Leadership in Self-Governing Schools:
Shared Leadership for More Effective Schools

Educational Leadership Development Conference
St. Peter's College
Oxford University
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Leadership in Self-Governing Schools

Shared Leadership for More Effective Schools

Education Leadership Development Conference

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Guest Editor: Helen Sobehart
The Leadership Institute, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA

Managing Editor: Vivian Williams
NCLS, St. Peter’s College, Oxford University

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Foreword

The time has come the leader said
to speak of many things
of hyacinths and loaves of bread
of tea and wise inklings.

For the past seven years I’ve had many opportunities to share fellowship and froth at the Eagle and Child tavern in Oxford. At that same tavern over 50 years ago, C.S. Lewis and others of his “inking” colleagues, such as J.R.R. Tolkien and W.H. “Warnie” Lewis also shared fellowship and froth as they imagined mystical lands, created beings from nether worlds, and designed epic journeys which, for some of their heroes, might never end. Perhaps because of the connection in that pub, I felt comfortable to begin this piece by playing on the famous words of another well known Oxford scholar, Lewis Carroll, in the poem “The Walrus and the Carpenter”:

“The time has come,” the Walrus said,
“To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
Of cabbages—and kings— (p. 75-81).

During the 18th Annual International Leadership Conference sponsored by the Norham Centre for Leadership Studies at St. Peter’s College, Leadership in Self-Governing Schools: Shared Leadership for More Effective Schools, over 40 educational leaders gathered from both sides of the Atlantic pond. During a week of rich discussion that included school visits, seminars, cultural excursions, and social activities, participants shared resources and views on a wide range of issues. Yet the contributors to this monograph represent a subgroup of these attendees, a group which shared a common background: they are all doctoral students from Duquesne University’s Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders (IDPEL), specifically from a branch of that program hosted at Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania. They engaged in the conference as part of a culminating course in their doctoral program and so had read many common resources and experienced many common situations in both basic and higher education systems. Therefore, I anticipated a more common set of reflections on their experience during the week-long conference. That was not to be the case.

The play on the Lewis Carroll quote came to mind as I pondered how to approach the foreword of a collection which represented remarkably varied experiences and perspectives. Some of the contributors to this compendium were impressed by the structural comparisons and contrasts between schools in the United States and the United Kingdom. They wrote articles about state and national standards, curriculum development, and high stakes assessments that may carry different acronyms, such as NCLB (No Child Left Behind) or Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education), but represent the rigid yardsticks by which educators must measure the work of their students.

Other writers took a more philosophical approach to the same issue. Some reflections were spawned by an English educator’s discussion of loaves and hyacinths. Rhetorically, he posed a question upon which those authors reflected: should the main purpose of education be to feed our children with the loaves of basic content, or should we inspire their creativity so they may grow hyacinths and create other works of art?

Still other articles addressed very practical aspects of the conference – the basic mechanics of planning, maneuvering, and completing the trip to Oxford for themselves and sometimes even family members. Some take a more scholarly approach, questioning the essence of leadership: where it has been, where it is going, where it ought to go, and even if it can exist at all without contributors who choose to follow those who aspire to lead.

Some of the writers included here remarked on the personal accomplishments of our gracious host and scholar, Dr. Vivian Williams, likening the support of his family to the concept of shared leadership which was so often discussed during our time together. One writer noted the symbology of canes, two of which were needed by Dr. Williams at the beginning of the week to physically support him due to recent health challenges. The canes symbolized contributorship to that writer as she noted how Dr. Williams needed these supports less during the week as the intellectual stimulation of discussion and collegiality gave him unanticipated strength to use only one cane and, momentarily, none.

Of course, some of my colleagues commented on culture. A few expressed great envy at the morning tea time held in every U.K. school. They observed it as a time in which everyone comes together, no matter what their responsibility in the school environment, to both discuss student issues and share the journey of life together. The unanimous feeling among all who shared this experience is that it is truly a spiritual rejuvenation.

Of course, history is an inevitable theme contained herein. Our authors commented about being touched by the “presence” of what has gone before them in this remarkable university. One specific observation brings me full circle to my opening thoughts about the “inklings” and what I originally thought were diverse perspectives among the scholars who visited the Eagle and Child during March 2004. Yes, they experienced and shared many different perspectives. However, as I consider them more deeply, I see a powerful common thread, one that was part of the discussion of the original “inklings” so long ago. That
powerful thread is the concept of “journey.” It may have been the actual journey across the ocean. It may have been the journey across time and culture. It may have been the journey through new scholarly concepts and realizations. It may have been the realization of the power of the shared leadership journey, of contributorship, and of the people, “canes” and events that help us along the way. The concept of the journey itself, even though we know not whom we may meet along the way, nor where or if it will end, was captured by one of the “inklings” at the Eagle and Child those many years ago. Our leadership journey and its importance was never described more eloquently than by C.S. Lewis:

…but for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story, which no one on earth had ever read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.

(Lewis, 1956)

Helen Sobehart
Editor
Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders
(IDPEL) & The Leadership Institute
Duquesne University

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Reflections of Support in Shared Leadership

Andrea Malmont

St. Peter’s College occupies the site of two of the University’s oldest inns or medieval hostels, Bishop Trellick’s, later New Inn Hall, and Rose Hall, both of which were founded in the thirteenth century. But its history really began in 1929 when St. Peter’s Hall was founded by Francis James Chavasse, Bishop of Liverpool, who was concerned at the rising cost of education in the older universities in Britain, and projected St. Peter’s as a College where promising students, who might otherwise be deterred by the costs of College life elsewhere, could obtain an Oxford education. The commitment to make Oxford accessible to any student of ability, irrespective of means, remains a feature of St. Peter’s today.

(St. Peter’s College, Retrieved April 7, 2004)

Some students who have studied at St. Peter’s College are a former President of Ghana, Edward Akufo Addo; a former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Carl Albert, who had used a cane prior to his passing at the age of ninety-one; film director, Ken Loach, who wrote the documentary A Question of Leadership. Nicholls (1999) states:

To combat the prevalence of Thatcherism, Loach embarked on a series of documentaries. His first foray into documentary was A Question of Leadership put together for ITV’s South Bank Show, but Editor Melvyn Bragg stepped in and refused to authorize the broadcast. However, it was eventually shown on Channel 4, three months later, after the heat of Thatcher’s overpowering of the steel strikers had subsided. (p. 1)

My experiences during the International Leadership Conference influenced my views on leadership. As I participated in the Higher Education Syndicate, I would reflect often about the people who had attended St. Peter’s College and their contributions. Equally as important to me as I reflected during the week was how Dr. Vivian Williams used two canes to support himself after a long illness. It became apparent to me that the canes of support were just as important to me as the lessons learned about the culture of the Oxford educational process. The canes were the foundation and support that Dr. Williams needed after many months of being bedridden. Interestingly enough, I realized that the canes Dr. Williams needed to stand upright were similar to the support that leadership is built upon and some of the people who had attended St. Peter’s were continuing the support of leadership of St. Peter’s College. The interactions with Dr. Williams, Dr. James Arthur and many other interactions brought me to a better understanding that leadership is just like the canes used to help support Dr. Williams. The leadership process has evolved and so has the cane.

The cane, otherwise known as a walking stick, has evolved from many different parts of the world. From royalty and their use of the scepter and staff, to the religious leaders and their use of pastoral staffs designed to look like a shepherd’s crook herding the believers to him, or for the solitary sheep herder, the cane has been an important symbolic accessory. Men and women in authority, whether secular or religious, have used the staff or walking stick as a symbol of their power. Senge (1990) wrote that for some people it may be difficult to see the connectedness to the world. He describes his six-week-old son as being unfamiliar with his own hands and feet “or that he controls their actions” (p.169). Senge continues to describe that his son had taken hold of one of his ears thus it started to hurt and agitate him. The more agitated he became, the harder he pulled. “Not knowing that his hand was actually within his control, he perceived the source of his discomfort as an external force” (p. 169). As the week passed, Dr. Williams went from using two canes, to using only one. He inspired all the participants as his color began to change and light the room with a variety of perspectives, challenges and his life experiences. The support of his daughter and wife were actually equally important in supporting Dr. Williams as he lead the conference. The lesson learned was evident to me as I realized that in leadership one person cannot lead or be a change agent without the support of people who take on roles just as important as the cane that supported Dr. Williams.

Interestingly enough, the cane has also represented people who are frail, and to alert the blind to obstacles in their path. James Biggs of Bristol claimed to have invented the white cane in 1921. After an accident that claimed his sight, the artist had to readjust to his environment, or so he thought. Feeling threatened by increased motor vehicle traffic around his home, Biggs decided to paint his walking stick white to make himself more visible to motorists (“Fashionable Canes and Walking Sticks,” Retrieved April 7, 2004). The obstacles and challenges that Dr. Williams and his family faced for many months had been supported with great rewards. He was able to continue sharing his energy about leadership because of the shared leadership of many people taking care of matters while he was ill.
As written in *Maslow on Management* (1998), formally titled *Eupsychian Management* (1961), Maslow asserts that leaders encounter diversity yet embrace the idea that communities with people from different states of life and a variety of ethnic origins will improve the workplace. Accepting others isn’t always easy and it is common to have perceptions about people that block the ability to effectively communicate. Some barriers to understanding people are: stereotypes, discrimination and fear of differences. Maslow (1998) stated that:

Synergy can be defined as the resolution of the dichotomy between selfishness and unselfishness, or between selfishness and altruism. We normally assume that the more one has the less the other has. The selfish person has less altruism than the unselfish person, but this need not to be so under the correct institutional and social arrangements. It is possible to set up organizations so that when I am pursuing my own self-interest, I automatically benefit everyone else, whether I mean to or not. (p.23)

Northouse (2001) examined a factor that helps leaders create a climate in which all people feel valued. It is the individualized consideration that is supportive to individual needs. It also addresses diversity in the workplace.

“Leaders act as coaches and advisers while trying to assist individuals in becoming fully actualized. These leaders may use delegation as a means to help followers grow through personal challenges” (p. 138).

Bugay (2001) termed TransformActional leadership as a philosophy by which people within the organization share the vision and became part of the process of leadership, thus creating an environment in which people trust each other, accept others non-judgmentally, and create a stimulating intellectual environment that is purposeful and brings a sense of fulfillment to the organization and to the people individually. Shared leadership, to Bugay, is a team working collaboratively with extensive communication and flexibility. Like Nicoli Machiavelli in 1532, he believes that leaders can share the responsibility of the kingdom. Machiavelli proposed a cabinet of experts from a different part of the kingdom to become close advisors to the king. Thus the king could understand and know specific problems in each area of the kingdom because the close advisors were the experts. The advisors and king become involved in defining, accepting and carrying out the mission of the kingdom with shared leadership.

Hoyle (2002) states that:

Although the term minority is slowly disappearing from our lexicon, minority status is a reality for many seeking equity and fairness in employment opportunities in most organizations. When minority managers are underrepresented in organizations, mentoring by majority managers takes on a new and vital role. Although most well-meaning and caring mentors believe that race and background are factors to be considered, they may believe that the ethnicity of the protégé is not that important. (p.80)

To effectively mentor people of all cultures and backgrounds, communication is an important process according to Hoyle. In order to communicate effectively, Hoyle asserts that love is what will open the channels to communication. When examining Maslow’s theory, it would make sense that leadership does involve meeting basic needs as well as self-actualization, but that the movement from basic needs to self-actualization is in constant motion depending on the situation.

The greatest gift during the conference was modeled to me. Leadership is most effective when it is shared by people. Like the canes that support Dr. Williams, so did his family. Both his daughter and wife took on many different leadership capacities and it was very evident to me. Communication and commitment is the key to effectively ensuring that a common goal is achieved. I flew home thinking about the wonderful information that I had learned but I was changed forever observing what shared leadership can do for people, programs and communities.

References


Endings and Beginnings: Inklings Style

April M. Hershey

In late March 2004, our Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders (IDPEL) cohort from Duquesne University gathered in Oxford, U.K., for the culminating coursework of our program. This experience involved a great deal of pre-planning--from airline arrangements to research to several group meetings to coordinate our presentations. In actuality, the preparations for this trip and the start of our journey began three years ago, at the commencement of our coursework in a remote state park in western Pennsylvania.

In the summer of 2001, our cohort met for the first time at the Linsly Outdoor Center outside Pittsburgh. The Linsly experience was designed for us to demonstrate leadership and problem-solving skills, build trusting relationships, and stretch ourselves by experiencing somewhat uncomfortable situations. This encounter prepared us for working together both as a cohort and in our smaller advisory groups. This ‘beginning’ was both traumatic and cathartic in many ways, marking the start of our doctoral program, but also the end of other stages and phases in our lives. At the time, the enormity of the doctoral program loomed before us: the three years of coursework, the papers, the constant self-reflection, the presentations, and ultimately, the dissertation. It seems impossible that with the close of the Norham conference, those three years of coursework which began at Linsly were essentially completed.

During our stay in Oxford, we were given several assignments, including the study of several texts, the discussion of a list of related questions, the analysis of and comparison between British and American school system, and the presentation of a leadership topic to the conference audience. In addition to these very scholarly assignments, we were also charged with the ‘responsibility’ of visiting several pubs in Oxford proper. In doing so, we were continuing the IDPEL tradition of collegiality, and in most instances, just finding a more comfortable location in which to hold scholarly discussion. While this assignment at first appeared somewhat silly, it proved to be one that caused more scholarly thinking and self-reflection.

One of the pubs on the assigned list was the Eagle and Child, a rather well-known establishment because of its connections to several famous authors. A plaque inside the pub tells the tale:

C.S. Lewis, his brother, W.H. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams and other friends met every Tuesday morning between the years 1939-1962 in the back room of this their favourite pub. These men, popularly known as the ‘Inklings,’ met here to drink beer and to discuss, among other things, the books they were writing.

In essence, our cohort did the very same thing as the ‘Inklings’: we sat in the pub and discussed our presentations and our dissertation topics. Our entire doctoral journey to this point mirrored this format as we met for class bi-monthly to discuss and refine our ideas over the last three years. The Oxford experience formally ended this part of our journey. It seemed fitting that we continued the same procedures, just in another setting, which happened to be in another country.

Having been at the very pub where so many creative thinkers held what can only be assumed to be magnificent discussions, I was inspired to pull out my personal copies of the great works of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. I had not read these books since my days in middle school, and with the current hype surrounding the Hollywood version of these works, I had been meaning to revisit them anyway. What struck me about the content in both series of books was that no matter how fantastic the story became, the undertones of life lessons were abundantly evident. Having the Oxford experience so fresh in my mind made me draw parallels to our doctoral program. Most meaningful to me was the continued references in both series of books to the ‘journey’ which is the exact term we have always used in our discussions of our program. Since this conference marked the conclusion of that journey, I found these two quotes to be most poignant:

‘And that’s the end of that,’ said Sam. ‘A nasty end, and I wish I needn’t have seen it; but it’s a good riddance.’

‘And the very last end of the War, I hope,’ said Merry. But to think that it should fall here…’ ‘I shan’t call it the end, till we’ve cleaned up the mess,’ said Sam gloomily. ‘And that’ll take a lot of time and work...’

(Tolkien, 1965)

…but for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story, which no one on earth had ever read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before. (Lewis, 1956)

Both authors address the intertwining of the beginning and end of a journey, each one seeing it in a different way. As we continue our journey, through the writing and defense of the dissertation and on to other educational endeavors, we can chose to see the path as a chore, or as an adventure “in which every chapter is better than the one before.”

April Hershey is Principal, Reamstown Elementary School, Cocalico School District, Pennsylvania
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Crisis in Education
The issues we discussed during our stay in Oxford and those that we encountered while visiting schools caused us to reflect on recent readings on leadership. How do we balance the practical with the theoretical or ideal? The struggling attitudes, behavior and educational outcomes of students defined as at-risk are causing notable concern on the part of educators. On both national and international levels, these issues are seeping through the structural walls of the educational system, creating an academic malignancy. It is now vital that solid administrative and academic leadership come to the forefront of addressing and resolving the emerging educational crisis. It behooves our nation, and its educational institutions, to work fervently and constructively on practical models of academic achievement, to restore the vigor and health of our educational system.

This will require leadership that is both practical and relational. Leadership that motivates both the personnel and students will be key to resolving the educational crisis. Alternative methods of teaching and learning will have to be implemented to reach the growing numbers of at-risk students. Twenty-first century leaders must be willing and ready to take on this challenge.

Idealist Leadership vs. Practical Leadership
Zemke (2001) lays out the ideals of leadership from a military model. In most modern media, leaders are indelibly described in fabled or lofty forms as a means of caricature symbolized by an individual’s performance. In other instances, the persona of leaders are seemingly able to scale great heights, elude villainous figures, and save the awaiting damsel from further catastrophic events. Vicariously, this swashbuckling figure has been depicted through media portrayals and often casts images of heroism and excitement in the minds of those entertained through this media. Yet the whimsical characteristics of literary leadership are mere forms of entertainment and humor, shells of true leadership that are often impractical and unattainable. Yet, Zemke emphasizes that for twenty-first century leadership to be effective it must first be practical.

Learning Communities and Leadership
Consequently, a new paradigm of leadership is emerging in the realm of professional administration.

Operating as a swashbuckling figure in school or business administration could have unpredictable and counter-productive effects on an organization. Leadership today must be realistic. Strategic interaction through attentive listening and adept response is the heartbeat of the organization. This is the thrust of leadership and community building: encouraging participants to work productively toward their organizational best.

Educationally, leadership within a school perpetuates the ideals of learning communities through compassion and capacity building of its students. The cavalier attitude of individualist, dictatorial headship is gone. Leadership must be tangible, attainable, and fashioned into the hearts and minds of its personnel. Hoyle (2002) depicts a caring form of leadership as being pragmatic. This form of compassionate leadership will promote effectiveness and maintain standards within learning communities.

Effectiveness in Institutions
An important definition of leadership is the ability to facilitate a group of individuals and successfully accomplish organizational objectives. Planning is important in the development of institutional outcomes. A good leader looks to develop group synergy. Encouraging individuals to work productively toward organizational goals is the hull of pragmatic leadership.

Yet, effectiveness is the crowning quality of leadership. Organizations solicit individuals in formal leadership capacities to ensure advancement for the overall enterprise. Leaders are expected to proactively influence the framework and life of the organization. Such leaders will impact the attitudes, actions, and even the culture of an organization. Effective leadership is the driving influence of dynamic organizations.

Dynamic Institutions and a Leader’s Behavior
The integrity of a leader is also an essential element of leadership. Working with people from diverse backgrounds and with uniquely different levels of expertise is frequently encountered by leaders. Yet nearly every person will respond affirmatively to leadership that is trustworthy, unselfish and fair. Based on this, an effective leader is able to influence staff members from varied personalities and working styles to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization.

The integrity of a leader is often reflected through the attitude of the employees. It is important to have positive and pro-active relationships with staff members, built by the equitable, knowledgeable and caring administration of their leaders. Employees will often work with greater productivity when the work environment is constructive.

Arthur Sutton is Administrative Specialist, Harrisburg Area Community College, Pennsylvania
There should be mutual feelings of positive regard within the working relationships. Successful leadership will be grounded in a supportive direction.

**Influence on the Organization**

Fundamental to a dynamic work environment is practical guidance. In this capacity, leadership becomes the catalyst for organizational accomplishment. An atmosphere or environment that promotes personal and organizational growth is an optimal work experience. Wheatly (1999) suggests that leadership can be likened to scientific management. This perspective notes inputs, interactions, and expected outcomes for productivity. This is an efficient model and relies heavily on the structural development within an organization.

Still, the responsibility of leadership is a unique and sometimes perplexing one for those ill-fitted for the expansive role of organizational operations. While leadership may be granted to an employee based on diligence, commitment, and sound work habits, these characteristics can be limited to a single job function. While some are identified as leaders in organizations as they demonstrate positive employment attributes, they may not be equipped to take on the responsibility of others’ productivity. For example, a person can be highly esteemed in an area of knowledge or expertise, and yet the individualized characteristics of a leader are not readily passed on to the group being led.

