NRQSH: FIRST STEP IN BECOMING A SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

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It’s hard to face pupils who know nothing, but it’s even harder to face teachers who think they know everything. Hence, being a school principal is not an easy task.

“If you don’t want to teach anymore, be a principal, that’s the easy way out.” I raise my eyebrows each time I hear this line. First of all, principals don’t stop teaching, in fact, they upgrade from teaching pupils their skills in Math, to mentoring teachers who needs assistance. And absolutely, that way is never easy.

National Qualifying Examination for School Heads (NQESH), also known as the “Principals’ Test”, is now considered as one of the hardest examinations today, along with the Bar Exam for aspiring lawyers. With the latest passing rate of 0.6% from the December 2018 Exam Result, there is no doubt that only the best of the best was able to surpass the great wall that divides the dreamers and doers.

Why is it mentioned? Because it will all start from here. You must pass this examination for you to be part of the faction of qualified principal aspirants. It is not an assurance for a definite advancement, but certainly, you’ll be a step ahead. As your wisdom and ambition for development grows, it will surely bring you to the next level of trials, and it will be my pleasure to give you the best tips that I, myself, used in overcoming NQESH.

There are lots of advices that can be found all over the internet. Ideally, these are great tips, but in reality, they are still hard to follow since the idea is so wide and ambiguous. So, let’s start by making these vague concepts more specific.
1. Upon knowing the schedule of the exam, be prepared. Have a concrete plan, be mindful of your timeline. You have to make a schedule for each day. Save the dates for online application while verification and payment must be done on your respective Schools Division Office (SDO). Make sure that each day is worthy because failing to plan means planning to fail.

2. Invest on Books/Reviewer. It is not a guarantee that reviewers contain the same questions in the exam, but it will train your brain in reading long questions and answering critically. Don’t answer and check one by one for you might peek at the correct answer of the next question. Instead, answer 10-20 questions, then check your work. Focus not only on your mistakes, but to your correct answers as well. You might choose the right answer by luck, so make sure you understand the explanation behind each correct answer.

3. Allocate time for your review. We work Mondays thru Fridays for 6-8 hours, and we don’t really own our weekends, since there are some unexpected seminars/trainings that may be conducted on Saturdays, so it’s very challenging to find time to review. I’m more than thankful that my wife is considerate enough to understand the importance of review. She even recommended me to go to places where I can relax and review properly. Aside from that, I also set a specific time to answer 50 questions every night.

4. Join group review. Some people, especially those intrapersonal, don’t like the idea of group study, but I’m 100% sure that this is of great help. Just like the old saying goes, two is better than one. As you share our knowledge with them, they can also drop topics which are new to you.

5. Be comfortable. If the testing center is 20 kms away or farther from your home, it’s best to check-in in a hotel near it. This is to avoid traffic and morning rush. You also don’t want to worry being late, and commuting can give you a nauseous feeling
which may result in poor performance. Visit your room assignment, and get familiarize with the surrounding.

6. Don’t put too much pressure on yourself. The result will not determine whether you are good or bad leader. Aside from that, pressure is the brother of stress, and stressed persons do not function well. You won’t be able to review properly; it will also affect your work behavior. To sum up, putting yourself under so much pressure won’t give you any positive outcome.

Above all, never forget to pray and lift up to God all your undertakings. Let Him be in control. NQESH chooses the best and finest school leaders, but God knows what is best for you, and the right time to attain it. The best is yet to come.

References:
DepEd Memorandum No. 76, s. 2019 entitled Results of the 2018 Principals’ Test
DepEd Memorandum No. 158, s. 2019 entitled 2018 Principals’ Test