

Quality Education News

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Reputation and Quality go together



It's unbelievable but it's true ... especially in a province such as Gauteng. Annually the provincial education department announces the opening date on which a school may start to accept admission enrolment forms for the next year. Some schools have such an overwhelming demand for places that families camp outside the school gates the day before. Desperate parents spend the night in a long queue waiting for the school gates to open at midnight or at the start of the new school day. Within hours of the first admission forms being accepted, the school finds that it has hundreds more applications than places.

Compare the above scene with certain schools in the very same town or city. There's no rush for enrolment. In fact, a parent could stroll into such a school at the end of the year and easily find a place for their child. There are plenty empty desks. Why the difference?

The explanation often comes down to a single word: Reputation. The one school is regarded as excellent; the other as execrable.

Whether it's a quality business, company, factory or school, those who work in it are vigilant about keeping up its' good reputation. They want to nurture and further grow their good name.

A school striving to have a good reputation manages these three categories:

- **Building:** A school doesn't simply have a good reputation from the outset. It builds it through criteria such as the behaviour of the learners, dedication of the staff and achievements both in and outside the classroom.
- **Maintaining:** Once the school has a good reputation, it works hard at

maintaining it. There's no let-up in what's expected of everyone in the school.

- **Controlling damage:** Even the very best schools will have incidents which can damage their reputations. Newspapers, radio stations and TV channels seem to sensationalise school scandals. There might be a shooting or stabbing incident amongst learners; a teacher attacked with a broom by a learner or a punch-up after an inter-school rugby match. When such incidents occur, the quality school acts decisively and promptly to control the reputation damage.

Across the world, top companies submit themselves to reputation index assessments. The top ten reputable South African company rankings are (*Mail & Guardian 2013*):

1. Coca-Cola South Africa
2. Standard Bank
3. Vodacom
4. MTN
5. Pick n Pay
6. FNB
7. KFC South Africa
8. Absa
9. SAB
10. Unilever SA

To determine the ranking position, ratings are given for each of nine qualities. A school and a business company obviously have different priorities to get an excellent reputation. Yet there are similarities between both. The nine Reputation Index qualities and their applicability to a school are:

- **Products and services:** At the end of a school year, learners are not perfect end products such as a bottle of Coca-Cola or a piece of perfectly fried KFC chicken!



This newsletter is edited by SAQI and distributed to those schools benefiting from their participation in the MySchool programme. MySchool acts as a conduit which raises and delivers essential funding for education and social development on a sustainable basis. This enables members of the community to participate in the future development of our nation.



MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet
EVERY SWIPE COUNTS

Yet a quality school will give learners a sound education both inside and outside the classroom. The whole staff will be competent, dedicated, hard-working and focussed.

- **Financial performance:** In the business sector, the bottom line is the profit margin. Shareholders want good returns on their investments. All public and most private schools are non-profit making institutions. Any surplus funds are kept for future use by the school. Yet every reputable school and organisation has sound financial management. Money is used ethically, sensibly and in full compliance of the law.
- **Governance:** Sound governance in the forms of a board of directors or governors and senior management teams, ensure that a good reputation is maintained. Decisions taken are democratically agreed on but assertively implemented. The principle of never-ending continuous improvement underpins the organisation.
- **Communication:** The organisation works hard at keeping everyone 'in the picture' and fully informed as to what's going on. The bigger the organisation, the bigger is the communication challenge. There's frequent communication to all the stakeholders - the learners, parents and staff. Where a school has enough money and expertise, it has a website and uses SMS-messaging. A quality organisation is a listening organisation. It listens to the voices of all their stakeholders, no matter whether it's a six-year old in Grade One or a teacher two terms away from retirement!
- **Recognition:** Dedication and hard work are recognised. Learners and staff members are praised publicly or – if certain individuals so prefer – privately. Promotions and salary top-ups (when legislation permits it), are given on the basis of merit. Promotions don't rely on factors such as the applicant's cultural, political party, teacher union or tribal affiliation.
- **Workplace environment:** If you were to Google the Google headquarters at Mountain View, California, you would see a workplace paradise. Employees have a range of shops including a laundromat on site; there are gardens and sports fields. There's even a staff swimming pool. Should you have a dog, you are welcome to bring Bella or Bruno to join you at your work station. Such a pleasant environment will likely get a better work performance and even longer working hours from staff.