**Leaders of Dynamic Institutions Inspire**

It is therefore essential to understand elements that influence people in working situations. Senge (1990) indicates leaders should demonstrate motivational skills that promote improvement among team members. An individual in a leadership capacity has to be cognizant of the environment, culture, and status of the employees. This underscores the aforementioned point of a leader having an excellent working knowledge of the organization. A leader must be an astute contributor to organizational success.

The ability to lead within an organization is not about a single characteristic. A leader can be a social anomaly, a methodical administrator, or outstanding innovator. The circumstances of leadership are dependent upon organization, staff, and, work-related exigencies. Events within the organization help to define the success of a leader. It is not the pleasant or merely inconvenient situations that prove leadership within a person. In many circumstances, it is the conduct and character of the person in crisis and adversity that characterizes successful leadership.

**Focused Leadership**

Reasoning is an essential aspect of leadership and substantiates the overall practice, direction and advancement of the organization. A leader’s ability to think and establish logical outcomes is crucial. Organizational development is both fundamental and a progressive demonstration of growth and vision. Because leaders are constantly called upon to develop a system of work ethics, practices and training that engender overall organizational leadership must incorporate practical methods of productivity as well as relational ones. Hearts and minds must work systematically alongside dollars and cents.

Productive outcomes will be effectively developed through inclusive methods of leadership. Being an active part of the events within an organization leads to worker productivity and enhances morale. Effective leadership intrinsically fosters the best interest of all. Consequently, it is important that a leader’s reasoning be proven and trusted so that it may be strongly implemented.

Kelehear (2004) continues to describe characteristics of leadership through a process of reflection. The ability to think through and critique decisions made in varying situations is an essential practice of leadership. Growth in the process of leadership can be operationally reviewed through journaling and other practices of recording leadership events. It is a noble and notable practice for a leader to reflect upon the positive and negative results of his or her management style. This candid review of leadership benefits the overall organization because leadership is strengthened through careful analysis of practice.

**Leadership in Conflicting Perspectives**

A leader’s ability to transcend the ideas of conflicting perspectives can be rooted in the identification of goals. This is an important aspect of leadership. Understanding and helping a group work towards anticipated outcomes is generally required for successful outcomes. Leaders need to think, feel, and respond within the best interests of the organization. Knowledge of the group’s background and individual expertise facilitates leadership viability. Leaders need to work within the ability of the workforce. Leading beyond the group’s ability is problematic. The group can only demonstrate accomplishment in area of proficiency.

Confident leadership skills are supported through experience. The ability to build on successful practice enables a leader to progressively embark upon habits that are in the best interest of the work team and organization. Patterened successful behavior on the part of effective leadership can be implemented and encouraged throughout the organization. The idea of success being built upon success is a concept upon which organizational development should be hinged. Leadership skills can be learned, practiced and refined throughout a workgroup.

**Concluding Points**

The nature and scope of leadership can be challenging. Sokolove (2003) gives a picture of leadership tenets surprisingly founded on poor practice:

Practicing bad leadership will not turn out to be good some day. If the leader’s style is bad, some aspects need to change. If a leader keeps doing what he has always done, he will keep receiving what he has always received. (p.74)
Leadership is not always a straightforward process. The path of diligent and committed executive level direction is often won through many struggles and subsequent accomplishment. A leader will often meet with frequent adversities that require adjustments. An individual unwilling to adjust and appropriately respond to adverse situations can change through reflection and self-analysis.

Overall, leadership is an imperative in every aspect of our social milieu. Children view parents, teachers, and appropriate adult figures as role models and leaders. This perception results from a trust and accepted demonstration of concern for their development. Organizationally, workers look up to authority figures in a similar way as role models. In this conceptual frame, it is essential that the integrity of leadership be perpetuated as a means of future organizational and societal success.

References


The World Turned Upside Down: Hyacinths, Loaves and Butterflies

Brett Gilliland

At a time when the heads of English schools and superintendents of American schools are under immense pressure due to mandates, laws, requirements and standardized testing, many leaders may feel like “The World Turned Upside Down” (Montgomery, n.d.). On the academic hit parade of patriotic music “The World Turned Upside Down” is up there in the top ten with the “Star Spangled Banner” and the “Battle Hymn of the Republic.” As Dr. Vivian Williams, Director of the Norham Centre for Leadership Studies, stated in his opening speech for The 18th International Oxford Conference, “Tradition has it that when Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown (1781) the British played this tune.” It was apropos for the historical event and now for this educational debate. The world’s most potent military power, in the first event, was drowned by a bunch of farmers, shopkeepers and overdressed Frenchmen in a battle that all but ended the Revolutionary War. Now the English and American governments have given many unfunded mandates to educational leaders with required programs and remediation and no way to fund them. A few bars of “The World Turned Upside Down” may be perfect for the occasion, especially the lyrics: “Yet let’s be content, and the times lament, You see the world turn’d upside down” (Montgomery, n.d., ¶ 43).

Sir Alec Clegg in 1980, right before the 1983 time of A Nation at Risk, questioned education with his clarification of the “Loaves and Hyacinths.” A headteacher, Mark Chesterton shared this analogy with educators from America and England at the 2004 Norham Centre Conference. Chesterton quoted Clegg in stating that “loaves are mainly concerned with facts and their manipulation, and they draw on the intellect. The hyacinths are concerned with a child’s loves and hates, fears, enthusiasm and antipathies, with his courage, his compassion and his confidence” (Clegg, 1980).

In a time of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in America and the Ofsted in England, Sir Alec Clegg shared the following and timely statement, “It is one thing to know how to make a bomb, it is another to decide who is to be killed by its use” (Clegg, 1980). We are all focused on standards of education today, but are we forgetting how to teach students to think. By thinking, students need to know not only the facts of a subject, but also how to take those facts and create an answer or hypothesis by which to solve a problem, and show creativity. The thirteenth-century Persian poet, Muslih-uddin Sadi, counseled us thus:

If of thy mortal goods thou art bereft
And from thy slender store
Two loaves alone to thee are left
Sell one, and with the dole
Buy hyacinths to feed thy soul.
(Jensen, 2003)

Perhaps Clegg foresaw the situation of forgetting hyacinths becoming fat and lazy on loaves alone. However, Professor Tim Brighouse, Chief Education Officer of Birmingham City Council, confounded the loaves and hyacinth debate when he added a third component. He discussed an addition of butterflies. Brighouse (2001) urged his audience to collect butterflies, which he defined as small things that make a difference.

Margaret Holiday, Assistant Headteacher at the Old Stratford Primary School in Northamptonshire, cited Michael Satterly as he asked and responded to a question, “Why do you study other systems – to better understand my own.” This quote is the epitome of what happened in St. Peter’s College under the direction of Dr. Vivian Williams at the Norham Centre for Leadership Studies. During this, the 18th International Conference, whose theme was, “Leadership in Self-Governing Schools: Shared Leadership for More Effective Schools,” participants were able to experience a day in the life of a leader. One such example was given by Jeffrey Pelling, Assistant Department Chair of English in the Marlborough Secondary School. He explained there are a lot of similarities in philosophy and education in both the United Kingdom and America. With respect to curriculum, “Even though the ‘standards’ or ideology of education in the U.K. is put upon the teachers, there is an amount of flexibility on how you present the materials to the students.” When asked about the state of education in the U.K. today, he spoke about the tests and preparations for them as well as the anxiety created by the reporting of the scores. He also told the participants about “going back to the grind” after testing just as we do in America. He gave details about standards and goals, and also discussed how students react and work. He ended the discussion by saying that the education pendulum sometimes swings away from standards but inevitably will return to them. However, he felt that the students were losing individuality and the critical creative thinking that kids naturally have. This ties into the discussion by Mark Chesterton on day one of the conference with the loaves and hyacinths example. Jeffrey asked, “Are we becoming a society of lemmings who will not be able to think for ourselves or think out of the box? My fear is that we will be creating students that will not yield a Picasso or Rembrandt or a Bach, Beethoven or Jimmy Hendrix. Will our students

Brett Gilliland is Coordinator for Educational Support Service, Tuscarora Intermediate Unit #11, Pennsylvania
lose the ability to create, compose or see with different colored glasses?"

Margaret Holiday gave another example. She has been deputy headteacher of a variety of schools for a number of years. Additionally, she has presented at the Norham Centre Leadership Conference since 1998, having been a practicing teacher, mainly with fifth grade responsibilities for management, discipline, behavior issues, and curriculum. She feels that education should include the arts. When a participant noted that her school attended strongly to the arts, she responded, “We dare to be different. I have seen what it was like before the national curriculum and saw that we did what we wanted to do or what the headmaster wanted us to do.” She went on to say, “Christian Schiller said English education students should do what excites them in education rather than do cookie cutter curriculum.” She became aware that delivering the curriculum doesn’t always justify anything. She recalled,

In 1989, everything came out of a book. It was seen that curriculum changed and we let certain students down without basic skills. So the government organized the national curriculum group. The curriculum was put together by ‘three wise men’ in a cross curricular approach which required students to sit in unnatural positions for long periods of time, do schooling in a year, and get everyone to know a national curriculum.

She added that she was not thumbing her nose at the government or educational leaders. She was following the curriculum, with the addition of the arts, because she felt that the students were inspired by music and drama, which in turn induced creativity in the students. She felt that teachers needed to do lessons with depth and understanding of the whole process of learning and teaching. Their lesson plans needed to include an introduction, a statement of objectives, an academically rigorous activity and “lesson plenary closure.”

There is a show on Broadway and in London that expresses how many educators and educational leaders feel about instruction. The play is Fame. There is one scene in which a talented performer is a low, academically challenged student who does not complete work for an English teacher who also happens to be an administrator. The result of the confrontation is called the “Teacher Argument.” I would just like to quote a few lines from this song as a reminder that, as educational leaders, teachers, and people who are responsible for the future of the world, we are in a constant struggle with the development of “Loaves and Hyacinths.” We must form an educational process that encourages rigorous academics without stifling or forgetting creativity.

(Miss Sherman, spoken)

Greta, you know that 90 percent of these kids will never make a living in the arts we have to prepare them for life or what’s Tyrone gonna do if he can’t make it as a dancer, mop floors?

(Miss Bell)

Tyrone will make it

(sung)

I’ve seen them come and go for all these years kids with no talent for anything more than carrying spears another year another shipment lacking the drive or the style or the basic equipment this one is different. And I can see me there, unremarkable me the kid in the ballet class this one is different I tell you this one can dance this one is virtual I tell you give him a chance

(spoken)

Tyrone will make it, he will

(Miss Sherman)

Fine, and I wish him luck but this is an academic institution with academic standards Oh I know, we’re the fame high school now ever since that movie came out they come here expecting to become stars and you people think you run the show here oh teach them to perform and who cares if they can read or write who needs to write anyway as long as they can sign their name on a contract

(Miss Bell)

and who are you? Defender of the true faith

(Miss Sherman)

Exactly!

(Levy, 2000)

For more than a decade, politicians, business leaders and educational leaders have assumed that their education systems needed reform, not re-design (Abbott & Ryan, 1998). On both sides of the Atlantic reformers have insisted that young people can be successfully prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the Knowledge Age by getting systems of education designed for the Industrial Age. In taking this stance, much of the emerging body of research into the nature of human learning has failed to be fully appreciated (Abbott & Ryan, 1998).

New forms of education await development through exploiting new insights emerging from an ever-increasing array of research into how people learn how to learn, real understanding and transferable skills, then merging
these insights with best practice from around the world. If learning is the critical issue for the future, and not simply more schooling, then a transformation of the life of the community is as essential as any restructuring of formal educational arrangements (Abbott & Ryan, 1998).

Learning and schooling are not synonymous. “Learning and emotion cannot be separated; it is a waste of time to try” (Sylwester, 1995, p.73). No form of schooling can continuously compensate for a dysfunctional community; conversely, the harder the schools try, the less incentive communities have to help themselves. At the most fundamental level, it is impossible to bring up children to be intelligent in a world that appears unintelligible to them. Within a society dependent as never before on the intellectual and practical capabilities of people to demonstrate creativity and the mastery of a variety of skills, the key object of formal schooling, in both England and America, has to give every child the confidence and ability to manage their own learning as an ongoing lifelong activity (Abbott, 1997).

Educational institutions need to decide whether to cultivate wheat to bake loaves or to incubate and grow hyacinths. If the youngest children are progressively shown that a lesson about learning something can also be made into a lesson about how they “learn-to-learn” and remember something, then the child, as he or she becomes older, starts to become his or her own teacher. The student will be “working on the work” and will actually become, as Phil Schlechty states, “part of the ‘learning productivity process’” (2001, p.42). The older the child becomes, the more the child, as a learner, becomes a resource that the community can come to value. Like both wheat for loaves and hyacinths, this dynamic process has to be cultivated and grown. Educational leaders must assist educators to progressively wean pupils from their dependence on teachers and institutions and give them the confidence to manage their own learning, collaborating with colleagues, even as far as across the pond, and using a range of resources and learning situations (Abbott, 1997). To achieve this, the formal school system and its use of resources has to be completely reappraised, and effectively turned “upside-down.”

**Resources**


Mentors and Contributorship: Reflections Past, Present and Future

Bruce P. Elliott

The day came for us to present material to our colleagues and to Dr. Vivian Williams. I handle stressful situations well, but on this day, I lost my poise.

I could not speak. I could, however, write copious notes. The learning experience went beyond my expectations, and thus began a period of self-reflective growth which had begun several months earlier, culminating in everything I had learned in IDPEL. Through it I realized that not only had this bird left the nest, but that flying through life’s challenges is hard work. However, I now understand my journey. During this week several issues culminated for me. The two most important were the significance of mentorship and the essentialness of contributorship.

Let me reflect. Dr. Thomas W. Holtzman, Jr. was Superintendent of Susquehanna Township School District, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, for almost 13 years until he lost his battle with cancer in the year 2000. His outstanding leadership and his direct mentorship in my life contributed to who I am today and equally on what I will become tomorrow. His mentoring shaped some of my founding beliefs on how to operate as a leader and administrator.

Dr. Holtzman was a leader who placed his mind, body, and soul into developing the quality of his entire school community, including administrators. His commitment to the community was his driving force. Faced with the need for changes in his district, he acknowledged those needs and accommodated the resolutions for satisfying those needs. He was wonderfully transparent. His entire operational mode was that of contributorship, from within large organizations down to the individual and specifically to me.

From time to time, it is helpful having someone run interference and level the playing field. Dr. Holtzman groomed me to be a leader and supported my leadership development. An artful politician who threatened no one as he ushered in change, he inspired me to meet the needs of my students and teachers. He sharpened my understanding of and communication skills with parents. He also admonished me in a mentoring sense when I inadequately faced professional growth challenges.

I have learned privately since his death that Dr. Holtzman had confidence in me and that belief has helped me pick up the mantle of leadership that I have chosen for my life. Dr. Holtzman was my hero, and I model my leadership style and management efforts in emulation of him. As he did, I believe that effective leadership in a school district addresses the needs of its students, parents, and staff. I dedicated myself, as he did, and I modeled myself professionally after him because excellence required unequivocal commitment to the best interest of the entire school community. His leadership style compelled a school administrator to make decisions and take actions based on the long-term, best interest of the school community and to determine which interest takes priority in a particular situation. Dr. Holtzman’s contributions to my life, as Robert Frost said, “…have made all the difference.” I have since realized that he influenced many others as well.

With his loss, I am challenged professionally to develop a new leadership style, one that incorporates his influence but becomes entirely my own. I believe that high-caliber teachers and administrators are master artists in their professions. Such mastery develops most easily when the educator is a well-organized planner who appreciates unity of purpose. Mostly, teachers need a voice, a sense of contributorship to do their finest work.

In the last two years, I have also experienced the death of my mother and my closest sibling. Both of them had shown me how to care and demonstrate insightfulness through wisdom in order to live my life and influence people in a proactive manner. I am still adjusting to my new role of independence and responsibility.

I am the baby bird that has been completely and abruptly pushed out of the nest. These three caring and discerning individuals gave me pearls of wisdom to order in so many ways. They were and are my safe havens. I always appreciated the pearls they gave me, yet never expected that I would have to string them together by myself. I must stand tall and focus on my own guideposts in life. As my life is represented by the bird that is pushed out of the nest, I ask, “Are my wings ready? Am I willing to accept a leadership style that will be positive, that will work successfully?”

These reflections I have encountered over the last week at Oxford University, and they have culminated in being able to accept the challenge and to answer the question, “Am I ready?” with, “Yes, I believe I can fly.”

Spiritually and intellectually, I have learned many lessons. There are times, however, when it is difficult to demonstrate effective leadership. The more I learn about effective leadership, the greater my desire is to be an effective leader. I am sometimes distracted, however, when I do not hear an echo or affirmation or sense the presence of a shield. I hope to be able to provide this strength for others as I grow as a leader. Through prayer, I encourage myself from the inside. This connection with my inner self...
provides me with the strength to encourage others from the outside and not make their lives miserable. My obligation is to help students and teachers to succeed. This is the source of my energy. As Jonathan Livingston Seagull stated, “I must remind myself to not let the ‘birds’in power push me out of my own circle of influence.” Simply, I cannot let them get me down (Bach, 1970).

What is the value of my experiences this past week? I have had reaffirmed to me that any school district is a learning tree with some bad apples and some very good ones. I am able to recognize the differences between good and bad apples, and if I am honest with myself, I know that a bad apple may have good spots and a good apple may have a bad spot or two. As honestly as we try, few of us can appreciate where we are in the circle of influence. Others see things about us that are too familiar for the self to recognize. I am nervous and fearful, yet hopeful. I will stand on my faith. Also, and very importantly, I will draw on the things I have learned from the contributors in my life up to the present - and when I need to connect on a higher level, I will fly. Falling is a temporary prelude to flying. As I fall from the nest, I will continue to seek to understand and then to be understood. At times, I will return to the nest. I will question what my mentors, my contributors would have said or done in any given situation. I want to fly and make them proud. I want to teach others to fly high and well in the process as I have been taught. A successful career in the field of education continues to be my life ambition.

Reflecting on the present:

The experiences, concepts, and philosophies Dr. Vivian Williams spoke about that day were many. Principals are leaders. They are leaders who are not good or great, but they are leaders who have contributors, not followers. Principals must view the learning environment from a holistic approach. They must remain life-long learners. They are also life-long mentors who must consistently demonstrate a willingness to have contributorship as a share valued within the learning environment. It is vital that principals, like myself, realize and understand that contributors are leaders. Some are good, some great and some not so, but all are leaders nonetheless.

Principals must not speak only of contributorship. With contributorship, people must ask questions and give answers to assist in creating a vision with positive school cultures. I am flying, and growth is continuous. Teachers are not followers - they are contributors to the organization because they are masterful artists in their own rights. They have so much to offer and are better teachers when they are given the opportunities to be so. When they come to me, I must value that they have come to contribute; I must value what they have to say. I want to ask questions, such as how we can make our organization better, or what is their vision about specific topics. I want to utilize and incorporate their ideas.

Dr. Holztman did it by looking for people who had strength in an area. When he wanted to shift a traditional middle school operation into a teaming concept, he identified people with those strengths, asked for their input and then had them implement their ideas. Contributorship is involvement.....of the highest kind.

Contributorship permits leaders and followers to work at goals together with a realism that their conclusions can be utilized within the school community as practical strategies for success. Contributorship is positive and promotes expertise and appropriate behaviors among the organization.

Contributorship must be earned by members in the school organization through honesty, self-reflection, opportunities, listening to others, and a flexibility to adjust to varying opinions and decisions.

The independent schools in the United Kingdom definitely have something to teach public schools in the United States. National standards exist, along with a national curriculum, tests, and exams. The lesson learned is schools and all their community members must advertise and promote their schools from a positive perspective. Education must not be based on a legislative framework.

