

SHIFTING WORLDVIEW/DOMINANT NARRATIVE GUIDELINES

DO

- *Unmask* – Name the dominant narrative when you see it at work. Point out that what you just saw on the news or heard from a friend, or the law that was just passed, was based on particular values and beliefs. “The way you are talking about the recent contract settlement sounds like you think teachers are pretty greedy and we’re only looking out for ourselves.”
- *Elevate* – Name the values and beliefs from our new narrative that you want to see lived out in the world. Connect it to places where your audience may see that happening already. “I really like it when parents come in and express their appreciation – especially when they acknowledge they don’t now how we do it – it helps me feel valued and respected”
- *Contrast* – Lay out what might be different if your values/convictions were the ones shaping what happens in the world. – Be specific about how we have the choice to approach situations through a different belief system. Invite a rethinking of the situation. “I guess we have to decide if we want to scapegoat teachers for the many challenges we face or accept teachers as willing and able partners in educating all kids.”
- *Draw on your own journey* - While it’s important to personalize this, it’s also important to do it in a way that anyone can see themselves in it. Describing your own realizations and shifts will help others find their own way in the conversation. “I can understand your reaction, there are times when I realize that I’ve been reacting to what others say and not putting forth my own beliefs – it gets discouraging – but I realize now I’ve only been making it worse.”
- *Sustain your efforts and connect with others* – Shifting a dominant narrative does not happen quickly – it takes sustained effort, over time, with many people working at it
- *Demonstrate your worldview*, don’t just write or talk about it. Our actions say as much or more about our values and beliefs as our words

DON’T

- *Focus on challenging facts or interpretations of information* – this will not shift the narrative. Your arguments, as convincing as they may be, will ultimately lose out to the dominant narrative
- *Attack people for their worldview* – many people operate out of the dominant narrative, even if unconsciously. Shifting public narratives will take personal conversion and transformation. You cannot move people if you attack them

- *Name the dominant narrative as “wrong”* - Our assumption is that competing values & beliefs live within people. We want to provide people a chance to chose the ones they want to live out of and/or balance those competing narratives (eg accountability of and respect for teachers)
- *Try to convert or convince people* – We are trying to bring out the best of what is already in people, help them find the resonance for themselves. This is, in part, an emotional journey and our usual approaches to argument and logic don't work so well in this arena.