



InterLEAD Connector™

Connecting appraisal with professional learning,
reflection and teacher growth

UNLOCKING THE FULL POTENTIAL

Using the InterLEAD Connector™ System



Taking a strategic approach to developing and implementing the InterLEAD Connector™ system yields breakthroughs

Here's what one Principal has to say:

Hi Tony

Just thought I would write to share the success we are having with the connector – both the professional practice journal side and undertaking 4 Minute Walk Throughs.

After your last couple of workshops I openly offered to staff this term, that if they would like to find out more about self appraising and leading their appraisal to come to a meeting to find out more. I had 12/15 of my teaching staff attend. The 3 that did not are not returning to school next year.

After sharing the process and the personal data that they would receive on their own practice all staff have chosen to lead their appraisals and lead their own appraisal conversations following an invited visit by myself and Theresa.

For me, this is a huge shift in approach to appraisal and the professionalism in our profession. I must acknowledge the work you have contributed alongside our school to the success of our staff being in this position in the space of time that they are.

We had ERO at school last week and they spent a considerable amount of time focusing on 'appraisal'. They were blown away with the teaching as inquiry and self-reflection approach that our staff have and the way it's been woven into the appraisal system. A real credit to ERO was they offered for staff to visit classes along side them as an evaluator. The ERO reviewers were blown away that each time staff came out of a room their instant reflection was their own practice and how they could be working on x,y and z in their own practice. At no stage did staff think about the teacher that was teaching, it was all about themselves.

Exciting times and movements in our school, thanks to an approach and system that promotes professionalism and adults working and learning alongside as adults.

Thanks Tony

Matt

Unlocking the full potential of InterLEAD Connector™

Generally speaking the success of any system depends on the people using it...

The freighter ship Rena provides a useful analogy. The Rena was a very good system designed to transport freight. However it beached on Astrolabe reef off the coast of Mt Maunganui not because of any fault with the system itself but because of human failings. Like ships, aeroplanes too are systems. Aeroplanes remain airborne because people involved in making the system work have knowledge, skills and abilities to do so.

InterLEAD Connector™ is a system and can be thought of in the same way as we think of ships and aeroplanes. School leaders are increasingly realising how they, their teachers and ultimately their students can benefit most from the system when users have key knowledge components and specific skills allowing them to do so. The question becomes – *Would you as teacher want to become part of an appraisal process when you don't know how it works and don't have the skills to make it work and when those around you might not have those attributes either?*

Feedback we are receiving from school leaders and teachers using the InterLEAD Connector™ system is extremely positive. Because InterLEAD Connector™ is unlike any system encountered before, the novelty factor alone is very powerful. In talking to people however many teachers and leaders are realising they are missing valuable opportunities to make profound differences to the culture of their school, to teaching practice and learning opportunities in classrooms because users are not in possession of all the necessary knowledge facts and have not had opportunities to develop key skills allowing them to tap into the full potential the InterLEAD Connector™ offers.

There are two ways of viewing InterLEAD Connector™. One way is to think of it as an appraisal system designed to remedy or 'fix' your current one. The other is to see InterLEAD Connector™ as a ground breaking vehicle with the potential to transform school culture (see page 4) – that's the way teachers demonstrate professional practice, collaborate, talk about their practice and the way they practise their teaching whilst simultaneously meeting the requirements of appraisal. Leaders who are seeking to 'push the professional reflection, inquiry and journaling button', who seek to shift the burden for appraisal of accountability and responsibility onto teachers successfully, and who want to strengthen their adult learning culture and see InterLEAD Connector™ as the vehicle to connect these vital practices realise teachers require some new knowledge and the opportunity to develop new skills that will enhance their ability to get the most from the system. This booklet provides some of this information.



InterLEAD Connector™ requires leaders and teachers to think and act in ways they may not have been asked to work before. Because the system is designed to be more formative than summative – connecting personal reflection and inquiry and dialogue to create professional learning partnerships – it has been described by many as a high trust model. On this basis school leaders are discovering it is important teachers are provided opportunities to develop knowledge of the system and also opportunities to develop skills to work in new ways. By doing so leaders avoid running the risk of accusing teachers of not being trusted when issues might arise when in reality the issue is a lack of ability to make the system work.

