

Profile of an Innovative Education Leader

We are facing numerous challenges in all aspects of education. Some of these problems are rooted in the past, others are developing as the world around us changes, and some we cannot yet even imagine. To address these issues, we need education leaders who can focus on the future and bring about needed change. We need innovative leaders who look beyond innovating for immediate success and instead support long-term goals and build foundations that foster further innovation.

Without innovative leadership in education, schools and school systems would not be able to evolve to meet the education and learning challenges of this century. As times change, education also must change. Innovative leaders will drive that necessary change.


Innovative leaders are inventive, daring, resourceful, fearless, resilient, and inspiring, and these qualities help them identify current problems, prescribe improvements for the future, and mobilize stakeholders to collaborate in implementing innovations. They are visionary thinkers committed to increasing access to, equity within, and quality of education. They seek to create peaceful and just societies that place education at the center of human development and progress.

For innovations to be conceived, implemented, and adopted widely, it is essential that innovative leaders exist at all levels in education—classrooms, schools, school systems, ministries of education, and other institutions within the public and private sectors that deliver education and invest in its development.

Innovative leaders communicate their ideas about improving education effectively and diplomatically. They must be able to motivate the people around them to implement those ideas.

Innovation

Innovation builds upon, or improves, something that already exists. When we innovate in education, we are rethinking, reimagining, or reinventing the education of today through improvement, reform, and transformation to meet the needs of tomorrow. We are shepherding education through evolution and guiding it toward an improved and enhanced state.



Innovative education leaders focus their efforts on ways to improve schools and school systems while ensuring that quality and equity in education are achieved. Innovative leaders in education do not have to hold formal leadership positions, such as school principal or administrator, to effect change; they can be found throughout the education sector. Teachers, school counselors, advisors, administrative staff, and anyone else who has a desire to improve education outcomes for children and shares their vision with others can be an innovative leader.

Regardless of position, innovative leaders communicate their ideas about improving education effectively and diplomatically. They must be able to motivate the people around them—staff, teachers, education managers, parents, community partners, and other stakeholders—to implement those ideas. They have the energy, perseverance, and passion for unifying people in the pursuit of moving education forward. Further, they are able to lead themselves—they must know their own strengths, recognize areas where they need to improve, and be willing to engage in self-reflection.

Often, innovative leaders simply recognize a great idea—perhaps devised by someone else—and envision the path that leads to that idea becoming a reality. Innovative leaders create a culture that stimulates and supports others to come up with their own ideas about how to solve problems and improve and transform education.

Although important, creative genius is not always needed to become an innovative leader. However, one must be able to recognize an innovation, be able to form a vision around the new idea, and support others in moving the new idea, and vision for education, forward.

In this rapidly changing world, it is crucial for schools and school systems to ensure continued growth and evolution of education that will meet the needs of learners and of society at large. Therefore, innovative leaders empower others by providing an environment for open communication and building trusting and supportive relationships. Being involved in the innovation will empower and motivate all the stakeholders to adopt, support, and implement innovative changes.



Traits of Education Innovators

Traits that help education leaders find innovative solutions to education challenges include:

- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Collaboration
- Flexibility
- Passion
- Resourcefulness
- Perseverance
- Resilience
- Vision.



**Childhood Education
International™**

Bright Futures for Every Child, Every Nation

Website:

www.ceinternational1892.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/ChildhoodEducationIntl

Twitter:

twitter.com/ChildhoodEdIntl