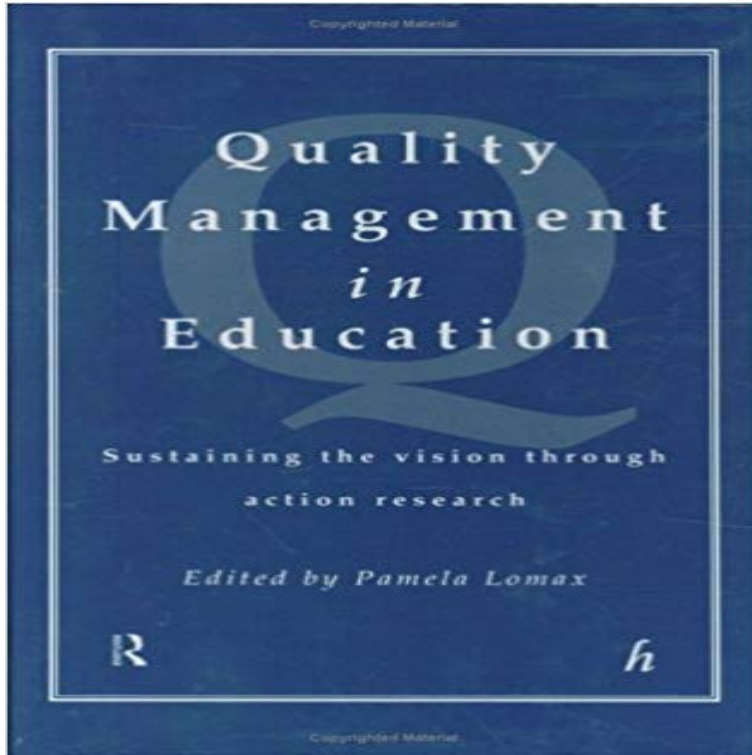


Quality Management In Education: Sustaining the Vision Through Action Research



This book is about people who are vitally aware of their own need to learn, and to apply that learning to the process of facilitating other peoples learning. It is a book about change, not in the sense that change is an isolated singularity, or a string of isolated singularities, that might sufficiently enter the stream of consciousness; but of change being the nature of that stream of consciousness. As we live we are in a continuing process of transformation, engaging in a form of thinking that is transformatory, and that transforms our social practices. For such change to carry the imperative of quality, as the legend on the back of this book suggests, the change must be for the better; it must be improvement. Improvement is linked inextricably with the notion of education, with the idea of openness to new possibilities, of responsible choice in diversity. Such is the nature of the stories in this book. Each story describes how its author deliberately changed an aspect of practice in the service of the people in their care. Such deliberation implies a willingness to change; such morally committed action, in the words of Pam Lomax, itself is aimed at improvement. The improvement is hard won. It is won at the expense of personal turmoil, of questioning comfortable ways of thinking, of personal instability in the transformatory practice of critical self-appraisal. That process, implicit in these stories, is a precursor to a better, more humane world. The book is also a story about peoples stories. It is the story of how people may be supported in their professional learning by others who care enough to engage in the kind of support practice that requires them also to learn. This is the nature of the professional network that is facilitated by Pam Lomax at Kingston University. Pam is internationally recognised as one of the foremost proponents of professional

education through action research, and her stature as a supporter of innovative forms of collaborative enquiry is substantial. Such recognition is also not without cost. In her commitment to promoting the cause of the legitimacy of practitioners knowledge, Pam Lomax has accepted the mandate constantly to interrogate her own ideas to stand accountable for her own practice. That story is here, too. The multiple-embedded stories of the book are echoes of the multiple-embedded lives of the storytellers within their network. The motif is clear - people deeply committed to improving the quality of their own practice in the service of others; and showing how they do it; and standing accountable for their actions. We should all learn from these stories, those of us who are willing to learn, and who recognise the need also to strive to improve our own practice. Doug Bone, Headteacher, Moyra Evans, Denbigh School, Milton Keynes, Di Hannon, Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames, John Loftus, Mayfield Primary School, Hanwell, Lon

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