

**INTEGRATING PEDAGOGY AND COVEY'S FIRST THREE HABITS OF  
HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE – AN INSIDE-OUT APPROACH**

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## Dedication

This project is dedicated to the students of my 1997-98 grade five class.

## Abstract

This project investigates Stephen Covey's first three habits of effectiveness and their application to problems a teacher was experiencing. Greg Hall, the teacher completing the project, utilizes the habits of "Be Proactive, Begin With the End in Mind and Put First Things First" and uses them to help with pedagogical problems being experienced by him.

The project produced the following findings in relation to Habit One. By being at least partially proactive Hall was able to do something about the problem of interruptions. Being proactive helped improve his attitude and, as a result, his response to interruptions. In turn this enhanced the classroom atmosphere. Problems required Hall to reflect on and identify a proactive plan. Hall discovered that behavior, through the development of proactivity, can become more conscious. Attitude, or 'frame of reference', is the most important factor in this process. Whether it is positive or negative, it will be fulfilled. As Covey (1987) writes: "Be a light, not a judge. Be a model, not a critic. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem."

The project produced the following finding in relation to Habit Two. The development of a mission statement has helped Hall to clarify what it is he desires from his teaching. The development of the mission statement as an end product was useful. The process was lengthy but was meaningful. Hall discovered that a metaphoric way of looking at the end result of teaching might be at least as powerful as a mission statement.

The project produced the following findings in relation to Habit Three. Covey (1987) indicates that a significant amount of time in quadrant two is essential to effectiveness. Hall found that increased time in quadrant two, planning and preparing for

a unit of study, was an important reason for the success of a unit. Hall believes that most significant of all was the weaving of the various factors: quadrant two time, multiple intelligence research and practice, cooperative learning research and practice and Glenn's (1988) research and practice. Hall found that the ideal to work toward is reducing time spent in quadrant three, eliminating time spent in quadrant four and increasing time spent in quadrant two. As he invested more time on the planning, prevention, and relationship-building activities of quadrant two, he found that he spent far less time reacting to crises.

The result of utilizing Covey's first three habits of effectiveness was better pedagogy in Mr. Hall's classroom. Hall discovered that Habit One, be proactive, is the most powerful of the three habits because it fundamentally is about thoughtful metacognitive functioning. More importantly Habit One is about improving attitude which is a building block to the other two habits.

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CHAPTER ONE  
INTRODUCTION

School

*“School is the worst. school is boring. school is so bad that know  
one likes it. but some enjoy it. well school is the worst, and boring  
who wants to learn about capitals dividing adding and subtract.  
Geez teachers are mean Mr. Hall is so bad he gives discipline  
letters for nothing.”*

Written by a student from grade 5 class. October, 1997.

This poem was written by one of my students as his entry into a Canadian Poetry Contest. This poem indicates a student’s attitudes about school and about me, his teacher. I am troubled by the underlying attitude that this poem seems to indicate. The sentiment indicated in this poem is that school is ‘boring’, ‘the worst’ and that I am ‘mean’. The sentiments are not the feelings I would normally associate with a student who exhibits a positive disposition toward life-long learning. These sentiments are not what I hope to help develop in my students and I would like to change these sentiments to a much more positive tone if possible.

My Background

I have been teaching for fourteen years and have had a variety of experiences. I have taught grades four through nine and have taught a first-year college seminar. I have taught most subjects, excluding French language arts. I am currently employed as a school district curriculum-coordinator.



During the last two years, prior to 1997-98, I encountered students in my class who had generally very positive attitudes and generally exhibited behavior that was self-disciplined and hard-working. The characteristics of my classroom over the two years were:

- students were motivated.
- The classroom culture was trusting and very positive. Students generally got along with each other quite well. The relationship between the students and I was, on the most part, excellent.
- Students, parents and teachers had hope and displayed optimism.
- Students managed time and other resources needed to complete a task.
- Students demonstrated persistence.
- Students generally evaluated their endeavours and strove to improve.

This last year of teaching, 1997-98, was challenging for me and even at times frustrating and terribly confusing. Through this project study I have pondered the possible contributing factors and my role.

My 1997-98 class has been, compared with other years, marked by:

- Lower levels of motivation with some students.
- Higher levels of conflict between certain students and a lack of willingness to resolve conflict in some cases without a high-level of teacher intervention.
- Some students not managing time effectively and not seeming to feel accountable for assignments not completed.
- Some students, parents and teachers displaying high anxiety levels.
- A high degree of student complacency, in regards to academic achievement.

My experience of this particular class was marked by:

- A lack of my clear vision about what the priorities were with these students.
- A lack of my understanding of what teaching processes are proven to be effective in/with such a class.
- A lack of ability on my part to establish excellent relationships between myself and my students.
- A high stress-level felt by me.

My perception of this year's students and my classroom environment has caused me to question whether what I am doing, in terms of my pedagogical approach, is as effective as it could be. Are the problems I encountered due to my teaching approach? What areas are the most important to work on with students such as these? Is the lack of 'flow' in the class due to my own attitude? What was it that I should have aimed at in terms of final outcomes for these students and what processes should I have?

### Covey's Seven Habits

Stephen Covey has completed research on effectiveness. He has studied highly effective people and has encapsulated seven habits that they practice based on their lifestyle.

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People embody many of the fundamental principles of human effectiveness. These habits are basic; they are primary. They represent the internalization of correct principles upon which enduring happiness and success are based. By centering our lives on correct principles and creating a balanced focus between doing and increasing our ability to do, we become empowered in the task of

creating effective, useful, and peaceful lives ... for ourselves, and for our posterity. That which we persist in doing becomes easier - not that the nature of the task has changed, but our ability to do has increased. (Covey, 1989, p. 318 )

DiMattia (1990) calls the tone of Covey's writing "positively evangelical" and declares that "some people may be put off by that." She also indicates that "there are others who will be inspired." Covey's habits have been applied to educational research previously. Farnsworth and Morris (1995) used Covey's habits as cornerstones in their research regarding effective educational mentoring and Branham (1997) utilized Covey's habits as a conceptual basis for developing highly effective teams in middle schools. Hence, it seemed pertinent to investigate the utility of these habits in a professional educational setting as applied to pedagogy.

Covey's seven habits are listed below:

Habit One: Be Proactive

Habit Two: Keep the End in mind

Habit Three: Put First Things First

Habit Four: Think 'Win-Win'

Habit Five: Seek First to Understand and then to be Understood

Habit Six: Synergize

Habit Seven: Sharpen the Saw.

#### Research Method

Stephen Covey's first three habits have provided a framework for this project. The purpose of this study has been for me to utilize his first three habits, in a sequential

order, and document their impact on my understanding of pedagogy. Covey's first habit enabled me to establish the necessary attitudes and proactive habits necessary for connecting with my students. Covey's second habit helped me to understand what is truly important as final student characteristic outcomes. Finally, Covey's third habit has helped me clarify how to put important research-based practices into play so that my classroom teaching practice will more closely emulate those practices supported by educational research.

As a classroom teacher, I have used the first three of Covey's seven habits of highly effective people as an integrated framework to answer three questions. The three questions are related to Covey's first three habits. These questions are:

1. What is the nature of proactivity and how can I become proactive in my teaching?
2. What is the end result that I desire from my teaching?
3. How do I put first things first in my teaching?

Albert Einstein observed, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." In order to more effectively create and manage highly effective pedagogy I have needed to acquire a new level of thinking and this new level of thinking has been acquired by using Covey's habits. "It's a principle-centered, character-based, inside-out approach to personal and interpersonal effectiveness. Inside-out means to start first with self; even more fundamentally, to start with the most inside part of self ." (Covey, 1989, p. 42-43)

The research has been conducted in three phases. Each of the three phases has corresponded with one of Covey's first three habits of effectiveness. During each phase

of the research I have read educational research that corresponds with each habit and have incorporated the ideas from the readings into my research. My intent was to use Covey's three habits as a way of organizing the research into the phases described below.

