997.

Leadership, especially adaptive leadership, defines a critical success factor of teaching improvement, but it can be an elusive concept that is sometimes difficult to translate into practical action in the classroom or online.

Often leadership actions can be determine by posing the right questions. Here are some crucial questions that may help you discover how to increase your leadership effectiveness this term:

- What have I been hired to accomplish?
- What results fall under my responsibilities?
- What can I, and only I, bring to my teaching that will make a significant, positive difference to my students?

What benefits will arise from focusing on such questions?

As you answer these, you will likely discover specific leadership actions you can take to cope with the rapid changes impacting your classroom this new academic year.

To help you build your adaptive leadership skills, TFS regularly examines examples of unique leadership concepts and outcomes that your colleagues have developed and applied to their teaching situations.

One of the keys to developing adaptive leadership skills, according to Heifetz and Laurie, is the ability to take a step back from the action and observe.

## TFS e-Mentor Success Insights

They note that the best athletes are the ones who can play their positions superbly and, at the same time, take in the direction and flow of the game—with almost the clarity of a coach's sideline view. In the same way, today's instructors must take in the field of action in their classrooms and online courses and use the up-to-the-minute observational data to make innovative leadership decisions.

This term, think about how you could become an adaptive educational leader for your students—that's teaching for success.

*~John H, (Jack) Shrawder, Exec. Director  
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