It is noticeable those schools using the InterLEAD Connector™ system for a year, but then discontinue using it, are consistently those schools who have not valued a strategic approach to implementation and development. They have not provided their staff with strategic professional learning to support their understanding of the big or small pictures and they have not thought about how to support teachers to navigate the system. Leaders who do return saying “Our staff are discovering just how worthwhile appraisal can be”, “The conversations are fantastic – we’ve never talked about teaching practice like this before”; and “People are getting so much from their appraisals than ever before”, successfully break long-held doom-loop thinking associated with traditional appraisal by seeing the importance of supporting it’s development and implementation with professional development. They see that getting appraisal right requires thinking of it as a 1-2 year initiative in it’s own right.

Whilst it might be stereotypical to say, it is our experience most teachers and even many school leaders view appraisal as a red flag word. Appraisal unfortunately conjures up more negative connotations than positive ones. On this basis, when developing and implementing InterLEAD Connector™, it is important teachers are provided positive experiences from the start so that buy in moves to ownership as quickly as possible.

This document provides an overview of six regularly requested areas of professional development school leaders ask us to provide to support their leadership teams and teachers to develop and implement InterLEAD Connector™, and the rationale for doing so, so that it’s full potential is realised as quickly as possible. There are other areas too. All professional development is tailored to meet the needs of you and your staff.

Why is the human side of appraisal so important?

Domain	Professional Development	Professional Learning
Motivation	Extrinsic "I have to"	Intrinsic "I want to"
Relationship	Hierarchy	Partnership
Communication	Prepared Presentation	Informal Professional Conversation
Conversation	Often Monologue	Dialogue
Conversation Type	Feedback & Discussion	Reflective & Generative
Communication Flow	Usually One To Many	One To One & Small Groups
Teacher Participation	Passive	Actively Participating
Basis Of Learning	Generic "One size fits all"	Personalised "Focuses on me"
Who Does The Thinking	The Provider	The Teacher
Underlying Belief	"We need to be fixed"	"Empowering me as a knowledge worker"
Underlying Belief	"We know what the problem is – listen to us"	"Let's explore and find out what the problem is together"
Occurs Through	Formal Side Of School	Informal Side Of School
Learning Type	Technical / Informational	Transformational / Adaptive / Deep
Nature Of Problem	Assumed To Be Known Before Starting	Discovered Through Collaborative Learning
Approach	Structured	Unstructured
Formation Of Learning	Instructed	Constructed
Collaboration	Often Contrived	Authentic
Results In	Compliance	Commitment
Creates	Resistance & Defensiveness	Energy & Excitement
Sense Of	Policing & Inspecting	Freedom & Exploration
Seeks From Teachers	'Buy-in'	'Personal Ownership'
Promotes	Teachers As Experts	Teachers As Learners
Courage	Encourages Risk Avoidance	Encourages Risk Taking
Type Of School Created	Professional Development Community	Professional Learning Community
Happens	Despite School Culture	Because It Is School Culture
Impact On Practice	Limited	Extremely High

There are significant differences between Professional **Learning** Communities and Professional **Development** Communities. The table highlights crucial variations.

School leaders seeking painless and simplifying ways to expedite the development of right-hand column thinking, behaviours and practices are using InterLEAD Connector™ to do so.

Because Professional Development tends to be led by others teachers can become passive. Professional Learning in contrast is an active process led by each teacher around their practice. The extent to which you will be able to successfully develop your school as a Professional Learning Community will depend on the extent to which your teachers and leaders have knowledge, thinking and skills to challenge and provoke. Developing your teachers' capability to fully tap into InterLEAD Connector™ is an easy and painless way to develop the right-hand column which research consistently highlights as being critical to high performing schools and classrooms.

Tapping into the full potential InterLEAD Connector™ offers deep and powerful reflection aided through the collaborative efforts of colleagues. Teachers become informed and insightful and are able to identify the professional development they require to continually improve. Rather than using professional development to drive professional learning, you want teachers through the InterLEAD Connector™ to engage in professional learning that drives their professional development.

Do your teachers have the knowledge, skills and ability to work in and support the behaviours and practices a 21st century professional learning community demands?

Developing the human side of appraisal is something often overlooked when thinking about effective adult learning systems like appraisal.

Four dimensions of professional learning and development are generally requested to assist teachers and leaders develop capability to support implementation and development of InterLEAD Connector™ in ways supportive of ‘right-hand column’ practices:

- Understanding the system – the philosophy and the mechanics
- Data gathering – what is good data and how do I gather it?
- Communication – how do we facilitate powerful reflective conversations?
- Partnership learning – how can we move from contrived collegiality to authentic collegiality? How can we develop collegial relationships as opposed to congenial relationships?

