Opportunities and Challenges for Future VET Leadership

p41 ... in particular developing new narratives about leadership

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How useful are narratives founded on

- C19th and C20th metaphors & language – the factory, the battle?
- the leader as heroic, charismatic, a person with the answers?
C19th: the factory: control, order, predictability

process management as the hallmark of quality: variation is feared

C20th: the battle: mission, direction, strategy, orders, command & control culture

win at all costs – victories as the hallmark of quality
Assumptions

- the present challenge is knowable
- the elements of the system are ordered and controllable
- there is one best way forward
- the results of interactions are predictable
- the future is knowable & predictable

... and what of the C21st?

- Gen X & Y assume change – it’s not something to be ‘managed’

- technology drives novelty, openness – customers can be involved in making their product or service

- global unpredictability
  - clarity (conversation) rather than certainty (direction)
  - capacity to be opportunistic (adaptive)
... and what of the C21st?

- hybrid value chains rather than production cycles
- the customer determines quality – based on their experience of personalisation & well-being
- so do staff – what’s their narrative?
- management innovation not just product innovation

=> old metaphors don’t help!

VET in the C21st: plenty of paradoxes ...

- mass AND niche?
- bespoke AND standardised?
- high level quals AND foundation skills?
- individual AND industry?
- outputs AND outcomes?
- competition AND collaboration?
- local AND global?
‘both/and’ … NOT ‘either/or’

New language & metaphors for new conversations about leadership

An Ecology?

- systems inside systems
- interdependence
- interaction (not just action)
- context
- constant adaptation in the present
The Relay?

- a shared process not an individual quality
- interdependence & interaction are keys to success
- baton-passing really matters
- distributed and generative