The independent schools of the United Kingdom allowed government to change schools. Public educators in the United States must talk positively and promote themselves. A student’s best must be more important than any kind of governmental rules or requirements.

Despite or maybe in support of my findings, my visitation to several schools showed me several things. The independent schools of the United Kingdom demonstrated that although a national curriculum exists, their leadership style is contributorship. Head Teachers are relentless and holistic with their vision of what makes their schools work successfully. There is a mindset of what it takes to excel at maintaining a healthy and psychologically safe environment for the members of the school environment. As an observer, I found that all school members are thinking outside the box and Head Teachers are not “shoving down” mandates and policies to their team. Instead, they are working hard to go against the flow to make their team a working community.

Schools in the United Kingdom are living and breathing institutions permeated with warmth, friendliness, support and challenges. They strive to unite home and school with strong, positive relationships. Daily achievement is expected. There exists in the world today the concept of a global economy. The independent schools provide the best opportunities for students to grow and be valued individuals in society. They want their students prepared for the global community by making all students qualified, responsible, and caring.

Teachers and principals are very much a part of the same team. They meet at the same table. They contribute their ideas together equally, with respect for all the varying voices. They work as team members to fight for what is best for their students.

I have seen these ideas working during my week’s visit at Oxford. Leaders are contributors, not only leaders. Now that I’ve lost Dr. Holtzman, I have found that my new superintendent exemplifies both leadership and contributorship. At times she steps back and contributes,
pushing me into an active leadership role. When she does so, I must lead. At other times, she will lead, while requiring me to contribute. Once again, I am learning “example” from a mentor. This is the same leadership skills I endeavor to pass on.

My goal is to “do” contributorship with my teachers and my team. I am now in full flight. I travel back to that nest to see what old mentors might say - those supporting wings who supported me while I was that little bird in the nest. I hope to be able to provide this strength for others as I grow as a leader.

Reference

The Learning of a Leader: A Formal or Informal Lesson?

Chad H. Bennett

Through the numerous opportunities for introspection while at thirty thousand feet, traveling five hundred-fifty miles per hour, I felt an internal sense of comfort and excitement engulf my psyche. I was thoroughly impressed and excited by the amenities that the airline had to offer me as a passenger. Complete video library, music, and an electronic navigational system which would pinpoint the geographic location of the aircraft in relation to its air speed and altitude. As I sat there pondering the marvels of this technology, it dawned on me that although change is quite constant through the many facets of our life, a common thread still exists among all of us as human beings. We all are imperfect, but strive to make sense of our rapidly changing world. We often speak about technology and the Information Age, and how fast each is propelling humanity into an age of endless informational possibilities. However, in the end, we are very much the same in fashion, no different than the individuals that have spanned the globe, yesterday, today, and tomorrow. It became quite apparent that experiencing new ideas, ways of life, and culture can act as common threads to bring us all together, including the enriched development of educational leaders across the globe. This experience was sure to be a monumental.

Often times, the most influential learning experiences can take place in the most informal of situations. It becomes quite apparent that in varying degrees, we place too much influence on formalized environments and therefore hang our hats on the prestige of structured learning situations. In many instances, we as leaders fail to recognize the importance of unstructured, free flowing, unrestricted opportunities to share. It is not my intention to devalue the importance of formalized learning situations, but rather to bring attention to the opportunities for learning outside of normal arenas. The interaction experienced by the conferees is of the utmost importance. We all participated to varying levels throughout the week’s endeavors, creating new links to one another and strengthening bonds that already exist. As Margaret Wheatley would say, “Relationships, not lone individuals, are the basic organization unit of life” (Wheatley, 1999). It’s quite evident that relationships are very key to the development of our leadership skills.

Hearing from the various higher education syndicate speakers enabled us as leaders to better broaden our perspective and assist our abilities to make informed decisions, while maintaining a level of creativity and fairness for all with whom we lead. After brief reflection, I realized that the conference would not only stretch my intellect, but stretch my eyes as well. You may ask, “Stretch your eyes?” This is what I mean. An individual can listen and learn, but an explorer with eyes wide open can touch, see, and experience the boundless encounters that a culture has to offer. We as leaders are all explorers in the path of providing direction, not only in our organizations, but also within our own internal compasses. Participation in the Norham Centre’s Leadership Conference was exactly that, an opportunity to reset an internal compass through an engagement of intellectual and cultural stimulation in order to provide insight into what makes us all valuable leaders.

Reference


Chad Bennett is Coordinator of Academic Support Services, Shippensburg University, Pennsylvania
The Oxford Journey: Shared Experiences, Shared Learning, Shared Moment in Time

David Reeder

A cohort departed Duquesne
But you can’t get to Oxford by train
So they all took the notion
To fly cross the ocean
A scholarly time to be gained

My journey to Oxford University to attend and contribute to an international conference on leadership had not been envisioned in 1957 when I started my life’s journey on a dairy farm in south central Pennsylvania. My European ancestors, the Reeder and Cross’s, were from England and Scotland, respectively. Finding myself in the land of my roots in the year 2004 was truly an emotional experience I had not anticipated.

There was no sleep for me on the flight from Washington, DC, to London, UK. I am not sure why this was the case since sleeping is not an area in which I am unskilled. I have to believe that this was the beginning of my reflective experience and the shared learning afforded through Duquesne University and St. Peter’s College in Oxford. However, the scholarly experience with a group of fellow travelers was an emotional as well as an intellectual journey that began for me when I was deposited at Dulles International and started seeing my Duquesne colleagues filter into line for check-in. We were beginning a trip that had become a symbolic rite of passage and experiential learning event at the end of doctoral coursework at Duquesne University.

It was evident that our world had changed since the last Shippensburg cohort had participated in the spring of 2001. September 11, 2001 had altered the way we live, learn, and process life. Some trepidation could be sensed among my fellow passengers as we passed through a variety of security checks and proceeded through the metal and luggage surveillance areas at Dulles International Airport. As I ambled down the passage to the airplane I observed several of my cohort friends removing articles of clothing in the hallway and a wand being passed over them. It was both amusing and disconcerting at the same time, another reminder of societal change and how this journey and the learning experience were different in this time and place.

Still no sleep as we landed at Heathrow at 7:30 am Saturday morning UK time. At this point I had been awake since 5:00 am USA time Friday morning and was beginning to feel the fog of fatigue settle over my consciousness. Fortunately, I was among a cohort of leaders and knew that I could easily fall into the follower role with some minor contributorship along the way. As a group, we problem-solved our way to the bus that would take us from Heathrow to Oxford. As uneventful and drizzly as the trip turned out to be, I tried to doze, but sleep would not come.

We arrived at the bus station in Oxford, and had no clue as to which direction would lead us to St. Peter’s College. We decided to simply start walking toward a perceived heart of the town and ask friendly faces where the college was located. After several unsuccessful attempts we finally accessed viable information and found our way a few short blocks to the entrance at St. Peter’s. This would be our home for the next week. It felt reassuring to reach the reception area and see a friendly face behind the desk confirming our existence in this time and place. The journey of learning and shared experience continued.

The meetings that ensued at this juncture involved introductions of other participants and seeing Dr. Vivian Williams and his staff. Dr. Williams had been in the United States a few years ago and presented to our doctoral class. We had all been looking forward to the conference but the experience became problematic when Dr. Williams experienced severe health problems. Now here we were with Dr. Williams who seemed as lively and scholarly as we had remembered. How different our experience and learning would have been had circumstances been different and this capstone conference not taken place. Events in life happen for a reason.

Our schedule for the week was outlined in a document that indicated we would be very busy from dawn to dusk and beyond for the next week. Visits to schools during the day and presentations in the afternoons and evenings would be the order of business. The itinerary made me tired, though I was unsure whether it was that or my lack of sleep for the past forty-eight hours. We met in a conference room on St. Peter’s campus that would serve as our base of operations for meetings and presentations. As we settled into the comfortable chairs and warm space, fatigue became my enemy as I fought valiantly to maintain a cognitive presence. Unfortunately, the need for sleep was stronger than my will and I left the world of scholars for periodic dreams and unexplained dark territories. Every so often my colleagues would nudge me or prop me up but, in general, thought my predicament quite amusing. Shared experiences and dilemmas forge the best relationships.

The visits to various schools in the United Kingdom were a highlight of the learning experience. My background includes teaching science to 10 – 14-year-old students for nine years before moving into the administrative arena as a middle school and high school principal for the next sixteen years. The opportunity to observe and dialogue
with teachers and administrators in a different country and educational environment was extremely enlightening.

My first visit was to a wonderful school named Deanshanger Primary School, tucked away in the city of Milton Keynes about forty minutes from Oxford. Security was evident as we approached the front door and were introduced and admitted. The Headteacher met us and provided us with a prospectus of the school, a tour of the facility, and introduced us to some of the staff in the immediate area. We were then permitted to move about the school to visit classrooms, speak to students and teachers, and observe the instructional process. The school was considered a large elementary and contained approximately three hundred students. In the United States this would have been an average to small elementary. Observing instruction was quite a treat with the most obvious difference being the English dialect. In one class I sat in a student chair with my knees up to my chest, closed my eyes and just listened. It was an incredible experience for me to be transported inside a Harry Potter novel. Listening to elementary children speaking in what I perceived to be such proper English was quite a treat.

Aside from this huge auditory difference, it was interesting to note that much is the same when it comes down to actual instruction in the classroom. The issues of quality instruction, dealing with students with disabilities, and human behavior were all very similar to the United States. I observed an instructional assistant sitting at a table with several students as the teacher facilitated the lesson. She worked with several students who seemed to be having difficulty focusing. She also assisted the students when they were working with the concept of a circle and 360 degrees. It was evident from the kinesthetic activity the teacher had provided for the class that these students needed the one-on-one attention. In another setting outside the classroom, an instructional assistant was working with an autistic child using clay and hands-on methods to stimulate neural functions. In still another instructional setting the teacher was using a computer lab for written composition as well as artistic expression of characters. In all cases the interaction between the students and the teacher were paramount to student success.

We visited a secondary school on the second day named Kingsbrook School, located near Milton Keynes, which is the next level when students leave the primary grades. The school contained over a thousand students ages eleven through eighteen. The Headteacher was absent that day so the Deputy Headteacher served as our host. This school would have been equivalent to grade seven through twelve high schools in the United States. As we sat in the office getting an overview of secondary education in the United Kingdom, the fire alarm sounded. I thanked the Headteacher for planning a fire drill for our benefit but he informed me that this was not a result of his planning so we exited the building with students and staff. It is much nicer observing this type of scenario when it is not yours to manage. We stood on the blacktop in the back of the building in a mixture of rain and sunshine. All was orderly and we were informed that the false alarm was likely perpetrated by one of the students. I was beginning to feel at home.

We were given a tour of the building and were again permitted to wander about the facility to visit classrooms. A substitute shortage required coverage by various staff and some classes were left somewhat to their own devices. We popped into one class where a substitute was maintaining classroom control admirably with a group of thirteen-year-old students. Several of the boys were jumping around and made some comment as we entered the room and were introduced as visitors from the United States. The substitute admonished them for their response saying “Stop being so cheeky.” They settled down but it was evident that hormonal fluctuation is universal in middle school age children.

Following the excitement and between the times the Deputy Headteacher needed to teach snippets of classes, we engaged in a discussion regarding the role of the administrator in the United Kingdom. In addition to observing and evaluating teachers and staff, the Head Teacher engages in making many site-based decisions. Overseeing contracts for food services and school construction are typically the purview of the site-based administrator. Writing grants to access funds for projects, submitting them for review, defending the request, and finally overseeing the project and assessment are common activities. I was quite impressed with the scope of responsibilities required of the Headteacher in regard to the facility and day-to-day operational concerns. The Headteacher’s plate in the United Kingdom is truly full if not overflowing. I believe this is a detriment to instructional leadership and praise the leadership for surviving on a daily basis. Needless to say, the exchange of ideas and the experience of observing administrators, teachers, staff, and students were truly valuable learning experiences.

Our final event was a truly spectacular dinner in one of the great halls of learning. We dined by candlelight and engaged in scholarly and bawdy discourse regarding the experiences of the week. As I flew back to my home in Pennsylvania, the flight afforded me the opportunity to reflect on shared experiences, exchanged ideas, and a shared moment in time that will not be forgotten, and sleep…
Cross-cultural Education Can Be for the Teacher, Too

Edward Arke

For centuries scholars have been wandering the globe in search of knowledge or to share and spread ideas. Those travels have not only helped the scholars to grow but can also bear fruit when they return to the classroom in their homeland.

A 1992 research study done at the State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNYAB) discovered ways faculty members were able to make their teaching more relevant to diverse populations while making their course content more international in scope (Razzano, 1996). Those modern-day wanderers gathered new concepts and ideas and made them applicable to the classroom. This research finding has a strong connection and relevance to my experience at the Educational Leadership Development Conference at St. Peter’s College, Oxford University.

Messiah College has been recognized nationally for the high percentage of students that spend some portion of their college careers studying abroad. Some of those experiences come from semesters abroad, others through faculty sponsored cross-cultural trips. It is only occasionally that faculty members grow through a professional development experience abroad. More higher education professionals can benefit from personally interacting with the global marketplace in which colleges and universities are increasingly immersed.

One only has to walk through the streets of Oxford to be impacted by the educational significance and historic nature of the centuries-old institution. To stare in awe at the great halls, magnificent chapels and well-groomed “quads,” a visiting scholar is immediately impressed by the influence Oxford University has had throughout Great Britain and the world. It is an educational aura that provides an opportunity for learning, both intentional and subconscious.

Younes and Asay discuss the unique opportunities international study experiences have for participants. They note such tours provide a vehicle for individuals to "contextualize world events and to determine their responsibility for the future as it unfolds" (2003, p. 141). The immersion that individuals have in a culture that does not possess the same world views helps to broaden the perspectives of those who venture outside of the safety of the classroom to learn what is outside their windows on the world.

At SUNYAB, faculty members found that upon returning home, they made a more conscious effort to stay informed of international news and events. “By watching or listening to foreign news broadcasts and by maintaining contact with foreign friends, the professors felt better prepared to analyze worldwide phenomena from differing viewpoints” (Razzano, 1996, p. 269). The BBC has now become a part of my attempts to digest a well-rounded media diet in order to maintain a global awareness and how the rest of the world impacts the field of broadcasting and communication. Considering and processing news reports originating from other parts of the world helps me to better educate students at Messiah College about the media marketplace that exists today.

Kirkwood calls for more discussion of global education so educators can agree on a definition for the term. However, as she works to help define the field, she also points to its benefits. She says among the implications is the need to be prepared for an involvement with worldwide systems. “It requires the removal of the national border as a barrier in education at all levels and in all subjects” (Kirkwood, 2001, p. 11-12).

The relevance of this statement to my work as a Communication educator dealing with mass communication industries at the higher education level is two-fold. First, despite the obsession many Americans have with various forms of the media, they fail to realize that many outlets are owned and/or controlled by multi-national corporations. The FOX television network is an example of one which has all the appearance of an American media company but is actually controlled by international media mogul Rupert Murdoch.

Second, my interaction with higher education colleagues, researchers and scholars at Oxford helped me to realize that despite the 3,500 hundred miles that separate the United States and United Kingdom we share similar challenges. Questions over academic standards, admission requirements and the tight fiscal situations stretch beyond America’s east coast. Opportunities to gather in an international setting and share the situations at our respective institutions are helpful in trying to create solutions to the ongoing challenges that we face.

Part of a consensus definition of global education is “state-of-the-planet awareness” (Kirkwood, 2001, p. 12). Kirkwood says that requires an understanding of world conditions, developments, trends and other problems confronting the world. It is this awareness which can lead to educators around the globe finding innovative solutions to common problems that seem to arise at all stages of the educational process.

Research has shown learning takes place at many
different levels and in many different ways, both intentionally and incidentally as well as introverted and extroverted. The immersion in other cultures that cross-cultural study provides can result in greater retention by students than would occur in a traditional setting (Younes & Asay, 2003). This longer retention can last a lifetime, particularly if faculty members continue to expand their world view through travel and international study throughout their careers.

More research is needed, to quantify for those scholars who demand such studies, how the quality and outcome of international study and classroom learning compare. Younes and Asay (2003) indicate there is a gap in scholarly research regarding such comparisons presently. Despite the lack of quantified data, from a qualitative and anecdotal point of view, there is certainly much to be gained from cross-cultural study for both college-age students and faculty.

References


Reflection on the Tutor-Student Relationship: Oxford Style

Gwendolyn Durham-Swingler

Introduction

Enrollment in the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders and attending the 18th International Leadership Conference in Oxford, England, have changed my life forever. Having an opportunity to reside in one of the thirty-eight colleges of such a prestigious university was an honor and a privilege. Scholarly reflection, experiencing the British culture and, ultimately, contributing to a scholarly forum are noteworthy accomplishments that will always be treasured. Global networking with leaders provided thought-provoking insights and discussions in relation to leadership in the 21st century. Moreover, the conference afforded each group member an opportunity to interface with educational leaders and resources which were connected to his/her individual educational interest. This article will focus on two major concepts: (a) Oxford, “leading with soul” and the tutor-student relationship and; (b) Oxford, “educational philosophy,” and the tutor-student relationship.

Oxford, Leading with Soul, and the Tutor-Student Relationship

Leaders in the 21st century have begun to identify the essence of leadership with soul, spirit, and compassion. No longer are charisma and dictatorship considered characteristics of a good leader. Leaders should care about their constituents and allow them to take an active role in creating a dynamic organization or educational institution. Effective leaders enable others to reach their personal potential and they help the organization or institution reach its highest potential (DePree, 1989). The tutorial system in the United Kingdom is synonymous with this idea of leadership.

It was amazing to learn about the enormous amount of autonomy that tutors have in admitting students into their colleges. These scholars interview, select, and ultimately teach the students they choose. This process requires the tutor to be a skillful risk-taker. It is a fascinating concept and a tremendous responsibility. Insightfulness, power, compassion, and, yes, wittiness, are adjectives that begin to describe this important process and the scholars who lead it. Leadership of this kind requires leading with soul. DePree (1989) postulated, “A leader must be a judge of people; for leaders choose a person, not a position” (p. 20).

Professors in universities and colleges of America are totally removed from the selection process. It is possible for a student to be enrolled in a course for an entire semester without speaking one-on-one to the professor. In addition, it is virtually impossible for professors to know the names of their students until they cross the thresholds of their doors.

The tutor-student relationship facilitates passionate learning. Bolman and Deal (2001) expounded, “The gifts of leadership address great spiritual traditions, compassion, and justice” (p.12). In leadership, passion is a gift. Leadership of this nature, and that of Oxford tutors include: (a) authorship - putting your signature on your work; (b) love - giving oneself to a common cause; (c) power - helping others find and productively make use of their autonomy; (d) significance - helping to provide a sense of unity and pride in contributing to the renewal of society (Bolman & Deal, 2001).

Moreover, the dedication that tutors have, and the scholarly sessions in which that dedication thrives, enables each Oxford scholar to “soar with their strengths.” It is individualized education that we can only dream of in America. Educational diversity for students at Oxford University is recognized and respected. Oxford can be viewed as a university in which every student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Clifton and Nelson (1992) eloquently stated, “Strengths develop best when sufficient time is devoted to a single subject and goal” (p. 41). Hats off to continuing the tradition.

Oxford, Educational Philosophy, and the Tutor-Student Relationship

A genuine passion swept the room as the concept of the tutor-student system in the U.K. unfolded. Ryan and Cooper (2004) defined philosophy as “the love of wisdom” (p. 264). Oxford triggered for me thoughts of the word philosophy – a word that teachers harvest for the foundation of their careers; the foundation that leaders harvest for the art of leadership. The tutor-student relationship at Oxford stimulates thoughts of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle – the essence of philosophy.