From a teacher’s perspective the most important outcome of their appraisal is that they feel safe yet challenged and invigorated at the same time. Through professional data gathering and conversation around their teaching practice data an aim of InterLEAD Connector™ is to provide for each teacher the opportunity to experience transformational learning.

Transformational learning relates to the development of cognitive, emotional, interpersonal and intrapersonal capacities that enable a person to manage the complexities of work and life. Through transformational learning a qualitative shift occurs in how a person actively interprets, organises, understands and makes sense of their world. When someone has an epiphany, a ‘light bulb’ or an ‘aha’ moment, they have experienced transformational learning. They experience something so profound and personally meaningful and relevant that their belief system, their value base, their assumptions and mental models are literally shunted to a new place and this change lasts forever. This is also referred to as ‘deep learning’. When it occurs it’s exciting and rewarding and you have moved closer to developing the professional learning community most leaders seek. Becoming comfortable with and being skilled in the ‘right-hand column’ practices is the basis for transformational learning.

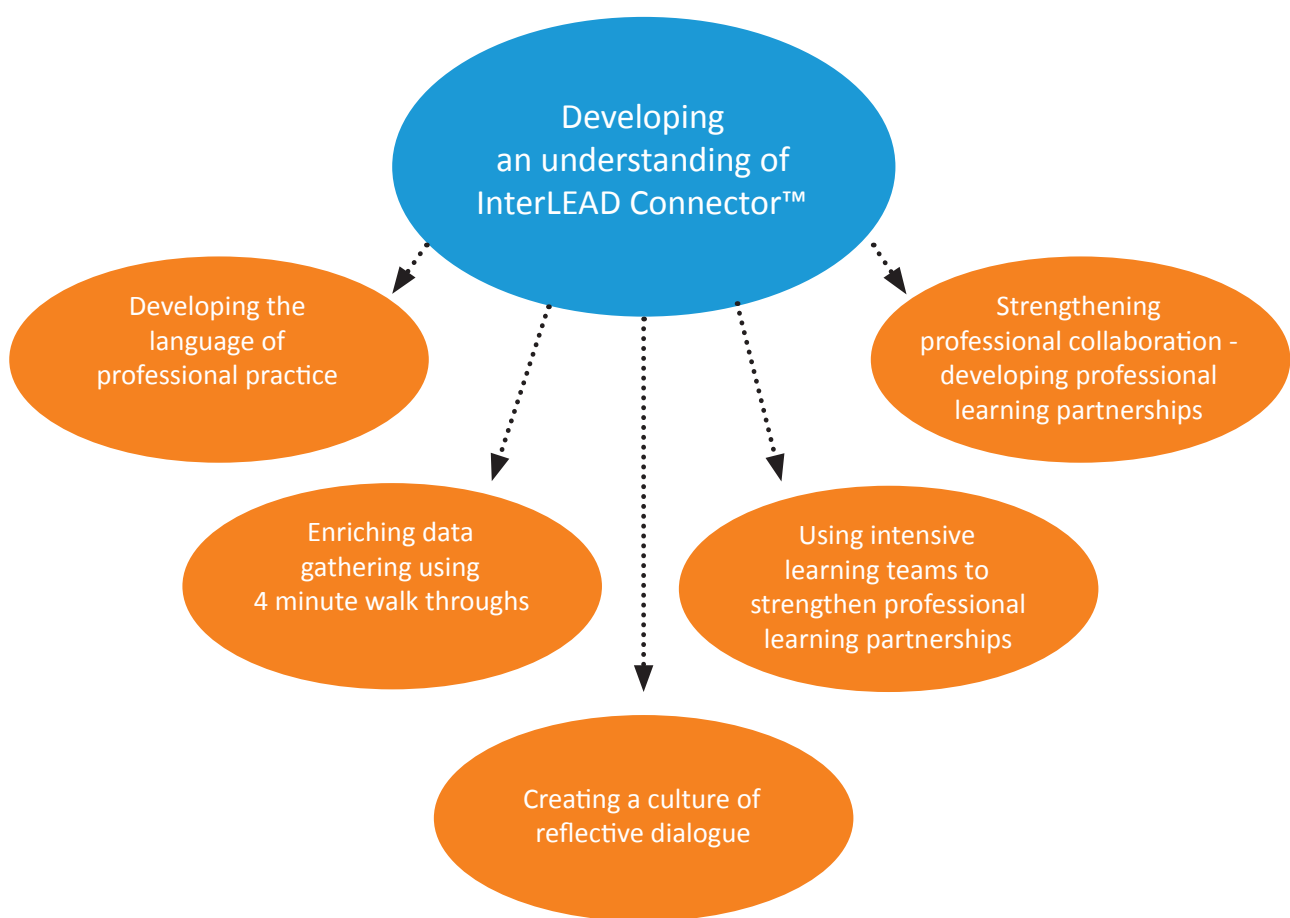
When teachers and leaders are able to access rich teaching practice data generated by InterLEAD Connector™ and when they have knowledge, skills and abilities to craft highly provocative yet safe reflective conversations, opportunities to experience transformational learning for teachers and leaders is exponentially increased. It’s through carefully crafted conversations, using higher order conversational techniques and strategies, that teachers are able to ‘connect’. It is at these times when appraisal literally comes alive for teachers.