Phase one:

Habit One: Be Proactive

The intent of this phase of research was to establish the nature of proactivity and to determine how I can become proactive in my teaching. The research I conducted during this phase determined what Covey's research indicates regarding proactivity and what techniques I can use to become proactive in my teaching. While I investigated Covey's Habit One I read the 'phase one research literature', listed below, to further enhance my understanding of proactivity. I integrated the findings in the 'phase one research literature' with the techniques suggested by Covey to become proactive.

The intention of this phase was to understand more clearly what proactivity, as defined by Covey, is and for me to become more proactive.

Phase one research literature:

Stephen Covey: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Stephen Covey: Principle-Centered Leadership

Victor Frankl: Man's Search for Meaning

Denis Waitley: The Psychology of Winning

Terry Orlick: In Pursuit of Excellence

Jane Nelsen: Positive Discipline

Stephen Glenn: Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World

Notes from lectures given by Father Eric Reichers

Phase two:

Habit Two: Begin With the End in Mind

The second phase of this research was an investigation using the notion of Covey's Habit Two: begin with the end in mind. During this phase I established the end result that I desire from my teaching. I also searched through documents, as listed below in 'Phase Two Research Literature,' to determine what qualities I should be striving to produce as desirable characteristics in my students. I utilized Covey's techniques for Habit Two for determining this outcome vision.

Phase Two Research Literature:

Stephen Covey: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Stephen Covey: Principle-Centered Leadership

Alberta Education: Program of Studies

District, School and Parent-Council mission statements and mottos

Stephen Glenn: Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World

Gary Philips: Transformation Teaching

Robert J. Marzano: Dimensions of Learning

Notes from lectures given by Father Eric Reichers

Phase three:

Habit Three: Put First Things First

The third phase of the research was an investigation using Habit Three: put first things first. During this phase I read research literature that suggests a variety of teaching strategies and processes that will enhance the progress toward the desirable student outcomes I clarified during phase two. During phase three of the research I have attempted to understand what teaching processes are most effective in helping my students reach the desired outcomes. I have reached a deeper understanding of research-based pedagogical practice. I utilized Covey's techniques for Habit Three while reaching this deeper level of understanding.

Phase Three Research Literature:

Stephen Covey: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Stephen Covey: First Things First

Stephen Covey: Principle-Centered Leadership

Gary Philips: Transformation Teaching

Robert J. Marzano: Dimensions of Learning

Notes from lectures given by Father Eric Reichers

A variety of Multiple Intelligences resources

A variety of Cooperative Learning resources.

## Research Summary

As a classroom teacher, I capitalized on the first three of Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" as a way to organize my research while observing and studying the effects on me. I have integrated selected pedagogical research with Covey's habits of effectiveness.



## CHAPTER TWO

### WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PROACTIVITY AND HOW CAN I BECOME PROACTIVE IN MY TEACHING?

#### Interruptions

It was what was becoming a typical day in my classroom. I was teaching science and was leading a discussion about weather. I was beginning to feel the anxiety I had felt several times over the course of the year during the class. The problem was one that I term “interruptions.”

During my science discussion it appeared to me that several students were not engaged with the discussion. One student appeared to be doodling in his notebook, another was turned around looking at the student behind her, another was engrossed in something inside his desk and a fourth student was offering his discussion without the established hand-raising decorum. Two other students were smiling and gazing at each other obviously engrossed in that rather than in the science. Most of the other students appeared to be listening to the discussion and engaged in the science learning but I was focused more on the non-engaged students. I regarded these as interruptions because they interrupted my focus on the science material. I could feel my frustration building and my sense of engagement with the lesson disintegrating.

My frustration had been building because I had carefully explained to the students the importance of self-discipline and of paying attention to the learning in the class. We had spent time developing a Class Constitution which indicated that self-discipline, doing one’s best and staying on task were extremely important.

When a student appeared to be engaged in off-task behavior I would immediately remind the student of what I thought was responsible behavior and then would return to the science lesson. This had the effect of interrupting the flow of a science lesson. I could sense that over the two months of the year my patience with interruptions was diminishing rapidly and that the tone of my voice, when addressing the students who were interrupting, indicated impatience. I was beginning to see certain students as uncaring, undisciplined and unmotivated. My normally positive attitude was failing. I felt the entire classroom atmosphere was being negatively influenced. I felt that I was failing as a teacher and that I needed to do something differently.

#### Strategy One

When something occurred in the class that I regarded as an interruption I used the strategy of stopping the class and reminding the student of his or her responsibility. Often I would have the student refer to the Class Constitution, a strategy that had been effective during the two previous years. This year however the strategy seemed to be ineffective because the same students seemed to be very regularly reading their constitution but it appeared to have no meaning to them because their behavior remained unchanged.

#### Strategy Two

Consequently I went to a more structured approach of putting the interrupter's name on the blackboard and then simply continuing with teaching. When students interrupted again I placed a check-mark beside their names and if they received a second check-mark they also received a written assignment which was to indicate how they had disrupted the class, or their own learning, and why what they had done was inappropriate

and how they intended to act in the future. This strategy was better in terms of pedagogical flow because the interruptions were definitely not as long as when I had them refer to their constitution. However, there were still problems with this strategy.

One of the problems was that by the end of the day several students had received up to eight or more checkmarks. These students were the ones who had been seemingly unaffected by the previous strategy and again despite the fact that they were engaged in extensive writing over what the problem was and how they could prevent it they seemed unresponsive to actually changing their behavior. Adding to that was the fact that several other students had their names on the board and some became quite agitated over that fact. I was growing more frustrated and the classroom atmosphere was deleteriously affected. This interruption factor was beginning to deeply affect the quality of my teaching and I knew that I needed help to solve this dilemma and hence needed to take some different action.

#### Developing a More Proactive Strategy

As I experienced the problems with the interruptions in my class I had been reading certain proactivity literature in the hope of discovering why I was in difficulty. I discovered that many of the problems I was experiencing were in part due to my lack of proactive behavior.

Stephen Covey (1989) accepts that genetic, psychological and environmental influences may influence us but that we, as human beings, have the capacity to choose our response to stimuli. He defines proactivity as the human capacity to choose a response. He indicates that proactivity is the first and most basic habit of a highly effective person in any environment.

As I read and reflected on Covey's literature I realized that I was becoming increasingly reactive in my response to the interruptions occurring in my class and that perhaps this was exacerbating the problems. Covey indicates that reactivity is the opposite of proactivity. "Reactive people are driven by feeling, by circumstances, by conditions, by their environment. Proactive people are driven by values – carefully thought about selected and internalized values" (Covey, 1989, p. 78).

Covey indicates that language is an indicator to the degree to which we see ourselves as proactive people. Examples like "there's nothing I can do" and "he makes me so mad" are some examples of reactive language. I realized that my self-talk or thinking in regards to the interruption problem had largely become reactive. The fact that I was growing increasingly frustrated and anxious was reactive. Covey indicates that the language of reactive people absolves them of responsibility and comes from a basic paradigm of determinism. "And the whole spirit of it is the transfer of responsibility. I am not responsible, not able to choose my response" (Covey, 1989, p.78).

The writing of Viktor Frankl (1939) was highly inspirational for me during this study. Frankl was a person who spent three years as a prisoner at Auschwitz and other Nazi prisons during World War Two. Frankl had been a psychiatrist before the war and he became engrossed in studying the prisoner's reactions to imprisonment and the ensuing brutality and suffering that they endured. Frankl became deeply intrigued by the fact that certain prisoners continued to live and, in at least a spiritual sense, even thrive while others either perished very early in their prison term or lived with inner-misery before perishing. He reached the conclusion that human beings are ultimately self-determining.

