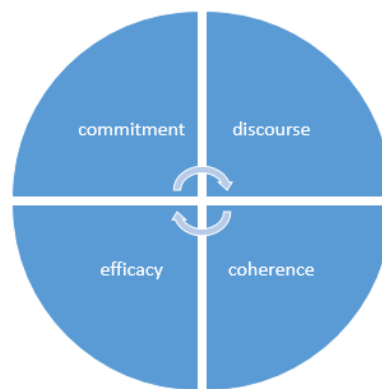


# The Ultimate Enterprise: Forging the Constructs of the NID Workshops

Rosenholtz asserts, "the ultimate social organizational variable is the meaning that the organization has for those who work within it" (1989:3). Thus, for the upcoming Northern Illinois District Ultimate Enterprise workshops, we will work from a perspective at the bottom of the organization, a vista grounded in the workplace of teachers and their experiences (Perrow 1986).



***Commitment to Student Learning.*** Motivation runs strong when an endeavor is absorbing and meaningful (Danetta 2002:145). Commitment is singled out among significant variables DuFour identifies as “the most important element in the improvement of any school” (DuFour 2004:12). Becoming and remaining fully engaged with students demonstrates a wholehearted commitment to student learning.

***Commitment to Collegiality.*** In an engaging school culture, commitment extends beyond classroom interactions with to another setting in which learning occurs, the context of staff interaction. A desire for collaboration is a distinction of professionals (Ebmeier & Nicklaus 1999). Indeed, "collaboration is a social imperative. Without it we can't get extraordinary things done in organizations" (Kouzes & Posner 2002:242). Commitment to collegiality exemplifies a pure learning organization; prizing new knowledge inspires organizational change.

***Discourse.*** Discourse, encompassing more than verbalization, is defined as inquiry (Sergiovanni 1994), social exchange (Bryk & Schneider 2002), struggle (Tusting 2005), the representation of meaning (Barton & Hamilton 2005), and a value-laden framework for understanding (Lavie 2006:773). Talbert and McLaughlin (Talbert & McLaughlin 1994) identify discourse as crucial to schools because it leads to shared meaning in a contemporary and uncertain context.

***Efficacy.*** Efficacy is a powerful determinant of behavioral change. Efficacy is defined as one's own perceived capability to learn or perform (Pintrich & Schunk 2002:143). The efficacy of teachers is propagated within individual certainty and collective convictions to bring about change and lead students to achieve. In a landmark study, teachers with a greater degree of efficacy were highly motivated to teach and their students were in turn motivated to learn (Ashton & Webb 1986:120).

***Coherence.*** The organizational context of school promulgates ambiguity. The indeterminate goals of education lead to vague standards against which to monitor success. Lest educators despair, "ambiguity is found in all aspects of organizational activity"(Weick 2001:44-45). Coherency "seems to be that root activity when people deal with an unknowable, unpredictable world," (Weick 2000:233) deriving personal meaning from contemplating the context of the organization.

These constructs (references available upon request) constitute a working model of the workplace culture in schools and combined forge the critical mass to engage, enlist, and procure teachers and students in the ministry of NID Lutheran Schools.