

Restructuring Education for the 21st Century

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When one gives serious consideration to the process for restructuring education on the basis of the new paradigm of inclusiveness, the question that arises is, how? It is important in answering this question that the process used be consistent with the ends of inclusion and compassion one is seeking to achieve. We are all acquainted by experience with processes that are dehumanizing in an endeavor to accomplish goals of humanization.

In order to effect change, the focus must not be just on individual change, but also on institutional change. Change will never come about if the unit of change on which one focuses is the individual rather than on the institution as an organization. What is being sought is not a mere cosmetic change but a change of basic orientation. Stephen Covey brings this out in a clear manner in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, when he states:

If we want to make relatively minor changes in our lives [and institutions], we can focus on our attitudes and behaviors [our prejudices and discriminations]. But if we want to make significant, quantum change, we need to work on our basic paradigms.

To try to change our attitudes and behaviors does very little good in the long run if we fail to examine the basic paradigms from which these attitudes and behaviors flow (p. 31).

This is not possible without a complete change of orientation. Human service organizations like churches and schools often tend to have an orientation toward the past, toward a "we-have-always-done-it-this-way" type of approach. This is a past-orientation. To confront the future with a past-orientation is much like driving using only the rearview mirror—the focus is on where one has been and not on where one is going. An occasional rearview focus is essential so that one may know what is coming up from behind. But for the most part the focus must be on what lies ahead. Is the educational system headed into the 21st century with a rearview focus, oriented toward the past? Or is its focus oriented toward the future, toward change?

The Need for Vision:

This calls for a need of vision, because as a wise man reminded us long ago, "without vision a people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). But what is vision? Vision is the bifocal ability to see what lies ahead (farsightedness), as well as the various impediments in the present (nearsightedness), and how to avoid them in order to arrive at the future. Seldom are both types of vision found in the same individual. Yet that is precisely what organizations need, a leadership and a staff that are bifocal. More often than not, much of the conflict that arises within systems comes when the farsighted and the nearsighted are not able to see the other's perspective. Yet both are needed for the one helps to put the other into perspective. But most people err on the side of nearsightedness because of their concentration on their daily, individual tasks. Therefore the need for a futures-orientation entails a new paradigm, a new way of seeing.

The first action in the direction of effecting change is a need for perspective-grasping a vision, a sense of direction, a new paradigm of where education is headed. This entails having an understanding of where society is

headed, how the world of work is changing, and the demographic shifts in the neighborhoods. Here is where the school needs vision, values and mission statements.

In order for a school to operate effectively in a rapidly changing society, it needs to process Vision, Values and Mission Statements. What is the difference? A Vision Statement answers the "Where?" question. It addresses where an organization is headed-its direction, perspective and paradigms in view of the changes taking place in our nation and in the world today. A Values Statement addresses the "What?" question. It is concerned with what the school is becoming-the effective end/goal behaviors it needs to model in the present. A Mission Statement, on the other hand, answers the "Why?" question. It addresses the reason(s) why an organization exists in view of the direction taken and the needs of its target population. At every step of the process certain key questions have to be answered:

THE FOUR CRUCIAL QUESTIONS

- The Where Question: addresses Vision: "Where are we headed?"
- The What Question: addresses Values: "What are we becoming?"
- The Why Question: addresses Mission: "Why do we exist?"
- The How Question: addresses Goals: "How do we get there?"

The key dynamic here is vision, for "without vision a people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Vision is the most essential dynamic an organization needs to have, for from it proceed its values, mission and goals. These three elements without vision will find themselves being formulated in a social vacuum, divorced from social reality. An organization, such as a school, can have a good internal climate: clear goals, well shaped programs, and skilled teachers and staff who relate and communicate well, and still cease to function properly if it has not taken into account its external climate, the ways in which it is being influenced by the larger society of which it is a part, and the other environmentally impacting systems within it.

This is the role of vision. If a school is not aware nor has an understanding of the social forces impacting change, such as the political climate, economic conditions, demographic changes, and the social environment, it can quickly become a historical and social anachronism. The following graphic lays out the process for effecting change.

Once these four questions are answered than appropriate training, giving people the right knowledge and skills to implement programs can be undertaken.

