

Title: Empowerment

Domain: Teacher engagement/professionalism

What Happened?

I have always known, in an abstract way, that teachers respond well to empowerment and trust. However, I really learned this when I took a bit of gamble in changing our budgeting process. We went from asking for detailed submissions, to providing our various faculties and Learning Areas with a fixed, two-tier level of funding – with no restrictions/direction as to how money would be spent, other than to improve student learning outcomes and follow school priorities. In 2004 the Senior Campus Learning Areas combined funds, contributed to multi media centre in a joint library. As a result the local Council matched the amount and TAFE matched with equipment – the traditional method of budgeting would not have allowed us to get this facility.

Why do you think this is a significant change?

My thinking – the theory is right. I have learned how to apply the theory. Senior Campus staff has learned how to collaborate, be adventurous and get real pleasure from significant achievement – Synergy is more than a word. Congruence between theory and practice.

What evidence do you have?

- Teacher morale did improve – senior campus staff has certainly walked taller as a result of this achievement.
- We have a facility that we would never have had under the old methodology.
- Teachers (Tech, ICT, Arts etc) volunteered time in the actual construction of the room (with students). It's started a sense of ownership and pride.