

“Developing the Teaching Career for a Global Economy: the Irish Policy Approach.”

**Contribution by
Professor John Coolahan,**

To Session 6 of the

**Global Forum on Education: The challenges for
Education in a Global Economy**

25th October 2005

School Characteristics Sought by the Global Economy (1)

- Pupils' Identities and Destinations Fluid
- Intelligence is Multi-dimensional
- School is Culturally Heterogeneous (Inclusive)
- Focus on Personalised Educ., Not Mass Product
- 'Learning to Learn' Motif
- Holistic Educational Experience
- Creativity re Curriculum and Assessment
- Repertoire of Teaching Styles
- Value of Group Work
- Integration of Technologies

School Characteristics Sought by the Global Economy (2)

- Teacher Teamwork, Collegiality
- Teachers as Learners – C.P.D.
- Roles are Blurred/Overlapping + New Roles
- Leadership Style Collegial
- More School Autonomy
- School Planning – Inquiry, Reflection
- R. & D. Projects
- Links with External Agencies / Partnerships
- Significance of Relationships
- Education within a Lifelong Framework

Significance of *Teachers Matter*

- The Most Comprehensive, Most Interpretative Comparative Study of the Teaching Career
- Centrality of the Teacher to Achieving Aims of the “Knowledge Society” within the Global Economy
- All Aspects of Career, from Entry to Retirement
- Respect for Diversity of Country Traditions
- Broadens the Framework of Policy Reference - Stimulation not Prescription

Towards Schools as Learning Communities (4.6.5)

- **Changing Role of Teachers**
 - **At Student Level**
 - **At Classroom Level**
 - **At School Level**
 - **At the Level of Parents and Wider Community**


OECD, *Report* (pp.86-87)

Main Concerns set out in OECD Review (2005)

- **Attractiveness**
 - Half Countries have Problems of Supply
 - Fewer “Higher Achievers”, Males
 - Image and Status Problematic
 - Salaries in Relative Decline in Most Countries
- **Teachers’ Knowledge and Skills**
 - “Qualitative” Shortfalls
 - Links between Teacher Education and Schools
 - Lack of Systematic Induction

- **Recruiting/Employing Teachers**
 - **Inequitable Distribution**
 - **Schools' Lack Role in Appointments**
 - **Handling of "Over-Supply"**
- **Retaining Effective Teachers**
 - **High Rates of Attrition (new teachers)**
 - **High Workloads / Stress**
 - **Limited Means to Reward Endeavour**
 - **Poor Processes for "Ineffective" Teachers**
 - **Age of Teaching Force**

Aspects of Irish National Context ⁽¹⁾

- Tradition and Status of Teaching Career
- Rootedness and Quality of Teacher Education
- Public Confidence in the Education System
- Education as an Investment Priority
- All Graduate Profession Since Early 1970's
- Registration Council (1918)  Teaching Council (2005)
- Mature Teacher Unions
- Consultative Role in Education Policy

Aspects of Irish National Context ⁽²⁾

- **Vitality of Education Policy**
 - 3 White Papers; Raft of Ed. Leg.
 - Curr. Reform as a Rolling Issue
 - Govt. Adoption of a 3 I's Policy
- **Quality of Entrants / Competitiveness**
- **Age Balance**

Aspects of Irish National Context ⁽³⁾

- **Feminisation**
- **Differentiation of Roles - Career Paths**
- **Secondments; Career Breaks; Early Retirement**
- **SEN Support Staff**
- **Education Centres**
- **Role of INSET / CPD Support Services**

The Strategic Challenge and Opportunity

- **Pro-active Policy on Teachers Crucial for Achieving a Quality Education System in Global Economy**
- **Need for Holistic, Interconnected Policy**
- **Timelines of the T.E.S., Teaching Council etc.**
- **Circumstances for Targeted Action are Propitious**
- **Partnership Approach**
- **Interface of Education ↔ Workforce**
↔ Global Economy

