The professional development of school principals

Isaac Mathibe
ire.mathibe@nwu.ac.za

Many schooling systems do not fulfil their mandates because of poor manage-ment and leadership. Similarly, the rigidity that one finds in schools does not only stunt schools' capacity to develop, but also leads to schools that are dys-functional and unproductive. As a result, in countries where there is universal transformation, efficacious management and leadership are elevated to the highest rostrum. In this paper I aim at investigating the necessity for profes-sional development of school principals.

Keywords: *coaching; leadership; management; mentoring; networking; principalship; professional development; school administration; school effectiveness; training*

Introduction

One reason that has always been advanced for poor results in schools is that principals are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management and leadership, and as a result there are those who call for professional development of school principals. According to Reitzug (2002:3), professional development may take different forms such as training, on-site processes, net-works and professional development schools. As a human resource manager, a principal needs to set up mechanisms for nurturing and unfolding of educa-tors' potential in order to enhance effective teaching and learning. For this reason, development and enhancement of educators' potential should relate to the work they are doing of not only nurturing the intellectual potential of learners, but also of moral formation and appropriate humanisation according to national policies and goals. To this end, Lenyai (2000:3) states appropri-ately:

> … the educator is the keystone in the multiple arch of education … elimi-nate the finest buildings and the most wisely developed curriculum but leave the learner with an intelligent, cultivated and humane educator and the educational process may continue satisfactorily. Provide all the mate-rial necessities without the educator or the wrong kind, and the results would be catastrophic …

Lenyai's assertion encapsulates the value of appropriately skilled and trained educators for the success of the education enterprise. Terry (1999:28) also notes that where the necessary skills and knowledge are lacking among educators, principals need to develop a multiple-strategy approach to enable educators to fulfil their roles effectively. There seems to be sufficient reason, therefore, that principals should be exposed to programmes of professional development in order to ensure that schools are managed and led by appro-priately qualified principals who understand the notion of optimum utilisation

of educators' potential. Similarly, since quality in education retracts from effective school management and leadership, the quest for quality in education necessitates that principals be up-to-date with developments in the education and training fields. In the light of the preceding statement, Jones, Clark, Figg, Howarth and Reid (1989:5) regard programmes for professional development [for principals] as the oxygen that ensures that principals survive as educated and trained professionals. In general, an effective professional development programme for principals should have the following characteristics:

- It should be integrated with educational goals to improve education;
- It should be guided by a coherent long-term plan;
- It should be primarily school-based;
- It should be continuous and ongoing, providing follow-up support for further learning; and
- It should be evaluated on the basis of its impact on school development and effectiveness (Madge, 2003:9; Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, 2004:3).

Forms of professional development

The model for professionalisation of principalship may encompass a variety of programmes such as training and networking. Reitzug (2002:3) contends that training is the traditional and still dominant form of professional development. Training includes direct instruction, skill demonstration and involves workshops and presentations. In addition, training involves instruction by an expert or experienced employee on job processes in an organisation (Grobler *et al.*, 2002:323). On the other hand, Higgs and Higgs (1994:43) capture the essence of training as they state that:

> … education and training are about the use that people make of their knowledge and skills, their value to them personally in their living and thinking and they are what the acquisition of knowledge and skills had done to their minds, their attitudes, values, ideas, motives and intentions.

Training involves providing employees with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to do a particular job effectively and efficiently (Cronje *et al.*, 2004:207). For Hodgkinson (1996:8), other things being equal, schools should appoint the wisest people to their administrative offices. As a result, Greenfield & Ribbins (1993:260) state that:

> … the ultimate training of a leader would be a kind of philosophical withdrawal to look at the larger issues in fresh perspective … a deeply clinical approach to the training of administrators is needed … our training is disjointed, reflection is separated from action, thinking from doing, praxis from the practical.

The foregoing discussion indicates that training should develop sophistication, credibility, know-how, integrity and vision in principals, and Stuart (1988) lists the following points about training aimed at professional development:

- People become ready to learn when they recognise a deficiency in their own performance level;

- People want learning to be problem-based leading to the solution of a particular problem facing them as individuals;
- People want to be involved as equal participants in planning, carrying out and evaluating learning;
- People want to be treated as people, enjoying mutual respect with the trainer; and
- People bring with them to the learning situation their unique:
  - Motives for wanting to learn;
  - Previous learning experiences [good and bad];
  - Learning styles and pace of learning; and
  - Self-confidence and self-image.

