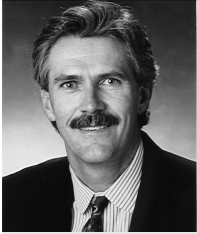


Welcome



Public educational institutions may well be the most complicated organizations in contemporary society. The stakeholders are diverse;

students, parents, teachers, administrators, politicians, and others. The customers vary depending upon perspective; students, parents, community, tax payers or society at large. The deliverables are hard to agree upon, much less effectively measure. No institutions in our society generate more interest, discussion, disagreement, and possible solutions for organizational improvement and change. Everyone seems to agree that "reform" is necessary, but what "reform" means varies drastically.

If ever a sector of our society needed good leadership, it is public education. I think the most innovative, thoughtful, and effective attempts to develop public education leadership is being directed by Kathleen Ponder at the Center for Creative Leadership. We were very fortunate to interview Dr. Ponder for this issue of Excursions. She has the vision and experience to integrate conceptual models with practical needs and the compassion and talent to build common ground among diverse perspectives and constituencies.

Chris Musselwhite, President

No More Teachers' Dirty Looks

Article and interviews by Randell Jones

Society's future lies in the hearts, hands, minds and character of its children. Everyone in the field of education believes that. But in some circles that may be one of the only areas of agreement. The educational approaches, both those in practice and those proposed, for developing these young people are quite varied. Some persons are clamoring for radically new and different schemes and others are pleading for a return to "basics," a term defined in myriad ways as well. In these circumstances, effective leadership at all levels in the dynamic education profession is essential to creating an outcome that will support the students who will in turn create our collective future.

"The most pressing problem facing school educators for the past ten years has been change," says Kathleen Ponder of the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL). "We're not talking about tweaking around the edges. We're talking about re-engineering, about conceiving a totally different way of providing public education." Ponder is the director of the Education Sector at CCL. Along with her doctorate, she has a professional background rich with practical experience in the field of public education, having served as a university professor, assistant school administrator, principal and classroom teacher. Today she works with school systems and education leaders around the country in several programs designed by CCL to address the issues of leadership that will affect the future of the education field in this country.

"Increased teamwork and cooperation are changing the face of public education."

"Before, people said, we had a factory model of schools," continues Ponder. "The kids came in the door, we gave them a treatment and they left. It was a production line that moved them through kindergarten to 12th grade. That old model simply won't meet the needs anymore. What the schools are being asked to do today is markedly different. Previously, the schools created followers who knew the rules. The system thrived as a way of teaching millions of immigrants how to be Americans. Not surprising, many of the structures that permeate school life today are designed to create rule-followers. That's not bad. It's necessary, but it's no longer sufficient. What business and industry in our 21st century, knowledge-worker society want and need are people who can think, who can critique, who can challenge the status quo, who can create a new future. That requires a wholly different education process." Creating that new process is the challenge that educators are continually facing.

CCL participates in several programs around the country to provide interpersonal and leadership development components of the training and development that professional educators seek. Ponder and CCL have worked with schools in all fifty states in a broad range of programs with different missions. In one large southern school system, CCL is

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A Closer Look

Discover Learning's AWAKA simulation provides a vehicle for exploring the issues that surface when we interact with people whom we perceive to be different from ourselves.



The simulation involves people from two different cultures, Awaka and Richland. With the best of intentions, the Richlanders, who are economically and technologically superior, travel to Awaka bringing tools and refined building materials to aid the Awakans with a construction project on which they are working. The Awakan project involves the design and construction of a monument to celebrate their newfound freedom and rich cultural history after several centuries of domination.

The simulation set-up creates perceptual differences in the two groups providing the opportunity for exploring miscommunication and conflict naturally occurring when individuals work across cultural or sub-cultural boundaries. The simulation also provides an opportunity to gain awareness of the assumptions underlying behavior in such a situation.

AWAKA has the capacity to carry participants through the experience and exploration of different areas of diversity. Three different debriefs provided in the Facilitator Guide address cross-cultural issues, ethnic and racial issues, and economic and power related issues.

