

School Leadership - Heads on the Block?

Pat Thomson



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Most teachers become heads for idealistic reasons, wanting to make a difference to the lives of children and young people. Yet serving heads suggest the job is getting harder, talking openly about stress and leaving the job. Many teachers now see headship as a risky business, and succession planning, while necessary, will not on its own be sufficient to attract the diverse range of applicants required to satisfactorily fill leadership positions. *School Leadership: Heads on the Block* addresses this shortage. It suggests there is no crisis in supply per se, but that schools in some locations find it difficult to attract the 'right people with the right stuff'. The book examines the expectations of heads, the hours they are expected to work and the nature of everyday demands. It proposes that 'sudden death' accountabilities act as a major disincentive to potential applicants, and outlines a series of policy measures to tackle the kinds of daily pressures heads now experience.

Key features of the book:

- draws on a wide range of material, ranging from published research, interviews and media clippings to popular films and children's novels
- makes extensive use of headteachers' words and stories
- based in the author's own experiences of headship, tackling issues that leadership books often ignore.

The book will be of interest to headteachers, headteachers' professional associations, teachers and those who study teaching. It will be useful to policy makers, those responsible for the education of potential heads and for headteacher professional development.

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