Teacher and school leader development: co-creation through social dialogue

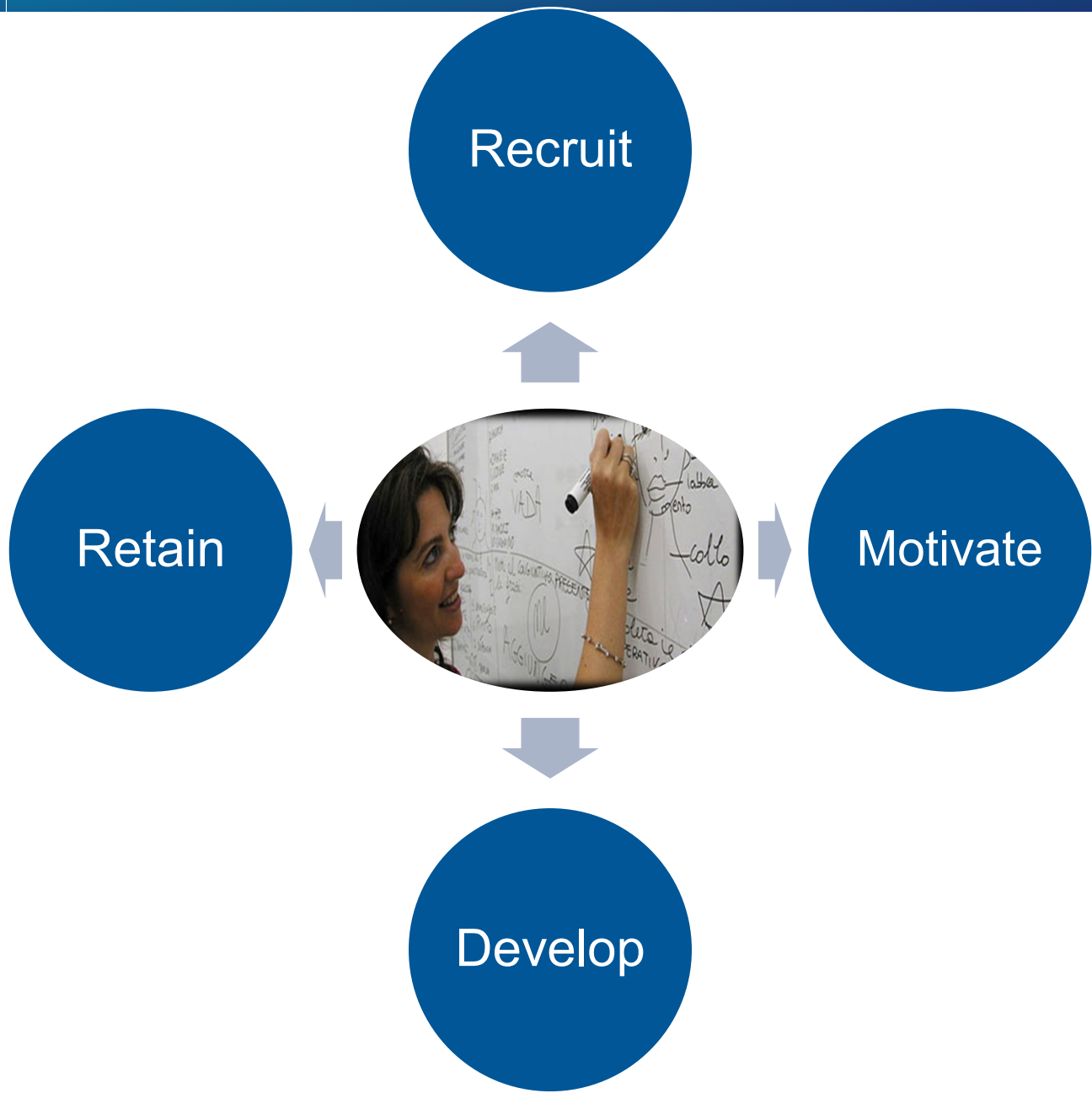**Howard Stevenson**
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Rome

'An education system can only be as good as its teachers' (OECD 2009)

Within school factors . . .

