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Introduction

How to Use This Book

While travelling around Australia, New Zealand and the United States doing workshops with teachers during the past three years, I began to notice a number of new theories, ideas and buzz words. *Learning styles, multiple intelligences, learning modalities, key competency performance levels, national curriculum, parent/school collaboration, site based management, mission statements, alternative assessments* and *multi-ability classrooms* were some of the words I heard. When I started to study some of these ideas and concepts, I realised how powerful many of them are in the potential they hold to change the whole face of education. At the same time I realised that most teachers were feeling overwhelmed with the number of theories and changes they are expected to absorb. I knew they needed some tools to assist them and make their enormous task easier.

A tool can be defined as any instrument or device that is used to make the work of one's profession or occupation easier, more effective or more efficient. Teachers have always used a variety of tools, from the slate and blackboard to the personal computer. Teaching tools also include planning books, curriculum designs, and visual organisers. I felt it was important to create some tools to assist teachers in incorporating some of the new educational theories and ideas and using them in their classrooms. These tools will help teachers facilitate the learning of their students into the 21st century.

Many teaching tools are presented in this book. As you read, you will be introduced to them and will be shown examples of how to use each. You will find flexible strategies and techniques for incorporating learning styles and modalities, multiple intelligences, and Bloom's taxonomy. You will find suggestions on types of assessments and how to work with parents effectively. You will find numerous sample lesson plans and **Learning Encounters** based on a variety of Australian themes and topics. Each of these are practical tools which you can use immediately!

Tools for Reflective Learning

Because of the amount and variety of information presented in this book, it is best to read a small section or chapter and then reflect on what you have read. I have included two types of tools which will help you in this reflection process.

One type is the **Teacher Reflection Page** which can be found in the chapters on Flexibility/Choices/Planning, Learning Styles, Learning Modalities, Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Multiple Intelligences and Assessment. The **Teacher Reflection Pages** are based on specific topics and offer questions for reflection and discussion. While these pages may be used individually or as part of a teacher self-assessment

portfolio, they are best used in small groups. They can guide reflective thinking about a particular topic in:

- Coaching/collegial support teams
- Site-based management teams
- Collaborative groups and teams
- Professional development sessions
- Beginning teacher programs
- Staff meetings
- University classes
- Year level or subject area planning meetings

The other tool to use in reflective thinking is the **Coil 4-I Planning Model**. A reproducible form to use with this model is found on the next page. This is a generic planning model which can be used individually or in any group planning session. I often use it in my workshops to help participants structure their thinking and planning in implementing workshop ideas.

Use the **4-I Planning Model** any time you are introduced to new concepts, thoughts, or theories. This can be when you listen to a speaker, when you are in conversation with a colleague, when you are part of a decision-making team, or when you are reading or studying on your own. This model will help you to understand what is being taught or discussed and gives you a way to apply new concepts to your own situation. This model has four parts (4-Is): *Imagination*, *Ideas*, *Information*, and *Implementation*.

1. *Imagination* This part of the model is used to capture any of the thoughts that may go through your head while you are reading or hearing about a new idea or concept. Included are visions and dreams which may or may not become solid ideas. Our brains constantly have *imaginings* running through them! Capture them on paper as you read and listen for they are generally the best source of new ideas.
2. *Ideas* Ideas are more solid than imaginings. When you get an idea, you usually think: "This is how I could do it." or "It could work like this!" Your ideas should be written in the second section of the **4-I Planning Model**.
3. *Information* When we have an idea, most of the time we need to gather more information to see how it might be useful in our particular situation. Write down the type of information you need and where it might be acquired. The information gathering phase is important, but it is also the step in the **4-I Planning Model** where groups or individuals can get bogged down. Beware of always needing to gather more and more information before any action can be taken. Sometimes we spend so much time gathering information about a new idea that the idea itself gets lost and is never implemented!
4. *Implementation* This is the most important part of the model for it is the action step where change takes place. For a new idea to have any long-term worth, it must be implemented. In the **4-I Planning Model**, an implementation plan with target dates should be written and agreed upon. As information is gathered the implementation plan can be modified.

Coil 4-I Planning Model

Imagination

(Visions—Possibilities—Brainstorms)

Ideas

(It could happen like this ... This is how we could do it.)

Information

*(All of the things we need to find out concerning our situation
and the possibilities we see)*

Implementation

(The plan for turning our ideas into reality)

The Needs of 21st Century Students

Linking School to the World of Work

The world is changing rapidly! The one thing that seems certain is that we will continue to experience rapid change throughout the 21st century. Like other areas of living, the world of work is changing. Automated and advanced technologies are replacing many of our traditional unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Jobs now require more advanced technical skills, but often our students do not have the relevant skills they need to work effectively now or into the 21st century.

Unskilled labour is no longer a valuable economic commodity and it will become even less so in the years ahead. In fact, it is widely believed that by the turn of the century the unskilled person will be virtually unemployable in most of the industrialised world.

Agriculture no longer dominates the Australian economy. Most of those who continue to work in agriculture in the 21st century will need advanced technological, financial, and organisational skills. Manufacturing no longer requires workers who do routine tasks over and over again. Instead, we have shifted to a more flexible and automated manufacturing system. The result is that industrial workers need technological skills and the ability to process information symbolically, mostly via computers. Often they also need advanced reading and language skills and the ability to think critically.

Workers in the 21st century will deal mostly with services and information. To do this, they will need to understand advanced technological applications involving the use of maths, language and thinking skills. Knowledge of statistics, logic, probability and measurement systems, and applied physics will be the norm. Because they will need to communicate with customers on a regular basis, these same workers will also need to express themselves well, organise information and activities, and do a great deal of technical reading and writing.

Furthermore, they will need to work well in task-oriented groups or teams and solve problems critically and creatively. However, for the most part, schools teach students to work *independently*, while the world of work needs workers who know how to work *interdependently* with one another. Because they will be part of a global economy and multicultural workplace, this interdependence also involves the ability to understand people from a variety of cultures and who may have different cultural values and norms.

One of the roles of education is to prepare students for this world of work. We need to prepare our students to do the type of jobs that will be available in the 21st century.