A human being is not one thing among other things; things determine each other, but man is ultimately self-determining. What he becomes – within the limits of endowment and environment – he has made out of himself. In the concentration camps, for example, in this living laboratory and on this testing ground, we watched and witnessed some of our comrades behave like swine while others behaved like saints. Man has both potentialities within himself; which one is actualized depends on decisions but not on conditions. (Frankl, 1939, p.213)

Frankl's reflections were very humbling for me. My situation, with the interruptions, seemed terribly insignificant when compared to the suffering and brutality that Frankl had experienced and yet I was wallowing in my own situation. I was led to the conclusion that it wasn't so much what was happening that should determine my attitude but rather I could decide on my attitude in response to what was happening.

Frankl suggests that there are three central values in life: the experiential, or that which happens to us; the creative, or that which we bring into existence; and the attitudinal, or our response in difficult circumstances such as terminal illness. Frankl indicates that the highest of the three values is attitudinal. In other words, what matters most is how we respond to what we experience in life. Frankl's reflections helped me gain perspective. I was giving more value to what was happening to me than to my own attitudinal response and clearly I needed to refocus my efforts on my own attitude. I had the choice to either become a frustrated and anxious teacher or something entirely different. This was becoming clearer to me as I continued to develop my understanding of proactivity. Terry Orlick (1990) writes "my greatest power in life is my power to

choose. I am the final authority over me” (p.7). A key idea in Harry and Rosemary Wong’s (1991) research on teacher effectiveness is that “how a person chooses to behave will greatly determine the quality of that person’s life” (p. 271). Wong and Wong write that perhaps up to 80% of teachers become victims because they do not take control over their own lives. They conclude that teachers are truly professional when they become responsible persons and this in turn makes them happier and much more successful. “All that separates a person from success or failure is one word: attitude” (Wong & Wong, 1991, p.295). Such conclusions helped me realize that I was falling into the ‘victim’ percentage of teachers and needed to proactively take more control of my attitude.

Covey (1989) indicates that proactive people focus their efforts on the things they can do something about. He calls this the Circle of Influence. Hence I needed to identify and work in my circle of influence. Jane Nelsen (1996) asks “What would happen if adults assumed full responsibility for creating whatever they complain about?” (p. 228). This is a rhetorical question. Nelsen implies that I will learn and model positively if I develop the habit of taking full responsibility for creating the environment I desire, at least within my own circle of influence.

As a result of the reading I realized that I had not been engaged in metacognitively examining my thought processes while there was a problem occurring in my class. I needed to become more self-aware. I needed to realize what my thought processes are and to examine the motives for my thoughts, to creatively pursue alternative reactions and then finally choose the resulting behavior that best exemplifies my true values. Therefore I needed to distance myself from the problem situation and

endeavour to connect with values, as opposed to feelings, conditions, and circumstances. I needed to bring greater thought and meaning to my behavior.

Covey (1989) also indicates that our behavior is governed by principles. Living in harmony with them brings positive consequences; violating them brings negative consequences. “Undoubtedly, there have been times in each of our lives when we have brought consequences we would rather have lived without. We call these choices mistakes” (Covey, 1989, p.91). Covey indicates that our response to any mistake affects the quality of the next moment. “It is important to immediately admit and correct our mistakes so that they have no power over that next moment and we are empowered again” (Covey, 1989, p.91). I needed to admit that I was on the wrong track and work on a proactive response to the interruption factor in my classroom.

#### Reflection

I decided to spend time reflecting on the interruptions in my class and how I could respond more proactively. I needed to become more conscious of my thoughts and actions in regards to this issue. First, I decided that although the issue of interruptions had grown to a significant one, it was primarily because of the effect on my attitude that it had become significant. I was focusing on interruptions and the ensuring checkmark system and it was having a negative effect on my relationship with my students. I think the students felt I was operating out of a ‘blame-frame’ paradigm. Second, I realized through the reflection, that the consequences of checkmarks and writing responses were not having any lasting effect on the more frequent interrupters. They still kept on interrupting at the same frequency and perhaps even at a greater frequency than before. Perhaps they were getting extra attention, albeit negative, as a result of this strategy.

### A Proactive Strategy

After the realization that my check-mark strategy was having detrimental effects on my class environment I decided to do two things. First, I decided to ignore the less severe interruptions and in fact to acknowledge the comment or question if it was pertinent. I decided that this made more sense, from a proactive point of view, because it didn't interrupt the flow as much as my previous strategy or upset the interrupter nor myself nearly as much. This response also had the advantage of acknowledging the responses that were pertinent, even though they may have been an interruption. Secondly, I decided to make more severe the consequence to an interruption that I interpreted as being blatant rudeness. The consequence, for a rude interruption, was an immediate removal to a school suspension room until the next natural break of the day (usually recess or lunch or the end of the school day). This, I hoped would remove distractions from the learning of others, and would serve to send a message that rudeness was not sanctioned.

The effect of this was immediate and very positive! During the ensuing weeks and months I experienced interruptions most frequently from one student (who occasionally was rude and was removed from the room) but even he was much less frequently an interrupter than previously. The remainder of the students were never removed from the class and generally the structure of the class was much more conversational in a natural way. Most students continued to use their hands, and I would occasionally remind them to do so.



## Why Did This Work and What Still Needs Work?

I had the experience of inner change. Because I had decided to change my attitude and consequent approach to interruptions I had the experience of changing my paradigm to an improvement frame and the improvement of students became much more of a focus for me. The atmosphere of the class was much more positive and often joyful. This was quite amazing to me as a proactive response to the interruptions, although trivial alone, had produced a change much more powerfully positive than I had imagined could be possible.

Covey (1989) indicates that human beings have the ability to think about their thought processes and that this makes us distinct from other animals. Covey writes that this is why we can evaluate and learn from others' experiences as well as our own and why we can make or break our habits. Because of this self-evaluative ability we can examine the way we see ourselves. Covey calls the way we see ourselves our "self-paradigm" and he indicates that our self-paradigm is the most fundamental paradigm of effectiveness. It seems obvious to me now but by simply thinking about my thought processes in a reflective way I was developing effectiveness, in terms of my reaction to the interruptions in my science class.

Covey (1989) indicates that humans have four endowments -- self-awareness, imagination, conscience and independent will -- that make us unique. Prior to learning about proactivity I had believed that positive-thinking was the key to attitudinal adjustment and although I still recognize that positive thinking is important it is not as powerful as proactivity. A primary difference between positive-thinking and proactivity is that proactivity must be based on the reality of the current circumstance and of future

projections. Prior to engaging in deep reflection, because of a lack of self-awareness and an unwillingness to truly acknowledge the growing inner frustration that the interruptions were causing me, I had not been proactive. I had previously relied on an overly simplistic positive belief that the problems with interruptions would pass.

Then I became reactive because the interruptions weren't passing. I hadn't taken the time to think about my own response deeply enough, until I spent time in deeper reflection. I had been focusing my efforts on getting my students to change their behavior and had not been focused enough on changing my own attitude and subsequent behavior. Reactive people have a focus of the weaknesses of other people. "Their focus results in blaming and accusing attitudes, reactive language, and increased feelings of victimization" (Covey, 1989, p.83).

I now believe that by focusing on the interruptions I allowed the interrupting behavior to become a self-fulfilling prophesy. Because I placed so much emphasis on the behavior of interrupting, my students lived up to my expectations of frequent interrupting behavior. When I proactively de-emphasized interruptions, my students then lived up to the de-emphasis of interrupting. I made a mistake by focusing on student behavior that largely is out of my control. I can't really absolutely control whether a student interrupts or not. I may be able to influence a student's interrupting behavior but I can't totally control it. As Covey suggests, by focusing on interrupting behavior I was focusing on my "Circle of Concern" rather than on my "Circle of Influence."

In hindsight it seems trivial to be spending so much time thinking about interruptions but it had been a difficult issue for me. I need to be vigilant in believing that

what I do is not futile. Orlick (1990) makes a point about self-control while discussing learned helplessness:

This also happens with human beings. The real world shocks people a few times, and they come to believe that they have no control over the situation or over themselves. Once this learning occurs they tend to stop trying because of the belief that trying has no effect. Yet in many cases, people are fully capable of stepping over the barrier and effecting positive change. It is the belief that their responses are futile that produces their state of helplessness, even though the belief may be totally inaccurate.

