

**MANAGING EDUCATION
FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLING:**

**THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM
IS TO COME TO TERMS WITH VALUES**

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This book might be said to be about the *wider* goals of education - but that would be misleading: It is about *the* goals of education - about the qualities that are to be fostered, the way in which they are to be fostered, the way in which progress toward them is to be assessed, the barriers to their achievement, and the developments that are needed if we are to have an effective educational system.

The research summarized amply confirms the accuracy of two widely shared sets of beliefs. First: the most important objectives of education include nurturing qualities like initiative, the ability to work with others, and the ability to understand and influence social processes. Second: the educational system generally fails to nurture such qualities - that is, it fails to achieve its main goals.

One of the problems is that to nurture high-level competencies, it is necessary to create, for each pupil, an individualized educational program which first taps the pupil's motives or values and then leads him or her to practise - and thereby develop - important components of competence.

This need to nurture different qualities in different pupils conflicts both with the notion that public provision should be uniform and with idea that it should be possible to specify in advance what pupils will learn.

To create the necessary developmental environments, teachers need to pay attention to each pupil's needs and then *invent* appropriate individualized developmental programs. This is a difficult and demanding process which is not encouraged by current educational evaluation and staff-appraisal procedures or beliefs about the management of public provision.

However, the chief causes of the educational system's failure to achieve its main goals stem from the value-laden nature of competence. To resolve these, it will be necessary for the public service to create in each community a variety of distinctive educational programs, to document the consequences of each, and to feed that information outward to the public instead of upward in a bureaucratic hierarchy to elected representatives.

Thus the effective management of the educational system requires new understandings of the role and functioning of the public service and new means of influencing what happens and holding the public service accountable to the public. That is, it necessitates nothing less than new understandings of bureaucracy and democracy.

This book is a must for anyone interested in understanding how to improve the quality of life: how to translate shared values into effect. It is crucial to understanding how to overcome the widespread malaise in the educational system.

From reviews

...a provocative challenge to anyone interested in education and the relationship between schools and society ... deserves to be widely read. *Gareth Morgan, York University, Toronto.*

A refreshing book on competence which gives due importance to values and self-esteem ... the highest level of capability involves judgement about the use of skills and confidence in one's ability to apply them. *John Stephenson, Director, Education for Capability.*

For those who want to understand the deep reasons for the practical failure of educational reform and who are ready to fight for the kind of education that could make the XXIst century culture the brightest in the history of mankind, this small book is a must. *Gilbert de Landsheere, University of Liege.*

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