Socrates engaged people with provocative dialogues and helped them to find answers and the truth within their own minds. Is this what happens at Oxford when tutor and students engage during the learning experience? In the words of Vivian Williams, a retired Oxford professor and host of the conference, “I asked questions of my students to determine how quickly they thought; I like a good challenge.” Plato, a student of Socrates, is known for the beauty and clarity of his writing. The core of his philosophy is his belief that the human soul has three parts: (a) intellect; (b) spirit or passion; and (c) appetite (Sadker, 2002).
Plato advocated that the intellect can be trained to control the other two. Is this what Oxford tutors do? Aristotle studied under Plato and is renowned for his ethical as well as political theories. He envisioned society as a place that would give each person the role most appropriate to the abilities and inclination of the individual (Ryan & Cooper, 2004; Sadker, M. & Sadker, D., 2000). While this is a goal for which all educators and leaders strive, the relationship between tutors and students seems to address this issue more intrinsically. One can only imagine the thoughts that are pondered, the dialogues about questions, and the ultimate significance of the deeper, richer, and clearer ideas that come to fruition for students. The tutor-student relationship in Oxford encompasses various philosophies that have influenced the American educational system.

**Eclecticism**

During the conference as the days and activities advanced, the culture at Oxford University, the philosophy of eclecticism, surfaced in my mind. Eclecticists are often criticized as having a lackadaisical stance about philosophical certainty. Supporters of this philosophy often feel that truth and knowledge can be formed anywhere. Henniger (2004) explained, “Many educators choose this philosophy because they recognize that teachers and students are unique individuals and, because of this uniqueness, no one philosophy can adequately describe specific teaching and learning strategies for all” (p. 270). In my view, the tutor-student relationship clearly supports the philosophy of eclecticism. One philosophy could never be as effective in the one-on-one academic encounters at Oxford University.

**Perennialism**

As information about the educational system in the U.K. unfolded, dominant schools of philosophy that influence the American educational system emerged. Oxford University was established in the 1100s. Despite the rising cost of education, the tutor-student educational forum has not perished. Perennialists consider that the primary purpose of education is to find the changeless truth and teach ideas that have lasted over centuries and remain relevant today (Ryan & Cooper, 2004). Educational administrators are great supporters of this philosophy.

**Essentialism**

Many of the scholars at Oxford are strong supporters of the essentialist philosophy. Essentialists urge that the most essential or basic knowledge be taught to all students. It is the role of the education/school to prepare students to be productive, contributing members of society. This philosophy views educators as the expert of content knowledge (Sadker, P. & Sadker, M., 2000; Henniger, 2004; Ryan & Cooper, 2004). Knowledge required for students to become productive citizens in society is common in all parts of the world. However, in the U.K. many affluent parents begin honing in on the educational development of their children at the tender age of four. They spend an enormous amount of money to assure their access to esteemed universities. The primary focus is often the essence of what students need to know to facilitate entrance into one of the 38 colleges of Oxford University. This system directly prepares students for the academic challenges that they will encounter after being accepted at one of the colleges. It meticulously prepares them to accomplish their goals (Sadker, P. & Sadker, M., 2004). “Essentialist programs are academically rigorous and maintain that classrooms should be orientated around the teacher, who ideally serves as an intellectual moral role model” (p. 397).

**Progressivism**

Progressivists have a high degree of respect for individuality. The tutor-student relationship epitomizes individuality. The programs in the U.K. are rigid, however, students have a tremendous amount of autonomy over their education. Upon entering one of the colleges, individuality is established. It was fascinating to learn that attending a lecture was not required during the entire duration of a student’s tenure at Oxford, but it was merely encouraged. Unlikely, but possible, a student may graduate without attending a single lecture. Students are indoctrinated with the concept of individuality and this concept is deep-rooted within each of the colleges.

It was apparent that the colleges operate as separate entities. While scholarly research is pivotal at colleges and universities in the United States, the degree to which Oxford colleges rigorously compete against each other to be number one in scholarly research is phenomenal. One can only respect this ritual that is practiced by the faculty – it is the Oxford way.

**Some Final Thoughts**

Being at Oxford University was a perfect opportunity and an outstanding experience for a professor from an American university. The presentations, discussions, lectures and comments spawned deep reflection. Each supplied an essential component to this scholarly event and broadened my perspective about leadership and education. In addition, many thoughts surface about this auspicious trip. First, the relationship between tutors and students is a unique and most fascinating concept. The advantages are enormous to both parties, however, it is the students who reap the most benefits. One can only imagine how the culture of universities and colleges in the United States would change under such an eminent system. Such a system helps develop a “well-rounded” individual in the most genuine sense.

Second, here are some memorable points which will stay with me far into the future:

- The current system is unique and advantageous for the scholars at Oxford.
- According to one of our hosts, there are many advantages, however, it is truly a demanding system.
Some students experience emotional trauma because of the rigorous demands.

• Access to the colleges at Oxford is a distinct challenge; tutors are the determining factors.
• Architecture, traditions, and history are important in Great Britain.
• It was quite interesting to learn about Oxford Brookes a new university, yet with a history that began in 1865.
• Touring the Blenheim Palace (a world heritage site) and recapturing its history was an incredible walk through time.
• Over the centuries the fiscal cost has risen, however, the tradition to provide quality education remains.
• Roving leadership is pivotal in the operation and effectiveness of a dynamic institution.

The hosts of the 18th International Oxford Conference eloquently modeled the concept of “Leading a Dynamic Institution.” Evidence of planning and reflecting were apparent. Each host operated as a roving leader. Each helped to create a professional climate that was conducive to scholarly thought, discussions, and learning. The success of the conference was contingent upon the hosts being responsible for prearranged responsibilities and each possessing essential characteristics (i.e., trust, interdependence) that are needed in roving leadership. They understood the notion that effective leaders cannot lead independently. Each host was unique and operated professionally to transfer and maintain the vitality of the conference. DePree (1989) said, “When roving leadership is practiced, it makes demands on each of us – whether we’re a hierarchical leader, a roving leader, or a good follower” (p. 49).

One final comment: Many thanks to Dr. Helen Sobehart, my leader and friend at Duquesne University in the United States, and to Dr. Vivian Williams, my leader and friend at Oxford University in the United Kingdom.

References


Attributes of Shared Leadership

James J. Bruno

As stated throughout our three years in the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders, “education is a journey not a destination.” Reflecting on this and preparing for the journey to Oxford, one couldn’t help but think this would be the culminating activity in which our cohort would engage. It has been a long journey since we began this program in July of 2001, and it was about to lead us to the anticipated conference that would measure, to some degree, our experiences, understanding and practical application of our training to become educational leaders. It is not the end of our journey; it is the segue between our training and the opportunity for members of this cohort to begin making an impact as change agents.

As we arrived in Oxford, we couldn’t help but feel the magnitude of this experience just through our surroundings. For many of the members of this cohort, it was the first time we stepped on foreign soil. It was a little overwhelming and would make any American feel a little apprehensive and intimidated. However, remembering why we were here and the purpose of this educational experience had a calming effect. The rallying point became St. Peter’s College in Oxford and the catalyst for this excursion was the 18th International Oxford Conference titled Leadership in Self-Governing Schools: Shared Leadership for More Effective Schools.

James MacGregor Burns best expresses the purpose of this conference and the lesson to be learned from this experience. He stated that:

Leadership is leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations – the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations – of both leaders and followers. And the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders see and act on their own and their followers, values and motivations. (as cited in Phillips, 1992, p.3)

Accepting this statement and being able to implement the theory in practice became the impetus for the presentations of each of our cohort advisory groups. The presentations were diverse yet similar in many respects, and the common thread throughout each presentation was the notion of shared leadership among those involved in the educational organization. With that, most groups shared ideas on how to increase the productivity of leadership programs, or how leaders have to be aware of their surroundings and be able to lead in all directions, or the need to attend to the needs of your followers to foster leadership, or to make the best of a situation by being creative with resources to provide strong learning.

A predominant theme throughout the presentations dealt with leaders who convert “followers” to “contributors.” It was discussed that the term “followers” was outdated and didn’t apply to the people who work to carry out the vision and mission of the organization. Followers have been thought of as individuals who were incapable of thinking on their own and unable to contribute to the work and success of an organization. Burns described “followers” as “submissive, unthinking, powerless and lacking motivation” (as cited in Williams, 2001, p.26). Conversely, Robert E. Kelly, vividly described followers as committed, loyal, effective, and co-adventurers (as cited in Wren, 1995, p. 196-198). As Dr. Vivian Williams discussed in his work Leadership as a Binocular Concept, “Leaders do not rely on followers any longer. The success of the organization is attributed to ‘contributors’” (2001, p.28). Williams feels that the role of contributor is advanced beyond the role of follower. The bond between leaders and contributors is an intense acceptance of mutually desired educational, organizational and social goals for students and communities. It is this understanding of mutually accepted goals that makes leaders realize that their colleagues elect to contribute in a collaborative process.

A further look into contributorship reveals that people like working with colleagues who are committed to their work. This helps with keeping the morale high and people focused. However, it should be noted that according to Kelly, “Followers who are strongly committed to goals not consistent with goals of their organizations can produce destructive results. Leaders having such followers/contributors can even lose control of their organizations” (as cited in Wren, 1995, p. 196-198).

Effective followers are able to control their own ideas or ambitions to satisfy the needs and goals of the organization. Effective leaders are able to harness the energies of strong commitment in ways that will satisfy the goals of the organization as well as attempt to satisfy the goals of the followers. Followership and contributorship are roles. What distinguishes followers from leaders is not intelligence or character but the role they play. Effective followers and effective leaders are often the same people playing different parts at different times (Kelley, 1988).

Without followers/contributors to enable an organization to realize improvement or success, the role of being a leader would be meaningless. Leadership can come in many styles, and to each their own. However, one style of leadership that accentuates shared leadership with contributors is transformational leadership.

James Bruno is Director of Athletics/Administrative Assistant to Superintendent, West Perry School District, Pennsylvania
Transformational leadership, according to Burns, “...occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (as cited in Wren, 1995, p.104). This style of leadership is empowering, and as its name indicates, “transformational.” This style of leadership allows or encourages interaction between leaders and followers and it is through this interaction that the level of contact between the groups adds to the relationship and allows both groups to become more humanistic. By becoming more humanistic there is an opportunity for the leader to transform the needs of followers. The leader may also be able to transform a follower’s self-interest, confidence, expectations of success and to elevate the value of the leader’s intended outcomes for the follower (Couto, 1993). One significant attribute to transformational leadership, and one that makes it so powerful, is that transformational leadership ultimately becomes moral. It becomes moral because it elevates the level of conduct expected from both followers and leaders. If effective, the followers will be transformed into highly motivated contributors who provide extra effort to perform beyond expectations of the leaders.

John Gardner, from his work Leaders and Followers, offers salient points that directly apply to the relationship between leaders and followers (1987). He believes that leaders must have a capacity for rational problem solving, but they must also have a firm grasp of the needs and moods of followers. The ablest leaders understand the embedded expectations of people with respect to their leadership, and they are adept at meeting those expectations, not only with rational words but also with gestures. Gardner (1987) further states that followers appreciate being treated with consideration. They like having their say and also having the ability to exercise their own initiative. Participation does increase acceptance of decisions, but there are times when followers welcome the decision making of leaders outright and will support the decision as if it were their own. The needs of the group are best served by a relationship in which the leader helps followers to develop their own judgment and enables them to grow and to become better and leaders in their own right (Gardner, 1987).

A final topic is the importance of having a shared vision. A vision is an organizational statement that identifies the values and beliefs that drive your organization. In the past, crafting a vision and mission statement was the work of the hierarchy of the organization. Then these statement(s) would be disseminated down upon the organizational workers so they would see what they were supposed to believe in and represent as a part of this organization.

Peter Senge, in his book The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization, offers guidelines for the commitment of the followers/contributors in the organization towards accepting the vision (1990). He believes that enrollment is a natural process that develops from a genuine enthusiasm for a vision and the willingness to allow others to either accept or reject this vision. The first step in this process is to “be enrolled yourself” (Senge, 1990, p.222). Obviously, as the leader you must be committed to the success of this vision and it is your job to enroll your workers in accepting the vision. Senge believes that “selling” the vision to your workers will only at best produce a bogus agreement and compliance (1990).

The second step for enrollment and commitment is “be on the level” (Senge, 1990, p.222). Give an accurate description of the vision. Be as honest as you can about the direction of the organization. Don’t minimize any problems or over-emphasize the ultimate goal. The third step is “let the other people choose” (Senge, 1990, p.222). Try not to convince fellow colleagues about the vision. The more willing you are to allow workers to be uninhibited when making a decision the more empowered they will feel. The ability to empower followers raises the level of accountability which the followers need to achieve. You are allowing them to be their own leaders when completing tasks. They will take great care to make certain the work is done with the organization’s interest at heart (Senge, 1990).

Shared leadership is reflected in the many attributes of leadership that were mentioned, such as (a) followership/contributorship, (b) transformational leadership, (c) leading contributors, and finally, (d) shared vision. It is through the ability of a leader that shared leadership is ultimately achieved. As Woodrow Wilson stated, “The ear of the leader must ring with the voices of the people.”

References


In July 2001, my journey began at Linsly Outdoor Center in Western Pennsylvania when I started my first year in Duquesne University’s Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders. Little did I know that this experience would take me on an educational journey of a lifetime. At Linsly, my classmates and I were introduced to our various cohorts. These individuals became my partners, friends, and teachers on this journey. After all, we were going to spend the next three years together helping each other become stronger educational leaders. Over the last three years, we studied, wrote papers, gave presentations, and ate together; but we also traveled to Oxford, England, together to study the English way of educational leadership. All of these opportunities have helped teach us how to use research and data to improve as educational leaders, and to help strengthen the dynamic institution.

I remember as we landed in London, the weather was just like it was at Linsly after a rainstorm: damp and foggy. After the plane landed, the cohort realized that we now had to use the last three years of experiences as well as capitalizing on each other’s strengths to find the bus depot that would lead us to our final leg of the journey, Oxford. As we learned at Linsly, it was imperative that we learn the strengths of others, so we could capitalize on them to help accomplish a common goal.

As I was entering through the large green door of St. Peter’s College, I felt as though I was passing through a portal to educational excellence. A feeling of academic greatness permeated the air, a feeling of the constant search for wisdom and learning. As Schwahn and Spady put it in their book Total Leaders, “Authentic leaders lead the quest for continuous personal and organizational learning. For them, learning and being a lifelong learner are as natural as breathing” (2002, p.46). My quest for educational leadership that I had developed over the past three years finally led me to the educational pinnacle, to present my thoughts and beliefs. Yet I wasn’t here alone; “I” was actually a “we.” My cohort had helped me get to this point and together we were reaching the educational pinnacle.

My own leadership journey began twenty years ago as I accepted an administrative position. The years of political and other influences had begun to dim the flame that burned inside. Then my daughter, after finishing college, said, “It’s your turn, Dad.” This was the opportunistic push I needed. Now, at Oxford, I was experiencing academic history, and am now able to add my name to the long list of people who came to this place before me.

Oxford and research are synonymous in education. Great individuals such as King Olav V of Norway, (Balliol College); John Wesley and Albert Einstein, (Christ Church College); Peter Wright, Paul Condon, Ken Loach, and Carl Albert (St. Peter’s); Harold Wilson (Jesus College); Bill and Chelsea Clinton, (University College); have graced the halls of Oxford’s Colleges on their way to their individual paths to success (Famous alumni of Oxford University, 2004). Dr. Vivian Williams among other Fellows have shown many scholars the path to excellence, teaching them to think and defend their positions, which must be supported by research. He has been a leader for many conference participants, teaching them to hone their leadership skills. At the conference, we were given opportunities to observe, listen, and communicate educational ideas with other leaders from around the globe.

Sunday night of the conference, Mark Chesterton discussed “Loaves and Hyacinths,” while Dr. Sobehart explained NCLB (No Child Left Behind) to our non-American conference members. Chesterton discussed education as Sir Alec Clegg did in 1980 with three themes. The first dealt with data retention, the student either gets the answer correct or not, which is described as “loaves.” The second area was a mix of “loaves and hyacinths.” Sir Alec described this area as knowing or not knowing the data, but demonstrating a creative edge. The last area described was that of pure creativeness, which is when the “hyacinths” appear (Clegg, 1980).

Today’s leader of a dynamic institution needs to be able to determine the worth of creativity, the “hyacinths,” as well as the quality control measures put forth by the governments of both the United Kingdom and the United States. The United Kingdom educators deal with the National Curriculum and Ofsted. Educators in the United States deal with No Child Left Behind and AYP (Average Yearly Progress). The responsibility of the leader is to deal with the many regulations, yet create an educational environment in which to educate every student. It is when these two elements, “loaves and hyacinths,” come into conflict with the government’s agenda and the news media that the true abilities of the leader take over. These abilities are necessary to deliver the best education for each student.

The schools we visited demonstrated the concept of “loaves and hyacinths.” Learning environments were organized around an appreciation of content rather than an organization which modeled a machine like process (Senge, 2000). Learners were constructing a three-dimensional model of a Greek city-state, Athens, and a willow dome in the schoolyard. The dome was monitored for progress through its growing process. These activities are examples of the “hyacinths.” In both of these examples, “learners get to discover through interacting with simulations that allow them to create and experiment” (Senge, 2000, p.54).

Leaders also need to use the talents of everyone involved with the educational process in order to accomplish specific goals. Using the talents of others enables leaders to maximize their leadership skills in moving their organizations
in a positive direction. Northouse discusses leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2001, p.3). In order to achieve this, a leader needs to operate from a position of power. This power is from one of two types, position power or personal power. Northouse describes position power as that which comes from either “particular rank, or office in a formal organization. Personal power refers to the power a leader derives from followers” (Northouse, 2001, p.6). Leaders obtain power because they are viewed as competent, good role models, caring, or because of the manner in which they interact with their contributors.

Leaders who know the strengths of others and can use those strengths effectively, lead dynamic institutions. For example, Headteacher Andrew Walkie allows his teachers to use their creativity to create a positive learning environment within the National Curriculum. The teachers follow the curriculum but develop lessons utilizing their own expertise. Each teacher’s special expertise helps to enhance the overall learning experience for the students of Walkie’s school.

Another goal of an educational leader is to create a positive learning community, where leaders do not have followers or subordinates, but as Dr. Williams suggested, have contributors (Williams, 2001), a process in which leaders and contributors interact to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2001, p.4).

Using the talents of people is one of the ingredients of the IDPEL program. People are grouped according to their talents, which in the end are found to compliment each other talents. Groups or teams are put together in order to get them “thinking and acting together” (Senge, 2000). The height of this relationship was demonstrated at Oxford and the NCLS conference. Groups came together to develop, present, and defend their topics. Answering questions posed by Dr. Williams, Dr. Sobehart and other conference participants was a heart-pounding thrill. This challenging experience enabled each group to demonstrate its leadership skills which had been cultivated over the three-year period.

Together we came to Oxford as members of a strong group of individuals who had worked together for three years in Pennsylvania, U.S.A. Finding the way from the airport to Oxford was the first challenge of the journey in the United Kingdom. We needed to use our individual leadership talents in order to finally make it to the big green door of St. Peter’s College. That door opened to a new stop on our journey. As a group, we had finally made it to Oxford’s educational environment. This environment was one that questions data, research, and one’s own knowledge and fortitude. One could not help but be inspired by the age of the walls which encompass St. Peter’s College. It was in these buildings where brilliant educators and students had walked, shared meals, learned, and honed their academic abilities on the way to becoming dynamic leaders.

Our presentations had been researched and developed by the team with the inspiration of various leaders within the group. Each member of the small group had to be visionary in order to begin the process, and serve the group in ways that helped the overall project. Group members had to be authentic and credible in order to achieve the end product, a successful presentation and defense. However, it was not until Dr. Williams stood up in the rear of the room that one’s mind began to reflect on the information just delivered. He initiated the question and answer section with statements, questions, and his reflections on the presentation. I found myself answering three or four possible questions in my mind before verbally answering questions. After the question was answered, another one would follow. In order to succeed, presenters had to anticipate questions, being ready to answer and defend with the support of research and data.

