

EPISODE 338

What Is Tier 3 Instructional Leadership? Durable Systems For Learning



INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP SHOW

THE PRINCIPAL CENTER

TIER3 

Essential Question



What is Tier 3 instructional leadership, and how does it relate to Tier 1 and Tier 2?

3 Tiers of Instructional Leadership



Tier 1: Feedback on specific teaching

Tier 2: Coaching to grow each teacher

Tier 3: Systems for learning

Transcending Individuals



- Each individual person eventually moves on
- *Something* must remain
- Culture and tradition do part of the job
- Formal systems can do more

CAIRO: Systems for Learning

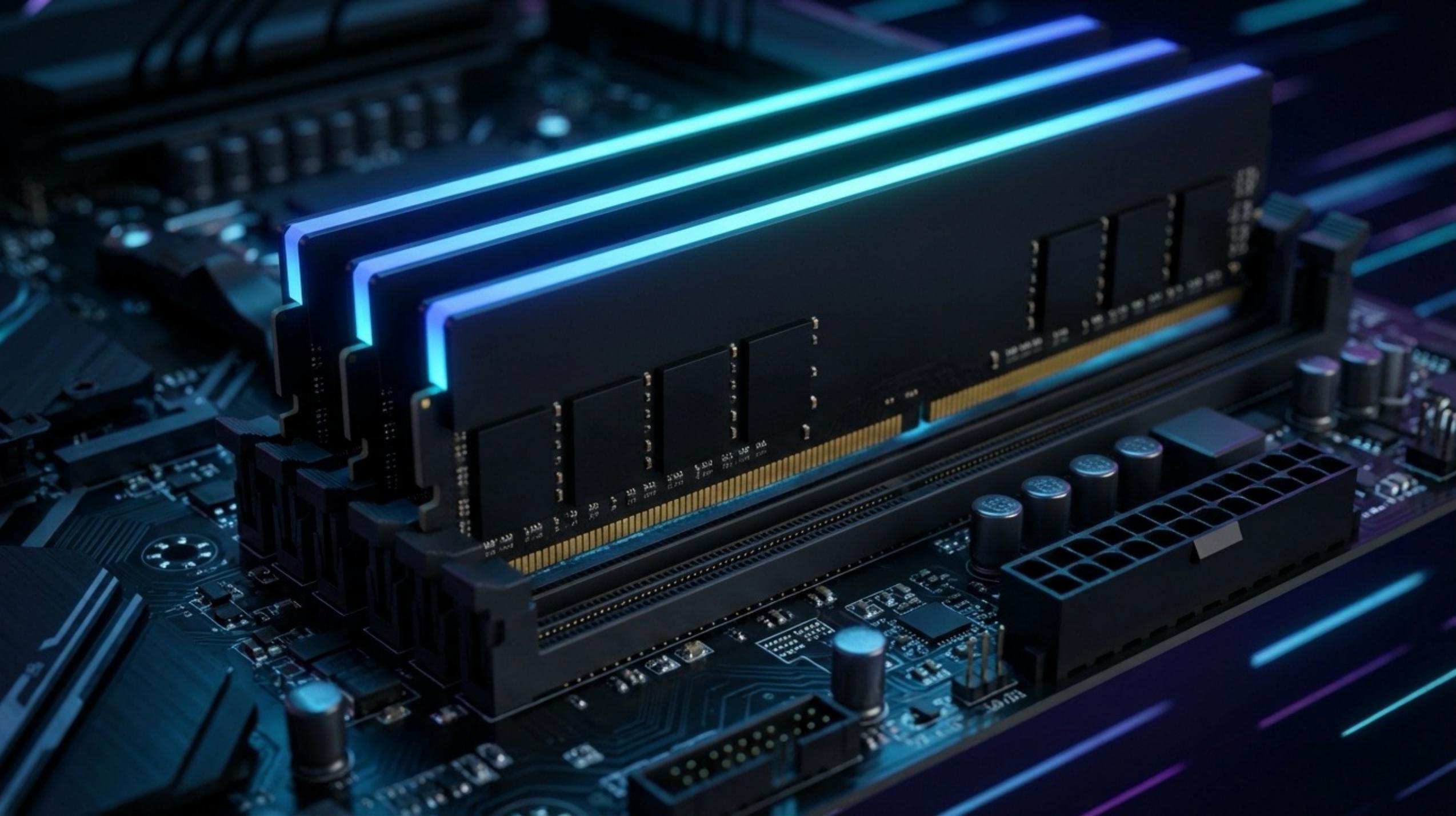
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Instruction
- Rules
- Operations



Why Culture Doesn't Last



- Every individual shapes the culture
- Culture evolves organically, even if ignored
- Culture has no strict rules to keep things the same



Tier 1 & 2 Inform Tier 3



What individual challenges require a system solution?

Example:

Difficulty planning differentiated lessons → Adopt Curriculum

High-Skill Assumptions



- It was once safe to assume that all teachers would operate with a high degree of skill
- This is no longer the case
- Systems that presume high skill will fail

High-Skill Assumptions



It was once safe to:

- Trust teachers' professional judgment
- Leave autonomy to make individual decisions
- Assume self-directed collaboration & coordination among professionals

Skill Transfer To Systems



- Where can one person's growth become a system that helps everyone—even lower-skilled individuals?
- Example: Teacher who uses formative assessment and brisk pacing → curriculum calendar & assessments
- Put the best people in charge of turning their professional judgment into systems

Expertise and Leadership



- Teachers who are good at something specific are often not the right people to get everyone else to do what they're doing
- Good leaders have often NOT done what they're asking others to do, based on what they learn from the best teachers
- We must work together to build systems around best practice

Timeframes & Tiers



- Tier 1—immediate
- Tier 2—observation & coaching cycles, up to 1 school year
- Tier 3—ongoing & long-term

Individual → CAIRO Systems



- Curriculum: Common Calendar/Guide
- Assessment: Common Assessments
- Instruction: Common Practices
- Rules: Consistent & Aligned to Learning
- Operations: Supportive of Learning

How Do We Build Tier 3 Fast?

- Sense of urgency
- Done is better than perfect
- Only what *exists* can improve
- Document what we have
- Solve big problems first



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