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Cinderella needs a glass slipper that fits



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An insider observes the TVET sector

A strong belief in the importance of the sector

An acknowledgement that the sector must adapt and subsequently change

A frustration to the point of inertia with the external pressures imposed on TVET professionals to accomplish multiple mandates



Why is change so difficult for the sector (I)?

**It's hard to think about draining the swamp
when you are up to your chin in crocodiles**

- ***Trained to teach not to manage much less
lead***
- ***'Yesterday I couldn't spell Chief Executive
Officer. Now I are one'***
- ***Financial experts, HR specialists, strategic
planners/thinkers***



Why is change so difficult (2)?

In this new, complex sector, there is a need for new knowledge, new skills, new aptitudes to run these multi-million rand operations

Leaders are not born to the task – they need to be developed, yet there is no capacity building

- ***How to be a visionary and transformational leader***
- ***How to develop people skills and negotiation skills***
- ***How to cope with operational pressures***



Isolated but not alone

What is the situation in the rest of the world?

TVET colleges in the UK are the poor relations of universities and schools

Like South African TVETs they are Cinderellas in dire need of a glass slipper

TVET leaders in the UK, Australia, USA and South Africa are also distracted by constant, multi-dimensional change and challenges

No single recipe for effective leadership anywhere in the world since the “competing priorities and responsibilities” that demand leaders’ attention are in constant flux.

This supports why training needs to be custom-made.



Conflicting motivations

My research has identified a number of conflicting areas in the VET sector worldwide:

1. Teaching and learning is the core TVET business
but

Career survival requires attention to audits, hard performance targets & government mandates. Keeping college doors open requires a new type of leader with broader management skills and vocational competence.

2. The conflicting role of the CEO: Ms. Inside or Mr Outside?

A highly visible presence to the learners and staff or the public face of the college? Custodian of academic standards or business leader ensuring financial stability?



Dilemmas in common

3. Operating across sectors: education, public service, private business and provincial/national government

Not only must leaders possess multiple competencies those competencies must be applied across multiple, complex environments

4. Interacting with a highly diverse body of learners

Employed and unemployed adults, school graduates, school leavers, recent immigrants plus industry, public service and community entrants

How to juggle teaching methods, delivery modes, timetables, flexi-learning: on-site or distance?



Manager or leader?

5. Educational leader or operational manager?

How to manage resources, balance administrative functions with academic matters?

6. Who is the boss here?

How to face external pressures such as nationally imposed funding with increasing demands and centrally-imposed policies, innovations and practices, almost at odds with education? Unionism? Political ideology?



Leadership development = transformation

Transformation of the TVET sector regardless of country or region requires leadership development

20th Century skill sets and life experiences are obsolete and counter productive

Throughout the world, VET leadership development has become a national priority



Key strategies

Succession planning

World wide, 84% of first generation community college leaders were retired by 2011

Average age range of Australian TAFE college principals is, for example between 50 and 59 with 7% over 60

Career path

Pipeline of future leaders is almost empty because articulated career paths from teaching to leadership are rare and TVET-focused leadership training programmes are rarer



Leadership development criteria I

Must be identified as a national investment and strategy

Deliberate, planned and driven by strategic objectives

Custom designed for national TVET colleges

Not part of other qualifications, not add-ons to MBA or MPA degrees, not imported from overseas

Complete and rigorous

Neither fragmentary nor parceled out in bits & pieces nor an ad hoc exercise



Leadership development criteria II

Integral part of a national strategy/investment

Not a collection of ad hoc policies, mandates or outcomes of crisis management

Long-term, regular instructional interaction

Not once-off, not in-service training, not external training providers, not drop-in/drop-out/drop-in

Mode of delivery

Experiential learning (learning through doing) including mentoring, job shadowing, internships and secondments



The rest of the world?