(p.159)

#### What Remains to be Done?

Anytime I think the problem is strictly 'out there', then that thought becomes part of the problem. I empower what's 'out there' to control me. That change paradigm is 'outside-in' or, in other words, 'what's out there has to change before I can change.' The proactive approach is to change from the inside-out: to be different and by being different, to effect positive change in what's 'out there.' By acting in this latter way I can be more resourceful, diligent, creative and ultimately more cooperative.

Orlick (1990) writes that "I control my own thoughts and emotions, and direct the whole pattern of my performance, health, and life" (p.38). To me, this suggests I must develop the human endowments of self-awareness and conscience. I need to become more conscious of areas of weakness, areas for improvement, areas of talent that could be developed, and areas that need to be changed or eliminated from my life. Then, as I

recognize and use my imagination and independent will to act on that awareness I can build the strength of character that makes possible every other positive thing.

I found Phillips' (1994) research particularly helpful. My frame of reference had partially been one of blame, denial, victimization, shame and codependence. For example, when I thought (in regards to my students) "Your behavior has made me this way!" I was in the "blame frame." When I thought, "the problem will pass" I was in denial. When I thought "I can't do anything, I am a loser teacher" then I was in the "shame frame." When I thought, "it will be a great day if my class only behaves" then I was in a "co-dependent frame." None of these frames are helpful nor are they proactive.

Phillips (1994) indicates that the teacher's mind frame is the most important variable in student learning. He believes that if a teacher approaches a difficult student from a frame of denial, victim, blame, shame, codependence, or justice the child doesn't stand a chance of success. In Phillips' characterization I must move to one of the following frames to experience much greater success with my students: improvement, vision, challenge, or predict-prevent. I also need to move to the same frames in regard to myself. I need to feel that I make a difference, that I am improving and pursuing excellence, that I am proactive and that I experience joy as part of my teaching experience.

I need to focus my attitude on the improvement of students by thinking and saying "the purpose of my class is to help everyone get better, including the teacher. I look for improvement daily, and I find it." Phillips' predict-prevent frame would have me thinking: "I have a plan to keep this from happening again. I can come up with a solution to this problem. It is much easier to predict and prevent than react and repair." His vision

frame would find me thinking: “every student in my class can find success if I alter the methodology and time by expanding classroom options to accommodate learner uniqueness.” And finally, the challenge frame would have me thinking: “this problem is exciting and worthy of a major life effort on my part. This problem can become my teacher.”

Reichers (1997) indicates that coming to peace is the desire of every human heart. Peace is a product of struggle, journey and choice. What I must do, to reach more inner-peace, is to engage further in the struggle and to develop my proactive conscious thought.

### Chapter Summary

In regards to the areas of proactivity I had been lacking. The interruption problems I had encountered and my subsequent negative paradigm within which I had been operating became a self-fulfilling prophesy. I had been frustrated because what I had been doing hadn't worked well and then I added to my frustration by trying the same thing harder and faster. I needed to change the way I did things but, fundamentally, I needed to continue to change my attitude.

In order to become more proactive I need to understand that problems require increased strength of character. Reichers (1997) equates life to a journey along which there will be struggle but, he says, true joy can result in not conquering the struggles but in the actual engagement of the struggles. The proactive engagement of struggle is what is necessary for me to be a more effective teacher. The struggle with the problem will increase my own growth and learning which is therefore positive. “When faced with adversity remember adversity is a hero in the making” (Phillips, 1994, p.42). Problematic situations in the classroom require increased strength of character and the resulting

struggle produces growth of character which, I feel, can expand my capacity to struggle in the future. What does not break me can only make me stronger. I can move towards becoming more aligned with values, to which, I claim to adhere. These values will be clarified in phase two of this research.

By being at least partially proactive I was able to do something about the problem of interruptions. Being proactive helped my attitude and, as a result, my response to interruptions. In turn this enhanced the classroom atmosphere. Being proactive helped put interruptions into better perspective for me.

Problems require me to reflect on and identify a proactive plan. I need to develop time in reflection to identify problems that I am having and determine whether the problems are a direct or no-control problem. My behavior, through the development of proactivity, can become more conscious.

I need to examine the problem, and determine whether my 'frame' is positive, then decide upon my ensuing action and commitment level to solve the problem. My attitude, or 'frame of reference', is the most important factor in this process. Whether it is positive or negative, it will be fulfilled. As Covey (1989) writes: "Be a light, not a judge. Be a model, not a critic. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem." The attitude and behavior of a light, a model and a solver is what I continually need to strive for.

## CHAPTER THREE

### WHAT IS THE END RESULT THAT I DESIRE FROM MY TEACHING?

#### Unclear Priorities

When teaching the grade five class, in 1997-98, I recognized that the students were very diverse and that their differences were presenting a difficulty to me. The difficulty was in deciding what areas of pedagogy were most important. Where should I put the most emphasis? Beyond the basic curriculum, what goals should I set and for what should I plan? I had students who seemed unmotivated. Should I focus on motivational techniques? I had students whom I thought were undisciplined and misbehaved. Should my focus switch to the promotion of discipline? I had students who were experiencing turmoil at home, and as a consequence, seemed to be sad. Should I focus on keeping my students joyous? I had students who appeared to have low self-esteem. How much of a priority is the development of self-esteem? Some students were achieving at a very low level academically. Should my focus be primarily academic achievement? I noticed a range of physical fitness development. How important is physical fitness as a focus of my teaching role? This list of questions could be greatly expanded but my point is that I needed to establish the focus of my role. As the cliché goes, I was having trouble seeing the forest for the trees.

#### Why Was I in Difficulty?

Covey (1989) indicates that effective people keep a long-term perspective as a frame of reference by which they act. They have clear vision of what they would like their lives to be like several years in the future and then they keep that vision in mind

when they decide how to live. I felt as if my vision was cloudy and I needed a stronger focus. Covey indicates that the most effective people utilize self-awareness, imagination, and conscience to visualize the things they want to accomplish. Covey calls this the “leadership habit.”

I had not developed in a formal way a teacher mission statement and perhaps this lack of a statement was a problem. Covey (1989) indicates that the most effective way to enact an understanding of the end in mind is to develop a personal mission statement or philosophy or creed. I knew that Alberta Education has a mission statement but I could not meaningfully recall it. Was it enough to adopt another mission statement and call it my own?

According to Covey (1989), in order to have the most effective mission statement, we must develop our own mission and that the best mission statements are based on a life-time of contribution. “I believe the higher use of imagination is in harmony with the use of conscience to transcend self and create a life of contribution based on unique purpose and on the principles that govern interdependent reality” (Covey, 1989, p.135). At the time I read this I felt scattered and stretched in so many directions. I was persuaded that the development of a mission statement might help kindle in me a sense of priorities.

Covey (1989) writes that one of the major problems that arises when people develop a long-term perspective and perhaps, an ensuing mission statement, is that they don’t think broadly enough. They focus too narrowly on one aspect of their life while ignoring other very important areas. He suggests that we think of our life in terms of up to seven different roles and then to set long-term goals for each of the roles. “An effective



goal focuses on results and identifies where you want to be, and, in the process, helps you determine where you are. It gives you important information on how to get there, and it tells you when you have arrived” (Covey, 1989, p. 137). I also needed to spend time setting goals for myself in relation to the students I had. My goals were not explicit, vague and not shared. Hence, in order to have a clear sense of priorities then, according to Covey, I needed to develop a mission statement, and from the statement develop roles and goals and identify how I would realize the goals. Also, in order to stay effective, I needed to develop a life-balance and not ignore the other important aspects of my life, besides teaching.

### Development of a Teacher Mission Statement

#### The Broad External Mission

For the development of a mission statement I referred to the Alberta Education Program of Studies for guidance. I wanted to develop a mission statement that was in harmony with the broader educational context within which I lived, hence the title for this section.

