

# Education the key to reclaiming leadership

Einstein once said, "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

The fundamental nature of work is changing – which means our entire approach to education must undergo a similar metamorphosis.

Our survival is increasingly linked to our ability to equip future generations with the capacity to effectively deal with the enormous challenges already coming into sharp focus.

So how can we do this? Well, we could start by emphasizing the following four principles:

Customization is more important than conformity. We desperately need creative, innovative problem-solvers – not homogeneity of knowledge and skill sets.

An educational philosophy built on a "cookie-cutter" model will not provide us with the talent necessary to compete in a global market.

Relationships are more important than rules. Some

degree of order and uniformity are essential to any enterprise; this is the basis for a successful civilization. Ultimately, however, our collective livelihood depends on our capacity to relate to each other in meaningful ways – and this should be the cornerstone of our entire approach to education.

People are more important than policies. Standardized procedures should exist solely to serve us – not the other way around. Significant progress is always made by those willing to take the road less traveled, whereas maintaining the status quo usually ends up being a dead end.

Individuals are more important than institutions. Our obsession with trying to force everyone into the same mold promotes unhealthy competition and essentially heightens mediocrity. Responding aggressively to the specific needs of each student makes the outcome better for everyone.

If we build our educational

system on these principles, the United States could effectively reclaim its global leadership in a number of critical arenas.

As they used to say at Apple, "Think different!"

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