

Transcript Ross Fox's Keynote Address

Part 5 – Leadership and managing change



Science of Learning Leadership Accelerator

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A joint venture between



Crowthor Centre
AN ENGINE THAT POWERS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

**Primary
focus**



It's been a learning journey, a serious leadership reflection learning journey. I'll note that Ollie Lovell's book makes it into the canon at the moment for the "Science of Learning", we've got "Why Knowledge Matters" there. There's another book which is more abstract about "The schools we need and why we don't have them", by ED Hirsch, which I also think is quite profound. Natalie Wexler is a brilliant writer in the "Knowledge Gap", but as you can see Anita L. Archer, Daisy Christodoulou and I've been cheeky and put Ollie's podcast and Greg Ashman's podcast because I think they're an amazing professional learning resource for those who are interested and want to find out more. I've certainly spent a lot of time sharing all of these resources with my colleagues who are leading education systems, saying, if you really want to understand this.

I think that is also an important point. That is a temptation to say we've all got to only be interested in our role in an education system, so principals don't need to worry much about how students learn in the classroom because we've got the teachers for that.

The director of Catholic Education doesn't need to know what our theory of learning is, because we've got the Education Lead, we've got these Principals, we've got all these teachers, and we all have to be accountable for the theory that informs our learning. That's certainly been my lesson, and too often, we're totally distracted by things that we can be busy with and not focussed on learning.

The other part of that journey is we have been collaborating with, formally or informally, I think, some of the best Science of Learning advocates, Science of Reading advocates. Pamela (Snow) addressed our Principals, but what happened is we started offering and encouraging people to do the Science of Learning and Reading Lab courses, and we had this amazing uptake far beyond our expectations. La Trobe has certainly been leading the way in a number of elements there. John Sweller, the person who really refined and proclaimed the cognitive load theory. A number of people have just been so influential in our understanding and how we've proceeded.

Just to note that, you know, I really encourage you, it's easy to think you're on your own way, we're hopefully reaching a tipping point in our system where we've got lots of people committed to the Science of Reading, Science of Learning, but there's people all over the country now. And what we're seeing obviously most recently is that WA adopted the Year One Phonics Check. It's really hard not to have a serious reflection on the importance of phonemic awareness and phonics knowledge when you've got a Year One Phonics Check. I've had all sorts of conversations about people opposed to such a proposition. I'm really optimistic. We are building coalitions. We're building lots of collaboration of those who want to be involved.