1. Quality of teaching

2. Quality of leadership

. . . professional development is most effective in improving teachers' instructional practice and contributing to student learning when it is continuous and sustained, is closely connected to the work of teachers in the classroom, fosters teacher professional collaboration, and coherently relates to broader school reform efforts.

(Burns and Darling-Hammond, 2015)

- Inappropriate

- Poor quality

- Poorly aligned to wider goals

- Too linked to managerial objectives

- Driven by organisational needs, not teacher needs

- Crudely linked to performance objectives

- Uses 'low impact' methods

- Not properly evaluated

- Not adequately resourced

- Teachers do not have the time to engage fully

The professional development you are driven to do by your Principal . . . is stultifyingly boring and doesn't give me any new skills at all. It is deadly . . .and it is tedious . . .and it is 'let's jump through a few more hoops', and if I don't do it right I'll get hit with a big stick. It is horrible.

*But I **like** learning. I **enjoy** learning. I **need** that stimulus.*

Teacher interviewee, from Stevenson (2012)

- Level (and the need for 'alignment')
  - European, national, local, institutional

- Scope (and the need for 'connection')
  - the totality of teachers' work (not 'industrial' vs 'professional')

- Form (and the need for 'pluralism')
  - communication, consultation, negotiation

School Sector (primary and secondary)	Common	Fairly Common	Rare	Not at all
There are established collective bargaining arrangements for negotiating pay in the primary and/or secondary education sectors.	75.0	9.1	6.8	9.1
There are established collective bargaining arrangements for negotiating non-pay-related employment conditions in the primary and secondary education sectors.	70.5	15.9	9.1	4.5
Unions are involved in a social partnership to determine overall policy in the primary and/or secondary education sectors.	61.4	18.2	20.5	0
Significant changes in the primary and/or secondary education sectors are only introduced with the involvement of relevant unions.	29.5	38.6	25.0	6.8
There is consultation between unions and EU agencies about the impact of EU policies on the primary and/or secondary education sectors.	4.5	20.5	50.0	25.0

Italy has received education-related Country Specific Recommendations in 5 of the 7 Semester cycles. Examples:

- 2013-14 '*Reforming teachers' professional career and development*'

- 2014-15 '*Implement the National System for Evaluation of Schools to improve school outcomes*'

- 2015-16 '*Implement the planned school reform*' (*La Buona Scuola*)

September 2016 – social dialogue '*fragile*' and '*in a state of disrepair*' - Stevenson *et* al, (2017, p 45)

. . . it is less about formal negotiations and more probably about a kind of co-creation and collaboration and where actually if we are seeking to do something we would generally be seeking to sit down at a relatively early point in the proceedings and talk about how we might do something.

(Education Scotland, civil servant)

- Tri-partite partnership (Ministry, local councils, teacher unions)

- A commitment to consensus

- Full involvement of all stakeholders, for example General Teaching Council of Scotland

- Creating the structures:

  – *Re-established* collective bargaining in 2001

  – A network of consultative bodies on all key policy areas, for example, curriculum, teacher education, professional update

- 'Professional update' – accountability *with* teachers

- Closing achievement gaps – addressing priority areas

– Union provided professional development

– Supporting action research conference

– Awards grants for teachers to undertake pedagogical research

– Links to local universities and Masters programme

– Union Learning Representatives

We are too compliant [as a profession]. *. . the professional learning agenda is about developing the academic and professional capacity of teachers*. (EIS official)

The effective development of teachers, trainers and leaders is a process of co-creation. This is achieved by:

- Vertical alignment – social dialogue at all levels

- Horizontal connection – link the industrial and professional

- Pluralism – communicate, consult, bargain