

# NCSL Annual Leadership Conference

Leadership that makes a difference for children

**Seizing Success**  
Annual Leadership Conference



# Professor David Hopkins

## The Adventure of Leadership

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# **The Adventure of Leadership**

**The NCSL Annual Conference**  
**International Convention Centre, Birmingham**  
**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

**Professor David Hopkins**  
**HSBC iNet Chair of International Leadership**

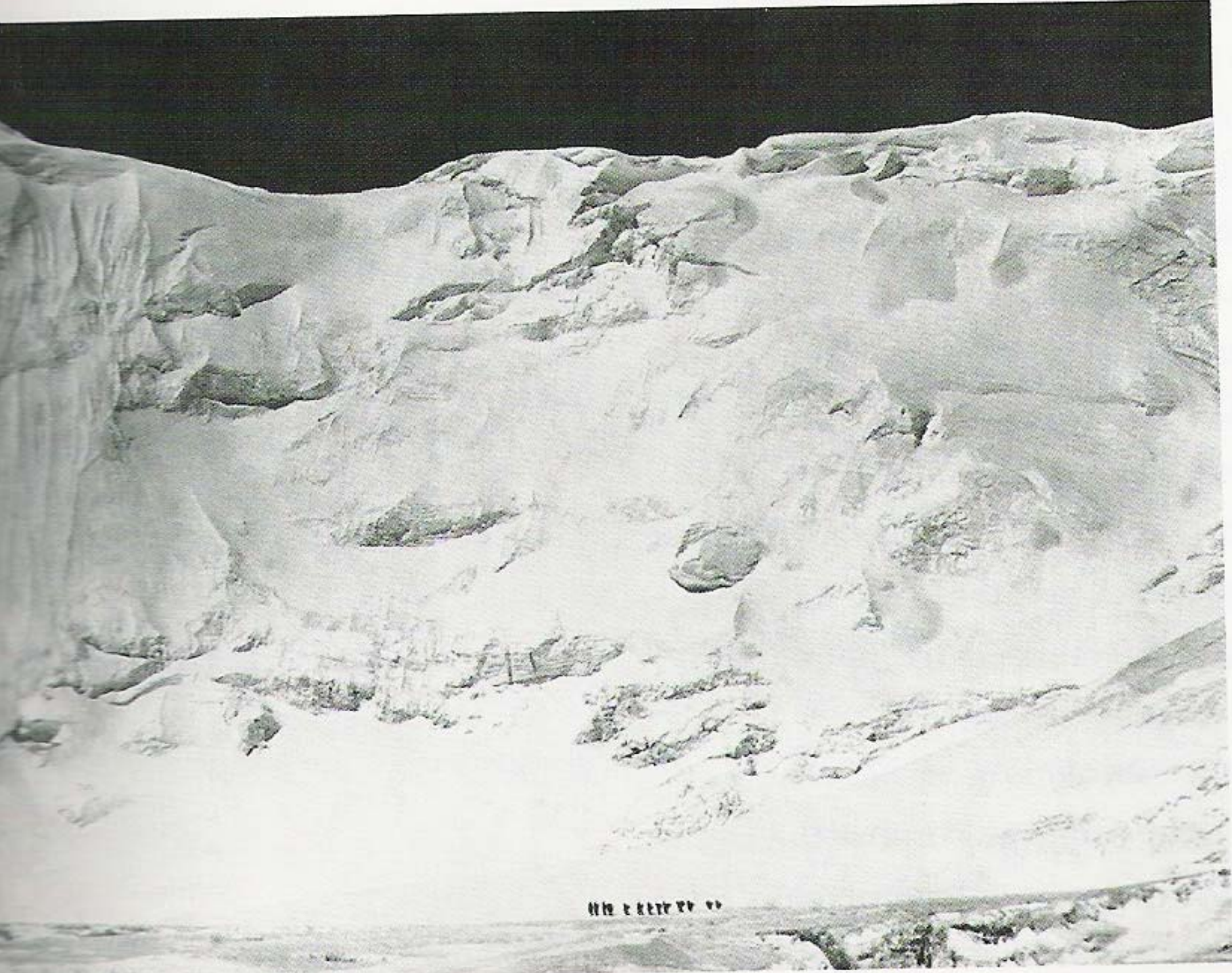
























Everest North Col Expedition 2004









# The Nature of Adventure

If adventure has a final all-embracing motive it is surely this; we go out because it is our nature to go out, to climb the mountains and sail the seas, to fly to the planets and plunge into the depths of the oceans. By doing these things we make touch with something outside or behind, which strangely seems to approve our doing them. We extend our horizon, we expand our being, we revel in a mastery of ourselves which gives an impression, mainly illusory, that we are masters of our world. In a word we are men, and when man ceases to do these things, he is no longer man.

Wilfred Noyce



# Adventure and Education 1

Adventure education has a long and distinguished tradition. Think of Homer's *Odyssey*; Plato's *Republic*; and Rousseau's *Emile*.

The notion of personal development occurring through challenge and adventure resonate with every one of us. So much so that *experience* has become the central block for many educational philosophers and psychologists such as Dewey, Piaget and Bruner.

Adventure education has an enduring relevance in a wide variety of educational contexts.

# Adventure and Education 2

Our aim should surely be – and is, ...that of discovery, of enlargement of mind and spirit, it is that young people might have life and have it more abundantly. And they can do this only by discovering for themselves, with our help and encouragement, what are life's truest values. The endurance, the hard work, the facing of dangers, the abstinence, the plodding on in rigorous conditions, these are merely the means. They are not ends...

The true end is freedom and light. And in the words of Clemenceau, 'Liberty is the right to discipline ourselves in order to be disciplined by others'.

