

GUIDE

Culture-Driven Professional Learning

Small shifts, big impact — one culture-building session at a time.

This guide helps school leaders bring quick, joyful moments of connection and reflection to their teams—strengthening trust, wellbeing, and school culture all year long.

Brought to you by your pals at

alpaca

WHAT'S IN HERE

Ready-to-use culture boosters to bring connection, joy, and energy to staff meetings or professional learning days.

A printable Alpaca Drivers poster to kick things off with intention.

Four activities aligned to key culture drivers:

- **Team Trust:** Trust Web
- **Workplace Health:** Energy Map
- **Personal Growth:** One Word Goal
- **Supportive Leadership:** Start, Stop, Continue



MAKE SCHOOL THE HAPPIEST PLACE TO WORK & LEARN

This guide helps school leaders lead quick, meaningful PD sessions that build connection, spark reflection, and strengthen school culture. Each 15-minute activity is aligned to one of the four Culture Drivers:

1. **Team Trust**
2. **Workplace Health**
3. **Personal Growth**
4. **Leadership Support.**

Use one activity per quarter to create intentional moments rooted in joy, purpose, and community.

Quick Tips:



Keep the tone warm, reflective, and open. This helps staff feel safe, seen, and ready to engage with authenticity.



Model vulnerability to invite honesty. When leaders go first, it gives others permission to share real thoughts and feelings.



Use these sessions to spark ongoing conversations. Follow up in future meetings or casual check-ins to keep the momentum going.

CULTURE DRIVERS

Team Trust
Workplace Health
Personal Growth
Leadership Support



OVERVIEW OF CULTURE DRIVERS

1

Team Trust

Team trust is built through reliability, respect, and psychological safety. When trust is strong, staff feel comfortable sharing ideas, taking risks, and collaborating—creating the conditions for lasting school improvement.

2

Workplace Health

Workplace health includes the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of educators. When staff feel safe, supported, and energized, they're more productive, resilient, and less likely to burn out—fueling a more positive school culture.

3

Personal Growth

Personal growth means developing skills, pursuing goals, and finding fulfillment in work. When staff are challenged and supported, they're more engaged, motivated, and likely to thrive.

4

Leadership Support

Leadership support is about how well leaders guide, recognize, and advocate for staff. When leaders listen and respond to their team, they build trust, boost morale, and align actions with real needs.

1

TRUST WEB

Purpose: Build relational trust among staff by recognizing strengths and showing appreciation.

Materials:

One ball of yarn

Directions:

1. Have staff stand or sit in a circle.
2. Start by holding the yarn. Share something you trust or admire about a teammate across the circle.
3. While holding onto the end, toss the ball of yarn to that person.
4. They'll do the same—recognizing someone new and tossing the yarn.
5. Continue until everyone has been included at least once.



WRAP-UP PROMPT:

What did it feel like to hear what your teammates see and value in you?

2

ENERGY MAP

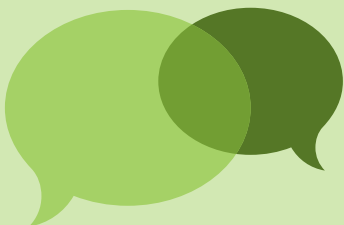
Purpose: Help staff reflect on what fuels and drains their energy at work—and explore small shifts that could help.

Materials:

- Sticky notes or printable and pens
- Poster board or whiteboard divided into two sections: Energizes Me and Drains Me

Directions:

- Invite staff to reflect on a typical week at school.
- On sticky notes, ask them to write one thing that energizes them and one thing that drains them.
- Have them place their notes on the corresponding side of the board.
- Spend a few minutes silently walking around and reading the board together.



WRAP-UP PROMPT:

What patterns did you notice? What's one small shift you can make to boost your energy or reduce a drain?

3

ONE WORD GOAL

Purpose: Encourage reflection and clarity by helping staff identify one focus area for personal growth. Use our ready-to-go resource!

Materials:

- Index cards
- Markers

Directions:

1. Ask staff to reflect on the question: What's one word that captures who you want to be at work this year?
2. Offer examples like: present, bold, patient, joyful, curious.
3. Have each person write their word on an index card and decorate it however they'd like.
4. Invite staff to share their word with a partner or small group.



WRAP-UP PROMPT:

How might keeping this word in mind help shape how you show up at school?

4

START, STOP, CONTINUE

Purpose: Create space for honest, constructive feedback on how leaders can better support their teams.

Materials:

- Paper or sticky notes
- Optional anonymous submission box

Directions:

1. Invite staff to reflect on leadership and support using these prompts:
2. One thing you'd like school leaders to stop doing
3. One thing you'd like them to start doing
4. One thing you appreciate and want them to continue doing
5. Offer the option to submit responses anonymously.
6. After collecting feedback, take time to review, reflect, and share key themes with the team later.



