

Errol Sundelowitz,
Carol Macdonald, Karel Stanz
Republic of South Africa

“Leadership Cocoons”: the Unseen Silk of Leadership

Abstract

Schools traditionally operate under a meritocratic system. Those children who fulfil systemic merit deserving criteria are selected as leaders within the school system. Furthermore, it is these children who stand the best chance to gain access to leadership positions once they have left school. Their silk is seen and acknowledged. They have the track record that organisations look at as first selection criteria when they are looking to appoint school leavers with an eye on promotion to leadership positions. This article specifically looks at the issues and develops them in terms of the metaphor of ‘*the silk of leadership*’.

Key words: *Cultural Psychology; Leadership Cocoons; The Silk of Leadership; Multiple Intellegences.*

Introduction

There are many theories and schools of thought regarding leadership. Whether one subscribes to the West Point way of leadership, focused on character development; or Steven Covey’s principle-centered leadership; or the legendary Attila the Hun leadership school, which emphasizes the “My way is the way or get out of my way” approach to leadership; one thing about leadership is constant: You know it when you see it! (Thomas, 1996, p. 1)

There is a problem in seeing ‘it’ if it is hidden, enclosed and encased in chrysalis form inside a Leadership Cocoon. The ‘it’ of leadership potential/talent that is not demonstrated is often not only hidden from those who are in the position of