Against the background of the preceding discussion it can be deduced that training assists personnel to acquire effective techniques, skills and knowledge to carry out their responsibilities efficaciously. Training involves direct instruction, skill demonstration, and Jones *et al.* (1989:102) lists the following forms of training:

- One-day conferences;
- Single-session activities;
- Short courses over a period of time;
- Formal meetings by subject specialists; and
- Membership of working groups.

Just as it is necessary for principals to have requisite qualifications before they are appointed to headship positions, there is a great need for systematic professional development programmes for practising principals. According to Smith (2001:3), workplace learning is a major contributor to competitiveness both of the school and the nation. It is noted that on-site learning augments flexible delivery mechanisms since on-site learning processes are characterised by:

- Acquisition of skills and knowledge in the midst of action;
- Collective action; and
- An outstanding experience of the learning process itself (Raelin, 2000:3).

On-site learning is essential not only for continuous transformation in the school, but also for sustained development of principals' competencies and knowledge. According to the Westchester Institute for Human Services Research (2004:3), on-site learning processes include joint work that entail shared responsibility for tasks such as teaching, curriculum writing, assessment development, as well as creating interdependence and co-operation among educators. In addition, through mentoring programmes experienced principals guide activities of other principal [as in the case on Consultant Heads in the United Kingdom]. For example, mentoring and coaching are often used to match novices with veterans, enabling veterans to share their knowledge and expertise with the initiates (Middlewood, 2003:5; Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, 2004:3). Grobler *et al.* (2002:325) are of the opinion that on-site learning processes involve:

- Enlarged and enriched job responsibilities;
- Coaching;
- Mentoring; and
- Committee assignments.

It is also noted that most often principals find themselves isolated and alone in the school situation. This then raises the need for creation of networks and principal councils in order that they — principals — have forums where they can discuss matters of common interest. Reitzug (2002:3) notes that networks are crew of personnel from across different schools who interact regularly to discuss and share practices around a particular focus. For example, Pernell and Firestone (1996:47) found that networks were effective in assisting educators to get learners more actively involved in learning, while Lieberman and Grolnick (1996:8) found networks to have a number of positive effects on educators' professional development. On the other hand, the Westchester Institute for Human Services Research (2004:3) notes that networks are characterised by:

- Supportive professional community beyond the school building;
- Being organised around specific subject matter;
- Deepening principals' understanding of the content and management; and
- Diversity, some are national and others are international — such as Carnegie Corporation and Pew Charitable Trusts.

Networks ensure intersectoral collaboration amongst specialists as in Professional Development Schools. The goals of Professional Development Schools [PDS] are met through the active participation of university faculties, practising principals and prospective principals engaging in study groups, curriculum development, peer observation, and through collaborative school-based research (Lieberman & Miller, 1992). Reitzug (2002:3) notes that PDS enhances teaching experience and improves professional development of personnel in schools.

Professional development of school principals in the United Kingdom
In the United Kingdom the New Vision programme was developed to meet the leadership development needs of principals in the first three years of school principalship (Bush, 2003). To ensure that principals attend the New Vision Programme, funds are made available from Head Teachers Leadership Management Programme [Headlamp]. According to Bush (2003:3), the programme has an unusual mix of content and process with an emphasis on participants' personal and school contexts. NCSL (2002:31-32) summarises the key learning processes and protocols of the programme:

- Coaching and mentoring;
- Diagnostic instruments;
- Leadership learning portfolios;
- Peer coaching; and
- Inter-visitation.

Bush, Briggs & Middlewood (2002) contend that in their first survey of the New Visions Programme they acknowledged that participants may not attain all the protocols. However, participants benefited from think pieces and short summary papers prepared by academics (Bush, 2003:4; Debrou, 2003:7-8). In addition, participants were stimulated to think about key issues in education management and leadership. In the light of the effectiveness of New Visions, Bush (2003:4) notes that formative and summative evaluations were conducted with the following specific objectives:

- To establish the felt needs of participants, consultants and facilitators before, during and after the programme;
- To establish whether, and to what extent, the programme builds on the ten principles set out in the NCSL's Leadership Development Framework;
- To establish the quality of programmes as perceived by participants and other stakeholders;
- To examine the impact of the programme upon participants and their schools; and
- To assess sustainability of this programme of leadership development.

Against the background of the preceding discussion Bush (2003:10) argues that the consultants brought a wealth of knowledge to the New Vision Programme. For example, they contributed to leadership development especially towards attainment of school vision, motivation, performance management, decision-making, negotiation and interpersonal skills. In this respect the work of Consultant Heads was given special examination. To illustrate the significance of consultant heads for the New Vision Programme, Bush (2003:10) provides the data in Table 1 from 18 consultant heads.