Tom Price



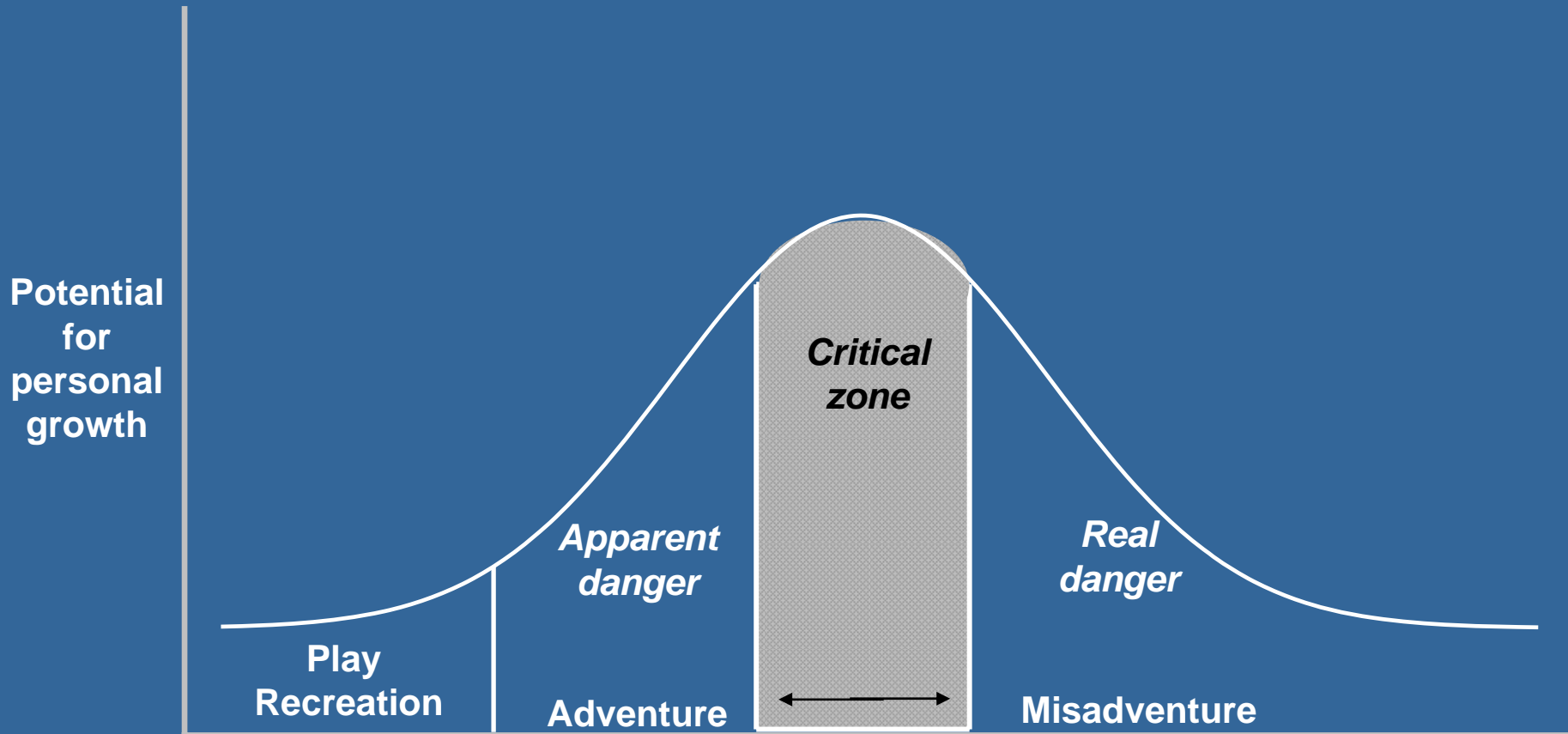
# A Framework for Adventure 1

Adventure is a state of mind that begins with feelings of uncertainty about the outcome of a journey and always ends with feelings of enjoyment, satisfaction, or elation about the successful completion of that journey....

The initial feeling of uncertainty of outcome is fear of physical or psychological harm. There can be no adventure in Outdoor Pursuits without this fear in the mind of the participant. Without the fear there would be no challenge. Fear extended to terror, however, is not adventure. This is misadventure as the journey is psychologically too demanding for the person concerned.

Colin Mortlock

# A Framework for Adventure 2





# Life Scripts and Adventure

We all have life scripts, some of us chose to develop them others are forced to do so. Life scripts evolve as the individual confronts direct experience and adapts and assimilates it with their self. Adventure as the purest form of direct experience has the ability to develop 'life script' in the most immediate way. 'Adventure leaders' create situations where others can develop their own life scripts.

As Mahatma Gandhi said – 'You must be the change you wish to see in the world'

# The Importance of Story Telling

All stories are true and yet not true. Every story is complete in its own context, its own reality. Every story therefore reflects a system a map of the world.