Overall, the underlying question is, “How can the educational leader address and influence the dynamic institution?” The answer has three parts. First the leader, as we have learned at Oxford, needs to be creative in meeting the needs of both student and the government. Secondly, teachers need to use the curriculum provided by government or local educational organization in conjunction with their creative talents in order to provide an appropriate education for each student.

Finally, team or group participation is a way the leader can facilitate this plan. The overall goal and answer to the question is involving all members of an educational organization as contributors in this process.

My journey began years ago, but was renewed when I entered Duquesne University’s IDPEL program which took me to Linsly and Oxford. The journey for me will continue, as it should, with a new goal of passing down my experiences and knowledge to a new generation of leaders. Educational journeys begin, but should never have a definite ending. It is truly a Journey of a Lifetime.

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Attending an international conference can be quite an eye-opening experience for someone who is not familiar with the culture of the host country. For example, it was surprising to discover that the entire primary school staff took a common break each morning to enjoy a cup of tea together. In England this is a common primary school tradition. In the United States of America (USA) it is rarely done and could even be seen by some school administrators as a luxury or even a waste of time. Trying to understand the cultural influences on educational systems, within the context of experience in just one country, can lead to a very narrow view of education. It would be like trying to understand the historical city of Oxford by looking at some pictures instead of seeing personally. While there are some perspectives about Oxford that can be learned from viewing pictures, there are many aspects that cannot be comprehended fully until it is visited personally.

Some educators may not be in favor of committing to attend an international leadership conference in order to learn about being a better educational leader. This could be due to the expense and because there are numerous places to visit fine educational systems in our own country. However, after attending the 18th International Conference on “Leadership in Self-Governing Schools: Shared Leadership for More Effective Schools” in Oxford, England, it became evident that educational leaders can improve their leadership skills by visiting schools in other countries. It was the general consensus among the conference attendees with whom this writer spoke that we could learn some important lessons from the primary schools visited during the conference. These schools had several fascinating cultural attributes which had a positive impact on the quality of the schools.

Cultural influences, like having a cup of tea each morning for the staff to enjoy each other’s company, do not sound initially like they could make a big difference, but traditions like this can have a positive impact on dynamic institutions. Quality learning communities make opportunities to build loyalty and establish mutual trust. The foundation of trust starts with open, sincere, two-way communication (Effron, Gandossy & Goldsmith, 2003). It was evident in the small primary schools visited in various rural villages in England that the staff valued and prioritized quality communication. Sharing a cup of tea together each morning was a concrete way to show other staff members that developing and sustaining relationships in a relaxed atmosphere was important. Around 10:30 each morning the break rooms came to life with teachers, aides and headteacher meeting to enjoy a cup of tea. Staff members discussed how they were doing, asked each other some questions related to work, but many comments were just related to personal issues.

In addition, the primary schools visited in England were overall much smaller than the typical elementary schools in the USA. Most of the primary schools visited had only 100 – 200 students in the entire school. There was a deliberate decision in these primary schools to keep them small by having a primary school in each of the villages. These primary schools were neighborhood schools, which also helped build a sense of community. According to Schwahn and Spady, “Smallness encourages clearer focus, better communication, less bureaucracy, and more rapid decision making and response to changing conditions and opportunities” (2001, p. 6). Often in schools of this size in the USA a principal would be assigned three or four schools to supervise. However, in England a headteacher was responsible for just a single primary school. Since each school operated autonomously there was a wider range of responsibilities for the headteacher, including maintaining a Board of Governors (similar to a school board in the USA), payroll and teaching one or two days a week.

Leaders in dynamic institutions help build trust by taking the time to listen to a wide range of conversational topics, not just ones directly related to educational issues. Teachers need to know their leaders care about them personally, not just matters directly related to school business. These informal dialogues help leaders understand people’s beliefs, background, hobbies, dreams and priorities (Lambert, 2003). This is important because, “People do not behave according to the facts, nor are people objective. They behave according to their personal meanings, perceptions or beliefs” (Combs, Miser & Whitaker, 1999, p. 16). If managers want to know how teachers will respond to a given situation or proposed change, they will need to get to know their staff personally. Hoy and Miskel (2001) articulated, “Communication through informal sources provides vital feedback to… school leaders. Moreover, active informal networks are indicative of a school’s culture and leaders can learn a great deal by listening to them” (p. 377).

While sipping a cup of tea the headteachers were talking openly and honestly with staff members using an informal communication system. The headteachers were not given any special treatment and the school staff felt they could relax for a few minutes and unwind with their colleagues. According to Schwahn and Spady (2001), an essential role in developing cultural leadership is developing quality relationships. Relationships take time to develop. In the USA teachers usually do not take official breaks, especially breaks taken together. Sometimes a grade level

Kenneth Jenkins is Elementary Principal, Shippensburg Area School District, Pennsylvania
in an elementary school may have a common planning period, but this is usually taken up with activities that isolate teachers from one another. In some USA school districts, principals are even encouraged to keep a visible distance between employees and administration. Being an administrator in an elementary school in the USA can be a much more lonely job than a headteacher of a primary school in England. In the USA being a principal can be an isolated administrative position at the top if a concerted effort is not made to find ways to develop quality relationships and overcome obstacles related to larger schools. In England, the headteacher in primary schools is usually seen as both a teacher and the leader of the school management team. When school leaders, teachers and other staff members are able to communicate freely with one another they are laying a solid foundation for strong collaborative teams (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2001).

Developing meaningful relationships with teachers could lead to a country club style of relationships for administrators if it is not also balanced with a high concern for student achievement (Wren, 1995). Informal communication is a starting point or an entrance ticket which can open the door to communicating more formally about a school’s vision, mission and other communication that will lead to school improvement. A strong team approach can be developed when a principal has both a high concern for people and performance (Wren, 1995). The primary schools visited during this conference had strong faculty teams, which led to strong, effective schools.

While observing schools in England, another cultural difference in dynamic institutions was that primary schools were intrinsically built around shared leadership. Each school had the authority that is similar to a school district in the USA. Due to how schools are established in England, teachers must take more ownership and leadership in schools than their counterparts in the USA. They do not have district level specialists and administrators who can support them in subject areas such as reading, writing or math. As a result when a school is not performing well they also do not have district specialists and administrators whom they can blame. Therefore, out of necessity it is an expectation in the primary schools for teachers to be part of the management team and find ways to make positive contributions to their school as a whole. If there is a problem they must roll up their sleeves and deal with it. If these schools want to survive they must work together because there is no one else to whom they can shift the responsibility of the schools’ performance.

Teacher empowerment, or shared leadership, can be a positive “process by which administrators share power and help others use it in constructive ways to make decisions affecting themselves and their work” (Hoy & Miskel, 2001, p. 226). In the primary schools visited in England some of the ways teachers were part of the management team were: helping with a specific area of the curriculum (math, science, reading, music, etc.); interviewing new teachers; meeting with the Board of Governors; and various administrative duties. Each primary school in England developed its own budget and was site-based managed in a similar fashion as charter schools are site-based managed in the USA.

As a result of the shared leadership in these primary schools there was an increase in the commitment to the schools’ mission and vision statements. When staff members have made an investment in the vision, goals and direction of a school, they are willing to take more ownership in a school’s outcomes (Schwahn & Spady, 2002). Shared leadership is also closely related to developing quality relationships. Senge (1990) claimed:

> Visions that are truly shared take time to emerge. They grow as a by-product of interactions of individual visions. Experience suggests that visions that are genuinely shared require ongoing conversation where individuals not only feel free to express their dreams, but learn how to listen to each others’ dreams (pp. 217-218).

An area in which there is a growing amount of cultural similarity between the schools in the USA and England is in regards to accountability. In England the schools know that if the school auditor finds serious problems unattended to it could mean an unsatisfactory rating. This could lead to a decrease in student enrollment and funding. In England parents have a greater amount of choice about where to send their children to school. If the school near them receives a bad rating, the parent can transfer their child to another school (if it has room) and the funding will follow the students. If a primary school is not able to correct their deficiencies and a significant amount of students leave to go to other schools, the decrease in funding could become severe enough to cause the school to close.

In the USA the accountability system is based on high-stakes testing given by each state rather than an audit completed by the United States Department of Education. While the pressure to improve performance is intense internationally, in the USA educational leaders seem to have a heavier burden of accountability due to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. School staffs in England were shocked to hear about the extreme consequences some schools were facing in America due to NCLB. Therefore, many districts in the USA are operating in more of a crisis mode than schools in England. Schools in the USA that have been on the low performing list for several years and are close to being taken over by the state are taking drastic measures to try to make the required improvements. One administrator who attended the international conference in Oxford told about how her district has started to retain a much higher percentage of students in fourth grade who were not proficient in reading. If this district’s state assessment’s scores do not improve and meet minimum expectations this school year, it will be taken over by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Another factor that
puts more students in the USA at risk is the fact that most students start school at a later age than students in England. At the primary schools visited during this conference, students went to full-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten and also went to school about ten more days a year than students in the USA. This extra investment in helping students at an early age was paying off. It was amazing to see classrooms of first graders where almost all the students were reading and writing on or above grade level.

While there are several key cultural distinctions between leadership in schools in England and the USA, there are also similarities. Wherever a school is located, its success is based on visionary leaders who possess the ability to empower their staff to give their best and move the school in the right direction (Schwahn & Spady, 2002; Wren, 1995). In times where educators are becoming more stressed and overwhelmed by their job responsibilities, it would be wise for educational leaders to learn from their British counterparts. Even in these times of increased accountability and high-stakes testing, educational leaders need to prioritize the time needed to develop quality relationships and rely more on sharing leadership responsibilities with teachers.

In order for primary or elementary schools to thrive in today’s demanding educational environment, educational leaders must have meaningful relationships that cause their schools to be better and stronger as a result of teams working together. Lambert (2003) asserted:

> When people have authentic relationships with each other, focus on a shared purpose, and work effectively and efficiently, they create a new form of energy. We sometimes call it synergy: a form of fellowship that regenerates energy rather than draining it. We feel calmer, clearer, and less harried by internal conflict about the choices that we make. Synergy in schools arises from conversations, collegial work, and action; it is the by-product of true collegiality (p. 76).

The week spent at the leadership conference in Oxford was exhilarating. However, this high level of academic reflection is exhausting. It is time for us to take a well-deserved break. It would be my pleasure if you would please join me for a cup of tea. It is just what we need to rejuvenate ourselves, build better relationships and help our schools be dynamic learning institutions.

**References**


More the Same than Different

Mark K. Leidy

Anticipation

Leaving family for a week is difficult since it was going to be my first experience abroad. Obviously, everything would be different. The food, accommodations, transportation, the accents and weather would make me feel like I was a million miles from home. Surely, the systems of education would be very different and the current topics could not be the same. The visit to Oxford would be a wonderful experience, but we might feel like tourists filling a scheduling gap at the college. I was sure that almost everything would be foreign. I never expected that it would be more the same than different.

Arrival

Traveling as a group made all of us feel more secure. Our landing in Heathrow was a welcomed event, and the bus trip to Oxford was quite relaxing. The countryside reminded me of parts of Pennsylvania with rolling green hills and daffodils blooming, while the sheep, hedgerows and double-decker buses passing on the “wrong side” of the road gave a distinct feeling of England. Arrival at college sent the immediate message that we were welcomed guests with an expectation of contributing scholarly information and research.

Realities

During the first session of the conference, the presenter discussed numerous issues such as standardized tests, national curriculum, special education, and budget constraints. There were no real surprises with the issues that the presenter offered. Personally, the surprise was that the presenter was a building leader in England, not the United States. These first discoveries led to many others, but the theme that quickly emerged was that educators in both countries are dealing with similar issues.

The opportunity to visit three schools provided me with an interesting perspective on students, teachers, facilities, and governance in England. The students were inquisitive about American youth. Their perspective on the lifestyle of teenagers in America was slanted by the media and much different than reality. Their approach to school and their dreams for the future made me feel as if I could be standing in any classroom in my building. Their interaction with the staff and with each other mimicked American adolescents with conversations about physical appearance, sports, and peer relationships. Some teachers encouraged me to engage in conversation with the students while others preferred to continue with the lesson as I observed.

The connection that I felt with the teachers was on a professional level that transcended cultures. Goals, instructional strategies, and rules were varied in each classroom. A number of classes were engaged in specific activities that were intended to prepare them for the standardized achievement tests. Others seemed cognizant of the test, but appeared to have the concepts embedded in the curriculum. The National Curriculum provided the framework for nearly every lesson I witnessed, and teachers offered numerous opinions regarding the government’s manipulation of the classroom. The staff at all three schools permitted much more independence with the students throughout the day than we normally do in America. Evidence of this existed in the design and structure of the facilities.

Each of the secondary schools that I visited had separate buildings in which the students took classes. Students moved freely from one building to the next for lessons, and were permitted to leave school property for lunch. Breaks were given to the students between classes at which time the staff would gather for tea and socialization to foster or maintain relationships with colleagues. Technology was abundant in most of the classrooms and effectively utilized by teachers. The schools varied in appearance and age with the common idea that more money would provide more aesthetically pleasing buildings and potentially better learning environments, an issue that is also familiar to educators in the United States where local Board of Directors, support is not always enough to get large projects completed.

Governance of the school system may have been the single biggest difference. Each school maintains its own Board of Governors that provides policy direction and budget. The lack of a superintendent and other district office personnel makes the role of the building leader even more critical in the success of the school. Additionally, Central Government provides considerably more direction and requires additional accountability. No Child Left Behind seems to have some roots in the governance philosophy of education in England.

Back Home and Final Thoughts

It was wonderful seeing my family after being away for more than a week. I could not wait to tell them how many similarities we had found between the two educational systems and cultures. Physical pounds that I gained through eating one excellent meal after another replaced the monetary pounds I lost exploring the culture of pubs and shops throughout the university and town. The place that seemed so far away just one week ago now feels like a place where true friends can be found. Dr. Williams and his staff provided us with the opportunity to prove our ability to be scholars at one of the finest universities in the world. In the end, I found that we really are quite similar, despite our differences.

Mark Leidy is Principal, Mechanicsburg High School, Mechanicsburg Area School District, Pennsylvania
The Servant Leaders Across the Pond

Maurice E. Flurie

The successful leader must be a motivator, counselor, visionary, communicator and servant to the members of the organization which he or she leads. It was evident through just one week of participation with and observation of educational leaders from both the United States and United Kingdom that the ability to lead their respective educational communities requires all of these skills. The most evident of these was the willingness to serve.

In his book Leadership is an Art, Max DePree (1989) describes, “leadership as a concept of owning certain things to the institution. It is a way of thinking about institutional heirs, a way of thinking about stewardship as contrasted with ownership” (p. 12). This was the most recognizable theme of the discussions among educational leaders from the United States and United Kingdom.

Discussions throughout the week among headteachers, principals, superintendents, professors and deans ranged from governmental regulation, leadership skills, and student needs. What was remarkable was, regardless of the level of leadership or the country of origin, the concerns and rewards were nearly identical. The United States contingent lamented the new challenges created by No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the ongoing struggle with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the standards movement and teacher shortages. The educators from the U.K. described a much longer running challenge created by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) evaluations, Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs) (Beers, 2002), a national curriculum, and an even greater teacher shortage.

The “weight” of these initiatives take their toll on educational leaders from both countries. These intrusive legislative initiatives require educational leaders to continually analyze their decisions about what is best for student learning against how the results will be measured by the representative bureaucratic yardstick. The skilled headteachers in the U.K. described how one could teach within the framework of a national curriculum and not lose the ability to be creative in instructional delivery methods and styles. Leaders from both countries admitted they resented the governmental intrusion but did not let it paralyze their overall mission to appropriately educate children. The visionary leaders simply viewed the high stakes testing initiatives related to the governmental curriculum as just one measure of student performance. They used the data as a tool to monitor student improvement and modify academic emphasis at specific educational levels.

The Servant Leaders Across the Pond

Maurice Flurie is Middle School Principal, Susquenita School District, Pennsylvania

The term “colleague” was used routinely by the administrators in the U.K. when speaking about or to the staff in their respective buildings. Many of their U.S. counterparts commented on how the term was not heard often in American schools. Most agreed, however, that the term did accurately describe they way everyone in the school plays an equally important role in the educational mission of the school. Successful leaders in any country must be able to communicate this respect for the contributors in their organization.

The leader must communicate to each contributor his/her importance to the other members of the school. This will enable facilitation of collaborative decision-making beyond token group meetings and sharing. The sharing of the vision, in conjunction with celebrating contributorship, advances the common goal and gives everyone a stake in the outcome. This common vision and enthusiasm for the process of implementing it within the school was very evident in the Northamptonshire schools we had the opportunity to visit. The more focused and engaged the leader was in the teaching environment of the school, the more enthusiastic the contributors in the school were in their roles, whether teacher, secretary or instructional aide.

In The Ultimate Gift, Stovall (1999), through the story’s main character Jason, defines the key to real learning as the desire and hunger for an education. He also describes how we cannot learn in a vacuum. “When we can learn from our own problems, we begin to deal with life. When we can learn from other peoples’ problems, we begin to master life” (p.62). In reflection, this was possibly the greatest benefit of the conference experience. Currently in the United States many educators are wallowing in misery over the demands of government regulation and financial constraints. The privilege of sharing with the educational leaders from England while in Oxford helped to reorient many of the U.S. leaders. The educators in the U.K. have lived with similar, and in many cases more intrusive, regulations and demands for more years than their U.S. counterparts. Through it all they have maintained a positive focus on their personal and professional mission of educating children. One headteacher from a primary school, when asked about the national curriculum and the Ofsted inspections, said, “While I don’t agree with many parts of the curriculum and may resent the inspections being forced on schools, it is what it is, and I can’t let it interfere with what we know is good educational practice that helps children learn. These little ones are what it’s all about, isn’t it?”

In the beginning of this narrative the term “servant leader” was used. Perhaps now the use of that term is better understood. Webster defines a servant as “a person devoted to another or to a cause or creed.” I cannot think of a better description of the dedicated professionals I had the privilege
to learn from at the Norham Centre for Leadership Studies, 18th Annual Conference at St. Peter’s College, Oxford University. For the experience, I am truly grateful.

References


“Remember, it was the little dog who exposed the wizard.” These words were spoken by Dr. Vivian Williams at the 18th International Leadership Conference at Oxford University. This odd quote has echoed in my mind many times since then and has caused me to pause and think about the concept of shared leadership.

In the classic movie The Wizard of Oz, Dorothy led a scarecrow, a cowardly lion, a tin man, and a little dog down the yellow brick road to meet the wonderful wizard and all he promised to bring. Dorothy was clearly the leader of the misfit group; however, in the end, it was Toto, the little dog, who pulled on the curtain exposing the wizard for the charlatan that he was. It was the dog who made perhaps the most profound contribution to the group. The point is that the contributions of even the seemingly most insignificant members of the organization must be valued as part of the relationship that is leadership.

What is leadership?

As I participated in the Oxford conference on shared leadership, I found myself asking, as Dr. Williams asked one group of presenters, “What is leadership?” To prepare for the conference on shared leadership, I read several required and recommended texts as well as current research on the topic. At the conference, I talked to many instructional leaders and sat through several presentations. I even engaged in scholarly dialogue with peers while drinking a pint at the Eagle & Child, a favorite pub where J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis shared profound ideas. Prior to the conference I spent three intense years of study in educational leadership. Somehow, leadership remained a vague term to me.

Most Americans remember the phrase, “It’s the economy, stupid.” The phrase was made famous by political strategist James Carville, who hung it on a sign in Bill Clinton’s campaign office. Capitalizing on that four word mantra, Clinton went on to be elected the 42nd president of the United States. One day, while walking across the campus of Saint Peter’s College, Oxford University, and pondering leadership it dawned on me: It’s about relationships, stupid. Leadership is a complex issue, but at the core of understanding leadership is something that is often overlooked – relationships. It took a trip to England to help me see leadership more clearly and my view of leadership has changed forever.