Table 1   Potential contribution of consultant heads

Anticipated potential contribution [main areas]	No. of consultant heads identifying this area [whole numbers]
Vision of the school	16
Motivating others	15
Interpersonal relationships	15
Leadership skills	15
Performance management	14
Monitoring and evaluation	14

Looking at the numbers provided in the preceding Table 1 it can be deduced that consultant heads assist in management and leadership development in the British schooling system. In their report, Bush, Briggs, Middlewood, with Blackburn & Stephen (2003) indicated that the New Visions programme provided the participating principals to look at themselves, their behaviour and where they find themselves objectively. There is evidence to conclude that

New Vision Programme enhances management and leadership development. Consequently, Bush (2003:13) notes that participants in the programme indicated that after being in the programme for 18 months they are:
• More reflective
• Reviewing their approach to leadership and management;
• Focusing more on the big picture;
• Improving their people management skills; and
• Improving their leadership qualities and skills.
In addition, Coles (2003:4) observes that professional development of school principals is necessary for growth of leaders in the schooling system.

Professional development of school principals in the United States of America
The US Department of Education (1987) states that effective superiors provide guidance and technical support from experienced peers that should help new managers adjust and succeed. It would appear that while the search for a principal ends when one is appointed to this management post, the process of producing an effective principal should be sustained by continuous learning and skills development. Anderson (1992), as cited by Legotlo (1992), indicates that a school management and leadership development programme should:
• Develop course work and practicums for school budget planning and management;
• Orientate beginning principals to districts;
• Give beginning principals feedback;
• Facilitate peer-group problem solving and idea sharing; and
• Facilitate regional in-service.
Just as Anderson acknowledges the significance of the buddy system, Pharis and Zakariya (1979), as cited by Legotlo (1992), note that each year nearly 11 000 individuals enter a school in the USA as new principals. Nevertheless, these new principals experience two distinct emotions: excitement and anxiety (Daresh, 1986). According to Legotlo (1992), it seems obvious that to cope with their new jobs these new principals need exposure to management and leadership training. In New York a more modest programme of half-day seminars organised by the School Administrator's Association, "Look Before You Leap", is aimed at preparing promising candidates for principal positions (Olson, 1999). However, experienced and prospective principals, as well as assistant principals are eligible to apply for this statewide programme. Daresh and Playko (1989) note that field-based learning is linked to internships, planned field experiences as well as practica, while professional formation is linked to mentoring, reflection, platform development, styles analyses and personal professional development.

Daresh (1986) notes that to counter the growing shortage of quality candidates prepared to move from teaching to principal positions, the city of Philadelphia launched the Leadership in Education Apprentice Design (LEAD) programme. According to Parkay and Currie (1992:80-81), a tripot of support

for principals in the USA consists of the following:
- Training: workshops designed to help principals identify technical expertise within the district in such areas as law, budgeting, scheduling, use of computers and planning. In addition, training includes workshops on effective techniques for working with faculty and staff, including listening skills, providing information, participatory decision making, and school management;
- Networking: creation of and participation in a Principal's Academy, creation of district-wide principals' support groups, and creation of an electronic bulletin board for principals; and
- Coaching: identification of retired principals and other principals who could serve as mentors, training for supervisory personnel in order to provide Encouragement and support to newly appointed principals, and Encouragement for principals to form peer relationships similar to the Peer-Assisted Leadership [PAL].

Professional development of school principals in South Africa

Mathibe (2005) notes that in South Africa, unlike in the UK and USA, any educator can be appointed to the office of principalship irrespective of the fact that he/she had a school management or leadership qualification. Such openness to appointment to the highest office in a school does not only defeat Frederick Taylor's view of "getting the right man" for the job (Van der Westhuizen, 1999), but it also places school administration, management, leadership and governance in the hands of 'technically' unqualified personnel. It is in this way that *ad hoc* attempts have been made to provide skills and professional development programmes for principals in South African schools (ETDP SETA, 2002). For example, an advisory body consisting of former principals, union representatives and members of the education department, was established to give direction to the Delta Foundation's programme for developing capacity in school management and leadership. Key features of the programme were:
- Ensuring that training programmes conform to the ETDP SETA–SAQA standards;
- Ensuring that all training has a long-term strategic objective;
- Ensuring that all principals' training should be a mixture of face-to-face contact and group work;
- Rigorous impact evaluation and cost benefit analysis; and
- The department of education to support the initiative as a full partner by providing financial assistance to the programme (Delta Foundation, 2001).

