



LC 2024 - Voices of Evolution: The Dynamic Careers of ESL Educators Turned Managers

with Ishmael Johnson, Ayse Sezgin and Matilda Vincent

Personal Career Journeys



- Key Milestones & Decision Points
- Initial draw of ESL teaching and evolution of passion
- Pivotal moments leading to administration transition



1 -

- *2013 Began in ESL as a Part-Time Saturday teacher while managing a hardware store*
- *In 2014, quit the hardware store to teach in the AM weekdays and do hourly Student Services Officer in the PM*
 - *In 2015, left Student Services to take the position of Assistant Director of Studies*
- *In 2016 became the Director of Studies and had full responsibility for academic program delivery*
 - *2018 left the US to become Centre Director of our school in Calgary*
 - *The biggest decision point was leaving the classroom to become ADoS*
 - *Pivotal Moment = Affecting change of a larger scale*
- *Passion evolved from teaching in the classroom to providing operational support, processes, compliance oversight, product (CRM) management and delving back into Student Services*



2 -

- *As Regional Director at Baskent Institution, I led a team in coordinating student accommodations, planning field trips, and ensuring financial compliance.*
- *Bachelor of Education in English Language Teaching from Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey, and a Cambridge University CELTA Certificate.*
- *ESL Instructor, Vice Principal I managed classrooms, designed/taught multi-level English courses, and organized language-focused events.*
- *Completed ISIEP Course from Canadian Bureau for International Education and got regulated International Student Immigration Advisor, recognized by the ICCRC*
- *In my current role as Student Services Manager at Bayswater, I've played a crucial role in developing operational systems and improving client service, successfully managing pre-enrollments, walk-in bookings, and collaborating with partners for market opportunities, while overseeing high-quality student services and ensuring financial compliance.*



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- *And yours?*
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What similarities or differences strike you when considering our experiences and your own?

What has your career journey looked like so far?

Where might you want that trajectory to go?

Leading like a teacher



Academics

Willingness to keep **learning**

New platforms, different tools, new metrics...

Keeping up with pedagogical research and advances

Further qualifications and the experience they can contribute (e.g., Delta Module 2, teacher training)

Communication: Some say teachers are the worst students - Team management benefits from the same strategies we use in the classroom!

- Instructions
- Engagement
- Buy-in

Organization: an ability to prioritize, plan ahead, but also deal with the unexpected

Adaptability and ability to go with the flow (just like teachers!)

Leadership: Calm and confident leadership, in ESL just like any other field! Determining when to ask and when to tell.

- Having high expectations
- Encouraging growth
- Offering support

Student Services

Communication : Explaining important steps to students with different levels is extremely important. It shows the ability to simplify complex ideas for diverse groups. This skill is crucial in administrative roles where sharing key information is essential.

Leadership skills : Encouraging students to engage and cooperate in class is vital. These leadership qualities are essential for directing teams and promoting team work in administrative positions.

Adaptability : Quickly adjusting to students' needs and overcoming unexpected challenges is crucial. This skill is just as important in administrative roles, where reacting effectively to unexpected situations is essential for success.

Administrators can shape policies affecting ESL students They can push for more funding and support for ESL programs, offer training to ESL teachers, and promote cultural inclusivity. They can also work with district leaders and policymakers to address wider issues and enhance outcomes for ESL students.

The story of Canada life begins with a new chapter, transitioning from a substitute teacher to a full-time teacher, then evolving into an immigration advisor, ultimately leading to a role in student services.



Challenges

Reflecting on the challenges encountered during the transition period

- A - Loss of student interaction and the strong connections I had previously formed with them
- A - Transitioning from teaching to administration posed challenges, including adapting to a new work environment and mindset
- I - The realization that my scheduling decisions influenced a person's ability to earn a paycheck
- I - The workload change from hourly to salary
- M - Moving from peer to manager and the unknown of that

Common hurdles

- A - Successfully completing the ISIEP course was challenging. Balancing assignments after work each week, mastering legal vocabulary, and passing exams required dedication and effort
- I - Managing work-life balance, learning to delegate and trusting in my team to make mistakes and learn from them
- M - Qualifications and the associated expenses both monetary and energetic

Strategies for overcoming obstacles

- A - Seek guidance and support from professionals in your field, and keep pushing forward, even when tasks seem tough. Sharing personal stories and strategies for overcoming obstacles can be valuable in tough situations
- I - Reminding yourself that there is always another 'cliff' after the one you're running towards
- I - Establishing a peer network inside and outside of your current institution
- M - Communication and teamwork - trust that support goes both ways in your broader team

Insight for Aspiring Administrators

ADVICE

For ESL teachers considering a transition into administration (A)

- *Seek opportunities to take on leadership roles or administrative tasks within your current teaching position*
 - *Think about what areas you are actually interested in learning more about and exploring a role in*
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Networking & continuous learning (I)

Joining seminars and workshops in the field can be highly beneficial for professional growth - expand your knowledge, acquire new skills, and stay updated on advancements in teaching methodologies and educational technology.

Things to bear in mind (M)

Identify the qualities (both good and bad) in those you meet or work with - what do you want to emulate, what do you want to avoid - everyone has something to teach us!

No two paths are the same, follow yours and encourage others to follow theirs!

And you?

What are some of the challenges you have come up against? How have you navigated them?

What might be some of the hurdles you anticipate up ahead?

Q&A



Would you make the same decisions now that you have the hindsight?

Is it necessary to have experience in all departments (academics, student services, admissions, sales) before going into management?

How does this translate to mentoring or guiding your team?

Are there any books, courses, or resources that you recommend for teachers who are looking to become administrators?

Please feel free to reach out to us via e-mail:

- *Ishmael Johnson ijohnson@bayswater.ac*
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- *Ayse Sezgin* asezgin@bayswater.ac
 - *Matilda Vincent* mvincent@bayswater.ac
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