Simulation Time: 2-3 hours
Group Size: 8-30 participants

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working with hundreds of educators at the school level over five years of each school's life. These teachers and principals are learning about leadership and teamwork through a program called the Bryan Leadership Development Initiative. In another program, sponsored by Kenan Charitable Trust, CCL is working with school district/university partnerships to help them create and support systems for providing seamless professional development from teacher preparation through continuing education. These innovative programs, along with several others also underway, are bringing important and essential leadership development to professional educators.

Ponder declares, "Effective leadership is essential to the success of all these ventures in changing education. We provide these teachers, principals, superintendents and university administrators training in interpersonal skills and leadership development. And, in a new twist on traditional thinking, at CCL we no longer speak of leadership as residing solely within an individual. Leadership is a phenomenon that exists in and among the members of an organization. Leadership is all about relationships. Understanding that and how to use it requires some new learning. That's where CCL contributes most effectively in working with these educators. We have had wonderfully powerful educational experiences with these professionals using simulations and models used successfully in business settings. The essentials of leadership don't vary. For example, we have used Discovery Learning's Change Style Indicator and Paper Planes, Inc. as key elements in raising participants' knowledge of self and others. These (instruments) are the bases for the development of effective leadership within their teams, within their schools, within their school systems and within their district/university partnerships."

In her work with many schools, Ponder has found that principals tend to be Originators as described by Change Style Indicator. These creative thinkers are looking for new and different ways of doing things and usually have multiple ideas ready to share. Teachers, on the whole, tend to be Conservers and find the tried-and-true proven routines familiar and comfortable. One common source of conflict within a school is well-intentioned principals suggesting new and innovative approaches

to a group of teachers who then appear resistant because they are asking for details and schedules. The Originators are saying "why not" and the Conservers are asking "how." Both groups, seem relieved to learn that each perspective is valuable and appropriate in the organization. The Pragmatists are likewise pleased to learn that their role of pushing ahead for action is also appreciated. From using CSI, these educators learn about the range of perspectives that exist in a changing situation. They also learn when to contribute from their Change Style perspective and when to hold back, so they can listen to and learn from others. That's a valuable lesson that helps them all function better as a team.

Ponder has used Discovery Learning's Paper Planes Inc. in similar settings. After completing the first round of the simulation, the teams of district-level educators often discover, as in their roles in the simulation, that they have been operating as isolated units. Each level of schooling has been passing along its students with a "we've-done-our-job-good-luck-to-you" attitude. Only when the students failed to perform sufficiently to graduate high school or were underperforming in college was there any awareness of a problem. Similarly the universities who were preparing teachers for the school systems discovered they have not necessarily focused on their "customers." In fact, the whole notion that schools had "customers" and who exactly were the customers-students, colleges, parents, employers, communities?-was an enlightening experience for many.

"We also used the AWAKA simulation," Ponder says, "to heighten awareness within the groups about diversity and cooperation." In this simulation, one team, the indigenous people, has to figure out how it will respond to and deal with the Richlanders who are coming from a highly developed society to "improve" the lives of the indigenous people. Ponder notes this type of confrontation tends to recur repeatedly in school systems where those who are enthusiastic about their new ideas are faced with the sometimes-hostile response of those who would have to implement them and disturb what they believe is working well. The exercise also heightens awareness of school cultures and subcultures such as band, athletes, academics, etc. and calls the participants'

attention to their own biases toward those persons who are different from them. "In one AWAKA simulation we conducted with a school team," Ponder recalls, "a principal learned that what she regarded as off-handed, flippant, playful remarks and actions were being interpreted by her teacher colleagues as dismissive and arrogant rebuffs. That type of personal learning is essential to developing the leadership skills that will allow and enable a team of professionals to create and to manage the change that is taking place today in the education system."

All too often today, educators, as do their counterparts in business, want to work on structure and systems and to focus on all the external issues. But to echo Ponder's earlier statement, that may be necessary but it is not sufficient. Many have learned and most know in their hearts, that until professionals get at the root causes of personal conflicts, nothing else is going

to happen constructively within that team. But after the team builds an awareness of individual strengths, learns to value all perspectives and each member learns how he or she contributes best to the organization, a real warmth and sense of camaraderie can develop. In this way, teachers, principals, system administrators and university professors are developing an attitude of "we're-all-in-this-together." That cooperation and teamwork are major steps toward helping put a new face on public education.

