

**The effectiveness of interpersonal and
relational skills criteria in the selection of
Queensland Executive Principals**

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B. Ed. Dip. Teach.

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
Master of Administrative Leadership (Honours)**

University of New England

February 2010

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher acknowledges the contributions of:

- (a) The Principal Researcher and Supervisors Dr Dan Riley, Professor Larry Smith and Mr David Gee;
- (b) the Executive Principals who participated in this research through interviews and questionnaires;
- (c) the Regional Executive Directors and Executive Directors (Schools) who participated in this research as supervisors of Executive Principals and who completed questionnaires;
- (d) The Deputy Principals and Heads of School who participated in this research through the questionnaires;
- (e) Mrs Valerie Odell who assembled the data;
- (f) Mrs Wendy Gallagher and Mr Allan Langdon who read the original scripts and provided advice.

ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of interpersonal and relational skills criteria in the selection of Queensland Executive Principals.

The question of whether Principals in large schools require high level interpersonal and relational skills to succeed, and whether the majority of incumbents of these positions have these skills has been largely ignored in the research about Principal leadership.

This study examines a sample of half of the most senior Principals in Queensland, those in schools of more than 1600 students who have had to re-apply for their positions under the title of Executive Principal. Data is collected from the Executive Principals; their supervisors; and officers within their schools who directly report to them. The research uses a mixed research approach using both qualitative and quantitative methodology and employs both interviews and questionnaires to affirm the conclusions from the literature study that these skills are vital to effective principalship in large and complex schools.

The data collected in the research shows that interpersonal and relational skills are seen by all parties as vital to effective principalship, and suggests that these skills are not only important, but perhaps the most important.

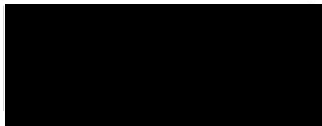
The conclusions of the research not only confirm the view that interpersonal and relational skills are vital to success as a principal, but also document some of the key skills in this area which are important – authenticity; collaboration and the ability to build partnerships; the ability to influence; concern for others; the ability to inspire and motivate; and the ability to deal with complex situations and people.

The paper provides a platform for further research in this area across the full breadth of the principalship.

CANDIDATE'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.



PHILIP ANTHONY COOK

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMNS

EP	Executive Principal
EDS	Executive Director (Schools) (A supervisor of Principals in Queensland)
BNet	Business Network Australia
LBDQ	Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire
HOD	Head of Department – a leadership position in secondary schools
QSPA	Queensland Secondary Principals Association
P-12	A school enrolling student from Preparatory (entry) to Year 12 (conclusion)
APAPDC	Australian Principals’ Associations’ Professional Development Council