I discovered that Alberta Education has listed twenty-four characteristics that are deemed as being important outcomes of education. I have determined to what extent the twenty-four characteristics are aligned with additional educational research as I have listed the twenty-four characteristics in Appendix One and, in addition, have added correlating outcomes as identified by Marzano (1992), Nelsen (1996), Glenn and Nelsen (1989), Phillips (1994) and the UNESCO statement of educational objectives as listed in Phillips (1994).

## Internal Mission

Covey (1989) indicates that it is important to develop a mission statement based on reality. By using the Alberta Education learner characteristics I believe I have developed a sense of the reality of teaching in the broad context of societal expectations. There are many learning characteristics that are deemed important in Alberta and it will be difficult to encapsulate them in one mission statement.

It is important as well, though, to develop a mission statement not based solely on external influence. I needed to incorporate my own uniquely detected mission, hence the title 'internal mission' that I have given to this sub-section. I needed to decide what is most important to me in my teaching mission.

Covey also indicates that it is important to have a mission statement based on correct principles or natural laws. "Principles are guidelines for human conduct that are proven to have enduring, permanent value ... The more closely our maps or paradigms are aligned with these principles or natural laws the more accurate and functional they will be" (Covey, 1989, p.35). He indicates that some examples of principles are: fairness, integrity, honesty, human dignity, service, quality, potential, growth, patience, nurturance, and encouragement.

In addition to this Covey indicates that if my mission statement is to be truly meaningful then I need to use my inner security, guidance, wisdom and power.

Security comes from knowing that correct principles do not change. The wisdom and guidance that accompany principle-centered living come from correct maps. The personal power that comes from principle-centered living is the power of a self-aware, knowledgeable, proactive individual,

unrestricted by the attitudes, behaviors and actions of others or by many of the circumstances and environmental influences that limit other people.

(Covey, 1989, p.123)

Covey suggests that in the writing of a mission statement we need to expand our perspective by visualizing our retirement from our present occupation. What will be my contributions and my achievements? He suggests visualizing this in detail and then writing the mission statement based on that visualization.

After deep consideration of my 1997-98 grade five class, I have decided what is important to me and, as a result of visualization of my retirement, I have concluded the important personal outcomes are:

- Love: I want my students know they are loved, that they are uniquely special and are honoured by me. I also want my students to be capable of loving. This, I believe, is the essence of being human.
- Courage: I want my students to have courage, and hence to be encouraged to reach for their dreams. I desire my students to possess the belief that they are capable of being a positive change-agent both for their own benefit and of the benefit of others.
- Hope: I want for my students to anticipate the best for their lives.
- Capable: I desire for my students to be capable in reaching their goals and for my students to feel capable.
- Growth and balance: I desire for my students to achieve growth in academic, spiritual, physical, emotional, social and cultural areas.

- Health: I desire my students to experience wellness, to begin to heal from the hurts many of them have had and to develop the capability to affect others in a healthy manner.
- Integrity: I desire for my students and myself to live with honesty, fairness and in harmony with what is morally correct.
- Relationship: I desire for my students and myself and for my students with each other to develop strong relationships that will continue, at least in their memories and mine, as positive memories.
- Social conscience: I desire that my students recognize that the world has complex problems that deserve their attention and active involvement in solving. Some of these problems are environmental degradation, discrimination, war and economic disparity.
- Joy: I desire for my students to experience joy as a function of their learning while a part of my pedagogy. This, I hope, will inspire life-long learning.
- Parents and colleagues and others: the above outcomes apply to my broader relationships with parents, colleagues and others.
- Self: the above outcomes also apply to outcomes I desire personally as a result of my educational career.

### Synthesis of External and Internal Data Into a Mission Statement

The challenge, in determining what I desire as the end products of my teaching for my students, and myself, is to somehow capture the vastness of the job that lies before

me. This will be done in the form of a mission statement. Covey (1992) indicates that if a mission statement is to be functional it needs to be short. Therefore my mission statement is a brief compilation of my expanded perspective from 'external' sources and from my 'internal' perspective as a result of my personal visualization.

My mission statement is:

**To improve in a synergistic manner the  
academic, physical, spiritual, cultural and affective domains  
and the overall quality of life of all stakeholders.**

To explain certain terminology in the mission statement: quality of life consists of acceptance and love, challenge and growth, purpose and meaning, fairness and opportunity and life balance; and the stakeholders include anyone who might be deleteriously effected by a poor set of outcomes for my students.

How Effective is My Mission Statement?

The time spent in reflection about my past class has helped me in the elucidation of my internal perspective. Because of the problems I experienced it made the experience much more meaningful than it might have been if I had no problems that would help me contextualize the statement.

The mission statement seems extremely useful for keeping the essence of my pedagogical mission in perspective. I think it would be additionally useful to examine on a regular basis and use it as a perception check for myself. Covey (1989) recommends revisiting mission statements regularly and rewriting them occasionally. Hence I view my mission statement as a fluid document which may be changed in the future.

As a device for keeping the end product of my teaching in mind, my mission statement is very general. I am being frank when I wonder if a mission statement can truly capture the breadth and depth of what my mission is. The Alberta Education outcomes are vast and even my own 'internal' outcomes are broad. I wonder if a written metaphor would be better able to encompass the vastness of the job. Perhaps a written metaphor in conjunction with a mission statement would enhance the two.

It seems obvious to me now that the outcomes deemed important both by myself and Alberta Education and others are all interrelated. Evidence of this, for example, may be given by considering the learner characteristic (Alberta Education) of 'Demonstrate Persistence.' This characteristic could be linked to almost any other learner characteristic as a mutually symbiotic partner. And this symbiotic relationship is not only true of this characteristic but of all the characteristics. Hence I have learned not to visualize these characteristics as separate and distinct but rather as an 'ecosystem' of learner characteristics. If one learner characteristic of the ecosystem is strengthened then all other learner characteristics are strengthened as well.

Interestingly, Covey indicates natural laws or principles must be utilized in the development of a powerful mission statement. An ecosystem, it seems to me, is nature's way of harmoniously existing. Viewing my mission as a metaphoric vision is at least as powerful than the mission statement itself. The metaphor is a harmonious learner characteristic ecosystem.

The mission statement does, however, capture the essence of my teaching mission. It is a balanced statement of ultimately what I hope will be the end product of my teaching. Phillips (1994) indicates that teachers make a much more positive

contribution operating from an 'improvement' frame. My mission statement holds key the concept of improvement and, therefore, is in harmony with Phillips' research.

I would recommend establishing roles and goals in conjunction with a mission statement. This would help further establish specific missions within the broad context of my mission statement. These goals could be correlated not only to my mission statement but to the provincial, district and school goals. My own goals could be my independent professional growth plan which is now required on an annual basis. The goals would very much help to put more 'meat on the bones' of my established mission statement.

Covey recommends developing an organizational mission statement with all stakeholders and that is something I would also incorporate in the future. It would be very interesting to have a teacher-student-parent meeting and develop together a shared mission statement. This would be an excellent forum at which to share my personal teacher mission statement and obtain feedback from the various stakeholders. This could also help springboard a 'class constitution' developed with the students that would hopefully reflect the shared mission statement. Further, it would be an interesting exercise to have each student develop his or her own mission statement, which could be revisited as a regular class routine.

### Summary

What is the end result that I desire from my teaching? I desire a balance of academic, physical, spiritual, cultural and affective growth in my students and in the other stakeholders. The stakeholders include myself, the parents of the students and anyone else who would be effected by my students and who would have an effect on my students. The development of a mission statement has helped to clarify what it is I desire

for my teaching. The result was a mission statement that is somewhat general but is an overall balanced statement of what I hope to accomplish through my teaching. The development of the mission statement as an end product was useful. The process was lengthy but was meaningful. Without the lengthy process the end-product mission statement would not be nearly as meaningful to me. It was very useful to rely not only on my own 'internal' input but to search 'external' information. The process of searching for external information was very interesting. I feel somewhat humbled by the realization that, although my mission statement helped me to clarify what I hope to accomplish as a teacher, the statement in and of itself may be regarded as unimpressive by others. Ironically, I probably could have written a similar mission statement in a few minutes prior to this research and it may have been more impressive. It was the process however that was important, as already mentioned, because it made me carefully consider the wording of the statement and certainly gave me more background knowledge when developing the statement. For these reasons the mission statement remains valuable to me.