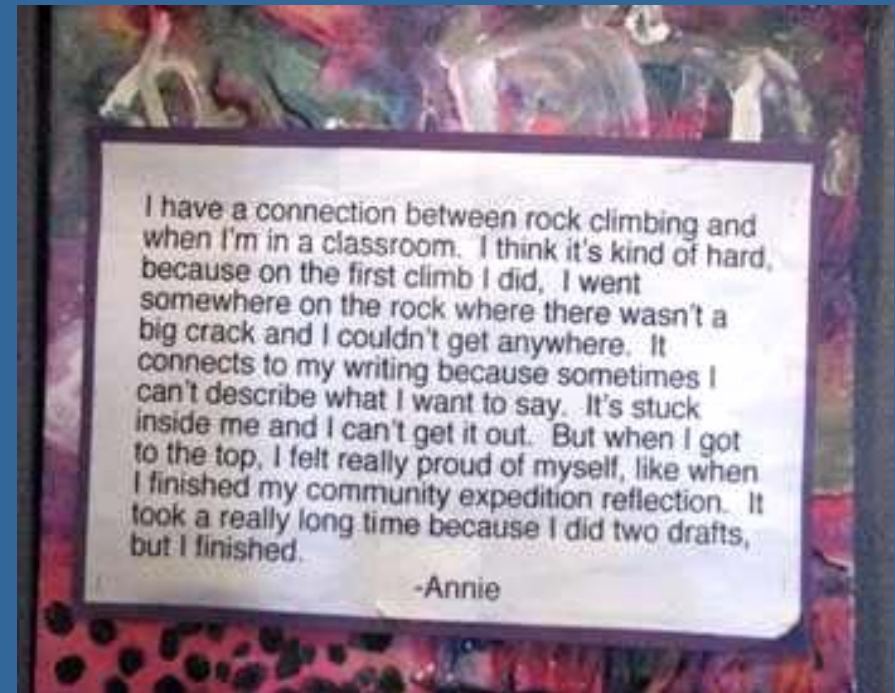
Stories offer us ways to see and understand our world in a new light, from a different angle. They allow us to challenge ourselves and others, to recognise the limitations and shortcomings of our own maps of reality so that new insights become possible. Change becomes possible. Transformation becomes possible.

Nick Owen



# Expeditionary Learning Schools' Mission

As Outward Bound aims at the transformation of individuals, Expeditionary Learning aims at the transformation of whole schools. Expeditionary Learning's mission is to develop and sustain good schools of a certain kind--more humane, rigorous, principled and adventurous than the norm--in places where they're most needed.



# The Five Core Practices of Expeditionary Learning

- Learning Expeditions
- Active Pedagogy
- School Culture and Character
- Leadership and School Improvement
- School Structures



# Teacher Professional Development Opportunities in Expeditionary Learning Schools

- **On-site:**
  - Direct service days working with ELS staff at the school
- **Off-site offerings:**
  - Summits, Institutes and OB Courses designed specifically to address the five core practices
  - National and Regional Conferences
  - Site seminars at EL schools to showcase what a high functioning ELS school looks like on a daily basis

# Codman Academy

- Charter high school in Boston
- 89% African- American, 1% Caucasian, 2%Asian and 8% Latino. Over 75% of Codman students receive free or reduced lunch
- 100% of the students in the 2005 graduating class accepted to four year colleges
- In 2003, 100 percent Codman's sophomores passed the state English Language Arts assessment test on their first attempt, compared to 53 percent at Dorchester High, two blocks away.
- Class of 2005 showed a gain of 7 points in each of the last two years, compared to a national average gain of 1-2 points per year.



**In an EL school, teachers involve their students in high-quality learning expeditions. Learning expeditions are long-term, in-depth investigations of engaging topics that involve students in authentic projects, fieldwork, and service.**

***Students celebrate  
another successful  
learning expedition  
with the people who  
made it possible***

# Making history

Students record the life stories of community elders

**By Sandra Kalle**  
*University of Iowa, Iowa*

**S**ince this year, the honey on Yucil is available without restriction and now will guide the life of Antennae. The first is its name. The middle of the middle-school path remains empty of greenness. Writing the word has been a work of a second-grade class. Light up the faces, brighten the history and literature of the school of contemporary education.

Among them is Lucien Urdan, a young XL. He said another member of Lumbini Masses spontaneously demonstrated his desire early to meet Whangyong's Middle School students, who will present them with typical Korean articles of their time. There is in the heart of an empty park, next to the Lumbini Temple, and members of that ancient Dharma temple wish to see selected in and the numerous students of...

The audience came knowing little about themselves besides the names they were given by their "musicians." Some spent several days in summer growing self-sufficient and healthy and the current wisdom of their time. They also gave cassette tapes of the flow of their experiences in which



"It was a real learning experience. We didn't just learn about someone's life, though, we learned about grammar and English. It was interesting and a lot of fun."

**Derek Marks**  
**Winnequah student**

# Fred Morrison

## Zoologist

### What is Zoology?

Zoology is the study of animals.



### Background

- Went to area public schools
- Graduated from University of Massachusetts, where he got a Bachelor's degree of science in Geology
- Did not become a geologist, instead became a middle school biology, physics and earth science teacher
- Finished a Masters Degree while he was teaching
- Taught science education courses in local colleges
- Worked part-time as a property manager at MassAudubon's Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary
- Took an early retirement from his teaching job in 2001
- Leads natural history tours to Costa Rica and Mexico
- Now works as a consulting biologist
- Also works as an editor and scientific consultant for the radio series "Field Notes" produced by his wife, Laurie Sanders. He and Laurie are the proud parents of 3-year-old Lydia.
- Owns a home in a Costa Rican cloud forest which he and his wife and other scientists use as a base for research

### Childhood

Growing up, Fred's parents were very supportive of him. They thought that whatever he chose for his career would be great! These days he is very happy that he chose to be a scientist!

### Did you Know

That dragonflies start out as nymphs that live underwater for one or more years. Then they crawl up onto the shore, shed their skins and fly away as winged adults.

### Expert in:

- Butterflies, especially Monarchs even to Mexico to study them at their overwintering colonies
- Fresh water mussels. He and a colleague recently found a population of endang mussels (not seen in MA for 12 years) was thought to be extirpated
- Reptiles and Amphibians (especially sn)
- Dragonflies and damselflies. He and his have been studying and collecting dragon skins for the past 8 years.
- Ants, his latest passion. He hopes to become good at this in a few years



### Equipment

- Nets
- Microscopes
- Boots
- Plastic bags
- Field guides
- Tupperware
- Scuba diving gear
- Science test tubes
- GPS units



### Fred's Work With Dragonflies

Fred studies dragonflies and the skins of nymphs. After their aquatic lives, the nymphs crawl out of the water, shed their skins (called exuviae) and fly off as adults. Fred collects and identifies these skins to learn about what kinds of dragonflies live at any particular body of water. He has mounted a small part of his skin collection in glass cases seen below. Under the skins are tiny labels that tell when, where, and by whom the skins were collected. Fred and Laurie estimate that they've collected 15,000 skins so far.