In a school, every classroom should be in a state of good repair and with enough proper furniture. Classes shouldn't be overcrowded. When the staffroom is comfortable, it's a statement from the senior management team and governing body of the respect shown towards staff. Neat gardens, grounds and sports fields add further quality to the workplace environment

- **Corporate social responsibility:** Major corporations put a percentage of their profits back into the society. A school might see this criterion as irrelevant because it's a non-profit organisation. Yet a school is still able to do much for the community. The learners, for example, can do outreach programmes such as visiting old-age homes and collecting clothes for a charity.
- **Vision and leadership:** Every top ten company in the 2013 Reputation Index has a vision statement. It's achieved through excellent leadership. Every school with a good reputation has the vision and the leadership to achieve it. Leadership is emotionally intelligent, driven yet compassionate, focussed yet willing to think 'out of the box'.
- **Broad-based black economic empowerment:** This criterion doesn't apply to most schools because they're not for-profit businesses. Yet one aspect where it tangentially does apply is around the issue of employment equity. A staffroom should broadly reflect the playground demographics. That reflection should also be seen in the racial profile of the senior management team. However, staff selection criteria reject appointments based on unethical factors such as tribalism as well as the candidates having the 'right' political and teacher union connections.

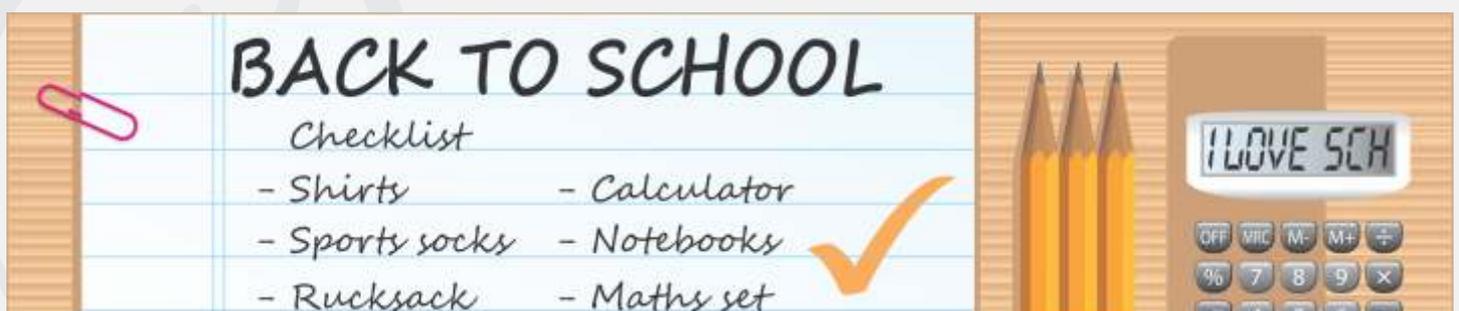
What's the reputation of your school, circuit, district or provincial education department office? Many families with school-age children undoubtedly discuss the quality of education that awaits them in 2014. Will their attitude about your institution be mainly one of complaints or of compliments? The Reputation Index qualities check-list is a good guide for self-assessment. We all have a part to play in protecting our organisation's good reputation. We know that a good reputation and good quality go together.

References

Hosea, M 2013. Six reputation management tips from Barclays brand chief. <http://www.marketingweek.co.uk> 6 June 2013.

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ANA walks the Quality road

Teachers growled when the ANA (Annual National Assessment) tests were started in 2011. They growled that they were an extra burden on a very heavy teaching workload. When the actual tests were written, the growls turned into roars of disapproval. Yes, there were mistakes in those early ANA tests. The tests were set on work meant to have been covered by the end of the year although the tests were written months beforehand. Certain questions were poorly framed. These and other hiccups were acknowledged by the test compilers.

Three years down the line, teachers are gradually accepting the value of the ANA tests. The tests are a challenge to improve both the teaching and the learning. Montle

Makgatho, principal of Ipontshe Primary School in Tembisa, is one such convert to the ANAs. She told *City Press* (15 September 2013, page 5) that the 2011 ANA results were a huge 'wake-up' call at her school. By this year, their ANA results had improved by about 50%.

A crucial aspect for every Quality school is to continually assess its standards in every aspect of the school. The ANA tests do that in one area. ANAs give benchmarks and guidelines on how the school is performing in certain subjects and grades. It would be an education tragedy, however, if any school were to become totally focussed on ANAs. Nor should teachers 'teach to the tests'. Quality education includes but involves very much more than good ANA test results.

What's on your school CPTD programme?

Amongst the many items on the 'to do' list for school management teams, is the 2014 staff development programme. To help in this process, SACE intends issuing a catalogue of endorsed CPTD (Continuous Professional Teacher Development) programmes. Starting next year, principals and deputies need to collect 150 Professional Development (PD) points in a three-year cycle. Heads of Department and Post Level 1 teachers will join the CPTD management system in succeeding years.

SACE has endorsed the **Introduction to Total Quality Education** programme done by the South African Quality Institute (SAQI). The programme has been allocated ten PD points. The interactive workshop is done across the country. Poor schools are sponsored. For more details of this and other SAQI programmes, please contact Richard Hayward. The contact details are on page four.



Thank You!

Thank you for your ongoing support of *Quality Education News (QEN)*. Many readers thoughtfully forward or print this newsletter for others. Please carry on with this kind deed! Your kindness allows this Quality message to reach thousands. Due to limited funding, *QEN* can only be published in email format.