The process for developing a Vision Statement and Values Statement differs from the one used for a Mission Statement. Developing the Vision Statement is the responsibility of the Administrator/Principal, with the assistance of the School Board. On the other hand, the Values Statement and Mission Statement are developed by the entire school staff with a number of representative students working together in small groups. The importance of the three is that the first is where the principal gives the school a sense of the direction the school needs to go in view of changes in the society. With this vision in mind, the school faculty, staff and students, under the leadership of the principal, go on to develop a Statement of Values that helps all-faculty, administrative staff, and students-model behaviors reflective of inclusiveness and a Statement of Mission that depicts the school's purpose for existence, both of which they can take ownership.

Why does a school need all three statements, addressing vision, values and mission? Lewis Coser gives the rationale for this. Coser declares: "The greater the structural or cultural diversity of those who unite in a coalition, the more their interests other than in the immediate purpose are likely to be divergent if not antagonistic." The value of this statement will be seen immediately by anyone who has been involved in a multicultural environment. Groups differ in their interests. When the differences are due cultural/racial diversity, the greater will be the

potential for antagonism within the group. A homogeneous group, in terms of race and class, is a potentially less conflictual group than a heterogeneous one.

Coser tells us where the solution is to be found. "Such a coalition, if it is not to fall apart, must attempt to keep close to the purposes for which it was formed." The only way to keep a culturally diverse group from focusing exclusively on its differences, is by enabling it "to keep close to the purposes for which it was formed." If there is any group that must know up front why it exists, it is a racially/ethnically diverse group. Without this purpose for existence clear in everyone's mind, differences will creep in which will divide and deviate the group. Thus, the need for a clear Mission Statement, based on a singular Vision and inclusive Values.

It is virtually impossible to maintain, over an extended period of time a multicultural institution, without a precise Statement of Mission based on a clear vision and a set of operational inclusive Values. A school without Vision, Values and Mission Statements is like a ship without a rudder, with no destination port in mind, tossed here and there by the social forces in our changing society. A multicultural school will find itself in potentially more turbulent waters due to its ethnic makeup, and the influence which a socially divided society will have on the members within. This is the reason for a different set of operational values, which continually place before the school the question: "What are we becoming?" Without a Vision Statement, a Values Statement and a Mission Statement-the first gives the school direction, the second gives it character, the third keeps it on course-the possibility of shipwreck and self-destruction is an ever-present reality. Thus, the Vision, Values and Mission Statements need to be regarded as dynamic working documents and not museum pieces merely to be displayed. This has much to do with paradigms.

Paradigms:

The word paradigm comes from the Greek *paradeigma*, *para* = "to place along side"; *deigma* = "to show." It means to show by placing along side, as in an Example, Pattern or Model. Thus a paradigm is a mental construct, or conceptual model, influenced by our socialization, which defines and delimits the way we perceive reality and is the basis of our worldview. It is a particular way of seeing. For education this particular way of seeing has been one oriented toward the past. To change toward a futures-orientation requires a paradigm shift.

A paradigm shift is a movement away from old explanations and structures that no longer explain reality, resulting in a redefinition of taken for granted boundaries due to the emergence of a new model or paradigm, which returns everyone back to zero. The concept of paradigms and paradigm shifts is nothing new. It is the old problem of new wine and old wineskins that Jesus spoke about in Luke 5:37,38 when He said. "No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins." As long as one is dealing with the old wine, then the old wineskins will do. But the moment one shifts to new wine, the fermenting creative process will create an expansionism that will burst the old wineskins already stretched to their limit. For this reason, "new wine must be put into fresh wineskins." Mikhail Gorbachev learned he could not place the new wine of democracy into the old wineskins structures of communism. The result was spillage, as in the failed coup and August Revolution of 1991 which brought about the demise of the Soviet Union. South Africa is also drinking the new wine of multiculturalism and diversity, thus the need for new wineskins to accommodate change.

Where does change come from? Change comes from the outsiders, the young, those new to a reality (age is not a factor), as well as from those who are at the periphery, the marginal; all of whom have little investment in the prevailing paradigm, and thus have nothing to lose. Those most open to change are those who are not benefiting from the way things are presently structured. Those most resistant to change are those who are benefiting from the present system, and who therefore stand to lose if things were to change.

Crisis or Foresight Management?

The choice before us is either to be proactive or reactive. A reactive person is one who is overwhelmed and threatened by the challenge of diversity and change, and reacts with a defensive posture. The proactive person, on the other hand, anticipates change by putting into play behaviors which turn problems into challenges. Let me propose a new model of management, "Foresight Management," for bringing about change (see graphic).

