

**Birds of a Feather Association**  
**Kevin Capwell - META**  
**Pat Zielke - Viroqua**

# Birds of a Feather

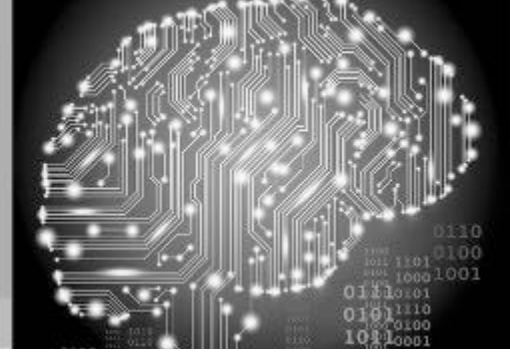


## School District of Onalaska



- Kevin Capwell  
fmr → Data Systems Director - 24 years
- Enrollment: 3,166
- Total Staff: 425
- Buildings: High School, Middle School, three Elementary Schools, District Office, and School Nutrition
- Computers: Desktop 1400, Chrome-books 1400, Other mobile 200.

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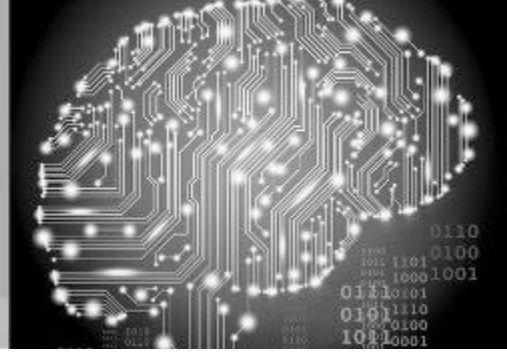


## Viroqua Area Schools



- Pat Zielke  
Technology Coordinator - 20 years
- Enrollment: 1,191
- Total Staff: 184
- Buildings: Shared High School/Middle School a separate Elementary all on the same campus.
- Computers: Desktop 400, Chrome-books 800, Other mobile 90.

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## The Challenging Role of Tech Leader



- Stay current with rapidly changing tech
- Deliver solutions on time & on budget
- Find ways to make workflows and processes more efficient
- Maintain the health and security of the network
- While guarding the personal identifiable information (PII) of students and staff
- With a limited (or shrinking) budget

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## Tech Departments Must Evolve



- Change your way of thinking, your tech has progressed - you must evolve too
- Transforming from manager to leader requires time, and effort
- Professional development and personal development is required
- Avoid being labeled as a gatekeeper

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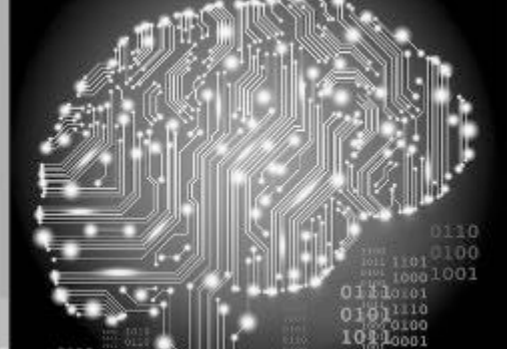


## First Steps to Becoming a Tech Leader



- Build trust with students, teachers, and administration
- Be available, approachable, interested and an active listener
- Avoid answering "no" to every question
- Whatever a barrier to productivity appears eliminate it

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## Understanding the Intersecting Paths



- Understand instruction, learning, and organizational workflows
- Be ready to attend meetings
- Understanding the "big picture" requires meticulous research
- Becoming fluent in the language and processes of your organization

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## Building a Strong Professional Network



- Through the Internet or social media
- Through local networking groups
- Keep in touch with your contacts
- Do favors for your contacts
- Attending conferences
- A good network can help solve problems, keep up with tech and learn best practices
- A proven record of success will bring staff to consult with you



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## Get to Know Your Staff

### Tech Support Self-Assessment

- How did last year go and what are we trying to accomplish this year?
- What are your accomplishments and contributions from last year?
- What learning experiences did you enjoy?
- What are the most demanding areas of your job?
- What ideas do you want to develop this year?
- What would make your job more interesting and satisfying?
- What professional growth opportunities do you want to develop?
- What can I do to support you? Am I holding you back in any way?

### Create two SMART goals

SMART = Specific Measurable Achievable  
Relevant Timely

- Review your current job description and note any changes
- Please note anything else

### Employee Engagement

- What motivates them
- Training and the role of certifications
- Personal areas of interest
- Goal setting
- Setting expectations

### What is the job?

- Review job descriptions
- Review goals regularly
- Keep things up to date
- Don't list specific technologies (they change)

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## Collaboration

- Very inexpensive training and education
- Most valuable time may not be in the sessions!

BrainStorm

WiscNET

National

CIO  
Luncheons

Roundtables

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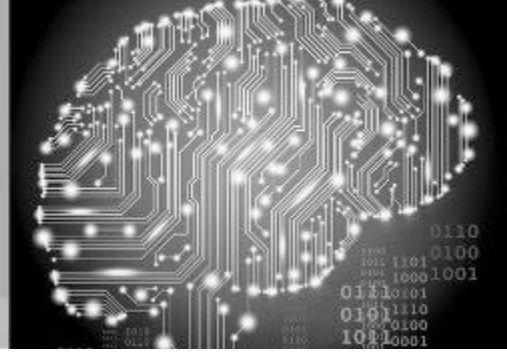


## Growth Opportunities & Involvement



- Allow for new responsibilities
- Set goals and provide opportunities for involvement in new tasks
- It's OK if they outgrow your organization, teaching is our game!
- Keep the pipeline flowing, everyone should feel like they can grow
- Not everyone wants to grow outside of the current position
- Encourage growth from within

