

BLUFF YOUR WAY IN EDUCATION

Background

For clarity of thought I choose to call current education 'new education'. The key to being successful in new education is to forget about education. To bluff your way you have to understand how new education works. The most difficult part is to re-educate yourself. Those of you who followed traditional education, will find the modern system baffling.

Education is now a business. To be more exact it pretends to be a business. Those of you who know about business will come across a word that is used in business and think you know what it means. However in education it will mean something entirely different. For example 'staff appraisal' in business means assessing whether someone is worth a pay rise. In new education it means lying about the achievement of last year's objectives and making up vacuous new ones for this year. No money is involved.

Another example is 'project' and 'project leader'. In business these terms mean a defined set of tasks to be done under the control of a knowledgeable and skilled person who is given resources and some freedom to carry them out. In new education they mean a centrally controlled job being administered by a person who is unable to do it properly due to obstructionism and a lack of resources. The person soon becomes disheartened and cynical.

Education is now out of the hands of people who know about learning and education. Instead policy is decided by politicians, which, as history shows us, is invariably a recipe for disaster. Most politicians have been well educated in the traditional way. They always educate their children in schools and universities that are not told what to do by the state, but they condemn everyone else's children to dull, vocational pap.

The content of education has changed even more than its environment. It has lost most of its original aim of stretching people's minds and exploring and questioning new ideas in an exciting meeting of minds. Though the process is not yet complete, education has been reduced to the achieving of a set of trivial skills. In fact all that is required is a tick in a box by an assessor. The skills are called 'performance criteria', though you must just say 'PC'. Deskkilled teachers cannot of course be trusted to make judgements. This is another reason for PCs. All the facilitator has to do is read a definition such as 'Can log on to a network'. They (he or she) watches the customer. (Yes, it does sound odd doesn't it? You must keep trying so that it comes naturally.) If the log on is successful they ticks the box and moves on to the next PC.

One commentator has said, 'This is the first generation that teaches its children less than it knows'. Now that really is sad isn't it?

The real world

The usual justification for new education is that it must live in the real world. All that is needed is sufficient vocational skill to make a person employable, very much a Victorian view of education. To be successful in New Education you must make people believe that you see education as a business and that you are not politically naïve. You must talk about 'flexible labour force' (ie Abused) and invent statistics to show that Britain is falling behind. You do not have to believe any of it of course. It is best if you don't, because you must appear to support the next set of nonsense when it comes along.

Abbreviations

Education always was a spawning-ground for abbreviations and acronyms. New education has seen an exponential rise. You need to learn lots of these. You don't need to know what they mean or abbreviate, merely to string them together. You might be very unlucky to be speaking to someone who might know the meaning of one of them. Don't worry. Just talk about the impact of SKERP on BDER (BDER is the thing he or she knows about). Of course you can make them up if you need to. Most new educationists suffer so much angst that they will not challenge something they are uncertain about. This is the equivalent of Vic Reeves assertion that, '82.6% of all statistics are made up on the spot'.

Here are some real ones to be going on with (no they are, really). Please add your own. PC NVQ IV EV D32 NAIT CLAIT SMERSH

Political correctness

PC is people being offended on another's behalf. PC is now rife in new education. For example you should not use 'his or her', for why should gender (not sex) be a factor and why should men come before women or vice versa. Instead you must say 'their' even in the singular case.

Much is now done on the 'osmosis' or 'infinite number of monkeys' principle. This means that the customer (student) is given material called 'courseware' and left to get on with it. This reduces 'costs'. Note that this is not cost in the real business sense but salary. It means that you can pay people less because you have deskilled the job. Deskilled teachers are called 'facilitators'. The latest example is called 'eLearning'. Notice the InterCapping. Vey modern, that.

Double-think

This is a term invented by George Orwell in his novel 1984. It means holding two contradictory ideas in your head at the same time. There is a lot of double-think in new education. For example a politician says, "Education, education, education!". This means that there will be more education and that it will be better. However it also means less money. In turn this means

students pay for their education for a second time, having already had it paid for by their parents' taxes. This means that courses must be shorter and simpler to ensure the rapid success of the customer. Thus more and better also means less and lower. It is summed up by the statement "all improvements are for the worse". You must practice double-think if you are to succeed.

Edbiz

Creating new training opportunities

Most educational statements are meaningless. Proposals and treatises are assessed by thickness not quality. This means that if the usual ploy of increasing line spacing to 1.5 and the type size to 14 point fails to produce sufficient weight of paper you can stuff the text with meaningless but high-sounding sentences or even paragraphs. The method is explained at the end of this paper.

To be completed

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