### Field Notes On WFCR

If you would like to listen to Fred and Laurie's radio show on WFCR public radio, 88.5 FM, tune in every Monday morning at 7:35. The show is hosted by Laurie Sanders.



Dragonfly skins

### Environmental Protection Work

One type of job that Fred and Laurie do involves construction sites. If it turns out the site might include the habitat for a rare species they sometimes get called in to check to see whether or not the construction will have any sort of negative impact to the habitat. This could affect the building plans. Or even, in some cases, stop the project. They also do before-and-after surveys to see if certain kinds of construction projects are a problem in terms of a habitat of rare species. For example, some eroding sections of the river bank along the Connecticut River were recently bio-engineered in an attempt to stop the erosion. Fred and Laurie studied the changes in the kinds and numbers of dragonflies (including several rare species) that came ashore both before and after the engineering work and then offered suggestions on how to improve future bank stabilization projects.



## Meet Local Scientists A Book For Kids, By Kids



*Interviews with scientists from the Pioneer Valley  
By students from 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> East Class,  
Shutesbury Elementary School  
Shutesbury, Massachusetts  
2003-2004*



**I wrote (with Bruce Joyce) some time ago  
that:**

*Learning experiences are composed of content, process and social climate. As teachers we create for and with our children opportunities to explore and build important areas of knowledge, develop powerful tools for learning, and live in humanizing social conditions.*

# Teaching Models

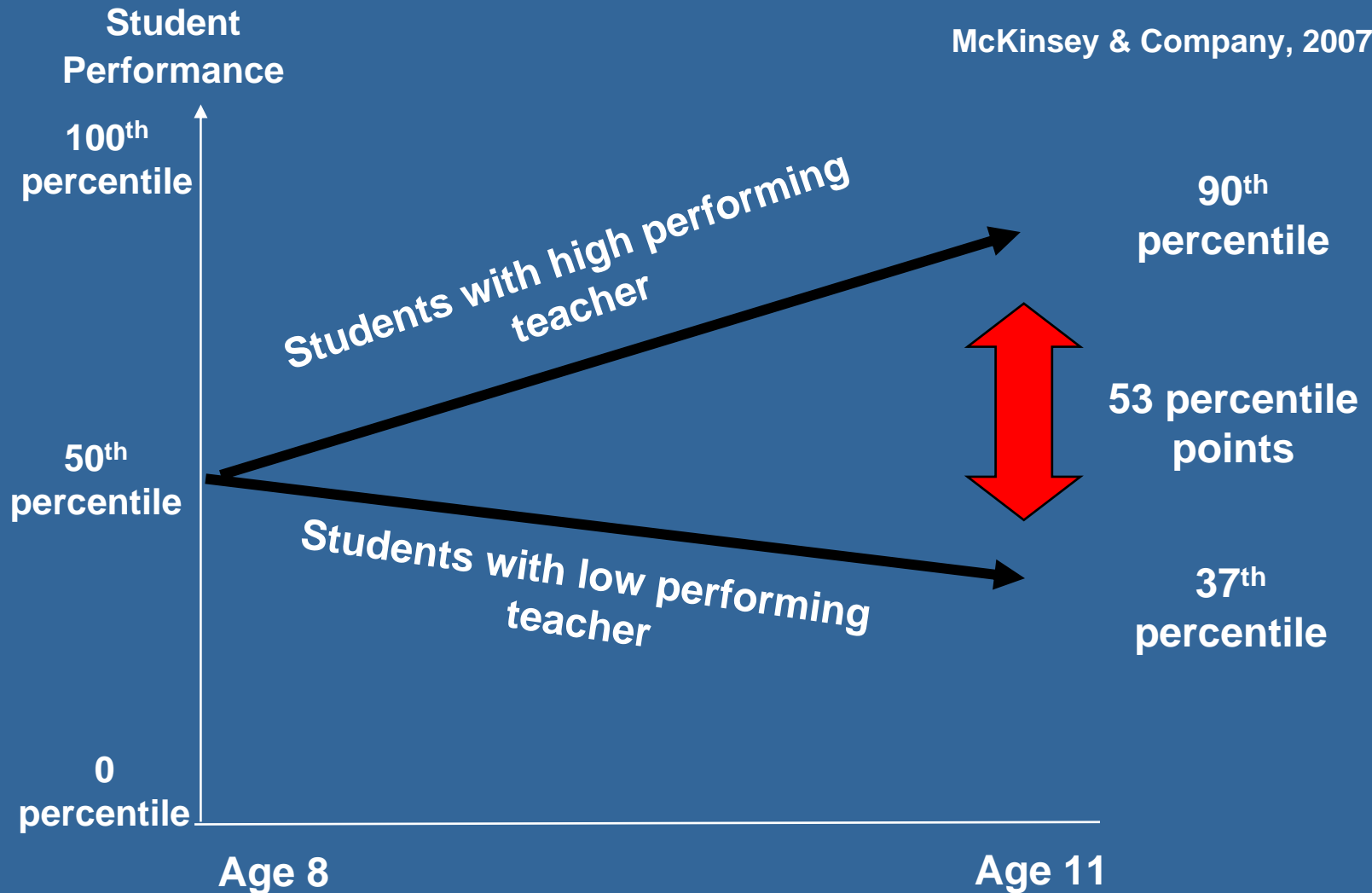
Our toolbox is the models of teaching, actually models for learning, that simultaneously define the nature of the content, the learning strategies, and the arrangements for social interaction that create the learning contexts of our students. For example, in powerful classrooms students learn models for:

- Extracting information and ideas from lectures and presentations
- Memorising information
- Building hypotheses and theories
- Attaining concepts and how to invent them
- Using metaphors to think creatively
- Working effectively with other to initiate and carry out co-operative tasks



# Effect Size of Teaching

McKinsey & Company, 2007:11



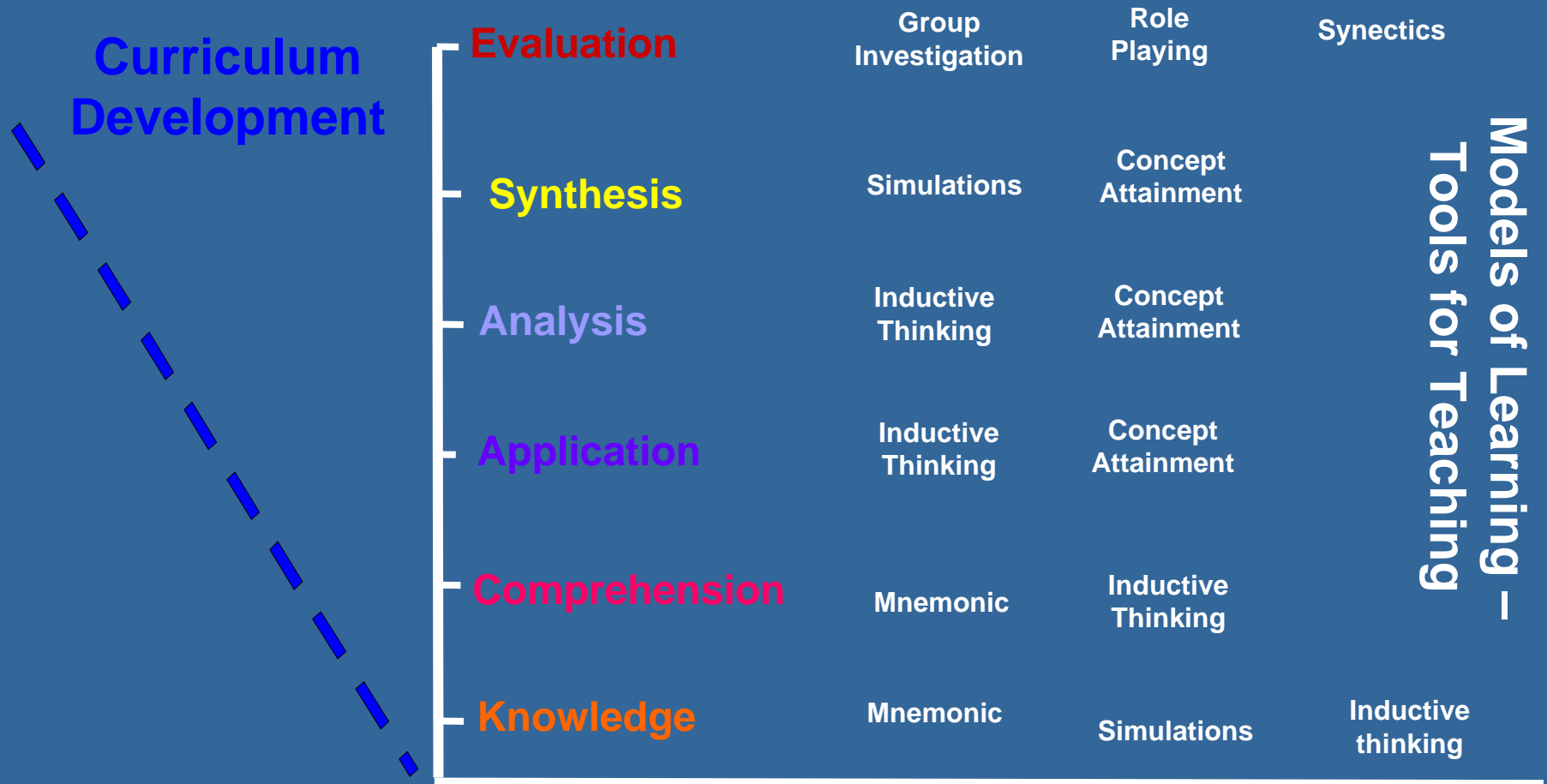
# Powerful Learning ...

Is the ability of learners to respond successfully to the tasks they are set, as well as the task they set themselves In particular, to:

- Integrate prior and new knowledge
- Acquire and use a range of learning skills
- Solve problems individually and in groups
- Think carefully about their successes and failures
- Accept that learning involves uncertainty and difficulty

All this has been termed “meta-cognition” – it is the learners’ ability to take control over their own learning processes.

# The Dialectic between Curriculum, Learning and Teaching





# The Leadership Challenge

“... we need to be skeptical about the “leadership by adjective” literature. Sometimes these adjectives have real meaning, but sometimes they mask the more important themes common to successful leadership, regardless of the style being advocated”.

Ken Leithwood



# Lord Hunt on Bonington and Leadership

Everest imposes enormous emotional strains on the climber. Upon no one was the stress so great and prolonged as on the leader of the expedition. His was the original decision to make the bid; his the choice of companions, the general strategy, the supervision of the whole complex plan and its unfolding on Everest. His was the responsibility for the lives of more than 70 men, exposed to risks of many kinds and for a considerable time ... On the leader would be heaped the chorus of criticism, if this expensive venture were to prove to be yet another failure.

