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A Study Using a 360 Degree Feedback for Principals Along With Professional Development Seminars

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A STUDY USING 360 DEGREE FEEDBACK FOR PRINCIPALS ALONG WITH
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Stephen D. Shutters

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
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Title: A Study Using a 360 Degree Feedback for Principals Along With Professional Development Seminars

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School principals often do not seek or have access to useful sources of data to guide their professional development, forcing them to rely on self-perception. Research has shown coworkers' perceptions of their supervisors' leadership to be more accurate than that of the supervisors' themselves. This finding may indicate that leaders might be missing a valuable resource for evaluating their effectiveness (Atkins & Wood, 2002). Furthermore, even when areas of need are identified, a catalyst to assist principals in developing professionally is often lacking (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1994; Reeves, 2004).

The research study uses a 360° assessment as well as professional development seminars and other interventions with 5 secondary school principals. The study implemented a variety of techniques used in the private sector, where 360° feedback programs have proven to be successful (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998; Lashway, 1999), and applied them to the public secondary school environment. Overall results revealed a difference of perception between secondary principals and their staffs when applied to the principals' leadership effectiveness. The data also showed that 4 out of the 5 principals in the study rated their leadership skills higher than did their staffs. The study also provided a wealth of information for establishing a successful 360° feedback program for secondary principals.

While the research study showed promise for implementing a 360° feedback model within the secondary school setting, it also revealed other areas of future research that need explored. Secondary principals operate in such a complex environment that other issues should

be examined to fully understand and access the professional growth potential of the model.

Differences in staff-principal perceptions of leadership effectiveness need explained.

Furthermore a secondary principal's self-efficacy, and the role it plays in shaping individual, is unknown as it relates to staff perceptions of secondary principal leadership.

The 360° feedback model shows promise in assisting secondary principals. However, the model needs implemented with strict guidelines as well as commitment from not only the secondary school principal, but from the school district's central office administration. When all are committed and the model is implemented properly, secondary principals can achieve increased leadership effectiveness.