SUBMISSION: Workshop INCITING CURIOSITY IN WORKPLACE THINKING

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Having attended both the 11th and 12th International Conferences on Thinking (Phoenix and Melbourne), I am extremely excited by the prospect of presenting in Sweden in 2007.

The point of inquiry ‘Curious minds think and learn by experiencing the unknown’ is directly aligned with my recent Masters Degree research and the subsequent innovations I have explored in my own school at Toorak College. I am a vibrant, energetic and experienced presenter who can make accessible to people from a range of backgrounds extensive and detailed research-based knowledge in an engaging and provocative manner.

My particular focus has been to consider the relationship between the stimulation of teachers’ and students’ minds, to produce tangible learning outcomes and the assessment of Professional Development.

In brief, I have achieved the following:
- In 2006 all members of the school staff engaged in my new four-step process of Performance Development. Under my guidance, and as a part of their annual performance review conducted by the school executive, each member of staff was required to demonstrate metacognitive processes inherent in their day-to-day teaching.
  This process has been designed to emphasise the merit of learning and growth, as distinct from competitive ranking models which pervade western thinking.
- For many experienced teachers, at our elite private school, this was actually the first formal challenge to present publicly on their approach to stimulating "curious minds". I found this to be exciting yet alarming.
- This process provides the opportunity for individual employees to reach new heights of professional aspiration, a sense of deep collegiality, and an opportunity to have their progress and innovation recognized. Equally important, however, is the opportunity it provides the institution to identify areas for growth and development.
- This model has been recognised by the Victorian Institute of Teaching as a potential model suitable for State-wide application. I have received great interest by professional bodies in the capacity for this model to facilitate better academic results for students...How curious!

Admittedly my innovative model of appraising Performance Development in this way, was at first met with some discomfort...How could very busy regular teachers possibly be expected to invest time and energy in contemplation and analysis of this esoteric kind?!!

Moreover, my new approach, challenges any traditional assumption that "success" in the teaching domain can numerically be quantified...which raises a number of ideas with broader application in regard to assessment of what constitutes "success".

BUT, I believe that it is fundamentally important that our teachers become proficient in understanding and articulating how best they do and can ignite exciting learning for all students. Who are we as educators, parents and good citizens if we demand any less?

I have presented this model on several occasions in different forums, with documented acclaim. Facilitating an interactive workshop, I will provide professionally-developed DVDs of
highly animated teachers' and students' responses, PowerPoint presentations, and worksheets to complement the oral discussion, and to outline how this managerial model can be practically implemented. I will demonstrate how this model of review and performance development is entirely transferable to any organisational setting to achieve innovation in workplace thinking and, accordingly, facilitate small group discussions on possible applications and strategies of adoption and modification.

I would be delighted to share this model with other curious minds at the 13th International Conference on Thinking and believe my presentation would enhance your program.

I look forward to receiving your feedback,

Warmest regards,

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