Reflections on Schools

With this realization in mind, I began to view schools through a different lens. While attending the Oxford conference on educational leadership I had the opportunity to visit several schools and meet with many headteachers. Like my colleagues, I noted many differences and many similarities between American and English schools. The observation that was most noteworthy to me was how students and staff are managed differently in England than they are in America. For example, mid-morning each day, all students were given a break to eat, play, or just wonder with little or no supervision while teachers met for tea or coffee. Observing this, my American colleague and I looked at each other in disbelief. Yet, when the break was over the students and teachers were back in their classrooms and learning had commenced. This observation reminded me that the management of students and all the physical elements of schooling have been over accentuated as a key component of leadership.

Leader or Manager

How does an instructional leader truly lead and avoid the pitfall of becoming a manager? This is a question that I continually ask myself. I suppose if there were an easy answer to the question leaders would not fall into the trap of becoming managers. During the conference and from my studies at Duquesne University’s Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders, I have traveled farther down the road (not yellow brick) toward answering that question.

To become empowered a leader must be willing to build relationships of trust with others and give up the mentality of control (Hoyle, 2002). Certainly, an effective leader must possess the skills and knowledge to manage the organization. Performing managerial duties with a great degree of competence is essential, but most leaders seem to be confident that these achievements will earn them the title of leader. In reality, they have simply achieved status as a good manager.

Williams and McCown (1998) noted that leadership is earned only as followers voluntarily yield to the leader. This relationship, described by Williams as “elective contributorship,” is developed as the leader involves the follower in the achievement of educational, organizational, and social goals for the school community (Williams, 2001). To grasp the concept of educational leadership in the 21st Century leaders must realize the time has come to move away from the managerial, if not institutional, boss-centered leadership to a more human-centered approach (Hoyle, 2002).
Many have advocated that the leader must provide vision. If a leader brings his or her vision to the organization he or she may generate compliance; however, to avoid the pitfalls of being a manager, a leader should form relationships with others and nurture a shared vision which will generate commitment to the organization (Senge, 1990). Committed members of the organization will share the management duties.

When I find myself falling into the trap of thinking that, as the “leader” I must discover the best way to move students from one place to another, arrange transportation, or produce good test scores on state mandated high stakes tests, I will recall the conference at Oxford. I will remember that there are many ways to manage students and one way is not necessarily better than another. I will remind myself to build relationships with people who may give me the privilege to lead them. It is this paradigm of leadership built on valuing the contribution of every member of the organization that will produce excellent schools for the future. After all, “it was the little dog who exposed the wizard.”

References


The Fine Art of Formality and Flummery

Shellie Jacobs

There I was looking out across the audience, not to belt out a song or to entertain by telling a story as I often do on stage at home in Pittsburgh, PA. Instead, I stood in my crisp suit prepared to present a formal speech to an educated audience in Oxford. I opened up the presentation for my group relying on a strong literature base as opposed to the flashiness of a performance.

Our speech was a well-received success. My advisory group worked together during a smooth defense of our presentation on transforming educational leadership development. The lessons learned will prove to be invaluable to me as I work towards my goals in academia.

One who was not at Oxford that week may never have heard Dr. Williams use the term “flummery.” It seems that flummery is the act of saying what one is supposed to say in certain situations. It can mean that one is overly politically correct. It could be interpreted as the act of being extremely proper. In fact it could be seen as being almost overly formal.

To be honest, if I had been asked to live up to this definition prior to my conference experience abroad at Oxford University, I would have shunned the concept. I love to participate in the informal play of improvisation on the stage. I have found a base of comfort in speaking without the strictness of true lecture format. I strive for my audience to walk away from my musical theater shows, and even some of the college courses that I have taught, thrilled by the spectacle and amazed by how concepts were broken down in a way that provided an enjoyable method of learning the material.

However, the lecture format of the presentation left no time, no room, and no reason to have the artist in myself come out. So for those few minutes, I spoke to the audience in a formal way based on a strict outline complete with quotes and the structure of the sentences that I spoke. I did not deviate from what was written for more than a few brief seconds as I set up the opening of our speech. This is what the constraints of the presentation required. Although I felt for a moment like I was acting out the role of a true scholar in a theatrical production, I had instead found this way of speaking inside myself and not in a character.

Fortunately, as I performed during the entertainment portion of the week as we said our goodbyes to our newly found friends from across the sea and solidified our cohort, I was reminded that there is a time and a place for formality and also there is a time for unabashed amusement. One cannot forget that individuality is vital in social situations and that for less formal presentations a little pizzazz can be effective and appropriate.

Luckily, this experience taught me that - if I need to - even I can throw aside the performer in myself and speak as a scholar. Educational leaders certainly need to find the most appropriate way to reach specific audiences. “Flummery” can have a place in presentation and fun has its place as well. They do not always have to be intertwined into one project. As one speaks, one must learn to match the scenery of the setting not only with the correct costume, but also with the level of formality that the scene requires.

Shellie Jacobs is Dean of Instruction, St. Stephen’s Lutheran Academy, Pennsylvania
Viewing Learning Through a New Set of Eyes

Sherri L. Smith

Finally, after three years of dreaming of and discussing a visit to Oxford in our last year of studies, we boarded our planes and headed across the wide ocean span for an exciting adventure and golden opportunity to learn. Upon landing at Heathrow, I find myself enmeshed in a new culture and in a personal state where I desire to learn and experience every moment of my visit. Over the next seven days, I experience visits to British Schools, a tour of the schools of Oxford, and engage in many intense conversations and lectures about educational leadership. What I have learned at the end of this seven-day adventure transcends deeper than any other learning experience I have encountered in the past - not just because of what I see, but how I view what I see. I have a new set of eyes!

The Experience

During the three-day visit to the schools, we had the opportunity to meet with the headteachers of the schools and to discuss the similarities and differences between the American and British systems of education. Discussions included that of national curriculum, assessments, budgets, professional development, and overall organizational structure. Our heads nodded in recognition of the many similarities that we see between our two systems and the sharing of the same frustrations that we face within public education. We learned a great deal from these conversations with Ed McConnell and Andrew Walkey, however the greater learning came from our own personal observations within each of the buildings. I discovered my personal focus in these observations was not so much in the routines of the school system but on the personal relationships. Over these three days, I observed the relationships between the headteacher and teachers, teacher to teacher, teacher to students, and student to student. The interactions that I saw impressed me with the overall collaborative and close relationship among all of these groups and the focus on learning. There was an overall structure of an open school concept; therefore students knew one another from classroom to classroom, across the ages. The head teacher knew his students personally because he was intimately involved with them every day. The morning teas where the teachers came together for 20 minutes a day was a time filled with open discussions and congeniality among all of the staff. Teachers eagerly shared their classroom and instructional practices with all of us. So what was so impressive about all of this? The focus. The focus was on the children, the learning. No matter what group one engaged in conversation, a culture filled with positive interactions, collaboration and ownership was very evident.

One observation as to why there was such an obvious difference in the focus within these schools may be related to the fact that British headteachers do not engage in teacher negotiations, salaries and insurances with their staff. Those concerns are managed at the national level. Although many of the teachers expressed their frustrations with the same concerns as American teachers, the focus of discontent was toward the government, not toward their administrators. Additionally, the sports and extracurricular opportunities were available on a club level and student transportation was organized outside of the school’s responsibilities. These facts allowed for the focus in the headteacher’s conversations on student learning without the outside tensions that come from these time consuming issues. The school leader was able to be an instructional leader in his building with a focus on the student learning.

Reflection

Looking back, I realize that what I observed on my trip to these schools was different from what I had ever observed in past visitations. I realized, however, that there were not as many differences in American and British systems as there were similarities. What was really changed was within myself; the way that I look at things. I have a new set of eyes to view organizations and systems within organizations, specifically within the realm of education. Vision is not created just by what you physically observe. It is crafted by your own beliefs and by what you view as most important. My new set of eyes developed over the past three years as I spent endless hours studying, and more importantly, sharing experiences with my cohort members. I, myself, have experienced the learning that occurs from collaboration with others. There is a deep personal understanding that what changes an individual’s daily practice and point of view is not just the journey; it’s the conversations along the way. Truly, the greatest professional development opportunity to enhance change and growth is through collaboration and relationships.

As individuals practice the discipline of personal mastery, several changes gradually take place within them. Many of these are quite subtle and often go unnoticed. In addition to clarifying the structures that characterize personal mastery as a discipline, the systems perspective also illuminates subtler aspects of personal mastery - especially: integrating reason and intuition; continually seeing more of our connectedness to the world; compassion; and commitment to the whole (Senge, 1994, p.167).
My experiences in the Duquesne IDPEL program, enriched with my visit and understanding of the Oxford style of learning, have provided me with the opportunities to continue on my venture to personal mastery. It is my hope that all educational leaders have the opportunity to experience such a journey of learning. Truly it is in the conversations and the caring along the way that assist us all to grow personally and professionally. It is through this last journey, my journey to Oxford, that I realized that I indeed had changed the way that I view the world. I now see through a new set of eyes.

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Reflections upon the “Oxford Experience” have led me to one central, overriding theme. That theme is the stark contrast between what I have termed “Action Leadership” and the more common form of “Leadership by Talking.” In the field of educational leadership there are those who theorize eloquently, argue vociferously, and lecture incessantly about their philosophies of leadership. There are others, however, who quietly embark upon the very demanding, very rewarding life choice of placing educational leadership into action.

During one of the school site visits, I experienced the pleasurable surprise of spending the day with the headteacher of Falconer’s Hill Infant School, Coleen Wilkins. Coleen shared many of the same qualities I observed in other headteachers during my visits to the other schools. She was gracious to her American guests, she readily cleared her schedule to spend time with us and provided us with a tour of her school, and she answered all of our questions thoroughly.

Coleen, however, possessed other qualities that are less commonly evidenced in educational leaders. These qualities are illustrative of my concept of “Action Leadership.” When Coleen began her tenure as headteacher at the Falconer School, the school’s test scores and climate were dismal. During the few years of her leadership, both the test scores and the climate have improved remarkably. She spoke about student achievement and test scores as basic accountability measures that were necessary but not sufficient indicators of the school’s success. Instead of complaining about the intrusion of the national government into curriculum and measurement of student achievement, Coleen accepted the measures as an opportunity to drive the improvements needed in the school. She also regularly and convincingly attributed the success of her school to the hard work of her teaching staff. Each and every time she was complimented on some aspect of her school, she credited either individual on the teaching staff or the teaching staff as a whole. Perhaps the most striking difference between Coleen and less effective leaders was her relentless, intensive focus on the children in the school. This was evident in the way she spoke about the children, but more importantly, in the way she interacted with the children. Coleen reinforced appropriate student behavior, improved student academic work, and student and staff pride in the school.

The identified “Aims” of the Falconer’s Hill Infant School include:

- To encourage independence and confidence within a happy and stimulating environment
- To promote inclusive practice in all aspects of school life
- To foster a desire and keenness to learn
- To create a partnership between home and school which seeks to support children’s development and learning

In Coleen’s school, the Aims are much more than words on a wall that are lost in the day-to-day activities of running a school. They are the driving, living force that is Falconer’s School.

The opposite concept, “Leadership by Talking,” seems to more often expound upon excuses for school failure - blaming the government, blaming the families, and blaming the students. The Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell, (Harari, 2002) states:

An unwillingness to face up to reality and an eagerness to protect the status quo are usually reflections of complacency. Complacency is the enemy of growth. The best leaders fight complacency. They are dis-organizers – individuals who are not afraid to shake things up and find a better way of doing things (p.91).

During one of Coleen’s answers to the many questions my colleagues and I asked her, Coleen ended her answer with, “It’s not rocket science, is it? It’s really about doing what is best for the children.” In her very simple, non-assuming way, Coleen described successful school leadership more concisely and more effectively than years of lectures, theories, and arguments combined. She most likely would not comfortably pontificate on the language of leadership with other scholars; she, however, purely embodies everything that leadership needs to be. She is clearly leadership by doing (“Active Leadership”), not “Leadership by Talking.”

Reference


Sherry Milchick is CSPD Project Administrator, Berks County Intermediate Unit #14, Pennsylvania
Building Meaningful Relationships
Sonya L. Barnes

As an elementary principal, I was anxious to observe elementary schools in another country. This opportunity came during our visit to Oxford. I was fortunate enough to spend days in three different elementary schools. While these schools ranged in student population from 90 to 200, one common trait prevailed. Each of these schools had a strong sense of community. It was obvious that the child as an individual was a stronger focus than the necessity to “cover” curriculum. Several educators from the area came to speak to our group. Each communicated the momentum that standardized testing had put on the country and the resulting increases in accountability among educators. Surely, these tribulations were no less demanding than those we have been experiencing in the United States with No Child Left Behind. Yet, there was not a climate of desperation or urgency in those schools that I visited. Instead, students and teachers worked together in their quest for learning. Relationships had obviously been developed among staff and students. No yelling or disrespectful tone was heard from either student or teacher. What was different? As I reflected on the experience, I tried to put my finger on it.

Then I realized what that difference was. Teachers knew their students. Of course all effective teachers know their students’ strengths and weaknesses. They are aware of their learning styles and plan instruction accordingly. However, these teachers really knew their students. They knew their likes and dislikes, their families and histories, as well as their academic needs. They were able to touch their students on a much deeper level.

It was remarkable how these observations mirrored the common theme of our leadership institute. As we discussed and debated effective leadership and all of the qualities that encompass leadership, one notion recurred: relationships. We examined and pondered several leadership theories and practices. In the end, I concluded that developing meaningful relationships within the organization is what makes a true leader. Of course, knowing leadership theory is a valuable tool. Just as the classroom teachers I observed demonstrated best teaching practices, leaders must study and understand leadership theory. Leadership is not about relationships alone, but I believe it is the foundation.

Now I had to decide what to do with this new-found revelation. How could I implement what I had learned? As I continue to reflect on my experience, I have gone about taking small steps to further develop these relationships with staff and among staff, as well as with students. I have found my profession to be much more rewarding. This is a goal I will continue to pursue in all aspects of my life, as building meaningful relationships not only impacts your profession, it changes your life.

Sonya Barnes is Principal, Emma K. Doub School for the Integrated Arts and Technology and Funkstown School for Early Childhood Education, Hagerstown, Maryland
A Higher Educational Journey on Leadership

Tim Ebersole

Prior to traveling to Oxford, England in March, I felt uneasy, because I didn’t understand what to expect during the journey. Having traveled quite a bit in the United States for my professional career, the opportunity to see a whole new world “across the pond” was exciting, to say the least. Looking at this trip as an opportunity of a lifetime gave me the insight to share this experience with my children. So we began the process of preparing for the journey through research on the internet, filing the necessary paperwork for passports and educational trip forms through the high school and university. I didn’t realize at the time how important this trip would be for their growth educationally and how it would affect my growth as an educational leader.

The trip began with a wonderful flight from Dulles to Heathrow airport. The excitement for traveling to a new place seemed to make the hours in the air feel relatively short. Arriving in Heathrow under cloudy skies reflected the visual image Dr. Vivian Williams had provided in his pre-conference letter to participants. Our group of twenty on the flight stayed together once we reached the terminal for our luggage. Looking back, I could see how our group stayed together as we exchanged American money for European dollars and picked up luggage from the terminal. We all proceeded from the terminal to the public transportation location for the trip to Oxford and St. Peter’s College.

At this point, our group was separated into two groups to travel by bus to Oxford. I was in the second group with my children and advisory group members. As we made the 45-minute trek to Oxford, you could feel the jet lag setting in, leaving at 7:30 pm on Friday and arriving at 8:00 am Saturday. Everyone in our travel party took this opportunity for a nap.

Upon arriving in Oxford, our group walked the three blocks from the bus terminal to St. Peter’s College. Picking up our keys to the dorm at the security station seemed to fulfill our mission of making it to our destination. The first meeting seemed to reinforce that I was not the only member of the group suffering from jet lag. As Dr. Vivian Williams informed the conference participants of the planned agenda for the week, I noticed a number of classmates struggling to keep their eyes open. Following this first conference meeting, I ventured out into the town of Oxford to explore the cultural opportunities that my children could especially enjoy during the week.

Our first dinner of the week took place at St. Anthony’s College. What a wonderful meal. The conversation was enlightening from a leadership perspective as we had the first real opportunity to listen to Dr. Williams.

The higher education strand of the conference was interesting and exceptionally presented by the guest speakers to the conference. The differences I noticed in the higher education administration of the United Kingdom as compared to the United States seemed to relate to the terms of study, class size and the overall program each student needs to complete toward a degree. The length of study for the year seems to be six months meaning a great deal of time for individual study. The average size of classes for a professor in the Oxford University program is approximately one-third the size of one class in the United States. Program requirements are earned in three years rather than four as in the United States.

The guest lecturers provided a tremendous amount of information that helped me to see the contrasts between the two countries, but they also opened my eyes to the many similarities found in each culture. The Reverend Christopher Jones, College Chaplain, St. Augustine Fellow and Tutor in Theology, shared with us the spiritual and temporal traditions found in the University of Oxford. The amount of student participation and the freedom to choose religious studies are very similar to the traditions found in U.S. institutions.

Dr. James Arthur, Professor of Educational Research, Christ Church University College, Canterbury, spoke on the topic of citizenship in regards to contemporary education policy development. This resonated with me from the perspective of my dissertation theme of raising dollars based on undergraduate student activity. The mission of most universities and colleges in higher education is to graduate productive citizens for their respective communities. Dr. Arthur shared the research of Davies, Gregory and Riley (1999) on citizenship stating that overwhelmingly a “good citizen” is one who exhibits social concern and tolerance for others and has a marked disposition towards moral behavior and community involvement.

The overall administrative structure of universities and colleges in the United Kingdom is similar to the United States as we learned throughout the conference. Our visit to Oxford Brookes University at mid-week reinforced this point, but did show some “thinking out of the box” perspective. For instance, the University Advancement and Development Division at Oxford Brookes has student recruitment as an integral piece of its structure. The Office of Admissions remains within the academic division of the university, but the actual recruiting of students, including all publications and marketing, is managed by the Advancement Division.

In regards to advancement and fundraising at St. Peter’s College, Sean Rainey, Deputy Development Director, mirrored a fundraising model similar to the ones shared

Tim Ebersole is Executive Director for University Relations, Shippensburg University, Pennsylvania
at the Council of Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) in the United States. He studied the programs and models used in the higher education institutions in the United States and implemented them within the St. Peter’s College structure.

The conference enhanced my overall understanding of the English higher education system and distinct teaching style, but did re-emphasize the many similarities found in the overall administrative structure of the universities and colleges found in the United States.

The final part of our visit was traveling to Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, a modern day palace that has centuries of history associated with the ancestry of English leadership and power. We visited the gravesite of Sir Winston Churchill, a great leader of the 20th century. This was a fitting conclusion to the 18th International Leadership Conference at St. Peter’s College, University of Oxford.

If I were to take anything away from this conference relating to leadership as described by Dr. Williams, it was a point similar to what was described in Leadership Jazz by De Pree (1992) when he discusses effective leadership through servanthood, integrity, vulnerability, discernment and courage in relationship building. The higher education strand of the conference emphasized these themes, especially through empowering individuals to enhance personal characteristics and, in turn, benefit the organization.

References


An Oxford Reflection: Personal and Professional

Virginia Allen

The IDPEL program staff presented the idea of the Oxford Leadership Conference three years ago at the beginning of the program. I looked forward to the opportunity in the future and hoped my colleagues would unanimously vote to go to England. As time went on there were terrorist attacks, and then the issue of Dr. Williams’ health, which created the possibility of cancelling the trip.