We all go through experiences in life. The word "experience" is a good term since it is value neutral, as opposed to the word "problem" that is negative, or "challenge" that is positive. As Aldous Huxley once declared, "Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him." In Chinese, for example, the word for "crisis" Wei-Ji is composed of two picture-characters, the one meaning "danger" and the other meaning "opportunity." How one responds to life's experiences or crises makes a big difference in the final outcome, for the same experience can be seen either as a problem or as a challenge (see graphic). Whether one views the experience as a problem or a challenge, is to a large extent determined by the action one takes towards the experience, whether a reactive (negative) posture based on Crisis Management or a proactive (positive) process, based Foresight Management.

Crisis Management in this context is a style of management that takes a reactive posture towards unexpected change, by using short term interventions in order to return operations to normal-the way they were before the crisis. Thus if the experience is perceived to be a problem, then the approach that is automatically taken is that of Problem Solving, in which the principal question is: "Who owns the problem?" Such an approach leads to the process of finding whom to blame. Why? Because the goal in this approach is to solve the problem as quickly as possible in order to get back to normal operation. This is because the orientation is to the past, to a "we-have-always-done-it-this way" mindset. Such an approach is not open to that which is new, but is steeped in tradition and its preservation, whether corporate or domestic. But the result of such a past-oriented, blaming process is that it creates division, for people often want to distance themselves from the one who has been identified as the problem. It also creates division in spirit and a climate of distrust. Am I next? Who's watching? Who can I trust? Will I be found out? By immediately looking for blame because of the desire to quickly get back to business as usual, the result may be an overlooking of the possibility that the problem may reside elsewhere, such as in the system, the structure or corporate culture. In which case, nothing is resolved, except cosmetic changes. In time the same problem or a similar one will reemerge, only to be temporarily suppressed. In the end, one is left with a lose-lose situation. The result of such reactive posture is institutional crisis and systemic bog-down, because the focus is on immediacy instead of long-term change.

The opposite methodology is to view our experiences as challenges, based on Foresight Management as the style of leadership. Foresight Management is a proactive style of management that anticipates change by critically analyzing trends, on the assumption that nothing is constant, by putting into operation processes that turn potential problems into challenging opportunities. The focus is thus on a Change-Anticipating approach. There are reasons why things don't always work out the way we desire. Some are easily grasped, others may elude us. Nevertheless, the concern of the proactive process is not, "Who is to blame?", but, "What can we learn?" With learning comes change, whether minor or major. One of the learnings is that things cannot continue as they are. This approach builds on the maxim of Max DePree, "We cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are." Thus the approach is a change-anticipating one; what needs to be different? Such an approach immediately forces one to realize that this is not the concern of anyone person exclusively. Therefore, the process that emerges is one of ownership by everyone who is affected by this experience or situation.

Focusing on ownership instead of blame, enables people to bring to the process several qualities:

1. Commitment-this is my concern also;
2. Community-since it is everyone's concern, we are all in this together;
3. Creativity-because it affects me, let me give it my best effort;
4. Cooperation-since we are all involved it can only be resolved through group effort;
5. Compassion-in taking the role of the other, I act in order to bring change that may relieve pain.

What is the difference between sympathy, empathy and compassion? These three concepts tend to be confused in the minds of many as similar or even the same, but they are not. They are vastly different and elicit from the respondent three different types of behavior. These three behaviors can best be illustrated with the following graphics.

1. In Sympathy there is sorrow for the other in need. But with sorrow there is also a sense of distance, separation from the other, an "I'm not like you" type of response. Even though there is an emotional response, the "bridge of identification" with the other has not been crossed.

2. In Empathy there is not only sorrow, but also an identification with the other in need. Here the person crosses the "bridge of identification" and enters into the emotional sphere of the other and identifies with the pain. The other senses and knows that identification has taken place.

3. In Compassion there is not only sorrow and identification with the other in need, but also an involvement in action to meet the need.

Here the response does not stop at identification, but goes one step further to take the necessary steps of action to alleviate suffering. The two-way arrow symbolizes that the action takes into consideration the wishes and, if possible, the involvement of the other in a reciprocal process to bring about change. Much of what passes for compassion is often an imposition from the outside, without regard for what might be best for the other nor for their input.

There is nothing wrong with sympathy, per se, however. There are many times when the only action a person can take is limited at a sympathetic response. There are other times when one can go further and express empathy. And there will be times when the opportunity will be there to express compassion. The problem comes when one has the ability to demonstrate compassion, but for reasons of one's own choosing, decides to limit the action only to sympathy or at best empathy.