Very special thanks go to three folk. Paul Harding, Managing Director of SAQI, continues to give ongoing enthusiastic support to this corporate social responsibility project. Vanessa du Toit does countless behind-the-scenes secretarial tasks in an efficient and ever-cheerful manner. Our newsletter graphic designer is Aubrey Jansen. We get phone calls from readers asking for his contact details. What an acknowledgement and compliment to your brilliant graphic design skills, Aubrey!

May we wish you an enjoyable, happy and safe Festive Season. Should you be celebrating religious festivals, may the days be filled with Blessings, Goodwill and Peace.

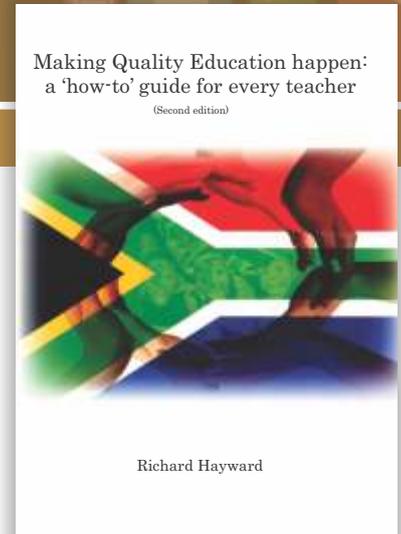


Book Review By Paul Harding

Making Quality Education happen: a “how – to” guide for every teacher (Second edition)

Published by CAXTON & CTP publishers and printers Limited

Author Richard Hayward



“Total Quality Education (TQE) is an adaption of the best quality practices and principles found in the business and professional world. This book proves that you don’t need money (although every bit helps!) to create an outstanding classroom and school. Many of the quality practices described in the book don’t cost a single cent to implement in a school”.

People often only associate quality principles and particularly quality management with manufacturing organizations. My training delegates often say to me when we are talking quality; “It’s OK if you are building cars but our situation is different.” Richard Hayward has managed to dispel that myth and through his insight into quality matters and his vast experience as an educator has put together a “must read” book for every teacher in South Africa that wants to develop a Quality School.

The author has managed to weave into the book lots of anecdotes, quotations and stories that cover education in our rainbow nation. He is able to compare the performance of schools that geographically are very close to each other but in terms of access to finances and facilities are miles apart. However, does this prevent the less privileged teachers and learners from achieving quality performance? According to Dr. Richard Hayward, not at all.

The book is published under the aegis of the South African Quality Institute (SAQI) and the author has based his book on the “SAQI Quality in Education Model for South Africa”.

The first chapter is dedicated to the question “What is Total Quality

Education (TQE). In this chapter he discusses two totally different Johannesburg schools. In one area called Dainfern most of the children attend private well resourced schools. Yet in the neighbouring informal settlement of Diepsloot a school provides some lessons in metal containers yet the dedicated staff provides an outstanding quality education for the learners.

The book then goes on to describe the SAQI Quality in Education Model and its application.

This model is based on five pillars of a quality school. These pillars are:

1. Values
2. Leadership
3. School Improvement Plans
4. Communication
5. Tools and Techniques

He first of all summarizes each pillar in an easy to understand way giving practical examples of their application in the classroom.

The author then sets the tone for the rest of the book by showing what the characteristics are of a quality school and compares them to those of an ordinary school by means of a simple table. He then expands on each pillar giving many practical examples of how each one of these pillars can be applied to support a quality school through the next five chapters that are focused on each pillar.

I particularly enjoyed the chapter on leadership. In business this is the main differentiator between successful organizations that move to “world class

performance” and those that plod along or fail. During this chapter Richard Hayward not only discusses the difference between managers and leaders but gives many examples of “true leadership”.

Once the five pillars of a good quality school have been digested, the book concludes with a nine step easy to follow approach on how to implement Total Quality Education.

This book is “priceless” in the ideas and quality principles it gives to the reader in the quest to achieve a “Quality School”. The book is also “priceless” in another way. The book is not for sale but can be acquired free of charge for educationalists by contacting Richard Hayward on 011 888 3262 or rpdhayward@yahoo.com

A small cost is required to cover postage and packaging if the book is to be sent out by mail.

SAQI congratulates Dr. Richard Hayward on writing such a wonderful book and would also like to thank CAXTON & CTP publishers & printers Limited for their generous sponsorship in making the publication of this book possible.

SAQI has Continuous Professional Development programmes. Many programmes focus on Total Quality Education (TQE) practices and principles. There are also workshops on topics such as bullying at both learner and adult level, change management, conflict resolution, discipline and emotional intelligence Poor schools are sponsored. If you'd like more details, please contact Richard Hayward (011-888-3262; rpdhayward@yahoo.com)