John Hunt





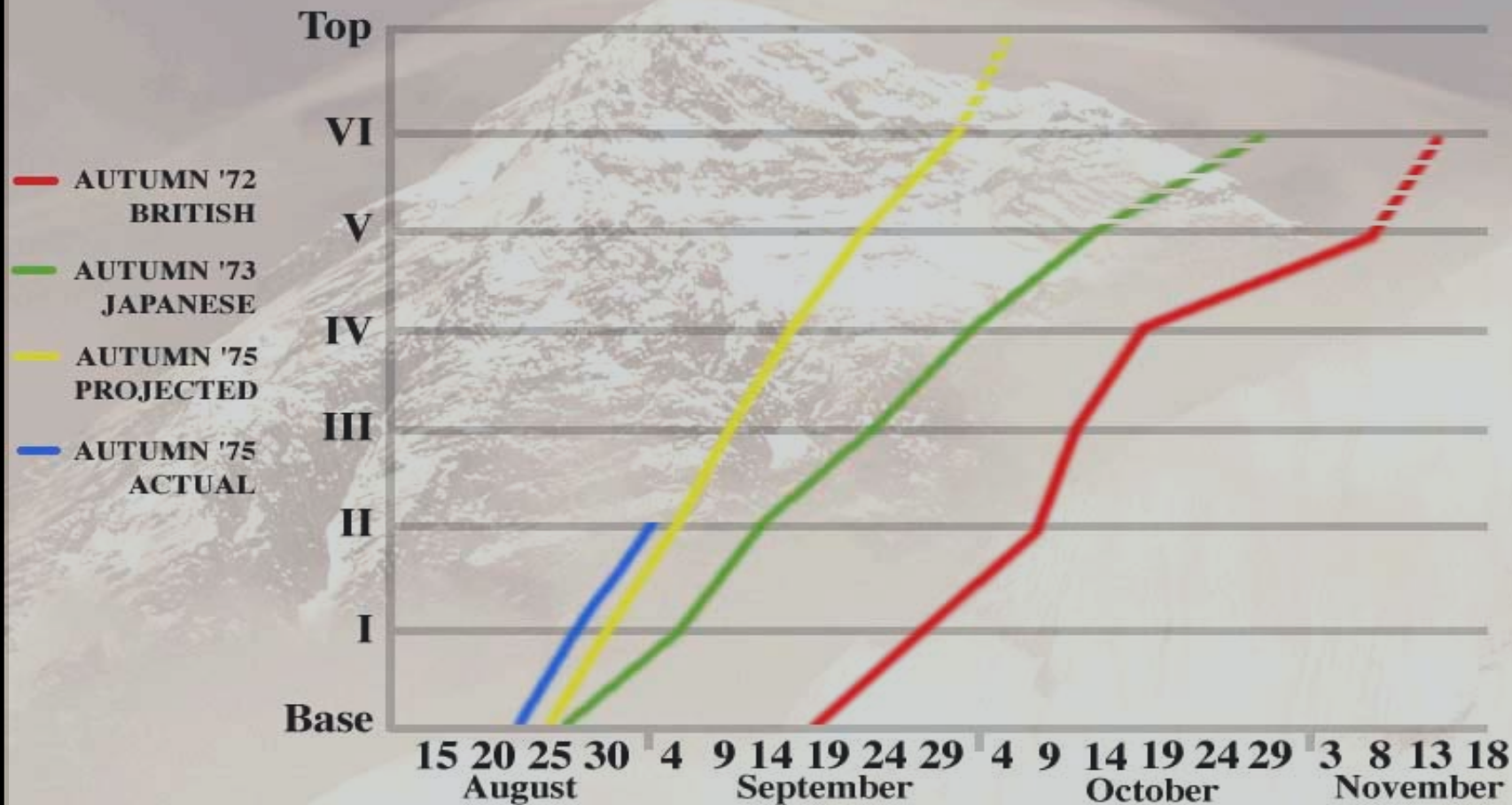






















































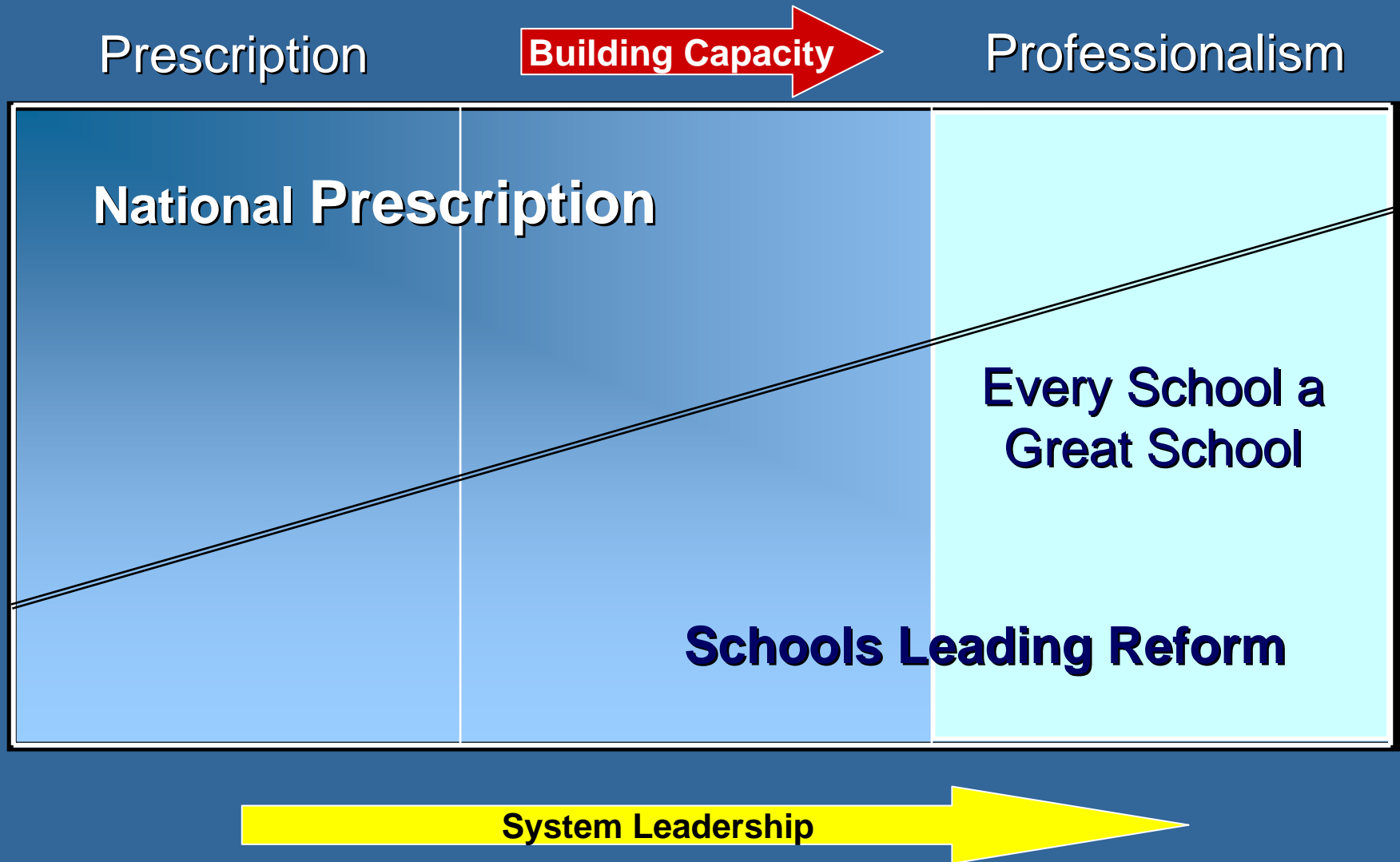


# The Adventure of Leadership

On first appearance leading a team up South West Face of Everest may not be similar to leading your school but do you:

- Expose yourself to risk and challenge complacency?
- Have a clear objective, develop a plan then tell the story?
- Carefully allocate roles and develop people within and beyond them?
- Manage core purpose and create the conditions where every learner can achieve their potential and achieve high standards?
- Have clear operating systems, but being open to innovation?
- Set objectives and then trust colleagues?
- Cultivate the energy that direct experience and trust generates?
- Open yourself up to awareness, adventure and challenge?

