

The dot point hunter **Anonymous***

And it begins. The start to another school year and the predictable avalanche of someone else's career aspirations being thrust upon us. The dot point. There it sits beside a claim on a resume masking the collective groans and the rolling eyes of its victims.

* I am a secondary teacher who has learnt that humour is the best survival mechanism in an occupation ruled by those who generally are devoid of both wit and wisdom.

And it begins. The start to another school year and the predictable avalanche of someone else's career aspirations being thrust upon us. The dot point. There it sits beside a claim on a resume masking the collective groans and the rolling eyes of its victims. It stands before, "I led . . . I facilitated . . . I supported . . ." In reality, it masks the suffering of the innocent, the truth and should read more like, "I told my colleagues to suck eggs . . . I demonstrated that mediocrity can be rewarded if combined with the right amount of sycophancy . . . I said the words 'data' 'cohort' 'pedagogy' and 'the research' in an attempt to cover up my ignorance and I seemed to have gotten away with it.

If David Attenborough were involved in the teaching profession he would have identified this genus as the 'dot point hunter'*. It is not too hard to imagine a lost chapter of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* dedicated to this embodiment of survival, despite largely unevolved characteristics. They are very much the reptiles of our profession.

The dot point hunter preys upon the weak and vulnerable plying its Machiavellian traits without shame or limit. Each dot point on the resume marks a victory over collegiality, common trust and sound practice. Equally adept at looking at their feet when addressing a staff meeting (and why wouldn't one focus there than meet the look of incredulous scorn on the faces of colleagues) or aggressively belittling those who dare to question their ill placed authority.

The dot point is suspended in time and space, accountable to neither. Successes are always claimed solely as the work of their placer, while the largely inevitable failures are passed off euphemistically as 'whole school change.'

Dot point. *I supported staff through the transition of a new and innovative. . .*

Reality: despite the good advice I was given by the collective wisdom of generations of teachers I implemented a system that narrowed what was taught and placed constraints on teacher efficacy.

Dot point. *Through a process of consultation I implemented a dynamic whole school approach to . . .*

Reality: I presented a predetermined agenda packaged with even worse options and asked staff to choose the least painful option from this illusion of choice.

Dot point. *I facilitated the professional development of staff in . . . that resulted in whole scale change in relation to . . .*

Reality: I attended a PD that simplified complex educational concepts and then passed off the presenter's PowerPoint as my own. As always the results of these efforts defy measurement and accountability.

Dot point. *I led colleagues to develop learning and teaching programs using comprehensive knowledge of curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements. . .*

Reality: I handed out butcher's paper and crayons at a staff meeting and had teachers write down what they thought was best practice and then represented this in a PowerPoint at the next staff meeting.

And there we have the dot point hunter's resume completed. If they were another species it would no doubt be sharks. Not because sharks have a reputation as being voracious predators. No, not that, but because they also are known to eat their siblings in the womb. After all, the dot point hunter is more than happy to advance their career prospects at the expense of their colleagues. Collegiality. Ha. How very twentieth-century.

By the time the dot point hunter has established their resume the grim truth of their nature has finally been exposed. I say finally because everyone except the person who appointed them understood their nature at a glance. But help has arrived for their long-suffering colleagues in the form of their ambition and an assistant principal vacancy. The desire to move on the at least socially inept, at worst staff-dividing demoraliser overcomes the last vestiges of morality of their preferred referee who willingly confirms the dot points to the next shark nursery.

*The term 'dot point hunter' was originally coined by a former colleague of mine.