



The Importance of Teachers as Role Models

by our regular book reviewer John Morris

Celebrating Teachers: Making A Difference by Gary Toward and Chris Henley

A Reflective Analysis

Individuals of all ages, when they move on to another school, college, sports club or work placement, frequently reflect on **the support** given by leaders such as coaches, teachers or supervisors and managers at work, in helping them with how they “**settle**”, their progress, attitude and achievements.

In an inspirational, thought-provoking and uplifting story, **Gary Toward** and **Chris Henley** effectively pursue a “**reflective analysis**”, which may well stimulate readers’ positive reminiscences.

Their evidence is based on **anecdotal conversations** with contributors from varied backgrounds as they recall how support from teachers and others **made a significant difference** in their lives.

Although the book focuses on **teachers** who have made a difference, positive motivational skills can apply to sport, work, and everyday or family-life situations.

Ian Wright

A major plus for the reader is the authors’ outstanding **in-depth analysis**. The personal attributes of teachers alongside the skills they display in promoting mutual trust, motivation, making interventions, creating a **feel-good factor**, and spotting potential are transferable skills relevant to leaders in other

work and learning environments.

Relevant examples include **Ian Wright**, the ex-footballer and football pundit on Match of the Day, as he recalls his indebtedness to his primary school teacher,

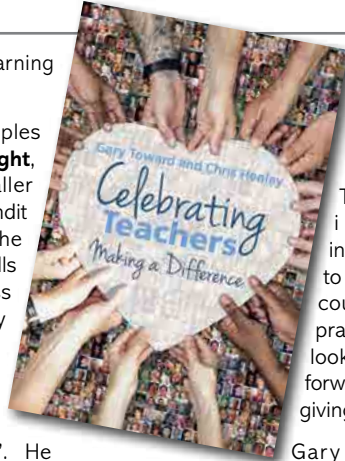
Mr Pigden: “The first positive male figure I had in my life”. He emphasises how Mr Pigden defused problems, using football as a **catalyst** for Ian to change.

Developing Trust

Mike Bushell, the sports reporter on BBC Breakfast, reflects on how his teacher **Mrs Erwin** “made you feel part of the process of learning, giving you a voice and encouraging you to contribute as a partner in the process”.

It is an outstanding book, full-to-overflowing with techniques that improve interaction skills, motivation and confidence.

The book structure, with sections at the end of each story analysing



strategies that made the difference, is **hugely beneficial**. These strategies include interaction skills to make feedback count, focusing praise on effort, looking for ways forward and never giving up.

Gary Toward and Chris Henley have produced **an overdue celebration** of examples of outstanding work and additional efforts by staff, which have positively affected individuals in schools and colleges.

This insightful and easily-read book will benefit teachers, sports coaches, supervisors at work and parents in supporting their current practice and raising awareness of skills and strategies. It should be read by all teachers, sports coaches and anyone aspiring to be successful in industry and commerce.

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Bibliographic Information

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