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## Staffing Your IT Team

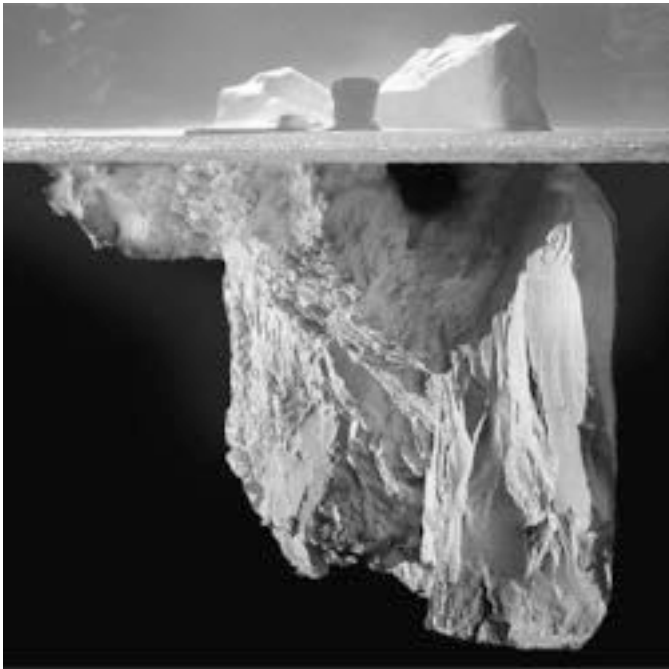


- Finding the correct job applicants
- Assembling an interview team
- Setting the interview format
- When to justify a new position
- Narrowing down the list
- Process of a good technical interview
- Selecting a candidate

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## IT Ecosystem



### What the End Users See

- Desktops
- Chromebooks and Laptops
- Tablets

### What the End Users Don't See

- Network Switches
- Servers (Physical or Virtual)
- TB's of Enterprise Storage
- Wireless Access Points
- Phones, Cameras
- Firewalls, Load balancers
- Support Contracts

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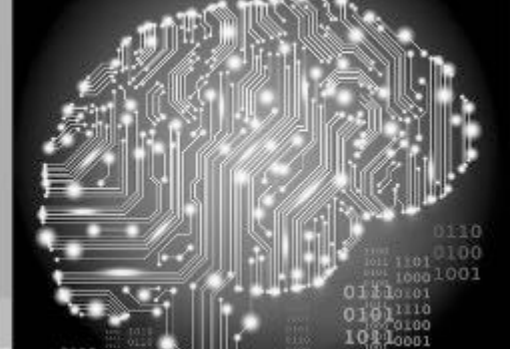


## Inventory Management



- Know your inventory
- Model numbers
- Dates of purchase
- End of life VS end of support
- Warranty expiration dates
- Develop a multi-year plan
- Demonstrates that you are informed
- Show needs and explain risks
- What does it mean if you delay a year?
- Use data to enhance your plan

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## Budgetary Process



- Estimating your budget
- Defending your budget
- Getting approval of your budget
- Lease vs buy - which solution fits?
- Device buyback from inventory
- Software and hardware maintenance
- Managing vendors / RFP / eRate
- Managing money during the hard times
- Print services, consultants, and outsourcing

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## IT Investment Considerations



- Operational investments and labor considerations
  - Know your projects and the skills needed
  - Proper scoping of projects is key
  - Set expectations with the organization
  - Plan for the unexpected (off track)
- Follow the Old School Rules:*
- Minimize brands and models
  - Minimize configurations



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## Evaluation of Projects



- Solution may be outside of IT
- Who manages the planning process?
- How much time do you have for this?
- What are mandatory projects?
- How much time does it take to keep the lights on in IT?
- Don't forget about time off!
- New responsibilities require cross training!
- Communicate plan to leadership

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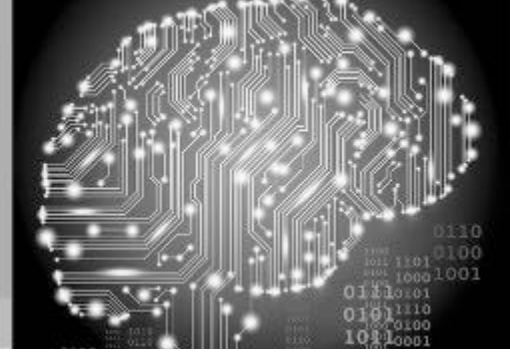


## Security and Compliance



- Authentication / setting access
- Security defenses
- COPPA / FERPA - Schools are responsible for protecting student data
- Malware, phishing, SQL injection, zero day exploits
- Educate employees
- Maintaining evidence (data retention)
- Surviving an IT audit
- Create a disaster recovery plan

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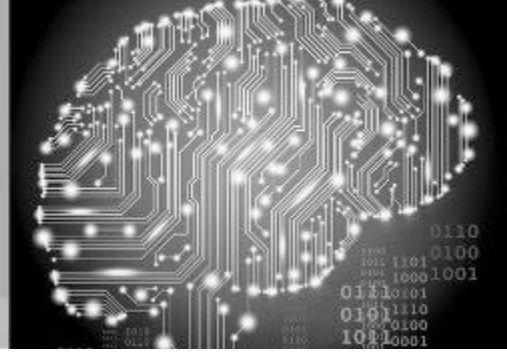


## End User Experience



- Establishing the IT department's perception of the users
- Relationships with users
- Sharing and collection of information
- Proactive solutions for end users
- End user training
- Help desk best practices
- Creating an end user survey

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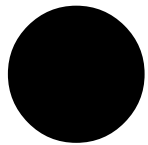


## Questions?

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