APPENDIX VI – 9

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The Process of Growth and Change

Effective professional development produces personal growth. Yet, personal growth can be challenging – particularly when it involves changing old and familiar patterns of behavior. It requires continuing effort and support over a long period of time. When beginning a program of professional growth, it is helpful to view the process through the trainee's eyes.

●Professional Growth is Intimate and Personal

Most people will not risk change unless someone they know and trust is already succeeding and will help them as they try to master new skills.

●Change is Risk

You cannot trust some innovation that you have not yet mastered. Old and familiar ways of doing things are safe. The willingness to risk trying something new will rest largely upon a person's trust in the network of support that accompanies his or her attempts to change.

●Change is Difficult

Learning any new skill requires effort. It happens neither quickly nor easily. Nor, does it always go right the first time.

●Change is Disruptive

Things usually get worse before they get better. As old ways of doing things are altered, there is predictable awkwardness and loss of both comfort and confidence.

●Change Must Survive the Critical Period

If, with help from a support network, a colleague persists in using a new skill, integration and comfort will be achieved at a higher level of functioning. Without adequate support, however, that teacher may well attribute the loss of comfort to the new skill and conclude that "It doesn't work for me."

To put it simply, training is the easy part of effective professional development, even though it takes more time than we have traditionally given it. The hard part of professional development is *follow-through*. Follow-through requires organizational change to support personal change.

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The Principal's Role

Training is just the beginning of mastery. Full mastery of new skills comes only with the sharing, problem-solving and relearning that occurs during follow-through as teachers use new skills in the classroom and collaborate on the fine points of implementation. Consequently, follow-through must be built into training from the very beginning. If not, it will be built out. The principal is the key decision maker for training and follow-through at the school site. Tactical decisions that are made before training begins often determine it's ultimate success or failure. The following guidelines will help you build follow-through into the training process:

- **Principal Participation**
  The principal determines whether professional development will be on the *front burner* or the *back burner*. If professional development is not on the principal's front burner, it will not happen. Principals, therefore, must be advocates. Giving permission is not enough. They must provide time for training, protect it from being cross-scheduled, and participate so they are as knowledgeable as their teachers.

- **School Site Focus**
  Training is best done by a team of mentor quality teachers at each school site. Not only will they draw colleagues into training by word-of-mouth as they use the program in their classrooms, but they will also be close at hand to problem solve with trainees. If a trainee has difficulty with a new procedure, they either get help quickly from a friend, or they are likely to dump it. Consequently, school site training teams serve one of their most important functions during follow-through.

- **Build on Strength**
  The most willing and able teachers should be trained first. Often they become co-trainers, thereby expanding the school site training team. In addition, their success should be shared with the faculty so that more hesitant colleagues say, "Well, if it can help them, I guess it can help me too." While well intentioned, the decision to train the most needy teachers first can reduce faculty buy-in by stigmatizing the program as remedial.

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● Make Training Voluntary

Changing habits is never easy. Teachers must want to change. They must focus on new ways of doing things every day, and this requires a high degree of motivation. Mandating that teachers participate usually backfires. It is better to create a critical mass of success with strong teachers, and then wait for colleagues to be drawn to the program.

● Start Slow, Go Slow

One of the hardest things for administrators and school board members to do once an effective program demonstrates its merit is to *slow down*. "Let's train everyone in the district" is usually a call to disaster with volunteerism being the first casualty. Successful training requires patience. Haste preempts the systematic process of training and team building that allows a program to gain strength as teachers achieve genuine mastery.

● Train and Retrain

Our tradition in professional development is to train teachers in one program and then move on to the next program never looking back. Yet, we know that skills are built slowly and incrementally. Teachers pass through predictable stages on the road to mastery which might be characterized as, 1) What is it? 2) How does it work? and 3) How do the pieces fit together? Genuine mastery requires that teachers be trained repeatedly.

● Focus on Follow-Through

Think of successful professional development at a school site as being a 3-5 year process. While some teachers succeed beautifully from the beginning, most will need more time to internalize new skills, break old habits and iron out wrinkles in classroom application. Build a process of growth and change, and let that process provide integration of new learning over time.

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Setting Our Sights

Building vs. Skimming

If a staff development program trains those teachers and administrators who first volunteer for the experience, it will repeatedly reach those who are most eager to learn, to grow, and to change. Contrary to the needs of the district, it skims the most active, involved and competent and leaves the rest behind. To involve the more hesitant faculty members into a process of change, they must be actively and consistently affirmed and supported for their efforts and given a lot of extra help along the way.

