Balancing Management and Leadership

By Rod Ramsay, Deputy Principal, Waverley Christian College.

I recently attended the Balancing Management and Leadership for Senior Leaders course run by Independent Schools Victoria and facilitated by Justine Coleman. From the outset, Justine made us all feel very welcome and her engaging and warm manner continued throughout the course. Using the excellent framework that is OPENUP, Justine challenged us to reflect very strategically on our use of the behaviours and competencies that are a part of this framework.

I have been to a number of courses focusing on the development of leadership skills but found this course especially helpful. The OPENUP acronym is one that is easy to remember and I can see very real positive outcomes for leadership when it is used. I think it covers all aspects of management and leadership and helps one discern the right behaviours in the right context and providing a flexible approach to produce positive outcomes. I found the tool very useful in reflecting on my own leadership behaviours.

Leadership in a school environment is very complex with so many competing projects and stakeholders to consider. In the busyness of the day to day demands, it is easy for one to lose sight of those leadership behaviours that make for an enjoyable and productive team. I am new to my current school and was looking for a program to help support me in this regard.

In the program we were introduced to a wide variety of tools and resources that brought about healthy discussion.

One of the main features of the course was the use of a computer simulation that engaged group members to consider and apply what we were learning. Each simulation was accompanied by useful feedback on responses and more importantly provided a means for quality discussion on the reasons for decisions. As such, the results of the simulation became less important to the participants than the rich analysis of why we chose certain pathways.

I would thoroughly recommend the course for both those new to leadership and those who think they might have it all worked out. There was much that was gained from the OPENUP tool, the material presented and the simulation game but most of all, from the engaging presenter, Justine. It was a pleasure to have been a participant. Thanks ISV.