Naming is framing

The word 'leadership' is now included in educational development organisations in New Zealand, USA, Australia and the UK

Australia: TAFE Leadership Scheme

Provides financial support for planning and implementation of leadership development programmes

UK: Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL)

Develops leaders in the FE sector

USA: too many programmes and initiatives to list

In SA, there is nothing, but this is what our leaders believe should be included in such a programme:



Proposed curriculum framework I

Legislation drives the system

College leaders need to understand the legislative process and how to implement the outcomes

Communication drives the governance process

Not only should DHET communicate with the college leaders, but college leaders need to learn to communicate effectively with staff and other roleplayers

Management awareness

Leaders are not managers but they own the process and are accountable for the outcomes (managers support)



Proposed curriculum framework II

Leadership = credibility not coercion

21st Century leadership is transformational, shared and distributed

Strategic perspective

College leaders are proactive not reactive, forward looking not backward looking, systematic not haphazard

An unwavering focus on the core business

A TVET college leader's sole reason for being is making teaching and learning happen



In conclusion: Is Cinderella ready for the ball?

Does the sector have a clear set of objectives for the future TVET leaders?

Can current and upcoming TVET leaders achieve the objectives expected of them?

Is there a recognition that leadership development is a major factor in achieving objectives?



The unqualified leading the untrained

Unlike the rest of the world:

South African TVET sector has no history of identifying, recruiting and training TVET college leaders

And THIS is the real challenge.



The core TVET college leadership skill

**The ability to consistently make decisions
which positively influence five Key
Educational Objectives:**

Quality of teaching

Quality of learning

Throughput

Learner access

Value for money



The quality of decision making: a criterion

The number of decisions relevant to Key Educational Objectives

versus

the number of decisions relevant to other issues, *inter alia* personnel, finance, marketing, legal, union relations, learner behaviour and unclassifiable



The Dean's Dilemma

**Dr Nigel Courtney: Cass Business School,
City University of London**

**Problem solving simulation for Deans in UK
technical colleges and universities**

**Adapted by the CHAE at the University of
Stellenbosch for TVET leadership training**



The Chief's Challenge

Combines leadership simulation for mid to upper level TVET professionals with data gathering for evaluation of quality of decision making by participants.

Presented to staffs of three colleges in the Western Cape, one in Gauteng and one in Mpumalanga

134 participants made 1344 decisions during the simulations



So how does it work?

Teams of six participants were divided into four roles corresponding to college department heads plus the Chief and an Evaluator:

Education & Training

Finance

Human Resources

Operations



Dealing with challenges

A challenge is presented to Chief

**Department specific challenges presented to
four department heads**

The Chief states his challenge to the group

**The department heads formulate their
decisions privately**

**At the Chief's request the department
heads share their decisions**

The Chief announces his decision

His decision is graded by the Evaluator



Quality of decisions: relevant or not?

**Of 1344 decisions 676 were relevant to
Key Educational Objectives**

Quality of Teaching – 34% (17%)

Quality of Learning – 33% (17%)

Learner Access – 27% (14%)

Value for Money – 3.4% (1.7%)

Throughput – 1.6% (<1%)

**Only 50.2% of decisions focused on
education**



Management decisions

Slightly less than 50% of decisions were relevant to Management Issues

Staff management – 21% (10%)

Staff compensation – 14% (7%)

Staff retention – 10% (5%)

Staff morale – 6% (3%)

Staff total – 51% (26%)

Union, Legal, Learner Behaviour – 4% (2%)

Unclassifiable – 30% (15%)



Rating the Chief's decision

The Evaluator rated the Chief's decision from 1 to 5 based on the relevance of the decision to the five Key Educational Objectives:

Quality of teaching

Quality of learning

Throughput

Learner access

Value for money

Max score: 25 Min score 5



How did they think they did?

241 evaluation cards were completed by participant Evaluators

The Chief's decisions were rated either somewhat relevant, relevant or highly relevant:

Quality of Teaching: 94%

Quality of Learning: 94%

Value for Money: 96%

Learner Access: 96%

Throughput: 81%



Quality of decisions revisited

**Of 1344 decisions only 50.2%
were relevant to Key
Educational Objectives**

Quality of Teaching – 17%

Quality of Learning – 17%

Learner Access – 14%

Value for Money – 1.7%

Throughput – < 1%



Take aways participants

Participants found the Chief's Challenge enjoyable

Participants found the training valuable

Participants found items that could be used immediately in the workplace



Take aways trainers/researchers

Among TVET college professionals there is no clear priority between management issues and educational issues

No perceived difference between managing a TVET college and leading a TVET college

No relationship between the perceived and actual quality of decision making by TVET college professionals



What must we do?

**If we want to meet Cinderella on our
TVET college campuses, we must:**

Identify her

and

Recruit her

With a glass slipper in hand