The Goal of this process is Change!-things cannot continue as they presently are. This is because the orientation of the process is toward the future, toward a concern with how improvement can be made. The end result of this proactive process is unity-everyone working together for the common good in a win-win manner where everyone benefits.

This model not only provides a method for conflict resolution, but also reflects different philosophical approaches towards leadership, as well as a new style of management. The first is patriarchal, focused on the individual, independence and power; the other tends to be egalitarian, concerned with the group, interconnectedness and team-building. In essence both represent two methods for dealing with change, one static, the other dynamic. This model also exposes two different styles of leadership: the old style of Problem Solver-Crisis Management-a reactive posture which dominated management in the 1960's, 70s and 80s, versus the new style of leadership for the 21st century, that of Change Anticipator-Foresight Management-a proactive process. The model is simple, yet useful, whether one is dealing with domestic/family difficulties or corporate/institutional concerns.

The choice between reactive and proactive responses can best be illustrated by hurricane Andrew. On August 24 and 25, 1992, hurricane Andrew struck a most devastating blow to the southern portions of the states of Florida and Louisiana. Two important lessons on how to deal with change can be learned from hurricane Andrew. The first is: Failure to anticipate impending change with a proactive process, will result in great loss, due to a come-from-behind reactive response. All the meteorological reports from the National Hurricane Center in Dade County, Florida said the same thing-Andrew is rushing towards land at a speed of 180 mph. But none of the appropriate persons and agencies quickly mobilized into action. President Bush continued campaigning and at first did little. Four days later FEMA was still trying to get organized, the National Guard had not moved into action, and the American Red Cross was struggling with the immensity of the damage. All were paralyzed by the failure to act proactively, resulting in a lot of finger pointing. But there is a second lesson from Andrew: Be careful how you build, for the storm will show what sort of work has been done. The vast devastation was in large measure due to the faulty housing construction of the building boom during the 1980s. Yet some houses experienced minimal damage, primarily those built by Habitat for Humanity, the agency with whom former president Jimmy Carter is affiliated. How we build during periods of great change, determines what lasts and what doesn't. Interestingly, the Great Mississippi Flood of 1993 found FEMA prepared.

The point of this illustration is that in the years ahead we are going to be experiencing a whirlwind of changes. From a distance they will all look like problems, and the temptation will be to unfurl the "danger" flag and take a reactive, defensive posture. However, such an approach will leave one hurried, hassled and harassed because the changes are happening so quick one will not have the time nor the energy to solve all the problems, many of which are self-perpetuating. The better approach is a proactive process which views the changes as challenges, thereby turning potential problems into "opportunities" for growth and change. Thus, a negative is turned into a positive, where everyone wins.

This is Foresight Management, and what managing diversity is all about. It addresses the question of how do people respond to the need for change? This is a question raised by Thomas S. Kuhn in his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Writing primarily to the scientific community, Kuhn asks: "How do scientists [and I would add preachers, professors, politicians or people in general] proceed when aware only that something has gone fundamentally wrong at a level with which their training has not equipped them to deal?" Kuhn suggests there are four responses to the stage of crisis:

1. An immediate change to the new paradigm.
2. A "wait-and-see" attitude.
3. A seeing of "new discoveries" upon examining anomalies.
4. A refusal to accept change-the new.

Thus the type of response one takes depends on how much one has invested in the old paradigm (Kuhn, p. 86ff).

The Structure Must Change:

If schools are to undergo a paradigm shift toward equity, then the prevailing structures must be broken up, to be replaced by more egalitarian, inclusive ones. Our present exclusive structures, with a majority of ethnically diverse student body, but a homogeneous administration, faculty, and staff do not reflect the needs of a changing society nor the multicultural world economic market for which school are seeking to prepare students. Let me make it very clear: As long as our present semi-exclusive academic structures continue to persist, there will always be racial/ethnic conflict in our schools at all levels from K-to graduate. But, is this the way for education to go into the 21st century? Absolutely not! A new age demands new methods-a new paradigm. Thus the need for structural change.

There are three methods of implementing change that schools can take, each one more inclusive than the next.