To get a different perspective read Curriculum for Change, a companion piece to No More Teacher's Dirty Looks posted on our website www.discoverylearning.net. Go to Newsletter and click on No More Teacher's Dirty Looks, Curriculum for Change

Tricks of the Trade

Colored Dots Bring Models To Life

Contributed by Nancy Probst, Log Cabin Consulting, Greensboro, NC

When engaging groups in working together whether on team development, change, communication or strategic planning - I often use a model or an instrument to reinforce an important learning or bring clarity and meaning to the dialogue. By nature, models and instruments are dry and may not capture the interest of or be meaningful to all participants. Through the use of colorful dots (that's right simple, colorful adhesive dots from the dime store), I have participants actually place themselves IN the model, thus bringing the models to life.

Two examples:

Change Models - I often use the Spencer and Adams Change Curve or William Bridges Transition model when helping groups understand and deal with change. I draw the model on flip chart pages and post them on the wall. Following a brief discussion of the model, I ask participants to identify, with a dot,

the stage of change they are currently experiencing. I usually ask them to view the change from several perspectives that include: the total organization, their department, their team and themselves, individually. This generates a lot of energy and interest as well as setting the stage for wonderful dialogue as they view and then process the results.

Change Style Indicator - I draw the CSI Continuum on a flip chart page and post on the wall. As participants complete and score the instrument, I have them write their score and initials on a dot and apply to the appropriate location on the continuum. This provides a quick, easy-to-view profile of the group and sets the stage for a rich dialogue, not just about change styles, but more specifically, about this particular group or team.

Benefits of this simple process of bringing models to life include:

- **Getting people up, moving about and interacting.**
- **Bringing models to life by personalizing them both to the group and to the individuals.**
- **Providing real-time snapshots of a group which then leads to rich dialogue.**
- **Enhancing the retention of learning.**

What's new at Discovery Learning?



Our newest assessment the **Decision Styles Survey** will be added to the products available from Discovery Learning in March. Utilizing data from over 40,000 respondents, the assessment tool will offer insight into an individual's preferred decision style. Do they tend to include or exclude others in the decision-making process? Do they take into account time constraints and relationship implications when choosing to include or exclude others in the decision-making?

Discovery Learning products are getting a new look. Not long ago we redesigned our corporate logo and now we are taking the next step, remodeling our product look. This includes new logos, new packaging and, in one case, a new name. All of this redesign is intended to give our products a more integrated "Discovery Learning look." The new look will first appear on our web site and marketing materials while the changes in the look of the actual products will be phased in during the year.

Discovery Learning Press will be publishing a series of research based articles focused on Personal Growth and Leadership Development. Featured articles include: "Selecting Developmental Goals - Manager Priorities" which looks at the types

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of personal development goals managers select and "Learning and Performing Management Behaviors: Who's Better - Men or Women?" which looks at differences in performance and explores whether men and women learn the same management skills in different ways and at different rates. Both of these articles, along with three others, will be available on our website www.discoverylearning.net and by request, through our office.

Train the Trainer

We will be holding our next Train the Trainer March 1-3 in Greensboro, NC. The session will be facilitated by Chris Musselwhite and will cover a number of Discovery Learning's tools, including Paper Planes, Inc. Change Style Indicator, Denison Organizational Culture Survey and others. Participants completing the session will receive certification in the tools covered and will receive facilitator guides as part of their materials. There is still space available, call for more information. 1.800.851.5118.

"Excellent products and facilitation. Everything was most informative and innovative in its approach. Bravo and Bravo!"

September '99 Train the Trainer Participant
Nancy Hall
Arthur Andersen Consulting

Next Edition

Our people make the difference" or similar phrases have been adopted by many organizations over the last few years. Though sometimes viewed as lip service by employees, the truth is that corporations around the world spend billions of dollars on training and leadership development, investing in their people, and, through them, their corporate futures. With such a significant investment, the pressure to see a workplace payoff is greater than ever.

What are the factors that influence successful learning, personal growth and the transfer of that learning to the workplace? Our Spring edition of Excursions will explore several factors that influence workshop learning and transfer of that learning to the workplace.

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