In addition to efforts by non-governmental organisations to build management and leadership capacity in schools, the ETDP SETA (2002:35) notes that in South Africa some of the management development programmes are provided by universities and technikons [Universities of Technology], as well as workshop based training offered by the Department of Education on education management development [EMD]. Mahanjana (1999:9-10) notes the following

salient points regarding strategic outcomes of EMD:
- Strengthening the capacity of district and regional officials to enable them to provide ongoing on-site professional support to principals;
- Developing principals as leaders and managers of collaborative management teams;
- Supporting the strategic role of principals and school governing bodies in addressing challenges at school level;
- Advocating the EMD visions, principles and practices to education stakeholders; and
- Developing a holistic resource and distribution plan which acknowledges EMD as a function of people and organisational development.

In a study of twelve management development programmes conducted by the Joint Education Trust [JET] on training offered by non-governmental organisations [NGOs] it was found that all 12 programmes offered by NGOs provided some form of training to principals (ETDP SETA, 2002; Heystek, 2003:10). The content of some of the training programmes included:
- Personnel management: developing a personal vision and mission, leadership skills, stress management, change management;
- Organisational development: vision crafting for the school, drawing up a mission and development plan, inspiring and staff motivation, conducting a SWOT analyses and strategic planning;
- Skills development: delegation, problem-solving, conflict management and resolution, aligning constituencies, team building, human resource management, employee appointment and induction, financial management and staff appraisal;
- Administrative management: computer literacy, timetabling, activity planning, improved record keeping, effective resource management and the planning of duty rosters; and
- Management of curriculum delivery: managing the classroom and quality assurance procedures (ETDP SETA, 2002).

From the preceding discussion of professional development programmes it is evident that professional development programmes for principals in South Africa are:
- Fragmented: there are too many agencies [both state and private] engaged in professional development and consequently, the different agencies emphasise different points of interest; and
- Not co-ordinated and sometimes they are irrelevant: University qualifications on school management and leadership differ in depth, quality and emphasis since there is no directive from the National Education Ministry on what service providers [universities] should offer in relation to what schools need. In other words, universities provide qualifications which are not responsive to school needs.

The nature and scope of programmes for professional development of principals suggest that there should be control over programmes that are provided to both practising and prospective principals as detailed in the National Qualifications Framework [NQF]. For example, the programme for

professional development should be relevant and outcomes-based. It is in this context that a study was conducted in Bojanala East and Bojanala West Regions of North West Province to investigate some of the practices in schools that necessitate professional development of school principals.

Method for empirical study

From findings obtained in a previous research project exploring a model for management and leadership development for primary schools in North West Province, South Africa (Mathibe, 2005), it follows that there is a significant relationship between the professional development of principals and school effectiveness in South Africa. Purposeful sampling was used to select 600 respondents (200 principals, 200 Heads of Department, and 200 educators) in Bojanala East and Bojanala West Regions of North West Province to inves-tigate practices that necessitate and precipitate professional development of school principals. A questionnaire with a set of 10 (ten) general questions was provided, and respondents were afforded the opportunity of selecting [accor-ding to instructions] their responses to the given questions.

Results and discussion of the empirical study

The responses were arranged according to mean score ranking as in Table 2.

Table 2 indicates a high mean score for item 1 at 4.51 and standard devi-ation at 0.57. It appears that management takes capacity building seriously, and affords the staff opportunities for professional development. However, the lowest score is on item 3 with its mean at 3.96 and standard deviation of 0.15. From the data analysis and interpretation, it was concluded that man-agement is weak when coming to the issue of change management, and it does not provide intervention strategies to assist educators cope with changes in the school. The following discussion — based on Table 2 — will further elu-cidate elements necessitating professional development of school principals.

Principals should ensure that schools have functioning linkages with their external environments

In spite of the present-day thrust to encourage networks between schools and their external environments, most principals feel comfortable to hide behind the 'I am the accounting officer' cliché. It should also be noted that for many years schools operated in isolation and they were oblivious of their roles in society (Steyn, 2002). However, in the present dispensation principals should be schooled to understand that schools should have functioning linkages with their external environment and they should be in touch with the needs of their clientele. In addition, principals should also be skilled to forge and main-tain linkages with the schools' environments. To this end, Robinson (1992: 260) states that:

> … oddly enough, the best way by far to engage others is by listening — seriously listening to them. If talking and giving orders was the administra-tive approach of the last fifty years, listening [to lots of people near the action] is the approach for the 1990s and beyond …