A process of growth and change, in contrast, takes the most competent teachers and puts them to work. It invests in making them trainers and peer coaches, and it supports their woking with colleagues over an extended follow-through period. Building this training and support structure gives a staff development program the capacity to reach beyond the top teachers and administrators and pull the rest of the staff into the growth process.

Process vs. Product

Our objective is not simply to produce a _product_ - a group of trained teachers - but, beyond that, to produce a _process_ of continuing professional growth that can become a permanent part of the social fabric of each school site. Creating a process, however, is a lot more work than merely sending a group of teachers to a workshop. It requires:

- long-term planning
- administrative involvement at all levels
- training administrators
- training selected teachers to such an extent that they can be successful trainers and leaders of a follow-through process at each participating school site
- follow-through at the school site level with adequate time allocation, administrative involvement and the opportunity for continuous retraining, collegial sharing and problem solving

The benefit of building a viable growth and change process within the school site or district far outweighs the cost of the initial investment. Working together to

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improve teaching and learning becomes the common goal that structures collective effort. Thus, collegial work groups at each participating school site become the basis of cooperative learning at the faculty level.

An active growth and change process also creates a pipeline for the dissemination of innovation. The review, sharing, and problem-solving of collegial work groups ensure not only the mastery of new skills but also their integration with other previously learned teaching practices. This shared enterprise continually invigorates professional life with the challenge of integrating new learning with classroom teaching. Only striving for continual improvement can transform a static job into a dynamic profession.

Tucson USD Training Goal Outline

* **Year One:**
  * Establish the foundation for Tools for Teaching's success by training district mentors, identified teachers, and administrators
  * Introduce larger faculty to Tools for Teaching through June workshop

* **Year Two:**
  * Implement "trainer of trainers" model by having district mentors train school site teams as Tools for Teaching Coaches
  * Build toward capacity through Tools for Teaching workshops and continued use of the Tools for Teaching Study Group Activity Guide and Video Toolbox to train coaches, teachers, and administrators

* **Year Three, Four, and Five:**
  * District mentors will continue the "trainer of trainers" model by training more school site teams as Tools for Teaching Coaches
  * School site coaches will build toward capacity through use of the Tools for Teaching Study Group Activity Guide and Video Toolbox

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The Tools for Teaching Study Group Activity Guide

The Study Group Activity Guide is designed for small "Study Groups" of teachers to meet regularly and put the skills detailed in Tools for Teaching into practice. A Study Group can help you perfect the skills of classroom management prior to implementation. With adequate structure, a brief after school meeting can become a significant learning experience. Hopefully, working with colleagues will become a permanent part of your school culture. The Study Group Activity Guide structures learning activities that can be used indefinitely as you perfect your management skills. If you and a handful of colleagues work together on a weekly basis after you have Tools for Teaching under your belt, you will be able to solve classroom management dilemmas as they arise.

What's in it and how do we use it?

The Tools for Teaching Study Group Activity Guide provides structure for 12 Study Group meetings lasting 45 minutes each, plus an organizational meeting to help you get started. Study Groups should consist of 3-8 teachers lead by a Tools for Teaching Coach.

- Each of the 12 meetings are structured around the following elements:
  - Focus questions
  - Study Group activities
  - Performance checklist
- The 12 meeting topics focus on the following skill areas:
  - Working the Crowd and Room Arrangement (Chapters 1-4)
  - Praise, Prompt and Leave (Chapters 5, 6)
  - Visual Instructional Plans (Chapter 7)
  - Say, See, Do Teaching (Chapters 8-10)
  - Rules Routines and Standards (Chapters 11, 12)
  - Understanding Brat Behavior (Chapter 13)
  - Calm is Strength (Chapters 14, 15)
  - The Body Language of Meaning Business (Chapters 16, 17)
  - Eliminating Backtalk (Chapters 18, 19)

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- Responsibility Training (Chapter 20, 21)
- Omission Training and Preferred Activity Time (Chapters 22, 23)
- Dealing with Typical Classroom Crises (Chapters 24, 25)

Download the Study Group Activity Guide at:
www.fredjones.com/study-group-activity-guide

The Tools for Teaching Video Toolbox

The 12 video training sessions of the Video Toolbox seamlessly integrate with the 12 Study Group meetings outlined in the Study Group Activity Guide. Video Sessions last an average of 30 minutes, add them onto the end of the 45 minute Study Group meetings for complete immersion into Tools for Teaching. It's all laid out for you in the Video Handbook for easy implementation and use.

What's inside:

- An Overview DVD that outlines every component of the Tools for Teaching program
- A Coaching DVD that models skill-building exercises
- 12 video training sessions on 6 DVDs
  - 1 video training session for each of the 12 Study Group meetings
- A Video Handbook that details viewing and exercise instructions
- A copy of Tools for Teaching 3rd Edition

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