



*Improving life and leadership of assistant principals*

### **Assistant Principal Podcast Five for Friday Template**

Hello colleagues and welcome to the Assistant Principal Podcast. I'm your host Frederick Buskey. The goal of this podcast is to help improve the life and leadership of assistant principals. Today's episode of Five for Friday recaps the strategic leadership emails for the week of November 7-11.

Imagine setting a leadership intention at the beginning of each day. That's what many readers of the daily email do. For some, it has become a ritual: Pour a cup of coffee, open your email, read the Strategic Leader Daily, and set one intention to be aware of or execute for the day. The daily email is a powerful leadership practice so if you aren't already a subscriber, I hope you'll consider joining the list. It's just one more way to include me on your leadership journey, and that would bring me joy. You can find a link on my homepage at <https://www.frederickbuskey.com/>

Recap...

I'm still recovering from some weird chest and head congestion thing, so forgive me for sounding strange...

Monday: **Three types of structures influence our work and we need to be better about recognizing them.**

The first year I taught middle school history my room had no windows, fluorescent lights, six columns of five chairs, and a chalk board in the front of the room. I taught five classes, had two preps, covered intramurals, and coached two sports.

These things were the result of or heavily influenced by three types of structures.

The obvious structures are the physical ones – the building and the room I taught in and the furniture and how it was arranged.

But there are two other types of structures.

Codified structures consisted of the written rules, laws, and policies that influenced my work. These included the length of the school day and class periods, the number of periods, the standards I taught, and my teaching load and other responsibilities.

Finally, there are the intangible structures that consist of expectations, rituals and routines that weren't written but still influenced the work. There was an expectation that I would coach a sport. There was an expectation that I would run teacher-centric lessons and maintain a quiet and orderly class.

These three types of structures – physical, codified, and intangible – influence how we work.

The challenge is that we become accustomed to these structures. When they inhibit our goals, we tend to build workarounds instead of changing the structures themselves.

Tuesday **Set an intention to help a specific person today!**

Think about one thing you can do today to impact a single person. Make it concrete – what can you say or do to support someone today.

Take a deep breath.

Close your eyes.

Visualize doing it.

That's it. Go make a difference today!

Wednesday **Stay calm, it's probably not as bad as you think.**

There are probably people within your organization who excel at creating drama. They are people who have grown up in a chaotic environment and craziness is all they know. They aren't bad people, but because they exist in continual craziness, calm and quiet feel strange and threatening. Life experiences have made it more comfortable to handle noise than handle quiet.

Maybe we are all like that to a certain degree, even if it is very small.

When leaders are living in the urgent zone, it is easy to mistake other people's craziness for our own.

Next time you find yourself caught up in emotion, pause.

Ask yourself, "is this really an issue?"

Whether it is or isn't, hang onto the pause and slow down.

There are very few things that are that big of a deal. Yes, all, or at least most, of what we do is important, but it doesn't have to be chaotic and noisy.

Exhibit calmness, for yourself and for those around you.

Thursday **SOPs are important tools that increase efficiency and quality**

A standard operating process or procedure (SOP) is a set of directions for completing a task.

I have a simple SOP for video calls. I open the SOP and it tells me exactly what I need to do.

Things like:

- Check my appearance
- Get a full glass of water
- Silence messages
- Tell people in my space that I am getting on a call
- Turn on the mic!

It also tells me what to do at the end of the call.

Among the benefits of this SOP:

- I don't need to waste brain power remembering the steps
- I won't forget steps
- I will be more consistent in the quality of my calls

SOPs save time and energy and increase quality and consistency.

Friday **SOP value increases with the complexity of the task.**

However, where SOPs become more valuable is in helping others to do things that are at the top end of their skills, or which they have not done before.

For The Assistant Principal Podcast we have a long and complex process that tells each person involved in production what to do each step of the way.

If we have a breakdown in the podcast process we can find the exact step where the breakdown occurred and either fix the step, build in supports, or work with the person who made the error.

By using a complex SOP, it is easier to bring in new people and have them execute with minimal training.

I will include a link on our website for this episode at  
<https://www.frederickbuskey.com/appodcast.html>



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### **Takeaway**

Bringing intentionality to your leadership in three ways:

- Being aware of the structures that impact your work
- Identifying one person you can impact each day
- Staying calm, even when others aren't
- Building supports to make your work easier

None of these things are hard, but they also don't happen without being intentional.

This wraps up this week's Five for Friday rendition of The Assistant Principal Podcast. If you enjoyed today's show, please subscribe and rate this podcast. Rating the podcast really does help other people to find it.

I'm always trying to improve the show, so if you have feedback please email me at [frederick@frederickbuskey.com](mailto:frederick@frederickbuskey.com). If you'd like to find out more about what I'm doing to support assistant principals, you can head over to my website at [frederickbuskey.com/theassistantprincipal](http://frederickbuskey.com/theassistantprincipal).

And if you would like my SOP guide, go to my website at <https://www.frederickbuskey.com/appodcast.html> and look for episode 74 and you'll find a link there.

I'm Frederick Buskey and I hope you'll join me next time for the Assistant Principal Podcast. Cheers!