Informational learning focuses on increasing the amount of knowledge a teacher has. It focuses on providing strategies and information to fix perceived problems. Informational learning works on the basis of knowledge dissemination. The thinking is that so long as teachers are provided a steady stream of knowledge they will improve their practice and student achievement will improve. What is usually missing is that part of the process aiding teachers to make ‘connections’ between their practice and their students – the conversation.

Without building organisational capacity amongst teachers and their leaders to synthesise and evaluate their teaching practice data through carefully crafted facilitated reflective conversations and authentic professional partnership learning it is unlikely InterLEAD Connector™ will provide teachers with the professional regeneration, ‘sparking’, creativity and the development of the ‘learning edge’ most desire. The risk is that for these teachers their appraisal becomes a process fostering more ‘shallow’ informational learning than ‘deep’ transformational learning. A little like the ‘left-hand column’ approach associated with professional development.

With these things in mind, the following areas of Professional Learning are being sought by leadership teams for both themselves and their staff to expedite the implementation and embedding of InterLEAD Connector™ so that it adds greatest value.

Popular professional learning – diagrammatically



Developing an understanding of InterLEAD Connector™ – what's in it for me, and why should I engage with it?

Time Frame: One Day

Focus Areas

Teachers will be most accustomed to appraisal “being done to them”. InterLEAD Connector™ shifts the responsibility for ensuring appraisal takes place on to them. Some shift in thinking needs to occur so that teachers are prepared to accept this responsibility. They should come to understand the new landscape of 21st century professional learning and thinking.

Possible Key areas covered are:

- Supporting teachers as adult learners – how does adult learning differ from how children learn? What must professionals commit to and be prepared to sacrifice to be the best they can?
- Using the InterLEAD Connector™ to strengthen the professional practices of a professional learning community – what are the practices of a professional learning community and how do they differ from a professional development community?
- The Standards - defining the requirements for Teacher Registration and how the InterLEAD Connector™ assists and supports teachers to do this
- What is high quality reflection and inquiry? What is low quality reflection and inquiry?
- Overcoming the barriers and hurdles to teacher reflection and inquiry – what must I commit to?
- Familiarisation with the four developmental stages of teachers and aligning with Appraisal Connector™ – Positive Classroom Management, Content and Curriculum Knowledge, Instructional Practices, Formative Assessment
- Modelling the Social Competencies – Managing Self, Relating to Others, Thinking , Participating and Contributing
- Data gathering and selecting partners; thinking about learning cycles; What might my appraisal look like? How can I personalise it to meet my needs?
- Data for reflection and inquiry (lead data v lag data)
- Navigating InterLEAD Connector™ – understanding the questions; tagging questions; accessing the different tabs; using the on-line journal, setting goals and more...



Developing the language of professional practice – marrying teaching practice with professional practice

Time Frame: One Day

Focus Areas

Three practices underpin high performing schools – Teaching Practice, Leadership Practice and Professional Practice. As educators our attention to teaching practice is historical and enduring; around leadership practice it's evolving. However, the introduction of the new Teacher's Council Registration framework is a game changer, explicitly placing professional practice on the table.

Committing to and demonstrating high quality professional practice is one way professional educators distinguish themselves from non-professional educators like parents and teacher aides. However, as Robert Keidel notes in his seminal book, *Seeing Organisational Patterns*, when people are asked to shift from a single focus (teaching practice) to a dual focus (teaching practice and professional practice) the world can sometimes become baffling. And for leaders, juggling the third (leadership practice), the world can become bamboozling.