To further aid the process of clarifying specific end products of my teaching the formation of specific goals would be beneficial. I think my mission statement shows that my desired end results, for my teaching, are rather broad and perhaps complex. Therefore more specific goals would help detail the mission statement.

I need to continue to reflect on and, if necessary, continue to develop the mission statement. If the statement is to remain meaningful it needs to become a regular part of my planning. I understand Covey's desire to have mission statements as short but there might be benefit in a longer mission statement with more detail.



A metaphoric way of looking at the end result of my teaching might be at least as powerful as a mission statement. The realization that the learner characteristics work in an 'ecosystem' was a revelation for me. As an addition to the mission statement development it might be beneficial for me to develop the metaphor of an ecosystem further either in writing or diagrammatically.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### HOW DO I PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST IN MY TEACHING?

#### Electricity Unit Flop

The school year 1997-98 had proven frustrating in part because of my lack of ability to get this class through a unit of study in the time I had originally allotted. I have had several instances of this tardiness but the electricity science unit was, unfortunately, an extreme example of a unit that took much longer than originally anticipated. This unit consisted of two parts: one part was a portion on electric theory and the second was an electric building unit. Although I had planned for the unit to take twelve weeks, ample time I thought considering my experience with the two previous years, it took eleven weeks for us to progress through the theory unit, leaving us only one week to complete the electric building portion.

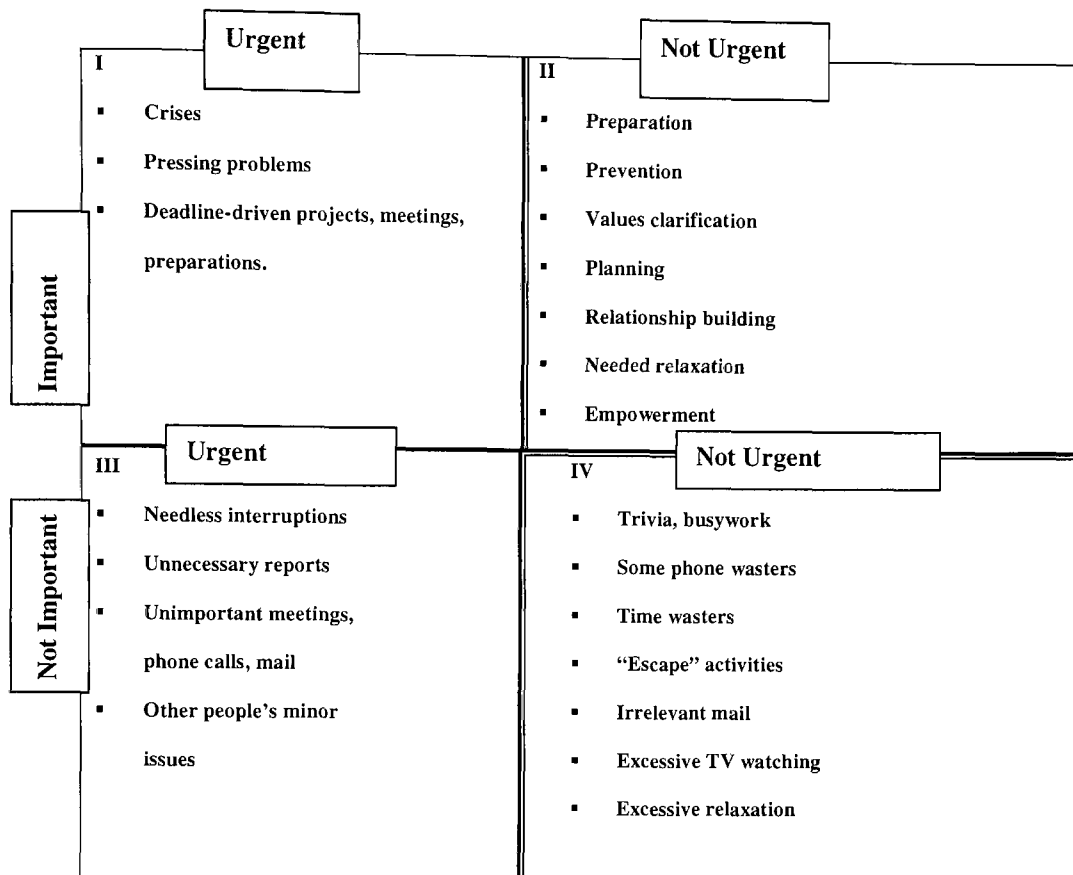
In the past two years the electric building unit had taken approximately four weeks so it was obvious to me that these students would not get finished the second part of the unit unless I cut time from the final science unit on wetland ecosystems. Considering the wetland ecosystems unit was the last science unit I decided not to cut the original time allotted for it but making these decisions was proving very frustrating to me! It seemed that every interruption in class, every problem encountered that slowed down our curricular progress, further exacerbated my sense of frustration and failure. Every interruption seemed to magnify the fact that we were behind and that things were taking longer than planned. If a student was late after recess, for example, I bristled inside. The students did not seem to be feeling frustrated as they weren't aware of the

curriculum objectives and the fact that they had not received the full bill of goods! I felt like I was failing them and now I had only one last chance to cover completely the wetland ecosystem unit.

I spent time reflecting about how I could approach the wetland unit and about the things I had learned as a result of my research. I realized that I was in difficulty because I had spent too little time in planning units of study and hadn't involved myself at a deep enough level in the planning other than a cursory overview of what had been done in the past two years.

Covey (1989) indicates that people spend time in one of four ways, as illustrated in the Time Management Matrix. This matrix defines activities as 'urgent' or 'not urgent,' and 'important' or 'not important.' All activities could potentially be categorized using this matrix as falling into one of the four quadrants. Covey contends that most people spend far too much time responding to the urgent crises of Quadrants I and III. Covey writes that these people then escape occasionally for survival to the not urgent, unimportant time wasters of Quadrant IV. Covey's research indicates that truly effective people focus on Quadrant II.

**The Time Management Matrix (Covey, 1989, p. 151).**



I was in difficulty because I was spending too much time in quadrant one and three. I hadn't spent enough time truly planning effectively over the long-term of the unit in a manner that would work for the particular group of students I had. I was relying on plans that had worked with another group of students at a different time! Obviously this wasn't an effective method of planning.

I had also been involved, at the time, with an Action Research Group investigating Multiple Intelligence research and applications to pedagogy. Multiple intelligence research places a responsibility on educators to value the different

intelligences of students. I realized that I was not doing enough to connect with and enhance the multiple intelligences of my students. Howard Gardner (Lampard, 1998) indicates that if educators treat everybody as if they are the same, then they are catering to only one profile of intelligence, the language-logic profile. This is fine if a student happens to have that profile, but it's not great for the rest of the vast majority of human beings who do not have that particular profile of intelligence. Gardner's research indicates that learning takes on its significance when it is linked to what is valued in the world. Perhaps, I pondered, I hadn't been linking my teaching to what my students innately valued and therefore wasn't nearly as effective as I could be.

Perhaps this was why units were taking longer than anticipated. Perhaps the students were having difficulty learning effectively because I was pedagogically addressing them through inefficient means. Perhaps this group of students was the most tenacious group of learners I had experienced in my three years of grade five teaching in the sense that they would not simply allow me to speed through material without them trying to slow me down, with interruptions, so that they could try to understand it! Or perhaps because they were not connecting with the material they were creating interruptions as a way to relieve the 'mindless' tedium of the less-than-quality learning experience. I was experiencing a paradigm shift in regards to how I viewed these students of mine!

