



*Reforming  
Schools  
Through  
Innovative  
Teaching*

# *Reforming Schools Through Innovative Teaching*



- **Case study Australian research by Jim Cumming and Christine Owen**
- **Eight secondary school teachers – illustrations of innovative teaching**
- **Australian College of Education, Enterprise and Career Education Foundation, Dusseldorp Skills Forum**
- **Mounting evidence to indicate that good teachers really do ‘make a difference’**

# *Reforming Schools Through Innovative Teaching*



- **Jenifer Murdock, Hawker College, ACT - Matching Goals in Enterprising Ways.**
- **Nigel Howard, Norwood-Morialta High School, SA - Community Based Learning.**
- **Sandra Wilson, Berkeley Vale Community High School, NSW - Youth Mentoring Project.**
- **Melissa Hughes, Shelford Anglican Girls School, Victoria - Computer-Assisted Language Learning.**
- **John Eaton and Gemma Lawlor, Bridgetown High School, WA - Improved Practice through Professional Learning.**
- **Mandy West, Queechy High School, Tasmania - Teaching through Demonstration and Fun.**
- **Randall Clinch, Consultant - Associated Learning through Emotional Responses.**

# Attributes

**Innovative teachers exhibit a number of personal attributes or characteristics including:**

- *Altruism* — a concern for the lives/futures of young people — ‘socially aware’.
- *Confidence* — exude self-worth, are positive and enthusiastic — ‘self-starters’.
- *Creativity* — especially in initiating collaborative projects — ‘ideas people’.
- *Intuition* — open to ideas; readily follow hunches and leads — ‘lateral thinkers’.
- *Passion* — about youth and delivery of relevant curriculum — ‘love teaching’.
- *Perception* — responsive to the concerns and interests of others — ‘highly attuned’.
- *Modesty* — humble about achievements; readily admit mistakes — ‘just one of a team’.

# Skills

**Innovative teachers demonstrate advanced skills in a number of areas including:**

- *Change management* — focusing disparate energies; promoting teamwork; leadership.
- *Human relations* — establishing and maintaining quality relationships; communications.
- *Applied learning* — creating practical projects which enable ‘connections’ to be made.
- *Curriculum integration* — embedding KLA concepts and practices in broader contexts.
- *Outcome-based approaches* — ensuring that all students experience success in learning.
- *Standards setting* — defining parameters/expectations; negotiating targets/benchmarks.
- *Teaching techniques* — drawing on a wide repertoire of strategies; a big ‘bag of tricks’!

# Knowledge



**Innovative teachers have in-depth understandings on a range of topics including:**

- ***Adolescence*** — dimensions of physical, emotional and intellectual development.
- ***Youth culture*** — current trends and nuances re teenage language, music, art etc.
- ***Subject matter*** — advanced knowledge in at least one discipline, field or learning area.
- ***Pedagogy*** — various theories of teaching and learning — for adolescents AND adults.
- ***Innovation*** — fundamentals of enterprise, entrepreneurship and an ‘ideas’ culture.

# Values

**Innovative teachers follow a code of ethics that reflects core values associated with:**

- ***Youth* — commitment to the education, care and development of young people.**
- ***Learning* — belief in the concepts of life-long and life-wide learning for all.**
- ***Improvement* — desire to improve their own practice and ‘reinvent themselves’.**
- ***Philosophy* — capacity to articulate their educational beliefs and vision for the future.**
- ***Sharing* — willingness to share their knowledge, skills, expertise and resources.**
- ***Modelling* — preparedness to act as mentors and role models for colleagues as well as students.**
- ***Accountability* — readiness to be answerable to stakeholders (e.g. students, parents etc).**

# Strategies used

**Innovative teachers integrate many of their attributes, knowledge, skills and values by means of multi-faceted strategies that include a demonstrated capacity to:**

- *Transfer ownership*
- *Engage stakeholders*
- *Value-add*
- *Utilise the media*
- *Celebrate success*
- *Champion innovation*
- *Engage parents*
- *Create spaces*
- *Promote evaluation*
- *Challenge assumptions*
- *Conduct research*
- *Formulate options*
- *Form alliances*
- *Establish networks*
- *Marshal resources*
- *Build communities*
- *Provide training*
- *Identify advocates*

# *Strategies for schools*

- 1. Identify, recognise and sustain highly innovative teachers**
- 2. Disseminate the outcomes and processes of highly innovative teachers**
- 3. Conduct further research and development on innovative teaching at all levels**
- 4. Provide incentives to promote higher levels of ‘innovativeness’ in all teachers**
- 5. Generate support to build the ‘innovation capacity’ of all school communities**
- 6. Recruit highly innovative teachers as facilitators, mentors and models**
- 7. Engage teacher educators to facilitate and promote innovative teaching**
- 8. Link current work on innovation and professional teaching standards**
- 9. Identify innovative teachers who may be employed outside the education sector**
- 10. Map current developments on innovative teaching initiatives in other countries**
- 11. Acknowledge highly innovative teachers as educational leaders**
- 12. Provide advanced leadership training for highly innovative teachers**
- 13. Provide extended opportunities for innovative teachers to share their expertise**
- 14. Strengthen current links between innovative teaching and school reform work**
- 15. Raise awareness of international research on school effectiveness/improvement.**

# *The fundamental question is:*

**What can *you* do to advance innovative teaching?**

- **Participate in an online discussion group**
- **Send your ideas and proposals to one of the project sponsors**
- **Prepare a presentation to your local community**
- **Write an article for publication**
- **Form a local network or inter-sectoral working group**
- **Make every effort to become innovative in your own practice – become part of the ‘critical mass’.**

# *How?*



- Combination
- Re-arrangement
- Substitution
- Alteration
- Adaptation
- Minification
- Magnification

# Contact Details

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