



COMPETENCIES AND QUALITIES OF AN EXCEL PRINCIPAL

Excel Academy has built a strong track record of educational excellence. Excel Academy will capitalize and expand on its successes through school replication and, over the next five years, will grow to a network of high-performing schools. Actively recruiting and retaining top talent is a core component of Excel Academy's growth strategy and the organization is committed to identifying, training and supporting high-capacity individuals to serve as an Excel Principal.

The Principal is responsible for advancing the growth of Excel Academy in three core areas:

- Delivering results related to the mission and the school's annual performance goals,
- Executing a precise and scientific approach to school design and delivery, and
- Furthering the think tank mentality of the organization.

The following list defines the **competencies** (i.e. skills and knowledge) and **qualities** (i.e. characteristics and personality traits) that are needed for success in these three areas.

COMPETENCIES

Deep Knowledge of Excel Model:

The success of Excel Academy is grounded in a well-defined operating model that is precisely implemented. An Excel Principal has strong command of and deep belief in the core elements of Excel's operating model and can articulate how these elements contribute to a school's success. An Excel Principal has a proven track record in urban education and a career path that enables perspective and experience in applying the Excel model to the school he/she leads.

Direction-Setting:

High-performing schools have a clear vision for educational excellence which staff understand, buy-in to, and spend every minute of every day working to fulfill. The Principal is responsible for setting a vision for the school, communicating that vision to his/her team and uniting and aligning the team towards achieving that vision.

Focus on Outcomes:

Excel Academy is a results-focused organization. An Excel Principal must own accountability by setting ambitious performance goals, developing clear strategies for meeting these goals, using data to analyze progress, and taking aggressive and bold initiative and action to attain results.

Thrives in Fast-Paced, High Functioning Environment:

An Excel Principal demonstrates an above and beyond work ethic that never is satiated. He/she puts in a minimum of a 12 hour day and is able to prioritize tasks, effectively manage time and

quickly and effectively transition between a diverse range of tasks that are encountered on a daily basis. An Excel Principal has a history of success and demonstrable prior achievements in a high-functioning organization.

Models Effective Teaching and Classroom Management:

The Principal is the primary instructional leader of the school. As such, an Excel Principal is a master teacher and effectively models the instructional and non-instructional expectations to which teachers are held.

Systems Thinker:

Excel's operating model is grounded in a comprehensive set of systems and procedures that maximize the effectiveness and efficacy of the school design. An Excel Principal is able to design and execute effective systems and uses an iterative approach to systems thinking.

Management:

The Principal manages a significant number of direct reports, including instructional and non-instructional staff. The Principal is able to effectively support individuals with various work styles and manages difficult conversations adeptly.

Cultivate Adult Culture:

At Excel, there is a strong student culture that permeates the building. Of equal importance is the culture that defines the interactions, relationships and actions of the adults working at Excel. The Principal is responsible for defining, modeling and upholding a collegial, learning-focused adult professional culture. In doing so, he/she is equally accessible to staff, manages conflict, and ensures that staff are treated as professionals and are supported and inspired in the work that they do.

Communication:

On a given day, an Excel Principal will communicate with a variety of constituents including students, parents, staff, governing board members and external stakeholders such as funders, volunteers, the media and public officials. An Excel Principal has strong listening (i.e. "having an ear to the ground"), writing and speaking skills. Move over, he/she must be able to apply communication skills to diverse situations and be thoughtful, transparent and deliberate in delivery.

Stakeholder Management:

An Excel Principal interacts with a range of constituents. He/she develops strong, trusting, respectful relationships with others and demonstrates honesty and integrity in interactions with others.

Analytical Thinking and Decision-Making:

An Excel Principal makes multitudes of decisions on a given day. He/she must be able to effectively organize, assess and act on information in real-time and pro-actively anticipate challenges and potential actions. He/she must be able to consider and have command of both the big picture and the details and be willing to stand by/take responsibility for decisions.

Continuous Learning:

To be a highly functioning organization, the adults in the building must model the spirit and

practice of constant learning. An Excel Principal constantly seeks opportunities to learn and improve, makes use of successes, failures and data in order to learn and improve and is willing to take calculated risks in order to learn and improve. An Excel Principal is aware of his/her strengths and weaknesses and how his/her actions impact others.

QUALITIES

An Excel Principal embodies the following qualities and can reflect meaningfully how they apply to the school environment:

- Confident, but humble,
- Sure of oneself, but not egotistical,
- Passionate with a fire in his/her belly, but even-keeled and emotionally resilient;
and
- Firm in beliefs, but open and responsive to new ideas.