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Professional Development
in Technology:
Strategies and Examples

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Hello. This is Harvey Barnett. Welcome to “Professional Development in Technology: Strategies and Examples.” This presentation is the fifth in our series and is a companion to “Professional Development in Technology: Key Principles.” If you viewed that presentation, you know that sound professional development in technology should be based on the same principles that make for good professional development in any pedagogy or content area. You’re familiar with what those principles are as well as with some general guidelines for planning and evaluating professional development activities. In this presentation, we’ll look at some concrete strategies and examples of those principles in action.

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Strategies

1. Technology Rover
2. Prep shops
3. Toolkits
4. Technology resource teachers
5. Minigrants
6. Distance learning



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Creative designers of professional development have developed many practical, effective strategies for helping teachers develop their technology skills. Here are six strategies with proven track records. **The Technology Rover.** This strategy works at any grade level, but is especially helpful for K-6 teachers and any others who do not have student-free prep time. A school hires a floating substitute. Teachers sign up for 50 minutes of support provided by a district or school technology resource teacher. This strategy provides just-in-time support and is cost effective. Teachers receive the exact support needed. If your school has a shortage of substitutes, this is a great alternative to trying to release several teachers simultaneously to attend a workshop.

Prep Shops are the equivalent of the Rover at the middle or high school level or elsewhere where teachers have student-free time. Teachers sign up for help during their prep period. Like the Rover, this just-in-time training delivers exactly the support the teacher needs to advance instructional or productivity technology use.

Curriculum toolkits are subject-centered workshops that focus on the technology applications that support a given academic area. The value of this type of professional development is that it focuses on how technology integrates with subject matter to support content standards.

Technology Resource Teachers provide help when needed. Ideally, there should be one such teacher at each site with at least part of the day free to serve as a coach and resource. Putting visionary teachers in this role can be a very effective means of helping all teachers to use technology for both instruction and productivity.

Like all of us, teachers value two incentives--time and money.

Minigrants provide both. Giving teachers \$300 to \$500 dollars and one or two substitute days to master a new piece of hardware or software pays many benefits. The district gains important information about training and support issues and a potential trainer, while the teacher receives validation and valued support.


Distance learning is a new method of delivering professional development. The ability to take classes anytime, anywhere provides busy educators with a valuable

alternative to the after school or daylong training. New distance learning opportunities occur regularly and are offered by many kinds of organizations and in many formats.

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Examples

- ACOT Teacher Development Centers
- Challenge 2000 Multimedia Project
- Generation www.Y (Gen Y)




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Now let's turn our attention to three specific examples of highly successful professional development programs. The ACOT Teacher Development Center concept won recognition from the National Science Foundation in 1992. In September 2000, the Challenge 2000 Multimedia Project and "Gen Y" were cited as "exemplary" programs by the U.S. Department of Education.

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Teacher Development Centers

- Focus on
 - Reflection
 - redesigning instruction
 - continuing support
- Exist in working classrooms
- Grounded in coaching relationships



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The Apple Classroom of Tomorrow Project pioneered the concept of a teacher professional development program that focuses on teacher reflection, redesigning instruction and continuing support. Teacher Development Centers are working schools that serve as staff development laboratories. During their time at the Center participants observe accomplished technology-using teachers and then have the opportunity to discuss the teaching practices they have observed. The teachers also have the opportunity to reflect on their present practices, think about new

approaches, have hands-on experiences with technology, talk about their goals for integrating technology and develop a technology enhanced unit to teach when they return to their school. Another important element is follow up support. On going support is essential as teachers move from more traditional to more constructivist environments. Overall, the Teacher Development Center provides them with new information but also encourages them to think about creating more collaborative, active, student centered environments.

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The Multimedia Project

- Intensive training
- On-going support
- Coaching
- Incentives
- Accountability



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The goal of the Challenge 2000 Multimedia Project was to infuse classrooms in California's Silicon Valley with an exemplary model of project-based learning supported by multimedia. To accomplish this goal, the project implemented an extensive professional development effort that reflected the principles described in our presentation: Professional Development in Technology: Key Principles. Teachers began their participation in the project through immersion in a two-week long summer institute. Release time was provided to enable teachers to come back together once a month for workdays at which they shared their experiences and helped one another plan ways to overcome obstacles they might be encountering in implementing their classroom multimedia projects. Coaching was provided by roving Technology Learning Coordinators. Teachers received minigrants for specialized equipment or extra

training as well as \$500 annual stipends for successfully completing their obligations to the project. The stipends and annual public exhibitions of the students' multimedia projects ensured accountability.

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Generation www.Y

- A different view of professional development.
- Students and teachers as a team.
- Students mentor teachers to incorporate technology.




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Gen Y is a very different kind of professional development program. The major premise of the project is that most teachers don't have necessary technology skills but many students do. The project pairs students' technology skills with their teachers' content and instructional strategies knowledge. Students are taught to teach teachers how to integrate technology into their instructional program. Students and the teacher they are paired with jointly decide what lessons could be reworked to include technology. The role of the student is to help the teacher learn new technology skills.

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Finding Resources

- Go to Portical.org home page.
- Click the "Find" button at the top of the page.
- Enter the resource name in the search box.



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I hope you've found this brief overview on professional development helpful and that you'll want to share the information with others. The Portical resource matrix includes links to all the resources mentioned in this presentation as well as to many more similar resources you will find useful. Simply click the FIND button on the Portical home page and enter the name of the resource in the search box. Finally, return often to Portical. In the upcoming months, you'll find a growing collection of presentations like this and other resources on a variety of topics to assist you in your technology leadership role. For now, this is Harvey Barnett saying, "Good by until next time."