



Fostering Computing Education in NZ

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Book Review B1:

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Information Systems and Technology Education: From the University to the Workplace

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BOOK REVIEWED

Lowry, G. R. & Turner, R. L (2007, Eds.). *Information Systems and Technology Education: From the University to the Workplace*. Hershey, PA, USA: IGI Global (424 pages).

REVIEW

As an Information Technology educator teaching in a New Zealand tertiary institute I have often been concerned for how well equipped my students are for the workforce. As there appears to be a current focus by funding providers to link funding with an organisations ability to provide industry with work-ready graduates this topic is of even greater concern to me.

The technical skills of IT professionals are well understood and most educational institutions are able to develop programmes of study that develop these skills at various levels. The major issue in the management of those programmes of study is that of staying current as the technology changes.

The focus of this book is the development and understanding of the less well understood and more difficult to quantify, "soft" skills that the IT industry requires it's professionals to have. The editors have collated a collection of articles discussing how educators can ensure that graduates have valid work-ready skill sets. The book contains eighteen separate and independent chapters that give an international perspective to the discussion. The authors argue (in their individual papers) for including specific topic areas in the curriculum in order to provide industry with IT professionals. These topics include entrepreneurship, critical thinking, enterprise systems, socialisation, ethical consideration, collaboration and appreciation of global diversity. There is relevant and topical discussion of the non-technical skills required by an IT professional. The papers then consider various techniques that these academics have employed to develop curriculum that encourages these higher order skills.

The majority of the articles are written from a qualitative or action research perspective, although there are papers that attempt to use quantitative methods to comment on these "soft" skills. On the whole the authors write in a straightforward manner that is interesting and thought provoking. The book is very well edited and the articles have been carefully chosen to ensure they meet the editors' objectives.

This book would be of interest to educators who are interested in solidifying and further developing their understanding in the topic areas discussed above. Anyone teaching in these areas will find some useful ideas in terms of how to increase the competence of their students in these skill sets. In addition programme developers will find some compelling arguments for including courses on these topics in their programmes. I believe this book would be a useful addition to an institutional library as well as to my own personal one.

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