

Using the Visual Valet Model for Teacher/Staff Evaluations

The job of an administrator is to coach and support his/her staff to fulfill or exceed set goals needed for the success of a program. It is the responsibility of the administrator to provide feedback during a school year related to areas that need growth as well as affirm areas that are strong and thriving. This evaluation process can be difficult and challenging.

One of the reasons I would propose that evaluations in general can be difficult within Adventist Institutions is because the “denominational dynamic” bleeds into areas that need a business decision applied to them. For example, it is more challenging for an denominational leader to call in a teacher and challenge them to look at an area of weakness because we very likely may also sit in the same sanctuary at church on Sabbath morning. Compounding this issue would be the fact that our children may be in the same classroom at the elementary school, my employee’s spouse may be my child’s teacher, or their spouse works as an administrative assistant to my direct supervisor, or we worked together as greeters for a church evangelistic series, and the list goes on and on. Because the work that we do Monday through Friday is an intricate part of the overall mission of the church, it can create a dynamic that may make necessary business decisions difficult. Stewardship of God’s work calls us to make decisions that will better enable the work to move forward and yet many times we are hampered by these “church family” dynamics and unfortunately the work may suffer.

In the educational setting principals are required to motivate, challenge, support, and appropriately model for their faculty/staff. I would propose to you that the Visual Valet model could be a tool that can assist the principal in evaluating and encouraging his or her staff to be everything God has called them to be. Instead of trying to separate the business side of Adventist Education with its mission why don’t we just embrace the fact that there is no real way to separate them at all? In reality the business end of the work is really about the mission and vis versa. They are inseparable. If business decisions are not being made, then the mission fails. If the mission of a school is not properly in place, then the business side will fail because God’s hand is not in it.

I would propose is that we use Klassen’s Visual Valet model to create a spiritual growth model evaluative process for teachers and staff. If Adventist educators are about God’s work then they should be about personal growth. If we grow personally in Christ then we grow professionally. The difficult issue however is that personal growth is, well, personal. The problem however is this. If a teacher/staff member has a spiritual deficit and is not growing, then what they are called to do professionally at an Adventist institution will be subpar at best. If, however, the administrator is able to come along side their staff member in a coaching mode, providing feedback and help related to the faculty/staff member’s own evaluation of their goals and growth, a positive outcome could be seen. It can be looked at as a team effort while still allowing for accountability.

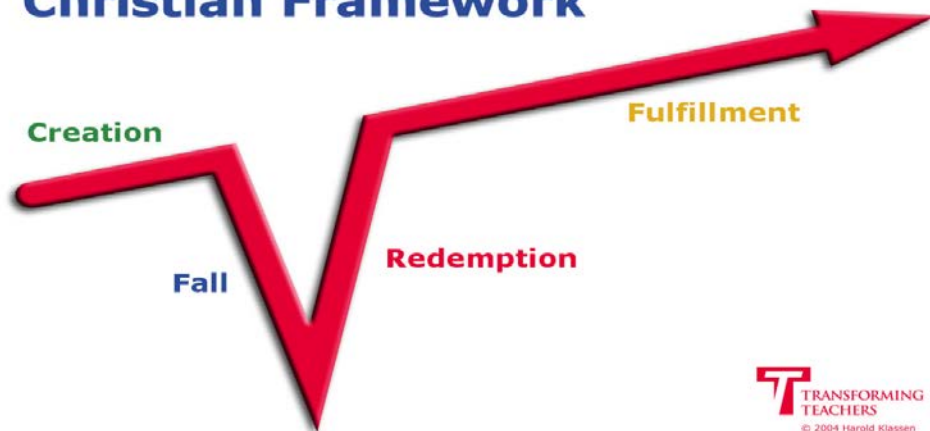
This model should be applied to normal growth evaluations throughout a given school year. There are times when an administrator must deal directly and intentionally with

more significant performance or conduct issues that would not call for a collaborative approach.

