

Kerrie Nairn Scholarship Progress Report

August 29 2010

Resources For Schools Project – ‘Speaking Confidently’

Speaking in public is feared by many. The aim of my Kerrie Nairn Scholarship project is to develop and make available on-line to both primary and secondary schools, a program aimed at increasing the confidence of student leaders to speak in public. The target audience are students in both primary and secondary schools who are candidates for school leadership positions.

The resources will be provided free of charge via the resource vault on the NSAA website. The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) as sponsors of the Kerrie Nairn Scholarship will also be approached to make the resources available to schools via their website – Civics and Citizenship Education.

A sequence of five lessons have been developed covering the *Top 10 Tips for Speaking Confidently*. As well as explaining the Top 10 tips, the lessons provide students with an opportunity to practise and develop their speaking skills through a series of speaking tasks. The tasks increase in complexity and lead to their dress rehearsal of their presentation at school.

Each of the tips is accompanied by a short video explanation. The establishment of a *You Tube* channel of relevant video tutorials appears to be the most feasible strategy for wide access. The channel and videos will be branded NSAA and DEEWR.

The program is designed to be either facilitated by a teacher for a group of students (eg candidates for school leadership positions) or completed by a student independently. I am currently trialing the lessons and tips with primary and secondary students.

I have been in contact with the Halogen Foundation, hosts of National Young Leader Days in Australian capital cities for primary and secondary students. I have been invited to present at their next Young Leaders Day in Brisbane to approximately 2000 secondary school student leaders in November.

Professional Development and Mentoring

On July 29 I presented a 20 minute keynote to 200 conference organisers, speaker bureau representatives and potential corporate clients as part of the *Thought Leaders Winter Showcase*. This was the culmination of the mentoring by Matt Church and proved very worthwhile. The Showcase was a fantastic opportunity to present to key potential clients. The feedback was very positive with a number of bookings and many connections made with speaker bureaus.

One of the key benefits I received through participating in this project was clarifying my key message. Through working with Matt as a mentor I developed the intellectual property that I have through my 20 years experience as a school principal and transferred that knowledge to the corporate sector. My keynote *‘Adapt or Die’* focused on the importance of learning faster than the pace of change. Almost everybody recognizes the rapid pace of change, however if we aren’t adapting and learning faster than the pace of change we risk either becoming obsolete or swamped.

Peter Senge advocated in the 1990s that businesses needed to become learning organisations. I argue that the recent GFC has led many organisations to become very lean. If they don’t put an emphasis on ‘learning’, as well as ‘earning’ they risk being obsolete. This positioning was well received and acknowledged by those who attended.

My area of expertise is 'learning'. Through working with Matt I unpacked my knowledge of learning and how that applied in business. I have identified 4 Principles of Pedagogy (the science of learning) and the 6 Learning Zones that businesses needed to consider and plan for to ensure they are truly a learning organisation. The work with Matt has been invaluable in assisting me to utilize my experience as a school principal to benefit clients in the corporate arena.

As a result of my work with Matt I launched the 'Steve Francis' brand with the signature use of chalk on black flip-charts. This approach is very eye catching, memorable and clearly aligned with my 'brand'. My 'takeaway' for prospective clients from the Showcase was a block of unique black post-it notes branded with my website and slogan "What did you learn today?" The feedback was extremely positive with the branding being memorable, ensuring a clear point of difference and aligned with my background as an educator – exactly what a signature should do!

As part of the Showcase process I developed a Speakers' Pack aligned with the guidelines provided by Suzie Christie from Global Speakers bureau. Feedback from Maria Carlton as part of her 'Awesome Author-ity' program was invaluable in ensuring clarity and brand consistency.

Apart from Matt, I have continued to receive guidance and advice from a number of NSAA colleagues including Tony Ryan, Bruce Sullivan and Maria Carlton.

Steve Francis

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