Table 2 Mean score ranking on elements of professional development

Rank	Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
1	1	Management capacitates educators to adapt to changes in the schools situation	4.51	0.57
9	2	The school has functioning linkages with its external environment	3.96	0.15
10	3	Management understands that change is typified by fear, sense of loss and disruptions in the school	3.91	0.38
3	4	Management organises workshops for stakeholders in order to explain the impact of the envisaged changes on the school and its members	4.20	0.42
4	5	Team work is encouraged in schools and co-operation is enhanced	4.17	0.21
2	6	The principal ensures effective teaching and learning by staff development and empowerment.	4.50	0.48
7	7	Changes in the school are carefully planned and managed and they are introduced gradually in order not to disrupt the school's operational programmes	3.99	0.15
6	8	Changes in the school are negotiated with the affected parties	4.02	0.40
7	9	Schools need functioning structures in order to carry out their duties to society effectively	3.99	0.15
4	10	The principal provides guidance to educators and learners on standards required for attainment of the school's vision and mission statements	4.17	0.21

The pre-eminence of participative leadership and management in organisational development is based on the assumption that empowering people may result in a more responsive, more flexible, and ultimately more effective organisation (Ang, 2002). Participative leadership is more than a willingness to share influence, it entails formal patterns of participation through which stakeholders are not only objects for organisational development, but active partners for the daily operations in a school. The shift to participative leadership in institutions is both inevitable and necessary since issues that are faced in the workplace are too complex to be solved by a few people in authority.

Principals should be skilled in change management
Mabale (2004) notes that change is not an event, but rather it is a process which unfolds as individuals and organisations grow in knowledge and expe-

rience. According to Van der Westhuizen (2002), there is a dualism in the concepts 'learning organisation' and change management: firstly, learning occurs in the organisation, and secondly, the organisation learns from changes that happen in its environment. It is to be borne in mind that a learning organisation is not static, but it is a dynamic entity that always positions itself in terms of its clients' needs. To explain the functioning of a learning organisation, Dawson (1993) provides the following analogy of a frog:

> … If you put a frog in a pot of boiling water it would immediately try to scramble out. However, if you put the frog in a pot of cold water and gradually turn up the heat, the frog would become groggier and groggier, until it is unable to climb out of the pot. The frog would sit there and boil because the frog's internal apparatus for sensing threats to survival is geared to sudden changes in the environment, not slow incremental death. This often happens when modern organisations react only to dramatic changes in the environment, ignoring gradual processes that may be bigger threats …

Change management cannot be done in isolation and experts who understand change processes should be invited to assist the school to deal with change (Mathibe, 2005). Major change is painful and it requires different ways of behaving, thinking and perceiving. It is also significant to note that effective change is line management and leadership driven, and change management and leadership cannot be delegated. The preceding discussion indicates that principals are pivotal in assisting stakeholders to cope with changes in the school situation, and a summary of the elements, feelings and coping mechanisms in effective change management is provided in Table 3.

The principal should create structures for service delivery
Structures are the sum total of the way in which labour is divided in a school (Mintzberg, 1992:24). There is a need for different structures in schools to assist a principal to effectively oversee the school as a whole. Principals need consent of their colleagues if policy initiatives are to be carried through into classroom practice. A principal should encourage co-operation between all structures in the school in order to increase opportunities for co-operation, and collective action. Additionally, there should be a mutual interdependence in structures within a school and it is management role to ensure that these structures do not develop into islands or clubs that compete for power (Mathibe, 2005). Principals should create a climate and culture for success in schools by ensuring that there is room for self-expression, creativity, communication and motivation in all structures. Bush (1995) lists the following points about structures in schools:

- For any organisation there is a structure appropriate to the goals, environment, technology and participants
- Specialisation permits for expertise and performance
- Co-ordination and control are accomplished through authority
- Structures should be systematically designed and implemented
- Organisational problems reflect weaknesses in an appropriate structure

Table 3   Assisting individuals to deal with change (adapted from Van der Westhuizen, 2002)

Stage	Main elements	Typical feelings, thinking and support	Coping mechanisms
1	Loss	Feelings of fear, shock, cautious thought, paralysed behaviour	Counselling
2	Doubt	Feelings of resentment, thoughts are sceptical, behaviour is resistant	Staff development model
3	Discomfort	Feelings of anxiety, confused thoughts, unproductive behaviour	Process transplant, Consultation
		DANGER ZONE	
4	Discovery	Feelings of anticipation, creative thoughts, energised behaviour	Discussion forum, Workshops
5	Understanding	Feelings of confidence, pragmatic thoughts, productive behaviour	New values, New opportunities, New goals
6	Integration	Feelings of satisfaction, focuses thoughts, generous behaviour	Empowerment, Responsibilities

Effective schools are typified by highly organised structures and high productivity (Van der Westhuizen, 1999). Accordingly, Hoy and Miskel (1991: 382) note that effective schools adapt their structural operations and productive capacity to the needs of their environments and constituencies

Ensuring effective teaching and learning
The concept effectiveness relates to the accomplishment of the co-operative purpose by balancing social and non-personal resources (Mwosa, 1987). An appropriate test for effectiveness is through an assessment of instruments for the accomplishment of organisational goals and objectives. According to Hoy & Miskel (1991:216) effectiveness is linked to goal achievement and group maintenance, and the following values are basic for effectiveness:
• Bias for action [planning is not a substitute for action]
• Promotion of shared values
• Client-orientation
• People-orientation [productivity comes through people]
• Achievement-orientation [high quality products are essential for success]
Effective teaching and learning should nurture the extension of the school's culture. Table 4 encapsulates leadership dimensions and descriptions for school effectiveness.

