VET educators: voices from the storm

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VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times

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The Turbulence
New Zealand tertiary education is constantly undergoing significant and frequent policy change through ‘radical reform agendas’ (McLaughlin, 2003)

Drivers for tertiary and particularly vocational education are many
Tertiary vocational education is seen as a way of addressing a range of social, political and commercial problems

Shifting eddies
Ongoing changes in an attempt to respond to the needs of:

- Society
- Industry
- Economy

High youth unemployment, skill shortages, students disengaged from school, industry/worker skill mismatches, value for money for government, students and industry

Current voices
Government – value for money qualifications, student achievement, youth unemployment
Industry – skills match (mismatch) to industry
Institutions – student needs
What is vocational education about?

Who is it for?

Who is navigating?

Where are we going?

Where are the voices of the educators?
What is vocational education about?

Identity
What do you (vocational educators) call yourself (themselves)? What names are in use?

Purpose
What do you see as the purpose of vocational education?

Influences
What are the main influences on the work of a vocational educator?

Future
What do you see as the future for vocational education?
What is vocational education?
(informal survey results, 111715 responses from trades, professions, administrators in tertiary VET)

• Training for a vocation for a workplace
• Preparation for a job
• Education tailored to a specific task that needs to be done
• Training in the trades
• Teaching in an applied situation
• Learning what it is to be a good ‘something’
• Education in touch with reality
• Teaching towards a vocation but with transferable skills that cover a wide range of occupations
• Personal development
• For students to better themselves
• Includes training in responsibility to others

What do you think?

Construct a model of vocational education

Choose any material

wire, sketching paper and pencil, plasticene, paper and colour (pens, colours)

Describe your construct

What themes emerge?

Any surprises?
Your feedback please

How did it go?

Recommendations?