# Towards system wide sustainable reform

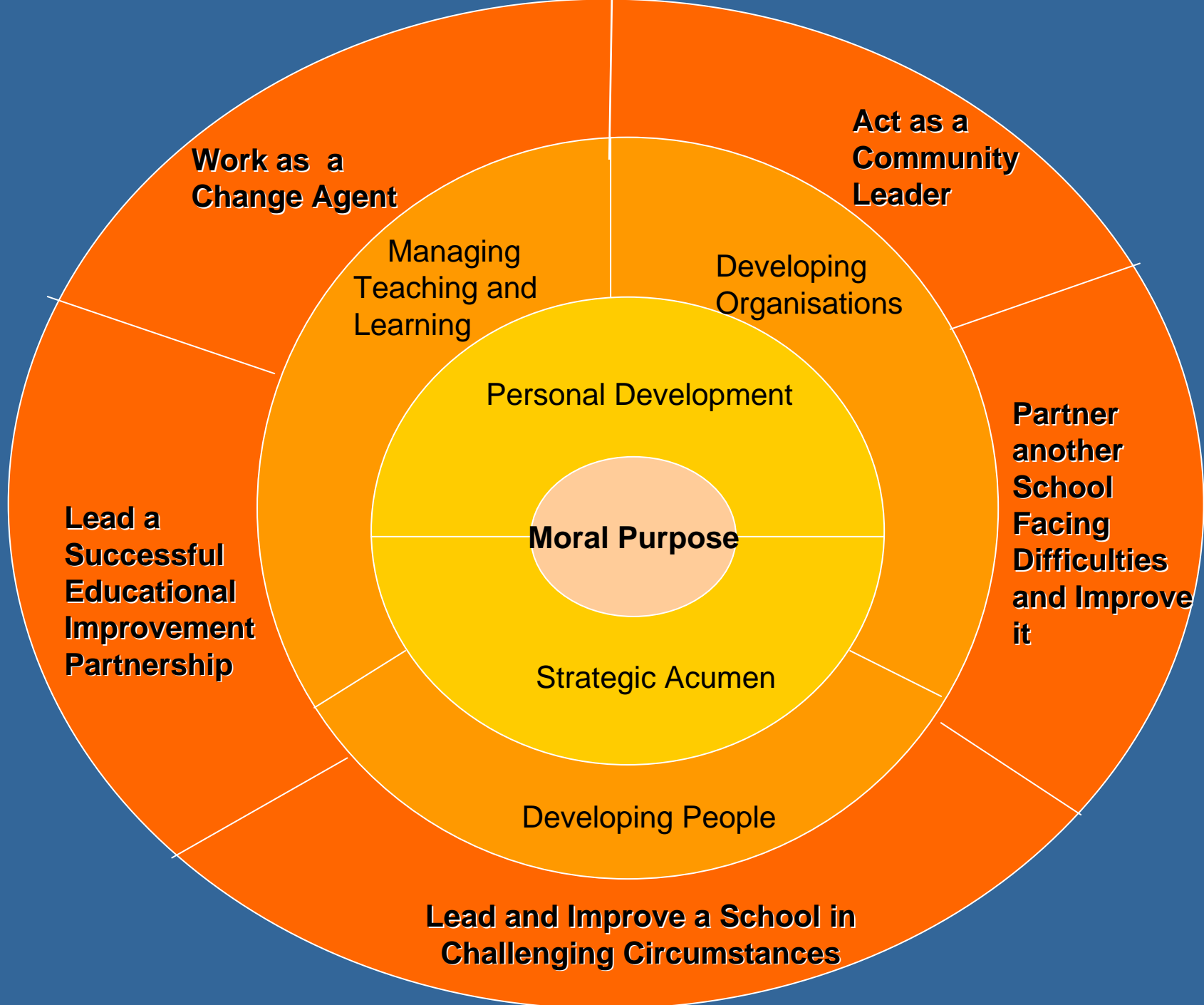




# System Leadership: A Proposition

‘System leaders’ care about and work for the success of other schools as well as their own. They measure their success in terms of improving student learning and increasing achievement, and strive to both raise the bar and narrow the gap(s).

Crucially they are willing to shoulder system leadership roles in the belief that in order to change the larger system you have to engage with it in a meaningful way.’



# System Leadership as Adaptive Work



*Technical problems can be solved through applying existing know how - adaptive challenges create a gap between a desired state and reality that cannot be closed using existing approaches alone*



# The Nature of Adaptive Work

*“The adaptive demands of our societies require leadership that takes responsibility without waiting for revelation or request. One may lead perhaps with no more than a question in hand.”*

Ron Heifetz (1994) - Leadership Without Easy Answers

- An adaptive challenge is a problem situation for which solutions lie outside current ways of operating.
- Adaptive challenges demand learning, because here ‘people are the problem’ and progress requires new ways of thinking and operating.
- Mobilising people to meet adaptive challenges, then, is at the heart of leadership practice.
- In the short term leadership helps people meet an immediate challenge. In the medium to long term leadership generates capacity to enable people to meet an ongoing stream of adaptive challenges.
- Ultimately, adaptive work requires us to reflect on the moral purpose by which we seek to thrive and demands diagnostic enquiry into the realities we face that threaten the realisation of those purposes.

From Ron Heifetz – ‘Adaptive Work’ (in Bentley and Wilsdon 2003)

# Some Characteristics of 'Adventure Leaders'

- Are not only conscious of their life scripts but also self consciously develop them and create situations where others develop their own life scripts
- Reflect on the moral purpose by which they seek to thrive and demand diagnostic enquiry into the realities they face that threaten the realisation of those purposes.
- Because they live in increasingly complex and turbulent environments they 'turn towards the danger' and adapt external change for internal purpose.
- They follow the rule of the four 'Rs' – respect for self, respect for others, respect for ecological systems and responsibility for all actions
- By themselves and in networks select and integrate innovation through their focus on teaching and learning, they take risks but they are measured risks.

# Adventure in Leadership

*‘Vision, values, determination and uncertainty are all to be found in the best leaders. Good management skills are essential, but can also leave one in the comfort zone. Good leadership should be a bit scary and is what we need most in our schools’.*

Alan Steer

*‘Never fully knowing how much further you can go; how much more can be achieved alongside the adults and young people you lead and share leadership with; and where any path may take you, but being open to all the possibilities along the journey.*