Guidance should be provided for optimum utilisation of potential
The thrust for competitiveness in the global arena, and the quest for quality in education precipitate the need for production of highly skilled workers (Hall, 1999). One of the most important aspects in emerging and budding organisations is of appropriate guidance for optimum utilisation of human po-

Table 4   Leadership dimensions and descriptions for school effectiveness (adapted from Dawson, 1993)

Systems orientated leadership	Person orientated leadership
Production emphasis: applies pressure for productive output	Tolerance of freedom: allows educators scope for initiative
Initiation of structures: defines own role clearly and lets followers know what is expected	Tolerance of uncertainty: is able to tolerate uncertainty and postponement without anxiety or upset
Representation: speaks and acts as representative of a group	Consideration: regards the comfort, well-being, and contributions of subordinates
Role assumption: actively exercises leadership role rather than surrendering leadership to others	Demand reconciliation: reconciles conflicting demands and reduces disorder in the system
Persuasion: uses persuasion and argument effectively, exhibits strong convictions	Predictive accuracy: exhibits foresight and ability to predict outcomes accurately

tential. It appears that various activities should be managed to enhance the effectiveness of school's personnel in job performance (Mabale, 2004). Major activities that may be adopted in guidance include personnel planning, staff development and evaluation, appraisal, and maintenance of effective personnel relationships. Hagel (2003) notes that the challenge facing principals is not only to acknowledge that educators have talents, they should ensure that that those talents and potentials are unfurled and utilised. Table 5 provides essentials for guidance in a school.

Encouraging team-work
Werner (2002:373) is of the opinion that group cohesion and team-work allow greater participation and performance. It is noted that effective principals empower teams working under their leadership by delegating to them as much authority as possible. To this end it may be concluded that a principal bridges the gap between where the school is at present and where it would be in future. Communicating with teams, in this respect, does not only ensure an understanding of the present conditions in a school, it also directs the educators to work towards sustaining the competitiveness of the school. The following characteristics of team-work are noted:
• Inspiring commitment to the school's mission which gives direction and purpose to its work;
• co-ordinating the work of the school by allocating resources, roles and delegating responsibilities within structures that support collaboration between the schools and its partners;
• being actively and visibly involved in the planning and implementation of change;
• emphasising quality and enhancing realistic expectations in the work

roles; and
• being enthusiastic about change and innovation, but judicious in control-
  ling the pace of change (Mathibe, 2005).

Table 5   Essentials for effective guidance in a school (adapted from Mathibe, 2005)

Communicating	The effective principal keeps his or her team members up to date and in the picture on a regular basis
Problem solving	The effective principal makes himself/herself available and is responsive to his/her team members' concerns and problems
Team development	The effective principal develops a balance of advisers, organisers, explorers and controllers in a team
Horses for courses	The effective principal would allocate work in ways that matches staff members' capabilities and preferences
Valuing differences	The effective principal encourages respect, trust and understanding between team members as well as healthy competition
Work standards	The effective principal sets realistic standards, and is clear about the high standards that are expected from teams
Participative decision-making	When it is appropriate the effective principal would make sure that she/he involves team members in those decisions that would affect them and their performance

   In the light of the preceding statement, the school manager's role is to
coach, stimulate, direct and co-ordinate group and individuals to attain desig-
nated tasks and organisational goals (Dawson, 1993:117). It is observed that
team building *per se* may be seen as a necessary step for collective guidance
to educators to achieve a school's goals by means of voluntary collaboration.
Mabale (2004) notes team-building enables educators to be actively involved
in monitoring their production and evaluating the quality of their product

Recommendations
Principalship should be professionalised
Schools in the present-day need highly qualified principals who can create not
only an environment for effective teaching and learning, but also who can
market school products in the outside community. Similarly, such professio-
nalisation of principalship falls within the realm of career-pathing in which
professional training is separated from academic development. This view is in
line with the thinking that schools should be headed by skilled personnel who
have the appropriate training and credentials for school management and
leadership. Professionalisation of principalship is long overdue in South Afri-
ca, and it is envisaged that such a step would ensure that schools become
productive. An appropriately skilled principal should know and understand
that the competencies of personnel in the school should always be honed and
improved. In this regard, principals should act as catalysts and motivators of

continuous staff development. It is noted that when a principal is unqualified for his/her position he/she sees every endeavour by staff members to improve their qualifications as a threat to his/her position. In addition, the trial-and-error approach to school management and leadership should be replaced by provision of sufficiently skilled principals who can maintain stability in schools without deviating from their schools' visions and mission statements.

