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## OVERVIEW

- **Chapter 1 – The Power of Mindsets**

We introduce the concept of an historical watershed to help describe our current period in education and examine the powerful ways in which habits of thinking are preserved so that they become unquestioned sets of rules and regulations, establishing boundaries and assumptions. They become our maps of reality—our ‘logic’. They are the way we see the world; they are our frames. The way we see the world determines what we do and the questions we ask. We assert that in times of change and discontinuity we need to be able to create new ways of seeing the world rather than remaining locked inside obsolete assumptions.

- **Chapter 2 – Why Do We Have the Schools We Now Have?**

Here, we review the origins of the current patterns and assumptions of schooling. These patterns emerged during a particular industrial period of our history and have been protected and projected into a quite different historical period which will no longer be able to sustain them. The chapter begins by comparing natural learning to the traditional learning of formal education. It then reviews the industrial context which shaped the patterns of mass schooling. The context included education for all young people, school as the educational factory of society, unswerving faith in the rationality of scientific logic and the birth of industrial meritocracy. We go on to describe the major elements of industrial schooling—practices and structures which persist today—and suggest that these interacting components need to be reviewed if we are to bring to the surface the often unconscious assumptions which frame our perceptions and create for us mental limits about what is possible in schools and in education generally.

- **Chapter 3 – What’s Wrong with Schools As They Are?**

This chapter challenges the validity of traditional industrial patterns and assumptions about schooling today. To do this, we begin a process of shaking ourselves free from the preconceptions outlined in Chapter 2—the fragmentation of knowledge, learning being time-bound, space-bound and credential bound, teachers being curriculum conduits, students being absorbers of learning and formal education being economically rational and just. We question the assumptions and the practices which flow from them in the light of the changes taking place in society. We argue that these preconceptions have the power to lock us into frameworks of the past and veil from us the possibilities for the future.

In Chapters 4, 5 and 6 we begin to explore possible future patterns of education.

- **Chapter 4 – Why Our Current Schools Can’t Survive**

We outline the changes that are buffeting our educational vehicles as they attempt to negotiate the terrain of a post-industrial world. We explore the impact of technological changes, changes in economic structure, and changes in society, including changes in patterns of work. We suggest that because the changes are still occurring and because we are all immersed in them, we find them difficult to interpret and feel increased tension about change. The tension is caused by manifestations of change which are global and pervading, and by others which are specific to Australia and to the settings of its educational institutions.

- **Chapter 5 – Outcomes Based Learning: Whose Outcomes?**

We trace the emergence of an outcomes approach to curriculum planning and compare it to the industrial logic used in the past. Essentially, the shift is away from a pattern where there was a

fixed process and differential outcomes towards one where the outcomes are defined and the process is differentiated to meet the varying learning needs of students. We provide a three-dimensional view of outcomes in terms of skills and knowledge, the growth of individuals and the development of a post-industrial society in which all have a place. While we argue that an outcomes based approach is a positive move away from an outmoded logic, we warn of the dangers of trying to implement such an approach with existing ‘top-down’ processes.

- **Chapter 6 – The Reformers’ Dilemmas**

This chapter explores the tensions and dilemmas of reform and analyses the reasons for the failure of traditional approaches in modern day education. Varied and contradictory urgings from lobbyists and pressure groups, increased politicisation, and change that is attempted within the industrial logic, complicate reform. The apparent contradiction between the moves for devolution and the increasing centralisation of major policies affecting the curriculum is symptomatic of a nation in tension between the previous surety of an industrial model of education and the growing realisation that such a model is no longer sustainable. Attempts to develop new policy positions and consultative processes are so deeply grounded in industrial thinking, that even when alternatives are conceived, they are unacceptable, because they contravene the unquestioned principles of industrial management. For example, ‘strategic planning’ ceases to be a precise or useful phrase to describe the way a professional community might learn together and adjust its practices in response to unforeseen contingencies when the word ‘strategic’ is used to describe a centralist, packaged approach to reform. An alternative approach, that of working out how to get there before you know precisely where you want to go, seems absurd. Yet it is this alternative approach that we support. When we try to build an image of a desirable future and create a blueprint for its achievement we merely transpose outmoded ways of thinking into

our planning for the future. As we seek to create alternatives to our current vehicles, we warn of the dangers of remaining embedded in an industrial logic or of creating a hybrid of old and new logics.

- **Chapter 7 – What Difference Does a New Mindset Make to Student Learning?**

This section analyses in a critical way some of the assumptions about learning which have been often taken for granted. It explores how people can learn to learn and how they can use this learning as a basis for creating a future. The chapter raises questions about learning and learners and suggests ways in which students might be better supported in becoming more self-directed in their learning.

- **Chapter 8 – Celebrating Learning**

In this chapter, we focus on the celebration of learning outcomes by individual students and by groups of students. The focus is on learners working towards their own and collective learning goals. We begin the chapter by analysing comparative assessment under an industrial logic. We go on to compare this with assessing the achievement of learning goals. We explore the concept of profiling and provide some alternative ways of using profiles and of reporting outcomes.

- **Chapter 9 – The Changing Roles of Teachers**

We explore the implications of a new mindset for the work of teachers. Essentially, if formal education is to provide each generation with the ability to make informed and moral decisions about its own future and about the future of the planet, there is no longer room for the perception that teachers are merely conduit workers at the base of an educational hierarchy functioning as tools of the government. We will develop instead an alternative set of images and strategies to describe the roles of teachers in a society where people are acting collaboratively to shape their future.

- **Chapter 10 – Structuring the Curriculum for Outcomes**

Discussed here are a range of structural initiatives schools are taking to provide scope for all students to experience success in their learning and for students generally to take more responsibility for their learning. Initiatives such as teaching teams, learning centres, tutorials, flexible timetabling and vertical integration are discussed, not as panaceas for the future but as ways in which new beliefs and assumptions might better find their practical expression in our learning environments.

- **Chapter 11 – Schools as Learning Communities**

We use the concept of a learning community as a frame within which we explore the interrelationship between organisational structure and culture, decision making, the change process,

management and leadership. The learning community concept is built on the belief that all people have the capacity to learn and that each person brings to the organisation unique gifts and abilities. We begin the chapter by revisiting traditional management and decision-making processes designed to protect the status quo and to maintain tradition. These are sometimes referred to as 'top down' and 'linear' strategies. We assert that when significant change is involved, these traditional techniques don't work. We then suggest different kinds of generic processes and strategies that will help schools as learning communities manage change by understanding the process of change, by exploring organisational culture, by applying decision-making processes that are more likely to bring about productive change and by considering the implications of these processes for management structures.