Another cause of concern I had about my teaching was the conscious choice I had made earlier in the year not to utilize cooperative learning. I was aware of Johnson, Johnson and Holubec's (1987) extensive research that indicated that teachers who employ cooperative learning methods promote learning because these collaborative

experiences engage students in an interactive approach to processing information, resulting in greater retention of subject matter, improved attitudes toward learning, and enhanced interpersonal relations among group members however I had decided earlier in the year that cooperative learning wasn't worth the bother with this class of students. There had been much conflict among students and disorganization on my part when cooperative learning had been employed. It seemed more effective to use other methods.

My conscience, however, was bothering me for two reasons. The first reason was that I was aware of the fact that cooperative learning is heavily supported by research. The second reason for the tickling of my conscience was the nagging feeling that I had given up on the worthiness of my students for the best education that I could possibly muster for them.

Covey (1989) indicates that to truly put 'first things first' one must spend a significant time planning and connecting with deeper values. Obviously if a value of mine was to help these students learn effectively then I needed to spend more time planning in a research-oriented manner.

I also realized that I had spent most of the year feeling frustrated both with and at my students. I knew this was not helpful either to my students or myself. Glenn and Nelsen (1988) indicates that the importance of both friendliness and unconditional acceptance, where learning is the goal, cannot be overemphasized. I needed to be more friendly, patient and accepting of these students over the final stages of the year, if the learning environment was to be more positive.

How does one go about helping students develop strong perceptions of personal capabilities? There are 'builders' and 'blockers' that can be used to significantly influence students' perceptions of their own capabilities.

The key components in all of the barriers and builders are attitudes. The attitudes inherent in the barriers are negative and disrespectful. The attitudes inherent in the builders are positive and the blockers are: assuming, rescuing/explaining, directing, expecting and using adultisms. The builders are: checking, exploring, encouraging/inviting, celebrating and using respect. (Glenn and Nelsen, 1988, p. 95)

Glenn's research reminded me that the key to establishing a friendly classroom would be primarily influenced by my own attitude.

Actually, the multiple-intelligence research helped me develop a greater respect for my students in the way that it helped reinforce that all students have amazing capabilities and intelligences. The multiple-intelligence research really helped me to shift my paradigm and see the students in a more positive light. The research worked in harmony with Glenn's research to contribute to a friendlier teacher and hence a classroom atmosphere that would be more conducive to students developing stronger perceptions of their own capabilities.

Hence I made a decision to spend all my preparation time to totally re-work my wetland ecosystem unit. I decided to plan the unit using a multiple-intelligence planning approach that was interlaced with Glenn's research and a simplified cooperative learning structure. Preparation involved more time, in a more thoughtful way, than I had spent on any unit for the entire year.

I previously had spent much of my 'prep-time' in items that would be classified as quadrant three activities. I would spend time checking email (much of which was not directly impacting my daily pedagogy), checking regular mail, or perhaps going to the staff room to be involved in conversation with other colleagues. Much of this time was in the realm of quadrant three or even quadrant four. I decided that my prep-time, in order to be more effective, needed to be spent truly in preparing exclusively for the wetland ecosystem unit and on nothing else. This exclusive planning time was quadrant two activity, not urgent but important.

The process of planning was invigorating for me. I felt the students would be excited about this unit. The planning was challenging and time-consuming but it was also connecting me to the vision I had created in phase two of my research. At the same time my conscience was telling me that the research-base was integral to my mission statement. The process of planning was totally invigorating!

When the wetland ecosystem unit began I gave the students an overview of what topics would be covered, what activities experienced and a little about the educational research of multiple intelligences and cooperative learning. I was very excited to introduce this unit and had the feeling that it was going to be a quality learning experience for the students and myself. The students also seemed very enthused about beginning the unit.

Over the course of the next six weeks I experienced an epiphany. My class was transformed and the students seemed to enjoy their learning, each other and me more than any time previous to that. There were far fewer interruptions or off-task behavior during this unit. The students seemed more motivated than during any other point in the year,



and it was late May and June, which is often the time when motivation sometimes lags. The students' science assignment, quiz and test scores were higher than at any other point during the year. For me it was one of the most rewarding teaching experiences of my career to this point and several students indicated on their year-end evaluation that aspects of the Wetland Ecosystem study were overall year highlights.

### Summary

Putting first things first meant that I spent more time planning and reflecting. It also meant using research as a guide to my planning. Covey (1989) indicates that a significant amount of time in quadrant two is essential to effectiveness. I believe the fact that I spent a significant amount of time in quadrant two, planning and preparing for the unit, was an important reason for the success of the unit. I also believe that the unit's multiple intelligence and cooperative learning research bases were significant. In addition I believe that my more friendly demeanour during the unit – due to utilizing some of Glenn's and Nelsen's (1988) research – was also significant. I also believe that it was much easier for me to be friendly during this unit because I had the inner belief that the unit was going to perpetuate learning more effectively. This helped me be less tense and more relaxed.

I believe that most significant of all was the weaving of the various factors: quadrant two time, multiple intelligence research and practice, cooperative learning research and practice and Glenn's (1988) research and practice.

My attitude is fundamentally important to pedagogical success. My excitement as a teacher is contagious, I believe, as evidenced during the wetland ecosystem unit. My

excitement about learning can become self-fulfilling with my students. This, too was evident during the wetland unit. This then, relates directly to habit one, be proactive. I have learned it is very important that I pay attention to my 'teacher' conscience. If I detect that my conscience is troubled I need to investigate the source of the trouble and whether it needs attention. The reason this is important is because my troubled conscience may affect my attitude toward my pedagogy and directly affect my students' learning.

The ideal for me to work toward is reducing time spent in quadrant three, eliminating time spent in quadrant four and increasing time spent in quadrant two. As I invest more time on the planning, prevention, and relationship-building activities of quadrant two, I will find, according to Covey, that I will spend far less time reacting to crises in quadrant one or reacting to the urgent demands of others in quadrant three. Covey indicates that if I am struggling to find time to invest in quadrant two, quadrant three is the primary place to get it.

It was very useful for me to be involved in the action research group in relation to multiple intelligence. It was the collegial support, knowledge and encouragement that helped me develop the multiple intelligence approach to learning during the wetland unit. It will be important for me to continue to deepen my knowledge of multiple intelligence, cooperative learning and social-relational research.

## EPILOGUE

This project has been a success for me because the pedagogical outcome was that I became a more effective teacher with better effects for my students. In conclusion, I think that Covey's first three habits have helped me to become more successful at teaching.

It seems to me that habit one, be proactive, is the most powerful of the three habits because it fundamentally is about thoughtful metacognitive functioning. More importantly habit one is about improving attitude which is a building block to the other two habits. It seems to me that if I have a mission that is well thought out, but lack the proactive attitude of habit one, then the mission is doomed. It also seems that in order to complete habit three, first things first, then a proactive attitude is necessarily fundamental.

I have discovered there is a synergistic relationship between the three habits. They work together and as the habits are put into practice they add to each other. Being more proactive helps keep my mission alive and keeping my mission alive helps develop a proactive attitude. Keeping first things first helps to carry out my mission which contributes to proactivity. Visualizing my teaching mission helps clarify both proactivity and the outcomes desired in habit three. Success begets success.

As a result of this project my lasting hope is to continue to develop the habits in my professional life and to develop greater pedagogical effectiveness on a continual basis.