Visual Valet Model

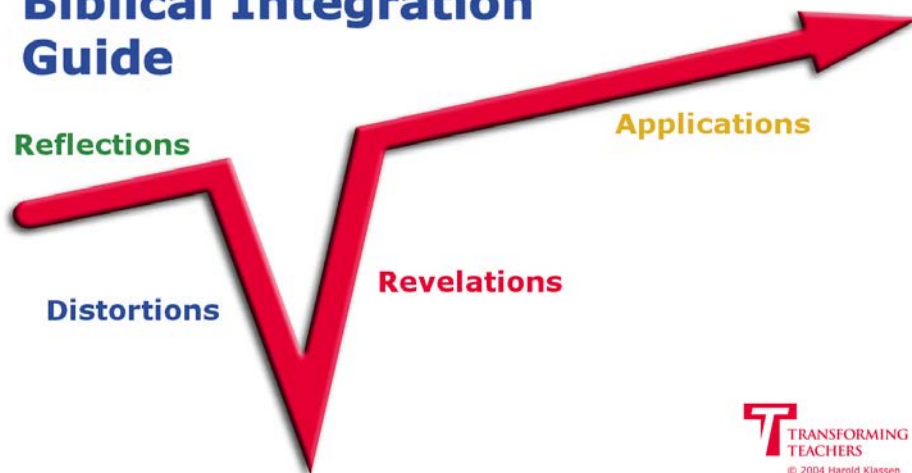
It is important that the administrator give a general overview of the Visual Valet as applied to the principles of Adventist Education. Specifically the simplistic yet powerful reference to the Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Fulfillment.

Christian Framework



Second, explanation should be given for the expansion of the Biblical Integration Guide which covers, Reflections, Distortions, Revelations, and Application.

Biblical Integration Guide



This model has spiritual application that can be transferred to all parts of life. Instead of compartmentalizing so much of our lives into different segments, we can see the different facets of our life being the spokes that flow into the hub of our spiritual journey with Christ. This philosophical paradigm shift can significantly alter our experience.

What follows is an explanation of how the Visual Valet could be used in a teacher/staff evaluation process.

Application to Teacher/Staff Evaluation

At the beginning of each school year the administrator would ask each faculty/staff member to review and become familiar with the benchmark curriculum goals stated for Adventist Education by the North American Division. These goals should be guiding principles that are applied in every facet of a school program.

In addition, each faculty/staff member would be asked to prayerfully select 5 professional goals they would like to accomplish throughout the school year. These goals could have a direct reference to their specific job description but could also apply to areas outside of their direct job description but within the overall mission of the institution and be turned into the principal at the beginning of the year.

As the staff member progresses through the school year they should periodically review (monthly) these goals and benchmarks to ascertain progress and pulse as they move throughout the year. This way, they would be able to make minor and incremental corrections if certain goals are starting to veer off course. This monthly review is very important as deviation from mission or an unaddressed lack of competency in a specific area can be detrimental to student progress and overall mission accomplishment. The administrator should meet approximately once a quarter to observe, review, and support the faculty member as they work towards accomplishing their goals. An “open door” policy should also exist so that any staff member could come in and review, receive feedback, or get encouragement should the need arise.

Following the Visual Valet model, we would see the following principles applied:

Goals (God’s Plan for man)

Jeremiah 29:11-13

Proverbs 14:12

James 4:13-16

Romans 11:33

The 5 goals that each faculty member selects should reflect areas in their professional life that could be improved and strengthened. Improvements in these areas should have a direct correlation to the strengthening of the school program. It should have rationale behind it that ties into the school’s mission statement as well as the curriculum goals of the NAD.

Sometimes these goals can be personal in nature if they are having a direct impact on the professional setting. These types of goals are extremely important but should be carefully reviewed as sometimes it may not be appropriate for discussion in the workplace.

Goals Met or Exceeded (Christ's Perfect Life)

Philippians 4:13

Hebrews 4:15

John 15:5

Romans 8:1

Romans 8:6-8

When we are connected to Christ we have the ability to accomplish the goals that He has laid before us to accomplish. Through His strength and power we are able to meet and exceed the expectations that we have before us as we labor in our various mission fields.