1. The introduction of diversity modules into an existing structure. [Normative-old paradigm left intact]
2. The addition of diversity as a total dimension of existing structures and processes. [Reformative-the old paradigm with new attitudes]
3. The reconceptualisation of the total culture/structure of an organization according to the modus operandi of diversity. [Transformative-the new paradigm of inclusion]

THREE METHODS OF IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

These three methods are not procedural, meaning that you do the first, then the second and finally the third. They are either or methods. One simply decides which one to implement, and goes with it. The first method is one where diversity is accommodated within the present structure. No effort is made to change the structure since it is regarded as "normative," the "traditional" way things have always been done. The only difference now is that one makes concessions to "accommodate" dissenting and disgruntled groups, by introducing diversity modules. It tends to be paternalistic, and gives people a sense of, "Hey, be happy with what you got." The inclusion of students of color in schools and courses that are inclusive is an example of the first method. The approach here is to put new wrapping paper on the box. But its the same old box with a new covering. The old paradigm of exclusion is left in tact, since the concern is with maintaining as normative the traditional way of doing things, though the door of opportunity has been made available.

The second method is slightly better but not by much. It looks at the overall structure and recommends making diversity an integral part of the total dimension of what presently exists. In this sense it is reformative, in that it is an improvement that on the surface looks good, since it appears that diversity is now part and parcel of the whole structure. The current concern with diversity and with women issues is an example of the second method. Here, the approach to remove the lid of the box and change the contents within the box, along with a new wrapping, but to leave the box itself unchanged. Thus the basic structure of the organization has not essentially changed, it is still the same old paradigm-the same old box with new wrappings and new contents. It has merely been added to, it has been reformed, with a new attitude about diversity and inclusiveness. The vast majority of the efforts of organizations to work with diversity today fit here. Both of these methods merely place new wine in old wineskins. The fact that spillage results should not surprise anyone, but because of a short-sighted vision and a wrong set of values it usually does.

The third method is an effort to step back take a good look at where society is headed (vision statement) and then look at the organization and ask, "What values does our behavior reflect?" (values statement), "Where do we fit in all of this?" (mission statement). For schools it means looking at change seriously in terms of its demands. It means looking at the box, cracked and warped because of the contents, and asking oneself: "How can we completely redesign this thing to be consistent with the challenges faced?" "If we were to start fresh from the ground up to reconstruct schools today for the 21st century, in what way would our they be different from what they presently are, in order to meet the new demands of change?" With this information in hand, the third method necessitates examining the total structure, curriculum and culture of education, and then transform them in harmony with the new paradigm of inclusion. It means creating a structural and cultural paradigm shift, which will give rise to a new way of doing administration and instruction consistent with the times and needs of a changing society. Yet as Paulo Freire so forcefully reminds us in all his writings, "the transformation of education cannot take place before the transformation of society."

What the times demand is thus the third approach. Anything short of this is merely a reworking of the old paradigm of exclusion. What education needs is a restructuring according to the Principle of Inclusiveness-new wineskins to handle the new wine of diversity. In the end this may only be possible through technology. Michael

Crichton, in Disclosure, brings out this possibility, when he suggests that, technological firms today are "selling" what both religion and revolution have promised but have not been able to deliver-freedom!-freedom from the body, freedom from race, gender, country and nationality. Religion has been a force that, while proclaiming the oneness of the human creation, has been the most pervasive factor in society in creating and maintaining exclusion. Revolutions have been no better, proclaiming the need for change, but often ending up as the biggest opponents of change. Technology will move education "from print to digital displays to virtual environments." Thus, computer technology may very well be the means by which to bring about a restructuring of society, with a level playing field for all.

Conclusion:

Change is upon us; this is a given. Our present academic structures, from K-graduate, modeled on the basis of the needs of an industrial society, are not longer functional nor adaptable to the needs of the 21st century. Merely seeking to reform them will not do. Radical surgery is needed, not just band-aid efforts. Corporations are already making it clear that school simply have to change. This is why so many of them are investing in schools to help with the process.

What is needed is an academic leadership that is proactive, that operates on the basis of Foresight Management, anticipating rather merely responding. Such a focus will turn what may appear to many to be a potentially dangerous situation, and turn it into a challenging opportunity. What is at issue here is not just sensitivity to other cultures and racial/ethnic groups that are marginal to the dominant culture, but an entire paradigm shift -a different mindset-which gives rise to a whole new way of seeing the world, as inclusive; and brings a change in institutional and societal structures, so as to create an environment (local, national and global) which is inclusive of all groups, is safe for differences and where everyone benefits. May we have the courage to proceed . . . with caution.