I was so intrigued by this trip that I wanted to share it with the people most important in my life, my two sons. They have had to endure my time away from them and vacations spent writing in order to complete the work required for this degree. They would also have the opportunity to meet the other 24 individuals with whom I have spent the last three years in class. I was elated upon Dr. Williams’ reply allowing them both to go with me. That began the frenzy for passports, proper luggage and connecting flights so that we could all fly together.

This trip began by flying my older son to Pennsylvania the night before flying to England. He arrived with no passport and only one of two suitcases. This sent us on a midnight trip to Philadelphia in snow and sleet to gain a passport to continue our travels. We rose early the next morning to walk to the House of Commons for the passport only to awaken to a fire in the hotel. Thank goodness we were dressed and ready to go when the alarm sounded. My older son evacuated his brother and we began our walk for the passport. We all hoped and prayed that the fire was minor and all of our belongings would still be there and dry when we returned.

Over three hours later we had a passport and left Philadelphia for the Dulles/Washington airport. We fought heavy traffic and engaged in creative one-stop shopping for basic belongings due to the missing luggage. We arrived at the airport in just enough time to go through security and Customs and board the plane to leave. The moment I sat in my assigned seat, three years of anticipation, the four hundred dollars for a passport, along with the anxiety of the last forty-eight hours were immediately forgotten. Now I knew the trip of a lifetime was actually beginning.

The flight was easy and the bus ride from the airport to Oxford allowed for another nap. In Oxford we pulled our luggage several blocks through the town in order to arrive at St. Peter’s College. There was no doubt by Oxford residents, watching seventeen people dragging luggage behind them, that we were tourists who had come to settle in for a stay.

We began the visit with a walking tour of Oxford. I was overwhelmed with the architecture and the history that have now become a shared experience with my family. I tried to imagine the many scholars that preceded me on every sidewalk or every college we entered. I found the people to be very kind and giving whether in St. Peter’s College, on the street in a public area, or in the schools I visited. I read voraciously every pamphlet, tourist guide, and books I bought in order to make the best selection to represent the whole story of the Oxford area.

The leadership conference began with presentations from Dr. Williams and headteachers before we began visiting the schools to which we were assigned. His design for sharing information in small rotating groups allowed everyone to gain information on a more intimate level. The information help set the framework for the visits yet to come. I was intrigued by the similarities of our school system to theirs. Titles and names were different, but the functions were very close.

Two head headteachers shared information in small groups. Margaret teaches classes part of the day and handles duties that deal with student discipline issues, curriculum and testing. She expressed that England is undergoing changes in terms of testing and evaluating students similar to the United States. She also assists with coordinating programs for special needs students.

A second headteacher, Mark, came from a school district that is closer to Oxford, a suburb bigger than Margaret’s area. His work was very similar to Margaret’s. He discussed student behavior in more detail. His school has a minority population made up of white students. He expressed how they have had to build a strong reputation for being a family in that building and that character education has played a major role in that aspect. He didn’t teach as much as Margaret, given the amount of time needed in other areas.

Both headteachers sounded as though they were just as busy as our principals. They seem to feel very connected with the teachers since they too taught a few classes in the day. This made me question how their rapport with the teaching staff is different compared to principals and staff in the United States. Is there more of a team attitude toward the headteacher position as compared to the relationship between a teacher and principal in the United States?

I met Jeffrey, an assistant departmental chair for English. He discussed curriculum, the United Kingdom’s national curriculum. Though his country has set forth a curriculum, schools give teachers the liberty to choose their delivery of the content for that level and the liberty to choose their books or resources. He did say he believed that students were losing their creativity due to teachers teaching to the test. The national curriculum was a borrowed idea from the United States by their Minister of Education. A
major difference is that teachers' salaries are not affected, students' attendance is not applied, and special groups, such as special education students, do not have to take the test. Jeffrey questioned whether or not schools manipulated the system. Jeffrey presented many concerns dealing with testing and a national curriculum which match our concerns for testing and standards.

We also discussed how standards are being written for head teachers in order to become or remain qualified, just as there are specific tests for our administrative positions. It is questionable as to which system is better. The U.K. allows you to get your Master’s degree by working towards the degree. You spend time being directly involved in your professional growth. In fact, you are very much in charge of the growth. You create the time line and follow it. The United States requires a certain number of classes in a certain set of areas for a Master’s degree. It is interesting to weigh one against the other.

A school board similar to ours governs U.K. schools. It is a local body of community entities. They hold meetings regularly and make the financial and business decisions for the school. The headteacher is allowed to be on the board and has a vote. What is interesting is that every school has a board. The size of the area does not dictate that schools consolidate as long as the area has sustainable money for the school. Since it is a very local governing body, the community, families and business people have a greater investment in the local school.

While visiting the schools I saw two different buildings. I noticed that their buildings didn’t stand out but looked more like buildings that were part of the community. They did not worry so much about perfect cleanliness or the brightest and whitest walls. They seem to have dealt with purpose and functionality first. We did discuss how money can be directed based on personal interest, but for the most part it was used for educating the local community of students.

I compare this to new school buildings in the United States and to some of the older buildings that have a common areas. That space is open for social occasions, although students rarely have much time to spend with each other because classes are forty-two minutes long with three minutes in between and students cannot be late for the next class. There is only a thirty-minute lunch with no breaks in between. The U.K. promotes a social time for students as well as teachers twice during a day and a lunch that lasts more than thirty minutes. As I listened to conversation during these breaks, teachers discussed students in order to assist with their needs. They discussed curriculum issues or looked for materials while having tea. The students retrieved snacks from their lunch boxes or book bags so that they too could visit with their friends. On this particular day, teachers expressed that they needed this time to unwind and refresh themselves in order to go back in the classroom. The students, they said, needed this as well.

Leaving the schools, I asked myself where I would like to work? Would it be in buildings that are not necessarily 21st century or in functional buildings that allow for exchange during a busy teaching day? Even though I have access to very modern conveniences and the aesthetics are wonderful as well, I am reminded we do this for kids. It is so important to keep in mind what education is meant to do for society. I will continue to reflect upon what I do and why I do it so that I will make the best choices possible for the people involved. Though there are structural differences, title differences, differences in testing, and somewhat in national curriculum, comparing the United Kingdom to the United States, we all educate youth.
The Oxford experience has become a tradition for the IDPEL program and offers a unique moment in time for participants to reflect upon leadership skills, self-confidence, and purpose. My Oxford experience was the stimulus for me to question and compare my own culture and beliefs. While the beautiful landscapes, endearing small primary schools, and truly astounding English pride in history have contributed to my delightful encounters in this “new” old world, it was the lively verbal exchange with people that caused me to contemplate and assess my beliefs about leadership.

What is leadership? The essential question was asked repeatedly by Dr. Vivian Williams. This question continues to forcefully resonate even after miles and time have separated us from our great questioner. Participants were challenged one by one each afternoon as we defended our research and thoughtful contributions to the program and conference theme of “Leadership in Self-Governing Schools: Shared Leadership for More Effective Schools.” What purpose could there be in such intellectual wrangling? The purpose is to both clarify and stimulate further thought, a time-honored tradition for Oxford.

The definition of leadership offered by James Houghton, CEO of Corning, comes closest to my belief in what leadership is all about. According to Houghton:

The true spirit of leadership is the spirit that is not sure it is always right. Leaders who are not too sure they are right are leaders who listen. Leadership is about performance over time, not charisma--about responsibility, not privilege. It is about personal integrity and a strong belief in team play… which points to one more element of leadership… developing strong followers and potential successors and staying out of their way. Organizations can no longer afford leadership by the few. If organizations are to move ahead and not just play catch-up, every employee must be a responsible leader. Employees must have responsibility and the power that goes with it; anything less leads to cynicism and skepticism - and nothing is more demoralizing for employees than to find their skepticism justified. (p.63)

A definition of leadership offered by Bennis in Hoy and Miskel (2001), is equally appealing to me but less descriptive. According to Bennis, “Leadership is like beauty---it is hard to define, but you know it when you see it!” (p. 392).

An analogy worthy of consideration is the idea of shared leadership and the horticultural definition of a leader. In plants a leader is described as the primary shoot of the plant. The primary shoot or leader emerges from the seed casing, breaks through the soil and strives to find the sun. The leader essentially establishes the direction for the plant. After the initial movement/direction and setting of the primary shoot, the roots establish their position, as do the leaves/branches, and are interrelated with the guidance of the leader.

In much the same way the leader of an organization emerges with a direction and creates a vision for the group or organization. School leadership is compelled to establish a vision for the school that communicates a direction or objective that unites the school community and provides purpose. An educational leader is particularly vulnerable while communicating a vision for the school in much the same way the primary shoot of a plant is vulnerable to natural forces as it emerges from the soil.

As the plant matures to a tree the primary shoot takes on additional roles and responsibilities that not only provide direction, but also serve the tree. The primary shoot grows into a stem, then in the case of a tree, a major trunk. The trunk of a tree provides support and helps to position the tree for maximum advantage of sunlight. In addition to providing support the tree trunk also acts as a vehicle for transportation of nutrients to the plant. In this way the tree trunk facilitates the function of the leaves, flowers and roots to ensure the tree’s survival and growth.

The leader of a school or organization also provides “nutrients” and support to the organization. The leader helps the organization to function effectively as well as to improve. The organization experiences the greatest advantage when an environment that fosters shared leadership exists. Genuine shared leadership exists when the leader, (a) has a compelling organizational purpose in place, (b) puts people in control of the variables that they perceive to be important to their success, (c) moves decisions to the point of implementation, (d) has individuals and teams lay out their own work, and (e) allows people to express themselves through their work (Schwahn & Spady, 2002).

The activities and the experiences of the conference helped me formulate with greater clarity what I consider to be important ingredients within leadership. The intellectual challenges stimulated through debate and questioning provided a valuable learning experience. The discussion of ideas among all participants throughout the week, both formal and informal, enriched the event. Like most other events in my life that have evoked change or stimulated thought, it is the mental confrontation of new ideas from

William Chain is Middle School Principal, Shippensburg Area School District, Pennsylvania
sincere people that create landmark opportunities for personal growth.

References


Higher Education Seminar : Leadership Practice - Prescriptive or Elective?

Vivian Williams

Context

Many brow-creasing problems confront those presently employed in leadership positions in higher education. Typical issues are embedded in complex and multiple values, teaching and research protocols, organisational processes, public accountability and ethical questions over ways in which potentially conflicting activities collide within short-term or extended planning and fiscal frameworks.

To establish traditional, ‘safe’ management control within orthodox, hierarchically structured pyramidal organisational frameworks using concepts reflecting tiered departmental accountability is a widely adopted solution. Many have been upwardly mobile in such organisations and, thus, are likely to support the basic concepts of hierarchies - not least because they have gained senior positional status within them. Nevertheless, through modification of orthodox structures, and recognising the value of shared personal experience, it is believed that refinement and mutation are now critical to achieve organisational flexibility - an unavoidable and pressing requirement in contemporary higher education establishments.

In recent years, some of the writer’s students on encountering practical strategies advocated by distinguished researchers were impressed with possibilities to enhance job-satisfaction of those employed within orthodox, hierarchical education organisations. Briefly, for them concepts applied in practice developed by authors such as Likert [1961] and McGregor [1966] offer persuasive motivational action-pathways. It was believed that benefits secured through modification of hierarchically structured educational organisations would be achieved by consciously introducing linking-pin supportive team processes. As ever, the effectiveness of the application of such concepts in practical day-to-day situations in schools, colleges and universities is considerably easier to advocate than to achieve. Encouragingly however, through the recent establishment of self-governing schools and colleges in the UK, supportive versions of linking-pin team models are now organisationally ubiquitous.

Characteristics of organisations achieving positive development through employees being encouraged to contribute at individual and collective levels have provided foci of research and practice since the 1950s. However, the potential benefits of research, such as those of the Hawthorne Studies, were overlooked for several decades as industrial traditional management practice focused on technologies leading to increased volume production. During the past thirty years or so, interest in efficient competitive modern economies, notably of those in the Pacific Rim, led to a variety of comparative studies of management practice. For example, studies contrasted management practice between Japan and the USA. Takeo Fujisawa, Head of Honda Motor Company, asserted that “... it [management practice] is 95% the same [but] differs in all important respects...” The paradox was explored in a notable study by Pascale and Athos [1982] which emphasised cultural contrasts in that Japanese management focused on the perceived needs of employees as individuals in the belief that attention to expressed expectations within an employment sub-culture created positive motivational stimulation to achieve objectives of mutual benefit to organisations and employees.

Broadly, management studies and practice during the final two decades of the past century led to the introduction of ground-breaking concepts of “interdependent relationships” in public and private organisations. Typically, the development and incorporation of individual talent in key areas within an organisation became an important management focus. An example of attitudinal change is reflected [if not universally practised] in innovative corporate vocabulary: from “personnel management” to “human resources management.” However, considerable difficulty lies not in the adoption of new organisational language but in developing conscious applications through translating novel concepts into genuinely effective workplace practice - for the benefit of organisations and stakeholders.

Problems of Perspective : Managing or Leading?

The contributions of many distinguished writers such as Burns [1978], Drucker [1980], Belbin [1981], Peters & Waterman [1982], Covey [1989], Sergiovanni [1992], Wheatley [1999], Northouse [2001], Hoy & Miskel [2001] have been of major significance in the development of interdependent relationships in organisations. Nevertheless, many authors have presented circumscribed perspectives of “good” practice in interdependent relationship exclusively from a leader perspective. Many also exist about the
tractability of stakeholders or subordinates - a view which this writer is unable to accept or support.

Enduring traditional perspectives of those being led have assumed general submissiveness and acceptance of passive status by employees. However, there appears to be a dearth of research and workplace studies which explores cultural roles of employees as interdependent stakeholders in organisational enterprise. For example, anthologies on the nature and practice of corporate leadership are almost devoid of studies on the rationale, purpose, attitude or influence of followers within interdependent relationships with appointed leaders. Undeniably, publication of studies on interdependent relationships between leader and led arise from cultural emphasis on leadership essentially based on socially powerful traditions of the leader as a person of legitimately higher status or a "great person." Derived from historic, mythological and propagandist traditions these perspectives have become the received wisdom in corporate organisations.

Invariably, cultures of organisations respond to the influence of social and economic change in their external environments. Further, cultural change produces both positive and negative effects through a conscious mutation of the internal organisation leading to the evolution of "new" cultures [Williams, 2003]. In response to extended innovation a voluminous literature exists about ways in which the relationships between positional leaders and led are understood on a basis of differentiated status and provide a basis for conventional understanding of ways in which functions of employers and employees may be defined and modelled. Although traditional attitudes have existed for many years it is only during the past century with the emergence of competitively complex corporate organisations that specific emphasis has been placed on the search for more effective and efficient use of material and human resources. During many incremental developments, traditional cultural models have become embedded in organisations requiring the harnessing of the energies of many participants in the successful achievement of increasingly complex objectives.

Coincidentally and arising from organisational innovation, vocabularies of corporate organisations have expanded in response to the demands for new economic and socially acceptable language. A crucial influence, and one which has deep significance in this exposition, is that a distinction between concepts of "managing" and "leading" during the past thirty or so years reflects a fundamental shift in individual and collective expectations. During this period, contemporary practice in organisational cultures, has prompted questions about the nature, purpose and outcomes in relationships between leaders and led. As issues of organisational intensity and complexity are multiplied in endeavours to meet economic, societal and personal expectations, existing vocabularies change in response to describe and accommodate unprecedented communication demands.

One of the central issues reflecting the current zeitgeist of organisational uncertainty and change, detectable in practice and usage in modern literature, is a tendency to use "leader" and "manager" as interchangeable, synonymous terms. Such imprecise use of language serves merely to compound confusion in contemporary organisational problems - notably of the kinds identified in publications such as Peters & Waterman [1982].

Pathways to Earned Leadership Status

This writer asserts that a fundamental difference exists and may be defined through a recognition that “...leaders cannot exist without followers whereas managers have subordinates ...” [Williams, 1989]. In corporate cultures, leadership is often interpreted in terms of the micro-management of people - a control function that inhibits and aborts incipient leadership abilities in others - a regrettable characteristic practised by those who rely entirely on positional, appointed status as a basis for their authority. Many holding senior appointed positions in public and private organisations have been sluggish in responding to influences of external pressure for cultural change.

Based on his disquiet over the confusion in the misuse of between managers and leaders as synonymous terms, research undertaken by the writer during the past decade has explored elusive concepts of leadership mainly, but not exclusively, within educational organisations. As a graduate professional occupational group, a basic strategy at the outset was that research foci would initially concentrate on ways in which shared activity among leaders and followers was being developed and practised within traditional public sector hierarchical organisations - schools, colleges and universities. In effect the research foci explored the writer’s core hypothesis viz. that leaders cannot exist without followers. Almost immediately, fieldwork responses demonstrated that when applied to conventional organisations within education, corporate models were flawed and generally inappropriate simply because they had been developed within industrial, commercial or military organisations where there were inherent cultural differences at social, educational, skill and experiential levels. The central conclusion emerging from the initial phase of the research project was that the traditional bureaucratic model was imimical to the development and realisation of particularly able, talented individuals - typically for those holding appointments in higher education.

Nevertheless, responses from several participants in the pilot phase, while encouraging, were not wholly satisfying as other intriguingly consequential research questions arose. For example: Who were the “followers”? Why did they “follow”? Were they ‘sheep’ slavishly following charismatic individuals? Were they people choosing to follow under the spell of particularly ‘visionary’ people? Was the espousing of an ideological philosophy of compelling influence? On what criteria were personal decisions made to follow or ignore those offering leadership? Under what circumstances did followers withdraw their allegiance to, or support for, leaders? How
did leaders: a). attract; b). retain; c). stimulate followers to achieve organisational objectives?

In recent years, programmed activity has sought to explore answers to these and other salient questions about followership and its many and varied subtleties. The prestigious Leverhulme Trust, with supplementary funding from the Norham Centre, generously supported the development of further phases of the project to enable research activity to continue beyond the initial study, published in 1991. During the past decade a clarifying framework has emerged. It was assumed that those who attended this conference seminar were familiar with influential publications in recent years - some of which are listed in the attached bibliography. These authors and others have made major contributions in the way forward for the role of leaders in organisations. However, the perception, role and status of followers has been given scant attention. Consequently, few writers have adequately differentiated between the roles and functions of managing and leading in organisations.

Fundamentally, the writer contends that an umbilical relationship exists between leaders and followers - an organic, nourishing two-way process. Thus, it is necessary, and becoming more urgent, to produce coherent knowledge and practice leading to recognition that, irrespective of appointed status, leadership is achieved only through sets of complex relationships among participants in an enterprise. From this perspective, leadership is neither a property nor positional status formally conferred by an organisation on an individual through formal appointment or designation - that is the sphere of management. Leadership is an accorded status with appropriate authority to lead conferred voluntarily by others. It is also fragile, and may be only temporary as it requires continuous renewal. If accorded status is not earned, and continuously renewed, it will be withdrawn by followers. Although not exploring the issue in detail, Bennis and Nanus [1985] are clear that effective leadership is more visible in organisations "... able to respond to spastic and turbulent conditions ..." a characteristic perception of those employed in schools and higher education institutions during the past decade in the UK and elsewhere. Currently, and for many in the education field, it is important to remember that there is no firm, empirical evidence available to suggest that a positive correlation exists between designated status and competence. In all organisations currently experiencing turbulent systemic innovation, not least in higher education, it is essential to ensure that colleagues and others whose abilities are unrecognised or under-utilised are provided with greater opportunities to contribute more fully to the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes. Recent research has provided insights and pathways towards achievement of these goals. Central to provision of opportunities is a recognition not only of formal responsibilities but of obligations to provide opportunities for others to find job satisfaction and personal fulfilment within contemporary innovative organisational cultures in higher education.