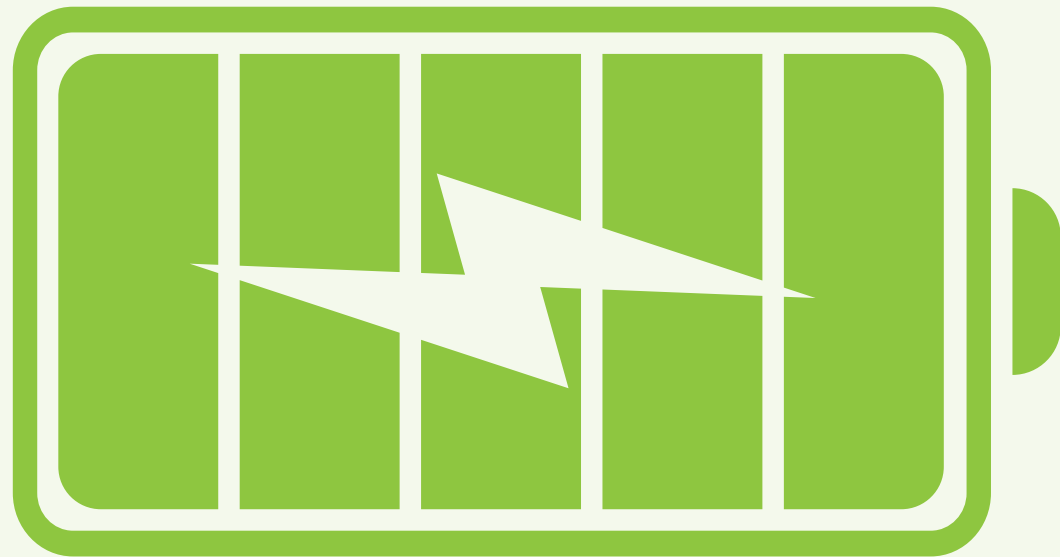
WRAP-UP PROMPT:

What does supportive leadership look and feel like to you?

QUARTER 2 ACTIVITY PRINTABLES

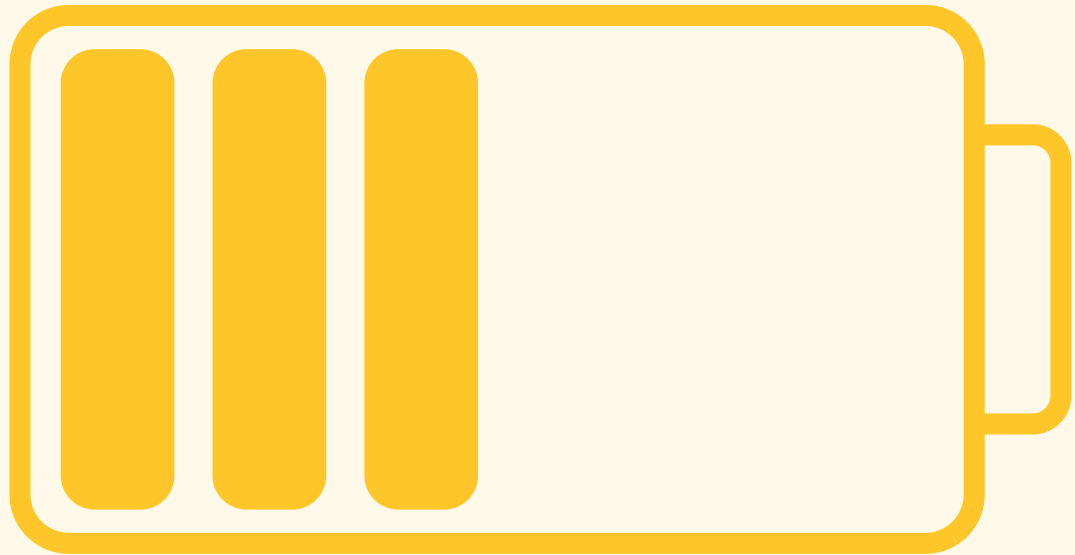


**WHAT
ENERGIZES
ME**



WHAT DRAINS

ME



QUARTER 4 ACTIVITY PRINTABLES





START



One thing I'd like us to try is

because



START

One thing I'd like us to try is

because



START



One thing I'd like us to try is

because



START

One thing I'd like us to try is

because





Instead of

STOP



I think our team should try



Instead of

STOP



I think our team should try



Instead of

STOP



I think our team should try



Instead of

STOP



I think our team should try





CONTINUE

I think we should continue doing

because



CONTINUE

I think we should continue doing

because



CONTINUE

I think we should continue doing

because



CONTINUE

I think we should continue doing

because

COLLABORATION

BUILT BY EDUCATORS, FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

This resource was created in collaboration with dedicated educators and school leaders who brought their experience, ideas, and insight to every step of the process. We're grateful for their partnership in building tools that truly make a difference in schools.



Abbey Sualy

Early Childhood Educator
Omaha, NE



Claire Hanneman

2nd Grade Teacher
Omaha, NE

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Thanks for downloading this resource—at [Alpaca](#), we're on a mission to **make school the happiest place to work**.



Tried an activity?

Send a photo or a staff testimonial to [our team](#), and we'll send you a coffee on us!



Got an idea brewing?

We love co-creating with school leaders—[drop us a line](#) with any resource ideas you'd love to see next.



Explore more!

Check out our [full resource library](#) for creative, ready-to-use tools to support you and your team.



SEE HOW ALPACA WORKS

Beautiful surveys, delightful care packages, and real insights on teacher wellbeing—everything you need to lead with confidence, all in one simple solution. [Book a quick demo!](#)