*Like a life well lived you should never feel all is achieved but rather there’s still a place left to visit, another book to read and so much more to experience’.*

Vanessa Wiseman



# Adventure in Leadership

*The adventure of leadership is the challenge of releasing the potential of others'.*

Dexter Hutt

*'Every interaction is an opportunity to share the vision and explore new ways of encouraging both staff and students to strive for bigger and better things. Leadership is all consuming and brings immense satisfaction as you observe your developing leaders, particularly young leaders, break new ground whilst keeping their focus firmly on putting students first. The adventure comes from challenging the process, from taking small risks and sometimes questioning received wisdom if you are convinced there is a better way to meet students needs. It's about not having all the answers at the beginning but pursuing the goal with 'confident uncertainty', sure that celebration will follow!'*

Michael Wilkins

# The Nature of Adventure

*You cannot stay on the summit forever:*

*you have to come down again....*

*So why bother in the first place?*

*Just this: What is above knows what is below,*

*But what is below does not know what is above.*

*One climbs, one sees, one descends, one sees no longer.*

*But one has seen.*

*There is an art of conducting oneself in the lower regions by the memory  
of what one has seen higher up.*

*When one can no longer see, one can at least still know.*

Rene Daumal

# Some Questions for ‘Adventure Leaders’

- How do we progress from Journey-ing to Adventure-ing?
- How do you develop your own life script, what role does adventure play and how do you model that?
- How are you managing the shift from prescription to professionalism in your own life and school?
- How do you manage risk in a measured way?
- As you develop the ‘adventure of learning’ in your school, what would you see, hear and feel differently?





## Professor David Hopkins HSBC Chair in International Leadership

David Hopkins is the inaugural HSBC Chair in International Leadership, where he supports the work of iNet, the international arm of the Specialist Schools Trust and the Leadership Centre at the Institute of Education, University of London. He is a Trustee of Outward Bound and holds visiting professorships at the Catholic University of Santiago, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Universities of Edinburgh, Melbourne and Wales. Between 2002 and 2005 he served three Secretary of States as the Chief Adviser on School Standards at the Department for Education and Skills. Previously, he was Chair of the Leicester City Partnership Board and Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Nottingham. Before that again he was a Tutor at the University of Cambridge Institute of Education, a Secondary School teacher and Outward Bound Instructor. David is also an International Mountain Guide who still climbs regularly in the Alps and Himalayas. His new book **Every School a Great School** has recently been published by The Open University Press.

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