Nevertheless, a persistent belief suggests that many organisations are over-managed and under-led. In management cultures, designated positional relationships are dependent on differentiated formal status within relatively inflexible systems of hierarchical organisations. A major problem can arise in that to ensure security within designated status, some managers suffer from "positional vertigo" in attempts to retain the equilibrium and authority of their positions. Inevitably, the culture is further formalised through impersonal, task-achievement, prescriptive relationships focused on rewards for compliance and a range of sanctions for non-cooperation. However personalised and relaxed, both managers and subordinates recognise that, ultimately, a culture of control and differentiated positional status is the foundation of relationships.

The writer believes it is crucially important to ensure that individuals who hold appointed status are clear about the distinction between managers with subordinates and leaders who earn their status from others who choose to follow. An earned leadership culture dependent on the willing acquiescence of others who elect to follow arises from perceptions of assumed mutual benefits of organic two-way interactive relationships. Leadership is dependent on the legitimacy of the authority and power to lead conferred by people who choose to follow others who offer accessible, realistic ways of achieving mutually desired immediate or longer term goals. On occasions, the offer is encapsulated as "vision" offered by an existing positional or nascent leader. More prosaically in organisations, the authority to lead arises from gradual perceptions that through dialogue the needs of others, awareness of shared values, contributions offered in a commitment to achieve task goals are likely to provide personal job satisfaction and mutual benefit for those involved in a project or programme. Leader-follower cultures of this kind are exemplified through the achievement and satisfaction experienced in effective teams - a major characteristic of innovative, developmental activity, typical of much that is admirable and progressive in higher education.

Others describe the essence of effective leadership within organisational contexts: "... It’s listening carefully much of the time, frequently speaking with encouragement, and reinforcing word with believable action. It’s being tough when necessary ... or the ‘subtle accumulation of nuances, a hundred things done a little better,’ as Henry Kissinger once put it” [Peters & Waterman, 1982]. Kouzes & Posner [1987] provide an important perspective in that "... mastery of the art of leadership comes with mastery of self. Ultimately, leadership development is a process of self-development ... effective leaders are constantly learning. They are constantly looking for ways to improve themselves and their organisations...” In effect they earn their leadership status through an understanding of self-worth and that of others - an insight that attracts approval of followers.
Elective Contributorship

In practice, it is self-evident that leadership is not a property, possession or activity of an appointed individual but rather a set of complex relationships with others who, *inter alia*, elect to follow to pursue mutual goals; to satisfy personal needs and motives. As authentic leadership can only be granted by others it is necessary to clarify and, thus, fundamentally modify traditional views of followers to match organisational cultures of the 21st century. First, it is erroneous to assume that followers are either sheep or apprentice leaders. In higher education, teachers, researchers and administrators take initiative, use value judgements, make effective decisions and are self-motivated for the benefit of students and the communities they serve. Essentially, the culture is collegial; a community working collectively towards the achievement of organisational goals. Consequently, it is important to recognise and accept that many autonomous individuals in higher education freely elect to accept the offer of leadership by others; not because of perceived personal inadequacies but on a basis of deliberate, considered and subjectively rational choice. Frequently, elective followership is linked with other personal preoccupations—specialist study, research, teaching or important non-academic activities such as assuming temporary administrative/management roles. Nevertheless, for such individuals the choice is not necessarily made on criteria of indifference but of a sense that their contribution to an enterprise may be better made in other ways.

During an early stage in the Oxford research study, several respondents rationalised pressing or preferred priorities and personal decisions leading to new perceptions about themselves and the relationship between their professional and social lives. A compelling conclusion emerged which rendered the term “followership” as inappropriate, inaccurate and misleading. A more realistic and convincing perspective offered was that of making personal contributions to an enterprise at team or other organisational levels through choosing to follow rather than offering, or attempting, to lead. As duties, needs and motivation were prioritised over time, respondents emphasised that in response to planned or unforeseen change, roles naturally varied along the continuum of leadership-followership. In effect, the preferred, accurate and appropriate term was contributorship and, emphatically, not followership [Williams, 1995].

Thus, subsequent phases in the research study explored concepts of contributorship through the perception of decisions made by respondents. Data analysis suggested that a tentative typology of contributions existed within active inter-relationships between leaders and others who elected to follow. Consideration of data, categories and culture of contributorship have been provided elsewhere [Williams, 1995, 1998, 2001 and 2003] but are again listed here mainly for discussion and possible further research. For example, limitations of the empirical data derived from respondents, prevented clear identification of a further category which in initial dialogue between the writer and pilot-phase respondents indicated the existence of at least one further category of contribution viz. ideological.

To date, five clear categories of contributorship have been identified: positive, adversarial, compliant, minimalist, self-serving. It is not suggested that these are fixed, static or personality-dependent roles. Rather, the dynamic ways in which team roles may develop offer opportunities for individuals to elect to explore a range of contributions, mainly dependent on interpretations of circumstance, earned or positional status together with temporary or enduring perceptions of personal needs within a bounded group context.

Currently, the priority focus is on exploration of ways in which traditional attitudes about positional leadership might be modified and replaced by more dynamic interpretations of roles and functions of leadership. It is increasingly evident that in modern society effective leadership has to be earned from those who elect to follow in recognition of the necessity for collective purpose and planned direction. Within the many complexities and uncertainties of modern organisational cultures the centrality of purpose to secure willing, thoughtful and positive contributions from colleagues is both self-evident and urgent. Continuing analysis of research data suggests that in the relationships involved in the subtleties of practice of earned leadership and elective contributorship, much can be learned from the well-established disciplines of social anthropology and social psychology. In conclusion, the following table provides summary criteria unequivocally believed by a substantial majority of participants in the research study to be crucial to the development and nurturing of earned leadership and elective contributorship cultures within interdependent school, college and university organisation.

### Earned Leadership & Elective Contributorship Cultures

**Key Criteria Identified in The Leverhulme Trust/NCLS Research Project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Values</th>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition of Personal Contribution</td>
<td>Praise Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Individual Differences</td>
<td>Respect for/of Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acknowledged/Celebrated Achievement</td>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career/Professional Development</td>
<td>Increased Responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Environment</td>
<td>Relationships with peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salary and Performance</td>
<td>Quality of Personal Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenure/Job Security</td>
<td>Shared Value Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identification/Sense of Belonging</td>
<td>Trusted by/Trusting of Others</td>
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<td>Team Membership</td>
<td>Confidence in Self/Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependent/Independent Traits</td>
<td>Expectations of Self/Others</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

[Williams, 2001]

**References**


Appendix A
Norham Centre for Leadership Studies [NCLS]
St. Peter’s College, Oxford University

18th International Invitation Oxford Conference, March 2004
Leadership in Self-Governing Schools : Shared Leadership for
More Effective Schools
Saturday 20 – Saturday 27 March, 2004

Programme

Saturday 20 March

a.m.   Arrival at St. Peter’s College : Registration in Conference Office
Dr. Vivian Williams, Director, NCLS; Cerys Williams, Administration Manager; David Launchbury, Conference Facilitator

13.00 Lunch in Hall

p.m.   Non-scheduled afternoon.

17.00 **Plenary Briefing Meeting** [JCR]
Vivian Williams

a. Conference Themes : Contemporary Issues in UK Education Provision
b. Programme & Evening Seminars
d. Domestic Notices

19.00 **Reception, St. Antony’s College** [VW - Taxis]

19.30 **Conference Dinner, St. Antony’s College** [VW]

21.45 **Return to SPC** [VW - Taxis]

Sunday 21 March

08.15 Breakfast in Hall

09.15 **System Briefings** [Chair - VW] [JCR]

a. USA - Helen Sobehart [09.25 - 10.00]
b. UK - Mark Chesterton [10.05 - 10.40]

10.45 Coffee [JCR]

11.15 **Syndicate Schedules** [VW]

a. School attachments and transportation details [JCR]
b. LEA School attachment clusters [JCR]
c. Higher Education syndicate [Latner]
12.30  Lunch in Hall

14.00  **Guided Walking Tour of Oxford Colleges** [HCW & DL]

19.00  Dinner in Hall

20.15 - 21.15  **Leadership Schools in England & Wales: Centralisation & Issues of Change for Practitioners:**
[Chair - VW] [JCR]  

**Monday 22 March**

07.15  Breakfast in Hall

08.00  1. Minibus No. 1 to Daventry Schools

08.15  2. Minibus No. 2 to Old Stratford/Deanshanger Schools

08.15  3. Minibus No. 3 to Woodstock Schools

16.00 [approx.]  
Arrive back at College

09.00  **Higher Education Syndicate: 1** [Dorfman]
  
a. **A Higher Education System in Transition**  
Dr. Vivian Williams, Emeritus Fellow, St. Peter’s College

b. **Rigours of Student Life at The University of Oxford**  
David Launchbury, Conference Facilitator & Alumnus of St. Peter’s College

10.15  Coffee [JCR]  
**Higher Education Syndicate: 2** [Dorfman]

10.45  **Spiritual & Temporal Traditions in The University of Oxford**  
Revd. Christopher Jones, College Chaplain, St. Augustine, Fellow and Tutor in Theology, Senior Welfare Adviser

12.15  H.F. Seminar - Lunch in Hall

14.00 - 16.00  **Higher Education Syndicate: 3** [Dorfman]
  
**Citizenship : A Reflection of Contemporary Education Policy Development**  
Dr. James Arthur, Professor, Educational Research, Christ Church University College, Canterbury

17.00 - 18.00  **Off-Programme Elective “Sharing” Seminar A.** [JCR]  
Professional development/action research themes and topics presented by conference participants.

19.00  Dinner in Hall

20.30 - 21.30  **Off-Programme Elective “Sharing” Seminar B.** [JCR]  
Professional development/action research themes and topics presented by participants.
Tuesday 23 March

07.15  Breakfast in Hall
School visiting programme as for Monday

16.00 [approx.]
Arrive back at College

09.00  **Higher Education Syndicate : 4 [Dorfman]**
*Curriculum Development in Teacher Education in the UK*
Dr. James Arthur

10.15  Coffee [JCR]

10.45 -12.00
**Higher Education Syndicate : 5 [Dorfman]**
*The Open University : A Unique Achievement in Distance Learning & Teacher Education*
Dr. John Butcher, Staff Tutor for Education, The Open University

17.00 -18.00
**Off-Programme Elective “Sharing” Seminar C. [JCR]**
Professional development/action research themes and topics presented by participants.

19.00  Dinner in Hall

20.30 -21.30
**Off-Programme Elective “Sharing” Seminar D. [JCR]**
Professional development/action research themes and topics presented by participants.

Wednesday 24 March

07.15  Breakfast in Hall
School visiting programme as for Tuesday

16.00 [approx.]
Arrive back at College
**Higher Education Syndicate : 7**
*University Organization & Administration*
Co-ordinator : Andred Bird, International Officer

09.30  **Taxis to Oxford Brookes University Main Campus, Gypsy Lane, Headington**

16.00 [approx.]
Arrive back at College [Taxis]

17.00 - 18.00
**Off-Programme Elective “Sharing” Seminar E. [JCR]**
Professional development/action research themes and topics presented by participants.

19.00  Dinner in Hall

Thursday 25 March

07.45  Breakfast in Hall
09.30 - 12.00  
**Single Phase Discussion Electives - Session 1**

[10.30 -11.00]  
Coffee

**Practitioner Leadership Practice in Schools Primary/Elementary Schools [JCR]**  
Stephen Goodall, Margaret Holiday, Heather Herring, Andrew Walkey  
Practitioner Accountability ; the National Curriculum ; literacy and numeracy standards ; Pupil Assessment ; SEN provision ; Ofsted & school inspection processes ; drugs ; truancy problems ; school-uniform issues.

**Secondary/High Schools [JCR]**  
Jane Curle, David Fennell, David Johnson, Ed McConnell  
Practitioner Accountability ; the National Curriculum ; Student Assessment ; SEN provision ; Ofsted & school inspection processes ; personal /social/health/drugs education programmes.

09.15 - 10.30  
**Higher Education Syndicate : 8 [Dorfman]**

**University Funding & College Development : Review of Current Policies and Practice**  
Sean Rainey, Deputy Development Director, St. Peter’s College

10.30 - 11.00  
Coffee [JCR]

11.00 - 11.45  
**Higher Education Syndicate : 9 [Dorfman]**

**Leadership - A Binocular Process in HE : Elective or Prescriptive or Both ?**  
Dr. Vivian Williams

12.15  Lunch in Hall

14.00  Non-scheduled afternoon for Individual Activities and/or Independent Visits

19.45  [NB] Dinner in Hall [Sign-In List]

**Friday 26 March**

07.30  Breakfast in Hall

09.15 - 12.00  
**Single Phase Discussion Electives - Session 2**

**Perceptions of Self-Governing Schools within a Centralized System**  
**Primary/Elementary Schools [JCR]**  
Steve Goodall, Margaret Holiday, Andrew Walkey  
School Governance ; LMS/SBM & Collective Autonomy ; shared professional decision-making ; practitioner performance/PRP assessment ; public relations between schools and their communities.

**Secondary/High Schools [JCR]**  
Jane Curle, David Johnson, Ed McConnell  
School Governance ; LMS/SBM & Collective Autonomy ; shared professional decision-making ; practitioner performance/PRP assessment ; public relations between schools and their communities ; absenteeism ; suspension.

**Higher Education Syndicate : 9**
09.15 - 10.00
   Seminar: Current Trends & Policy Issues in Higher Education [Dorfman]
   Dr. Vivian Williams

[10.00-10.30]
   Coffee [JCR]
   Higher Education Syndicate: 10

10.30 - 11.15
   The Oxford Tutorial System - A Reflective View [Dorfman]
   Dr. A.S. Bailey, Emeritus Fellow, St. Peter’s College

10.30 - 11.15
   Practitioner Leadership: Earned or Positional Status or Both? Reflective conversations
   1. Primary/Elementary Schools [JCR]
      Steve Goodall, Margaret Holiday, Andrew Walkey
   2. Secondary/High Schools [JCR]
      Jane Curle, David Johnson, Ed McConnell

11.20 - 11.50
   Final Plenary Meeting [JCR]
   Vivian Williams et al.
   a. Review of Conference Programme/Experience
   b. Conference, 2004: Reflections/Proceedings – Dates for receipt and publication of Jottings/Articles, etc.
   c. Planned personal & school-to-school networking.

12.15 Lunch in Hall

14.00 Visit to Blenheim Palace, Woodstock [Coach] [HCW/DL]

19.30 Concluding Conference Dinner at Balliol College [VW]

Saturday 27 March

08.00 Breakfast in Hall
   Farewells & departures for other locations, e.g., airports [Checkout by 11.00]
## Appendix B

Norham Centre for Leadership Studies [NCLS]

St. Peter’s College, Oxford University

18th International Invitation Oxford Conference, March 2004

Leadership in Self-Governing Schools: Shared Leadership for More Effective Schools

Saturday 20 – Saturday 27 March, 2004

### 1. Conference Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Role/Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward Arke</td>
<td>Grantham, PA</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Communications Messiah College [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonya Barnes</td>
<td>Hagerstown, MD</td>
<td>Principal, Funkstown School for Early Childhood Education [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad Bennett</td>
<td>Shippensburg, PA</td>
<td>Co-ordinator, Academic Support Services, Shippensburg University [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kip Bollinger</td>
<td>Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>Science Education Advisor [Middle Schools] State Dept. of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Ann Bollinger</td>
<td>Boiling Springs, PA</td>
<td>Communications Arts Teacher, Yellow Breeches Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Bruno</td>
<td>Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>Director of Athletics, West Perry School District [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Chain</td>
<td>Shippensburg, PA</td>
<td>Principal, Middle School, Shippensburg Area School District [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Allen</td>
<td>Mechanicsburg, PA</td>
<td>Assistant Principal, Middle School, Mechanicsburg School District [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Ebersole</td>
<td>Shippensburg, PA</td>
<td>Executive Director, University Relations Shippensburg University [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Elliott</td>
<td>Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>Principal, Middle School, Susquehanna Township School District [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maurice Flurie</td>
<td>Duncannon, PA</td>
<td>Principal, Middle School, Susquenita School District [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett Gilliland</td>
<td>McVeytown, PA</td>
<td>Co-ordinator, Educational Support Service, Tuscarora Intermediate Unit No.11 [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April Hershey</td>
<td>Reamstown, PA</td>
<td>Principal, Reamstown Elementary School [IDPEL]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deena Hoch</td>
<td>Bibb County, GA</td>
<td>8th Grade Science &amp; Mathematics Teacher, Weaver Middle School [PAGE President 2003-2004]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Preston Howard
Marietta, GA
Director, School Operations, Marietta City Schools [PAGE President 2002-2003]

## Shellie Jacobs
Zelienople, PA
Dean of Instruction, St. Stephen’s Lutheran Academy [IDPEL]

## Kenneth Jenkins
Shippensburg, PA
Elementary Principal, Shippensburg Area School District [IDPEL]

## Michael Jones
Harrisburg, PA
Assistant Principal, Dauphin County Technical School [IDPEL]

## Mark Leidy
Mechanicsburg, PA
Principal, Mechanicsburg High School [IDPEL]

## Andrea Malmont
Shippensburg, PA
Assistant Professor, Shippensburg University [IDPEL]

## Sherry Milchick
Reading, PA
CSPD Project Administrator, Berks County Intermediate Unit No.14 [IDPEL]

## Pam Pulkowski
Murraysville, PA
Superintendent, Franklin Regional School District

## David Reeder
Williamsport, MD
Principal, Springfield Middle School [IDPEL]

## Shelly Riedel
Mechanicsburg, PA
Assistant Superintendent, Mechanicsburg Area School District [IDPEL]

## Tracy Shank
Fawn Grove, PA
Assistant Superintendent, South Eastern School District

## Sherri Smith
Hummelstown, PA
Superintendent, Lower Dauphin School District [IDPEL]

## Joseph Snoke
York, PA
Principal, Conewago Elementary School [IDPEL]

## Helen Sobehart
Pittsburgh, PA
Director, IDPEL Programme & Leadership Institute, Duquesne University

## Nancy Stankus
Shippensburg, PA
Associate Professor & Chair Educational Administration, Shippensburg University

## Arthur Sutton
Gettysburg, PA
Administrative Specialist, Harrisburg Area Community College [IDPEL]

## Gwendolyn Swingler
Shippensburg, PA
Professor, Shippensburg University [IDPEL]

## 2. UK Contributing Members of Conference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>James Arthur</td>
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<td>David Johnson</td>
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### Conference Office

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<tr>
<td>David Launchbury</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant &amp; Conference Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerys Williams</td>
<td>Administrative Manager &amp; Conference Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivian Williams</td>
<td>Director, NCLS; Emeritus Fellow, St. Peter’s College, Oxford University</td>
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Appendix C

NCLS
St. Peter’s College, Oxford, OX1 2DL, UK

Enquiries to:
Director of Centre – Dr. Vivian Williams
Telephone: College (01865) 278900
Office (01993) 812511
Fax No: College (01865) 278855

The Centre was established in 1987 to promote greater awareness of, together with improved understanding and research into, the nature of leadership in educational establishments at local, regional, national and, especially, international levels.

Its objectives are:

1. To extend conceptualization of the characteristics and purposes of leadership in educational contexts.
2. To share experience and understanding.
3. To stimulate the development of progressive attitudes, methodologies and skills in the application of leadership concepts in education.
4. To promote ways in which through education, training and selection processes, candidates may be prepared more effectively for leadership roles and positions.
5. To encourage research studies in leadership (concepts, practice and process) which contribute to the development of school/higher education improvement strategies and enhance the effectiveness of existing and innovative educational provision.

For all these purposes, the Centre exists to provide opportunities at Oxford for practitioners and researchers for study periods, exchange visits and projects consonant with its primary objectives. For example; study periods and exchange visits may extend over half-semester, termly or annual programmes.

Further, conferences are arranged at Oxford and overseas when appropriate, to facilitate the sharing of experience and research among practitioners and researchers through programmes which are intellectually and professionally developmental.

The Centre is a Member of the Harvard International Network of Principals’ Centres in the USA and will seek similar arrangements with other systems.