Designed to simplify for leaders and teachers the complexities of professional practice this one-day workshop will:

- Clarify those professional practices distinguishing teachers who practise teaching from those who play at it;
- Provide strategies to help you shift your gifted amateurs to committed professionals;
- Identify key differences between wondering and professional reflecting;
- Clarify differences between questioning and professional inquiry;
- Distinguish professional journaling from professional diarising;
- Explore the tension between traditional goal setting and teaching as inquiry;
- Provide you with credible answers when teachers ask questions such as “how much should I be writing for a reflection?”, “How regularly should I be doing it?” and “what’s the point in writing it down when it’s already in my head?”



Enriching data gathering using 4 minute walk throughs

Time Frame: One Day

Focus Areas

Part of accessing the full potential of InterLEAD Connector™ requires shifting away from the traditional 40 minute lesson observation/s. Working in this way will not provide teachers with the reflective data they require for in-depth reflection and inquiry. You will not see in one or two 40 minute observations everything you need to.

The most popular professional learning undertaken by schools around enriching teachers' and leaders' abilities to gather high quality teaching practice data is learning how to undertake 4 Minute Walk Throughs. Rather than relying on gathering data from a one off lesson (which is often artificially contrived and produces often null and void data) the focus is learning how to take 'snapshots' of teachers' practices overtime so that patterns and trends emerge. Patterns become the focus for data gathering and deepen professional conversation.

Teachers and/or leaders trained in Walk Throughs use them to visit each other and use the information they gather to complete the on-line reflective statements. This richer data is a key to unlocking deeper and more meaningful conversations which can lead to transformational learning experiences. If a teacher/leader can undertake one 4 Minute Walk Through a week on a colleague over 18 weeks, they have rich data with which to provide that teacher with. This is richer and more useful than gathering data from a one-off lesson observation lasting 50 minutes.

Systems like InterLEAD Connector™ can often work best when data provided is based on perceptions over time because this is more accurate, richer and more authentic. 4 Minute Walk Throughs are a vehicle allowing this to happen.

Possible Key areas covered are:

- Linking InterLEAD Connector™ philosophy to walk through philosophy
- Learning the five steps of a walk through
- In-school walk through coaching – undertaking 4 minute walk throughs



Creating a culture of reflective dialogue – the art of thinking together in conversation

Time Frame: One Day

Focus Areas

There are two primary types of discourse – dialogue and discussion. Both are important for people to be productive and to be able to learn through and with each other.

Discussion has the same root as percussion and concussion. It suggests something like a 'Ping-Pong' game where participants hit a ball backwards and forwards. Discussion is less than helpful when it comes to professional learning. It stymies transformational learning opportunities and like any game, has at its core the aim of winning.

Dialogue is a very old idea revered by the ancient Greeks and practiced by many primitive societies such as the American Indians. The word 'dialogue' comes from the Greek dialogos. Dia means through. Logos means the word, or more broadly, the meaning. The purpose of a dialogue is to go beyond any one individual's understanding. Developing skills and knowledge to engage others in dialogue is crucial to making appraisal meaningful and relevant to teachers.

InterLEAD Connector™ has been designed expressly as a reflective tool to assist teachers to inquire into, through synthesis and evaluation, critical aspects of their teaching practice. Whilst raw data provides one angle for teachers' consideration, the jewel will always be the quality of professional conversation they and their learning partner's or appraiser are able to facilitate and contribute to. Productive professional conversations do not come down to luck or good fortune but skill and knowledge of everyone involved. Participants are required to possess knowledge and skills to ensure their conversations remain productive by ensuring they remain out of discussion and in dialogue. This is a most crucial and most powerful part of an appraisal process for teachers and leaders. The data becomes the basis for a profound and highly relevant reflective conversation with the potential to transform thinking and practice.

The appraiser leads traditional appraisal conversations because the appraiser has gathered data, the appraiser has evaluated and synthesised the data they have gathered, and the appraiser then feeds back or leads a facilitated conversation for the teacher based on the data they have gathered and reflected on. Traditional appraisal places the teacher in a passive role.

Because teachers have their InterLEAD Connector™ data before any appraisal meeting takes place, teachers are now in a position to lead their professional appraisal conversations. The roles are reversed. Teachers often feel uncomfortable and threatened when they are required to this.

Possible Key areas covered are:

- Clarifying the roles of the appraiser and the appraisee
- Learning to use four Communication Styles
- Moving from discussion to dialogue
- Facilitating reflective conversations.
- Ensuring high inquiry conversations don't become interviews or interrogations
- Asking reflective questions



Using intensive learning teams to strengthen professional learning partnerships and creating pathways for knowledge exchange

Time Frame: One Day

Focus Areas

Jeffrey Pfeffer and Robert Sutton write in their book, *The Knowing-Doing Gap* (2000, p.29) *“one of the main barriers to turning knowledge into action is the tendency to treat talking about something as equivalent to actually doing something about it.”* Many collaborative vehicles such as learning circles, professional learning communities and professional learning groups do not see teachers go beyond reflection to action – or making changes to their teaching. Intensive learning teams go beyond this.