It is important that we recognize and affirm these accomplishments. It is important in faith building to recognize and build upon instances where we have seen Christ work through us to accomplish our goals. Sometimes we may question or doubt whether or not a specific goal is attainable. Looking back to see instances along the way when goals are met or exceeded builds energy, momentum, and the strength to move on to even greater heights. It is similar to climbing a mountain trail. As one moves up the trail it is good to pause at various points to see the distance covered, to examine the view from each vantage point. When the hiker does this, it motivates and encourages them because they can look back and see what has been accomplished and be energized to attain an even greater vantage point in the near future.

Goals Not Met and Why (Man's failure through sin)

Romans 3:10

Romans 3:23

Romans 8:7

Because our sinful nature wars against God's plan for our lives there are times when we desire and decide to follow our own path instead of the path God calls for us to walk down. Because of this we see areas in our work setting when we fall short. One of the difficult things about honest introspection is setting our pride aside in order to see the true picture of why we failed. It is easier to place blame on others and attribute our failure to a circumstance or uncontrollable problem. Sometimes failure can be attributed to circumstances outside of our control but most of the time it is because we have walked outside of faith in Christ and followed our own pathway.

Recognition of Failing Factors (Identifying my tendencies towards sin)

Isaiah 1:18

Proverbs 14:12

As the realization of a failure sets in it can be discouraging and disheartening. Each individual deals with defeat in a different way. Regardless of our defeats we must take the opportunity to learn from our failures. What were the contributing factors that caused me to fall short of my goal? What were the reasons that this goal was not a higher priority for me to fulfill? What circumstances that were in my control, could I have adjusted so that this goal would have been met? As we move through this thought process we are opening ourselves up to solutions and acquiring tools that will help us solve the challenge should it arise in this area again. The key is honest self-reflection.

Strategies for Success (I can do all things through Christ)

Philippians 4:13

1 John 1:9

1 John 2:1

Philippians 3:13

We should always take courage in these low points to know that it is when we are weak, that we are really strong. We have an Advocate who has made a way of escape from every problem and failure; someone who will make a way for us to stand up again and get back on the right path. When we recognize our weakness, it is then that Christ can fill us and use us to accomplish His work. It is when we are at the foot of the Cross that we are the most powerful because we are humbled and empty of self. Christ-filled, we can have courage to move past our failure to the goals that are before us. (Philippians 3:13)

Application of New Plan (If God be for us, who can be against us?)

Romans 8:31

It is easy to have round table theoretical discussions. The challenge is putting that theory into practice. Our old nature is a difficult thing to vanquish. We must ensure that, as we have processed our failures and weaknesses, we have planned different steps that will be implemented if we encounter the problem again. This “retraining” is difficult but once we establish a new pattern, we can move to greater heights.

Continuous Monthly and then Yearly loop

It is important that we consistently review our goals and evaluate our progress through the school year. This should occur on a monthly cycle so that we are able to make adjustments and provide “boosts” to specific areas that may be lacking as we move along. It is easy to get extremely busy so planning and scheduling these reviews will help keep them at the forefront of our mind as we move through the school year.

TEACHER GOAL ACHIEVEMENT FORM

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

GOALS

Please state the goals that you are working towards. Write as much detail as possible so that it is clearly defined and more accurately measurable. Look for tangible elements to state as this will be easier to assess.

GOAL 1:

GOAL 2

GOAL 3

GOAL 4

GOAL 5

GOAL REVIEW

Instructions:

You will need to print off 5 copies of this sheet for each of your 5 individual goals.

Write the number of the goal you will be reviewing. Check the box that applies. Either you have met or exceeded the goal, or you have failed to meet it.

If the goal is met or exceeded, please list the reasons why this has occurred. Be specific. If the goal has not been met, please follow Classens Visual Valet module to identify the following: **1.** Why was the goal not met? **2.** Identify Failing Factors. **3.** Strategies for Success. **4.** Application of plan for success.

GOAL # _____

Met or Exceeded () Failed to Meet ()