Principals should be skilled in development of appropriate professional development programmes

An appropriately qualified principal knows that educators and teachers should always improve their qualifications, knowledge and skills as a strategy for effective teaching. In line with the Skills Development Act of 1998, and other factors necessitating acquisition of new skills and knowledge for efficacy in teaching, a principals should have skills to analyse the schools' person-power and human resources needs since an indiscriminate creation of talent may lead to provision of 'round pegs for square holes'. Professional development programmes should be needs-driven, and principals should be wary of over-production of certain skills while there is a dearth of skills in other areas. For example, principals should have knowledge of positioning and prioritising the provision of the person power and, professional development and training should be 'in sync' with operational requirements and needs in a school.

Principals should be capacitated to manage democratic processes in schools

In a democratic society it is expected that schools will also be run in a democratic way. As a result, principals should be capacitated to create and maintain democratic processes in schools and to work well with school governing bodies. As part of their responsibilities, principals should show commitment to ensuring involvement of parents and the community in the administration of schools. For example, principals should be able to develop and maintain sound working relationships with SGBs, parents, learners, the communities, and other interest groups in education. In addition, a principal should have the creativity and the ability to foster an environment of collective bargaining, collaboration and negotiation in a school without feeling challenged, disadvantaged or outnumbered.

In conclusion

The principal is the curator and custodian of the school's vision, missions and values. As a result, he/she should provide the inspiration to achieve the school's vision and missions, grow people to achieve the school's vision and missions, thrive on change to lead the school towards its chosen destination, and collaborate with different interest groups to achieve the school's vision and missions. It is noted that as part of the strategy for achieving the school's vision and missions it is necessary that the principal take the lead in the development of policies, targets, and plans. In addition, the principal should provide guidance to the teachers, learners, parents, and other stakeholders on the best approaches and practices that would assist in attainment of the

school's vision. The preceding discussion indicates and provides sufficient evidence that principalship should not be acquired on luck or connection, it needs specially trained professionals who can do the job right the first time round, and not suitors and pretenders that feel threatened at every corner in the school.

References

Anderson ME 1992. Helping beginning school managers succeed. *Oregon School Study Council/University of Oregon/Eugene, OR*, 30.

Ang A 2002. An eclectic review of multi-dimensional perspectives of employee involvement. *Employer*, 14:192-200.

Bush T 1995. *Theories of educational management*. 2nd edn. London: Chapman.

Bush T 2003. New visions or empty vessels: the National College For School Leadership induction model for new school managers. Paper presented at the *Education Management Association of South Africa Conference*, Nelspruit, 12-14 March.

Bush T, Coleman M, Wall D & West-Burnham J 1996. Mentoring and continuing professional development. In: McIntyre D & Hagger H (eds). *Mentors in schools: Developing the profession of teaching*. London: Fulton.

Bush T, Briggs A & Middlewood D 2002. *Pilot, New Visions Evaluation: second interim report*. Nottingham: NCSL.

Bush T, Briggs A & Middlewood D with Blackburn S & Stephen J 2002. *Pilot New Vision Evaluation: third interim report*. Nottingham: NCSL.

Coles M 2003. Universities and the National College for School Leadership: a developing relationship. *Educational Management News*, 21:3-4.

Cronje GJdJ, Du Toit GS, Marais AdK & Motlatla MDC 2004. *Introduction to Business Management*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Daresh JC 1987. The beginning of school leadership: preservice and in-service. In: Legotlo MW 1992. *Educational Planning and Administration: Induction*, Volume 1. Mmabatho: UNW.

Daresh JC & Playko M. 1989. The administrative entry-year model in Ohio: a resource guide. In: Legotlo MW 1992. *Educational Planning and Administration: Induction, Volume 1*. Mmabatho: UNW.

Dawson T 1993. *Principles and Practice of Modern Management*. Hodder & Stoughton.

Debrou M 2003. Headlamp — Lighting the way. *Educational Management News*, 21:7-8.

Delta Foundation 2001. *The school managers' training model*. Johannesburg: Delta Foundation.