Intensive learning teams are autonomous teams in which individual teachers take personal responsibility for developing each others’ practice. Using InterLEAD Connector,[™] team members commit to visiting and providing teaching practice data. Teachers establish a common vision within their team and identify learning partnerships within each team. Once a term, when each learning cycle is completed, each team meets and each teacher within the team shares data they have received via InterLEAD Connector[™]. Each teacher shares their teaching strengths, areas for development and goals. Team members then consider how each can actively contribute to each others’ goal achievements. Intensive Learning Teams shift appraisal from a personal action to collaborative action via a team.

Possible Key areas covered are:

- Purpose/rationale
- Key concepts
- Professional learning community thinking
- Clarifying teachers’ commitments and obligations
- Intensive learning teams’ visioning exercise
- Setting up learning partnerships within teams and learning cycles
- Setting up the learning programme for the next 12 months



Strengthening professional collaboration – developing professional learning partnerships

Time Frame: One Day

Focus Areas

Often we don't know what we don't know and whilst 'bliss' can be enjoyable it can also lead over time to frustration and also performance problems. Teachers reflecting in isolation independently are not always provided new angles, different perceptions or new thinking, which can generate previously unseen pathways for exploration. Developing and working in professional learning partnerships provides teachers with opportunities to avoid falling into performance 'doom loops'.

Unfortunately many professional learning partnerships are not that professional. People might be professionals but that alone does not make them professional learning partners. Teachers can be more concerned with avoiding conflict, not wishing to hurt or harm personal relationships with each other, and avoid talking about the truth or those things which could cause pain and frustration. By taking this path it will likely lead to the superficial rather than deep and profound levels which challenge each others' assumptions and thinking. Andy Hargreaves talks of contrived collegiality and Roland Barth of congenial as opposed to collegial teacher relationships, all of which stymie teacher growth and development and hinder the development of enhancing student achievement.

To expedite the development of robust and productive professional learning partnerships teachers and leaders could develop knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- To work within and model the seven principles of partnership learning
- Distinguish between congeniality and collegiality
- Distinguish between contrived and authentic collegiality
- Avoiding falling into 'doom loops'
- Understanding the differences between coaching, mentoring, on the job training and delegation
- Understanding roles within learning partnerships
- Valuing the right values – ignoring the others
- Understanding fast brain and slow brain thinking for productive collaboration
- Understanding different personality types to get the best from each other
- Understanding the processes and challenges of personal change and development



InterLEAD Connector™ investment

Facilitation

\$1,895.00 +GST Per Day

Excludes travel

Includes

- Facilitator
- Resources for the first 30 participants (additional resources invoiced at printing cost)

\$1,250.00 +GST Per Half Day

Excludes travel

Includes

- Facilitator
- Resources for the first 30 participants (additional resources invoiced at printing cost)

Appraisal Connector™ Investment

InterLEAD Connector™ Set Up

- Establishment Fee (one off cost) \$350.00 +GST Per School
- InterLEAD Connector™ Per Teaching Staff Member \$59.95 +GST Per Year*

**The appraisal cost covers an unlimited number of appraisals per year per teacher.*

School Wide Report Access

- \$325.00 +GST - Under 25 Staff Appraised Per Year*
- \$400.00 +GST - Over 25 Staff Appraised Per Year*

**This provides unlimited access to approved staff throughout the year.*



Questions - please contact us

Learn more at www.interlead.co.nz, email connector@interlead.co.nz or contact one of our team.

If you are interested in using the InterLEAD Connector™ to expedite the development of your school as a professional learning community, or just wish to support your teachers and leaders to get the most from the InterLEAD Connector™ system, we are happy to work with you. Rather than delivering a 'one size fits all' package, we recognise no two schools are the same – it's vital to tailor professional learning to meet your particular context.

Investment for each day is \$1,895.00 plus GST and includes the development of new material for your school, printing of resources and manuals for participants* and a money back guarantee for any aspect of our programmes you may be dissatisfied with.

* When participant numbers exceed 30 each additional manual is invoiced at cost of printing.

Contact Tony, Judith, John, Stephen or Andrew or email connector@interlead.co.nz and we'll provide you with more information.

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