“Teachers Matter”: A Spur for Action

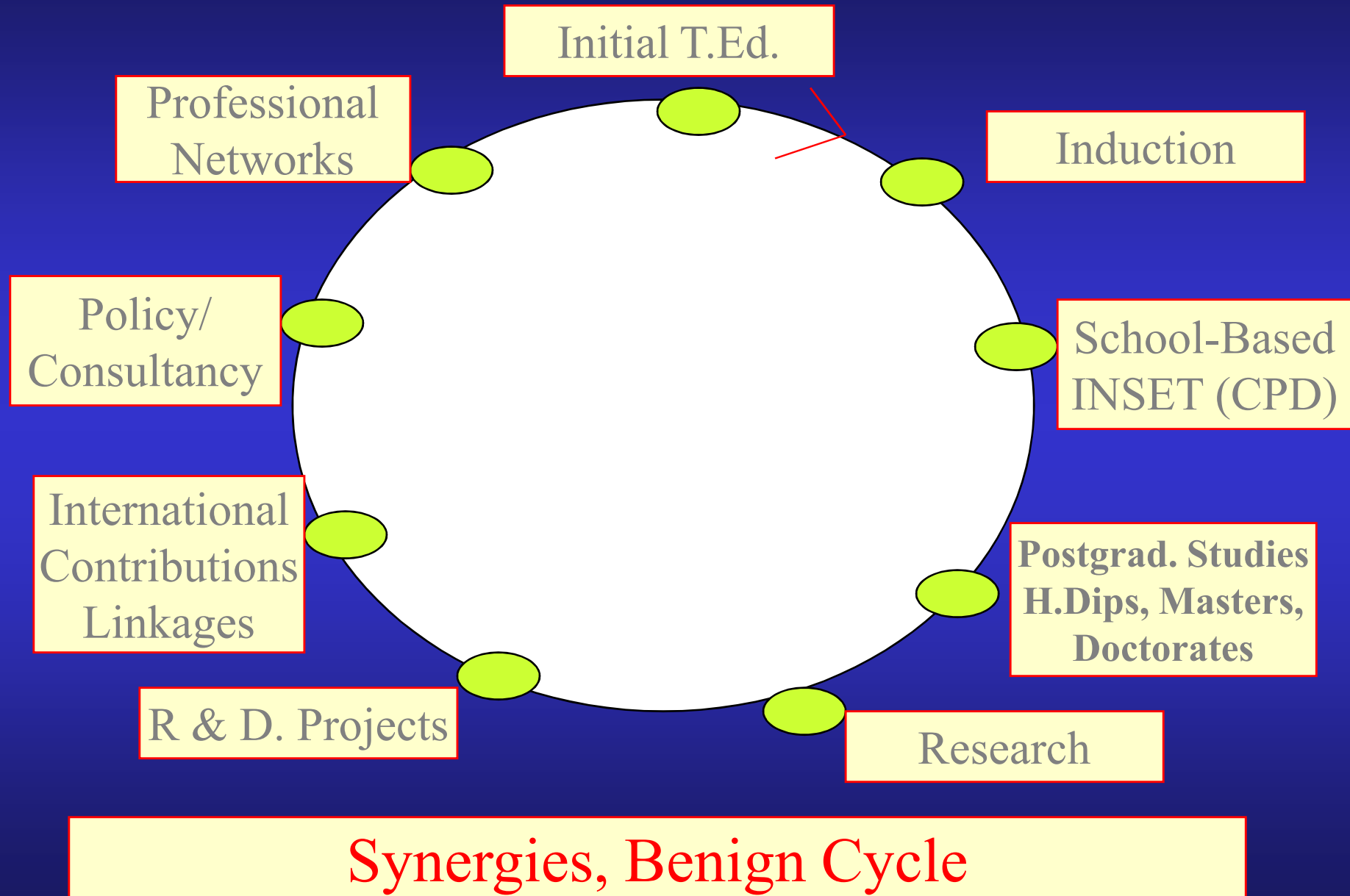
FOUNDATION ISSUES

- Developing a Comprehensive Data Base on Teachers
- Providing Time for Non-class contact Duties
- Drawing on Recent Reviews of Teacher Education
- Study of, and Reflection on the Teacher Profile / Competencies Approach
 - What teachers are expected to know, be able to do
 - Evidence-based, involvement of the profession

Recruitment / Selection Issues

- Sustaining Image of Profession
- Quality Needed
- Varied Pattern – Concurrent, Consecutive
- Role Models
- Female / Male Imbalance
- “Mature” Students
- Provision for Career Transfers
- Mode of Selection

Changing Profile of Education Departments



Curriculum of I.T.E.

- Subject to On-going Reforms
- Components: Academic Subjects
 - Educational Sciences
 - Methodologies / Didactics
 - Teaching Practice
- Rationale – “The Reflective Practitioner”
- Variety of Teaching – Learning Styles
- Small-group and Individual Attention
- Incorporation of ICT
- Research Emphasis

Enriching School-Based Experience

- Increasing Importance
- Nature of the Experience
- Patterns of Placement
- Not Just T.P.
- College-School Partnerships
- Role of School Mentors – Training, Rewards
- Evaluating T.P.
- Linking Theory and Practice
- Promotion of Action Research / Self
Appraisal

Induction

- Idea Generally Accepted
- Variation of Policy Response
- Draw on Good Practice / Pilot Experiences
- Plan for Reduced Workloads
- Mentor Provision and Training / Role
- Partnership of Schools, Teaching Institutions
Education Centres, Support Services
- School Leadership Role
- Problems of P.T. Beginning Teachers
- Induction Distinct from Probation

INSET ——— C.P.D. (1)

- Integral to Career – Investment
- Broad Interpretation within Strategic Policy
- Compulsory – Voluntary – Rights
- Variety of : Types, Providers, Themes,
Duration
- Time / Timing – A Concern
- Linked to Career Stages
- Methodology – Interactive
- Involvement of the Profession

INSET

C.P.D. (2)

- Award-Bearing: College-Based, Distance Ed.
- School-Based Dimensions
- Sustained R. & D. Approach
- Clusters / Network Approach
- New Initiatives – Support /Groups,
Education Centres
- Research Aspects
- Evaluation / Feedback

Some In-Career Issues (1)

- **Strengthening Probation for 2nd Level**
- **Policy on Young, Qualified P.T. Teachers**
- **Supports for Teachers in Disadvantaged Contexts**
- **Evaluation / Inspectorate — Links with Profiles**
- **Encourage Teacher Mobility**
- **Vary Work Experience**

Some In-Career Issues (2)

- **Re-establish Employee Assistance Scheme**
- **Implement Policy on the Chronically Ineffective Teacher**
- **Provide Attractive Working Conditions for Older Teachers**
- **Support School Leadership**
- **Improve Support / Administrative Services**