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Appendix One:

Alberta Education 24 Learner Characteristics and Additional Correlated  
Characteristics

- 1) Read for information, understanding and enjoyment –Alberta Education
  - a) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - b) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - c) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
  - d) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
  - e) Written and oral communication – Phillips
  - f) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
  - g) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
- 2) Write and speak clearly, accurately and appropriately for the context – Alberta Education
  - a) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - b) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - c) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
  - d) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
  - e) Written and oral communication – Phillips
  - f) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
  - g) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
- 3) Use mathematics to solve problems in business, science and daily-life situations – Alberta Education
  - a) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn

- b) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - c) Efficacy: how to solve problems – Phillips
  - d) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - e) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
  - f) Trusting your own judgment: how to think – Phillips
  - g) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
  - h) Written and oral communication – Phillips
  - i) Learn problem-solving skills – Nelsen
  - j) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
  - k) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
  - l) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
  - m) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - n) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 4) Understand the physical world, ecology and the diversity of life and understand the scientific method and the societal context of science – Alberta

Education

- a) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
- b) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
- c) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
- d) Written and oral communication – Phillips
- e) Develop social interest – concern for their environment – Nelsen
- f) Ability to invent or create – UNESCO
- g) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO

- h) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
  - i) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
  - j) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - k) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 5) Know the history and geography of Canada and have a general understanding of world history and geography – Alberta Education
- a) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - b) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - c) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
  - d) Written and oral communication – Phillips
  - e) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
  - f) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
- 6) Understand Canada’s political, social and economic systems within a global context – Alberta Education
- a) Systemic skills – Glenn
  - b) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - c) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
  - d) Written and oral communication – Phillips
  - e) Develop social interest: concern for community – Nelsen
  - f) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
  - g) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
  - h) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
  - i) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO



- j) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 7) Research an issue thoroughly – Alberta Education
- a) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - b) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn
  - c) Judgemental skills – Glenn
  - d) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - e) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
  - f) How to design and direct your own learning – Phillips
  - g) Trusting your own judgment: how to think – Phillips
  - h) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
  - i) Written and oral communication – Phillips
  - j) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
  - k) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
  - l) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
  - m) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
  - n) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - o) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 8) Know how to work independently – Alberta Education
- a) Ultimate goal is for students to become independent learners who have developed the ability to continue to learn throughout their lives – Marzano
  - b) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - c) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn
  - d) Judgemental skills – Glenn

- e) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - f) Appreciating your own uniqueness as a learner – your zen – Phillips
  - g) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
  - h) How to design and direct your own learning – Phillips
  - i) Trusting your own judgment: how to think – Phillips
  - j) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
  - k) Written and oral communication – Phillips
  - l) Self discipline – Nelsen
  - m) Ability to learn without instruction – UNESCO
  - n) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
  - o) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
  - p) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
  - q) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - r) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 9) Know how to work as part of a team – Alberta Education
- a) Interpersonal skills – Glenn
  - b) Perception of personal capability – Glenn
  - c) Perception of personal significance – Glenn
  - d) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - e) Appreciating your own uniqueness as a learner – your zen – Phillips
  - f) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
  - g) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
  - h) Skills of social intimacy: to give and receive affection – Phillips

- i) Written and oral communication – Phillips
  - j) Develop social interest – concern for others – Nelsen
  - k) Interpersonal skills – UNESCO
  - l) Ability to lead others – UNESCO
  - m) Ability to communicate (written and oral) – UNESCO
  - n) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
  - o) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - p) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 10) Respect the cultural diversity of Canada – Alberta Education
- a) Interpersonal skills – Glenn
  - b) Develop social interest – concern for others – Nelsen
  - c) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
  - d) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
  - e) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - f) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 11) Appreciate literature – Alberta Education
- a) Appreciation of beauty: epiphany – Phillips
  - b) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
- 12) Appreciate the arts – Alberta Education
- a) Appreciation of beauty: epiphany – Phillips
  - b) Ability to understand new ideas – UNESCO
- 13) Know the basic requirements of an active, healthful lifestyle – Alberta Education

- a) Perceptions of personal power or influence over life – Glenn
  - b) Judgemental skills – Glenn
  - c) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn
  - d) Habits for health and rituals – Phillips
- 14) Recognize the importance of accepting responsibility for their physical and emotional well-being – Alberta Education
- a) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - b) Perceptions of personal power or influence over life – Glenn
  - c) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn
  - d) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - e) Habits for health and rituals – Phillips
  - f) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
  - g) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - h) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 15) Appreciate the role of the family and other relationships to physical and emotional well-being – Alberta Education
- a) Interpersonal skills – Glenn
  - b) Appreciating your own uniqueness as a learner – your zen – Phillips
  - c) Skills of social intimacy: to give and receive affection – Phillips
  - d) Habits for health and rituals – Phillips
  - e) Develop social interest – concern for others – Nelsen
  - f) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - g) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO

16) Manage time and other resources needed to complete a task – Alberta

Education

- a) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn
- b) Trusting your own judgment: how to think – Phillips
- c) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
- d) Process skills, e.g. time management – Phillips
- e) Self-discipline, responsibility – Nelsen
- f) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
- g) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
- h) Ability to monitor the effects of one's actions – UNESCO
- i) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO

17) Use computer and communication technologies – Alberta Education

- a) How to design and direct your own learning – Phillips
- b) Written and oral communication – Phillips

18) Demonstrate initiative – Alberta Education

- a) Perceptions of personal power or influence over life – Glenn
- b) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
- c) Appreciating your own uniqueness as a learner – your zen – Phillips
- d) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
- e) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
- f) Dreams: hope, optimism – Phillips
- g) Joy of learning – Phillips

- h) Self-discipline, responsibility, positive capabilities, positive attitude – Nelsen
- i) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
- j) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
- k) Ability to monitor the effects of one's actions – UNESCO
- l) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO

19) Demonstrate leadership – Alberta Education

- a) Perceptions of personal significance – Glenn
- b) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
- c) Trusting your own judgment: how to think – Phillips
- d) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
- e) Skills of social intimacy: to give and receive affection – Phillips
- f) Dreams: hope, optimism – Phillips
- g) Joy of learning – Phillips
- h) Ability to lead others – UNESCO
- i) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
- j) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
- k) Ability to monitor the effects of one's actions – UNESCO
- l) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO

20) Demonstrate flexibility – Alberta Education

- a) Interpersonal skills – Glenn
- b) Systemic skills – Glenn
- c) Dreams: hope, optimism – Phillips

- d) Joy of learning – Phillips
- e) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
- f) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
- g) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO

21) Demonstrate persistence – Alberta Education

- a) Perceptions of personal power or influence over life – Glenn
- b) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn
- c) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
- d) Appreciating your own uniqueness as a learner – your zen – Phillips
- e) The process of inquiry: how to find answers – Phillips
- f) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
- g) Dreams: hope, optimism – Phillips
- h) Joy of learning – Phillips
- i) Develop self-discipline, responsibility, positive capability, positive attitude – Nelsen
- j) Ability to forecast – UNESCO

22) Evaluate their own endeavours – Alberta Education

- a) Judgemental skills – Glenn
- b) Appreciating your own uniqueness as a learner – your zen – Phillips
- c) Trusting your own judgment: how to think – Phillips
- d) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
- e) Dreams: hope, optimism – Phillips
- f) Joy of learning – Phillips

- g) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
  - h) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
  - i) Ability to monitor the effects of one’s actions – UNESCO
  - j) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO
- 23) Continually strive to improve – Alberta Education
- a) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn
  - b) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - c) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - d) Appreciating your own uniqueness as a learner – your zen – Phillips
  - e) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips
  - f) Dreams: hope, optimism – Phillips
  - g) Joy of learning – Phillips
  - h) Develop more social interest and act on the concern – Nelsen
  - i) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
  - j) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
- 24) Have the desire and realize the need for life-long learning – Alberta Education
- a) Judgemental skills – Glenn
  - b) Intrapersonal skills – Glenn
  - c) Perceptions of personal capabilities – Glenn
  - d) Feeling capable and confident – Phillips
  - e) Appreciating your own uniqueness as a learner – your zen – Phillips
  - f) How to design and direct your own learning – Phillips
  - g) Process of mastery: how you become an expert – Phillips



- h) Dreams: hope, optimism – Phillips
- i) Joy of learning – Phillips
- j) Positive capability and positive attitude – Nelsen
- k) Ability to forecast – UNESCO
- l) Ability to make good judgements – UNESCO
- m) Ability to monitor the effects of one's actions – UNESCO
- n) Ability to take corrective action when necessary (efficacy) – UNESCO