ETDP SETA 2001/2002. *Status Report*. Rivonia: HSRC

Greenfield T & Ribbins P 1993. *Greenfield on educational administration*. London: Routledge.

Grobler PA, Warnich S, Carrel MR, Elbert NF & Hatfield RD 2002. *Human resource management in South Africa*. Cornwall: Thomson.

Hagel J 2003. *Capital vs. talent? Strategies for maximising value of talent*. Available at http://www.johnhagel.com/blog20031022.html

Hall E 1999. Demand for professional skills on the increase. In: *The Graduate*. Pretoria: HSRC.

Heystek J 2003. Background to management training for school principals in South Africa. *Educational Management News*, 21:10-11.

Higgs P & Higgs LG 1994. University education in post-apartheid South Africa.

Educare, 23:42-44.

Hodgkinson C 1996. *Educational leadership: the moral art*. New York: SUNY.

Hoy WK & Miskel CG 1991. *Educational administration: theory, research and practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Jones K, Clark J, Figg G, Howarth S & Reid K 1989. *Staff development in primary schools*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Legotlo MW 1992. *Educational Planning and Administration: Induction, Volume 1*. Mmabatho: UNW.

Lenyai S 2000. Improving teacher education and the teaching profession: Education's continuing agenda. Address delivered at the Diploma ceremony of Mankwe Christian College of Education, 18 March.

Lieberman A & Grolnick M 1996. Networks and reform in American Education. *Teachers College Records*, 98:7-45.

Lieberman A & Miller L 1992. Teacher development in professional practice schools. *ERIC*, ED 374098.

Mabale JB 2004. Optimisation of educators' potential in primary schools with a particular focus on performance management in Bojanala West Region. Unpublished MEd dissertation. Mafikeng: North West University.

Madge P 2003. Subject leadership and the importance of developing skills and attributes of middle management. *Education Management News*, 21:9.

Mahanjana N 1999. Education management and leadership development in South Africa: Challenges and a national strategy. Paper presented at a national *Conference on Educational Management and Leadership, Development and Governance,* Rustenburg, 1-4 August.

Mathibe IR 2005. A Beehive Model for management and leadership development in primary schools in North West Province, South Africa. Unpublished PhD thesis. Mafikeng: North West University.

Middlewood D 2003. New visions for New Heads. Educational Management News, 21:5.

Mintzberg H 1992. *Structures in fives: designing effective organisations*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Mwosa JL 1987. Concepts of development leadership. In: Ndengwa P, Muretheili LP & Greene RH (eds). *Management for development*. Nairobi: Oxford University.

NCSL 2002. *New Visions, induction to Headship Pilot Model*. Nottingham: NCSL.

Olson B 1999. Joint meeting on lifelong learning first century: the changing roles of educational personnel 2000. *Part 2. Sectoral activities*. Microsoft Word.

Parkay FW & Currie G 1992. Sources of support for first-time high school school managers during selection and entry. In: Legotlo MW. *Education Planning and Administration: induction*. Mmabatho: UNW.

Pernel J & Firestone WA 1996. Changing classroom practice through teacher networks: model features with teacher characteristics and circumstances. *Teachers College Records*, 98:46-76.

Raelin JA 2000. *Work-based learning: new frontiers of management development*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall.

Reitzug UC 2002. *School Reform Proposals: The research evidence*. Available at http://www.asu.edu/educ/epsl/ERPU/documents/ ERPU%202002-01/Chapter%2012-Rei

Robinson J 1992. *Managing after the superlatives*. Kent: Tudor.

Smith PJ 2001. Workplace learning and flexible delivery. Unpublished paper. Victoria: Deaken.

Steyn GM 2002. The changing leadership in South African schools. *Educare*, 31:251-273.

Terry GR 1999. Principles of management. In: Van der Westhuizen PC (ed.). *Effective Educational Management,* 9th impression. Pretoria: Kagiso.

US Department of Education 1987. *Principal selection guide.* Washington, DC: Office of Education research and improvement..

Van der Westhuizen AJ 2002. South African Higher Education schools as learning schools: a leadership process Model. Unpublished PhD thesis. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.

Werner A 2002. Leadership. In: Nel PS, Gerber PD, Van Dyk PS, Haasbroek GD, Schultz HB, Sono T & Werner A. *Human Resources Management and leadership.* London: Oxford.

Westchester Institute for Human Services Research 2004. *The balanced view.* Available at http://www.sharingsuccess.org/code/bv/pd.html.

Isaac Mathibe is Senior Lecturer at North-West University, Mafikeng Campus and member of the Standards Generating Body for Education Management and Leadership, NSB05.