

Stephen Bigger, (2002) 'Book Reviews', *Professional Development in Education*, 28: 2, 376 — 378

Managing to Motivate: a guide for school leaders

LINDA EVANS, 1999

London: Cassell

ix + 150 pp., ISBN 0 3047 0617 5, £15.99

This is a contribution to the literature on school leadership. Evans explores morale, job satisfaction and motivation, pointing to the importance of good leadership. She explores different leadership styles, concluding that no one style can be described as optimum.

Chapter 3 discusses how to get the best out of 'extended' professionals. The concept comes from Hoyle's 1975 Open University text: professionalism ranges from 'restricted' to 'extended' on a continuum. 'Professionalism' is about vision, values, predisposition and reflection. 'Extended' professionals are seen as a minority who plan their teaching reflectively, who are not satisfied with tips for teachers, but consider underlying issues. They are depicted crudely with those who value Masters courses over 'professional' courses. (This begs the question of the extent to which a Masters can be professional). The

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chapter ends with advice on recognising, valuing, and promoting and mentoring extended professionals. Of course, if school leaders are not extended professionals themselves, this might explain why many feel undervalued.

Chapter 4 is concerned with listening to teachers, 'giving them a voice'. Motivation of staff is closely linked to the extent they are able to participate in policy and strategy. Participation is, however, complex. Consultation can be promoted as an avoidance of decision making, so there is constant argument and no clear content policy. Some teachers want to be directed, to have decisions made for them. This is described as 'commitment' and 'engagement' level. For some, teaching is a life, for others it is only a job. Restricted professionals want a voice in limited contents; extended professionals want to participate in decisions. SMTs can inhibit inclusivity. They can be broadened or more radical solutions found. 'Hierarchical' headship collectives, with all staff contributing to focused projects, is projected as an alternative, a flattened structure. Heads may disagree with points raised, but do so by rational argument, which makes clear why a particular decision has been made.

Chapter 5 deals with motivation through recognition, which tends to be a model of 'the job fulfilment process' (p. 79). This assumes that teachers have identified and put right problems within their control and thus built self-esteem. There are, however, some issues. I am likely to be demotivated by lack of recognition, but not necessarily motivated by its presence. That motivation is an inner conviction of the worth of the activity. Motivation towards (or against) an activity can be counterbalanced by motivation about its rewards. Underpaid motivating activities set up different dynamics than overpaid unmotivating activities. This model is over simplistic. Also, for some, the awareness of what still needs to be done outweighs what has already been achieved. For many, feelings of job fulfilment are sporadic, rather than a state of mind, and triggered by a range of experiences and emotions. Nevertheless, I agree with her view that job fulfilment comes from a sense of significant achievement in a valued and worthwhile activity: recognition of this

achievement by oneself and by others contribute to this (p. 85). The research data stresses the importance of positive feedback, even a craving for reassurance (Lortie). The chapter ends with tips for school leaders.

Chapter 6 deals with 'teacher centred leadership'. The school staff is regarded as analogous to a school class; the leader has to get the best from those under his or her care and be sensitive to their starting points. It involves regarding staff as individuals, recognising their strengths and efforts, and acting in ways most appropriate to each. This also involves awareness in what is going on and interest in teachers as colleagues. Chapter 7 deals with the leader's credibility as a person, as a teacher, as an intellectual and as a leading professional. Credibility is

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built up by actions and attitudes as much 'as by qualifications'. Her research has many examples of Heads lacking in both competence and credibility. Her advice for Heads to use national standards for headteachers diagnostically is rather weak.

The final chapter, 'the pay-back' or 'reaping the rewards' identifies the following: low staff turnover, enhanced working atmosphere, teacher development, a better school and job fulfilments as benefits. There is much that is predictable in this study, based on only three primary schools. Although pseudonyms are used for teachers, Evans does not say whether the school names are pseudonyms also – with considerable impact on their easily identifiable Heads if so, since many comments are critical. There are glaring errors, such as 'valve' for 'value' in a heading (p. 48).

What are the implications for in-service, apart from contributing to the literature on primary school leadership? Mainly that advanced CPD to Masters level needs both to offer the extended professional a framework to make professional progress and to encourage other teachers to become extended professionals by building up their confidence through systematic school-based enquiry, as a means of raising the attainment levels of their pupils. When programmes can demonstrably do this, the vital next stage is to persuade school heads that involvement in such programmes has significant potential for school improvement.

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Reaching Students: teachers' ways of knowing

VIVIENNE COLLINSON, 1996

Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press/Sage

xiii + 122 pp., ISBN 0 8039 6228 2 (paperback), £12.99

Vivienne Collinson has written up her doctoral work on exemplary teachers, first through *Teachers as Learners: exemplary teachers' perceptions of personal and professional renewal* (1994) and now as *Teaching Students: teachers' ways of knowing*. This is particularly pertinent now that in the United Kingdom government and the current General Teaching Council are strongly advocating the role of teachers as reflective researchers.

This book addresses a critical issue that serves as knowledge in educational research. There is a perception among teachers that research is what you do in the library and is not particularly relevant to their needs – not that they, through action research and reflective practice, might be producing new knowledge. Collinson identifies a 'triad of knowledge':

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- professional knowledge (curriculum and pedagogy);
- inter-personal knowledge (relationships and community);
- intra-personal knowledge (reflection, ethics and dispositions).

The work of Gardner on multiple intelligences is to the fore. An exemplary teacher operates within a network of pupils, colleagues, parents, multiagency workers and the local community. Exemplary teachers know pupils and their world in ways that should stimulate learning. She feels that trainee and new teachers particularly need the messages of getting to know pupils as individuals and, hence, 'developing teachers, not just techniques'. Such teachers exhibit and promote caring, respect, personal understanding, giving and receiving, and course (= 'an ethic of care'); pride of effort, perseverance, doing one's best (= 'a work ethic'); and curiosity, creativity, risk taking, problem solving, responsibility and flexibility (= 'a disposition towards continuous learning'). These categories and this model were drawn from interviews with exemplary teachers.

In-service education tends to focus on 'how to' (new curriculum, new techniques), whilst questions of coherence and impact on learning are an overarching importance – how this new knowledge can augment the learning discipline. A collaborative classroom encourages pupils to develop supportive relationships. The relationship between teacher and pupils should encourage risk taking, to push the boundaries of learning: it will aim to trust and continually develop trust.

Parents are pupils' 'long term teachers'; they can support teachers and provide invaluable information. The notion of partnership with parents requires real respect. A blame culture is unhelpful; difficult pupils in particular need the school and the parents to be working closely together. This has generally been easier in secondary schools. Equally, not all parents (and for that matter not all teachers) are easy to get on with.

With intra-personal knowledge she defines reflection as a six-step process:

1. Recognition of a problem.
2. Proposal of hypotheses.
3. Gathering information.

4. Reasoning and analysis.
5. Conclusion (resolving the problem).
6. Evaluation of the process.

Compassion, respect, personal understanding, giving and receiving, and moral courage may need to be modelled in the learning process. Pupils need to learn not to be deflected from a reasoned and moral stance by

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peer pressure. Her chapter on 'Learning to Think' is particularly good advice for the new teacher.

This is a simple message, which hides an ideal very hard to achieve – that the main thing about teaching is the ability to motivate pupils through a positive learning relationship. This is as important a message to experienced (and hardbitten) teachers as to new teachers. Ensure that your teaching is motivating; and empower pupils to learn autonomously. Drawing on the perspectives of experienced teachers, it is a message with its feet on the ground – an education ideal that *can* be achieved.

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