Effective Professional Development: Trainer Tips and Tricks

Idaho Regional Training for Increasing Literacy in Intermediate Students

September 2020

Photo is for illustrative purposes only. Any person depicted in the photo is a model.
Objectives

» Reflect on the features of high-quality professional development
» Understand the design and structure of intermediate literacy training materials
» Identify key factors for marrying training content with instructional delivery
» Explain the importance of productive language opportunities for active learning
» Describe the 10:2 theory and how it can be used for planning effective professional development sessions
» Identify grouping types and engagement structures for active learning and their connection to effective professional development
Grouping types

- Individual
- Structured partners
- Table groups
- Pairs to square (two partner pairs come together to make a group of four)
Features of high-quality professional development

Think of a training or professional development session that you would consider “high quality.”

What features or actions were part of this professional development that made it meaningful?

Write, then share.
High-quality professional development

›› Leads educators to gain and refine knowledge of both content and pedagogy
›› Models best practices in teaching and learning
›› Has a positive impact on the classroom in terms of both teacher effectiveness and student learning
›› Is engaging and motivating

(Strickland, 2009)
Marrying training content with effective delivery

The **WHAT**

Content

Facilitator Guide:
- Slides
- Notes

The **HOW**

Delivery

Facilitator Guide:
- Active Engagement Activities
- Handouts

The Art of Teaching
Training materials and structure

Each module contains (1) a facilitator guide, (2) a PowerPoint presentation, and (3) handouts.

Each facilitator guide drives the use of the presentation and handouts and provides:

- Materials checklist and notes
- Similar introduction for each module
- Embedded activities throughout each module
- Closing reflections that connect to classroom instruction
Training content

Training content is derived from the What Works Clearing House (WWC) of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES): Improving Adolescent Literacy Levels of evidence

Strong

Moderate

Low

Practice Guide Level of Evidence video

(IES: WWC, 2017)

Table 1. Institute of Education Sciences levels of evidence for practice guides

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<th>Level</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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| Strong | In general, characterization of the evidence for a recommendation as strong requires both studies with high internal validity and moderate or strong external validity, or studies with high external validity but moderate internal validity. Moderate evidence is derived from studies that support strong causal conclusions but where generalization is uncertain, or studies that support the generalizability of a relationship but where the causality is uncertain. Moderate evidence for this practice guide is operationalized as:  
  - Experiments or quasi-experiments generally meeting the WWC standards and supporting the effectiveness of a program, practice, or approach with small sample sizes/and/or other conditions of implementation or analysis that limit generalizability and no contrary evidence. OR  
  - Comparison group studies that do not demonstrate equivalence of groups at present and therefore do not meet the WWC standards but that consistently show enhanced outcomes for participants experiencing a particular program, practice, or approach and/or have no major flaws related to internal validity other than lack of demonstrated equivalence at posttest (e.g., one teacher or one class per condition, unequal amounts of instructional time, highly biased outcome measures). OR  
  - Conditional research with strong statistical controls for selection bias and for discerning influence of endogenous factors and no contrary evidence. OR  
  - For assessments, evidence of reliability that meets the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing that with evidence of validity from samples not adequately representative of the population on which the recommendation is focused. |
| Moderate | In general, characterization of the evidence for a recommendation as moderate requires studies with high internal validity but moderate or strong external validity, or studies with high external validity but moderate internal validity. In other words, moderate evidence is derived from studies that support strong causal conclusions but where generalization is uncertain, or studies that support the generalizability of a relationship but where the causality is uncertain. Moderate evidence for this practice guide is operationalized as:  
  - Experiments or quasi-experiments generally meeting the WWC standards and supporting the effectiveness of a program, practice, or approach with small sample sizes and/or other conditions of implementation or analysis that limit generalizability and no contrary evidence. OR  
  - Comparison group studies that do not demonstrate equivalence of groups at present and therefore do not meet the WWC standards but that consistently show enhanced outcomes for participants experiencing a particular program, practice, or approach and/or have no major flaws related to internal validity other than lack of demonstrated equivalence at posttest (e.g., one teacher or one class per condition, unequal amounts of instructional time, highly biased outcome measures). OR  
  - Conditional research with strong statistical controls for selection bias and for discerning influence of endogenous factors and no contrary evidence. OR  
  - For assessments, evidence of reliability that meets the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing but with evidence of validity from samples not adequately representative of the population on which the recommendation is focused. |
| Low | In general, characterization of the evidence for a recommendation as low means that the recommendation is based on expert opinion derived from strong findings or theories in related areas and/or expert opinion buttressed by direct evidence that does not meet the moderate or strong levels. Low evidence is operationalized as evidence not meeting the standards for the moderate or high levels. |

(Kamil et al., 2008, p.2)
Key factors for marrying content with delivery

» Content (derived from WWC IES practice guides)
  » Clear objectives for the session (what is the target)
  » Rationale or evidence base (how will it positively impact students)
  » Meaningful connection to all disciplines and content areas

» Active engagement
  » Content peppered with active engagement opportunities that incorporate productive language opportunities
  » Numerous opportunities for participants to “RAP”
    » Reflect
    » Apply
    » Practice
Think and write

Think about the last professional development session you attended.

1. Who did most of the talking — the presenter or the learners?
2. What type of active engagement techniques were used?
3. Where did the presenter include most of the engagement strategies (beginning, middle, end, or throughout the training)?
4. Think about the key factors for marrying content with delivery (from previous slide):
   - What was incorporated? What wasn’t? How did this affect the professional development session in positive or negative ways?
5. How can you use these reflections as you prepare for your own professional development session?
Training design

One of the most important goals in designing a professional development session is to “ensure learners do as much of the cognitive work — the writing, the thinking, the analyzing, the talking — as possible.”

— Teach Like a Champion (Lemov, 2010, p. 92)
Training design: Weighty words

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Vocabulary forms

**ORAL**

- **Listening**
  Words we understand when others talk to us.

**PRODUCTIVE**

- **Speaking**
  Words we use when we talk to others.

**RECEPTIVE**

- **Reading**
  Words we know when we see them in print.

**PRINT**

- **Writing**
  Words we use when we write.
Lecturing as a primary strategy

“Learning is not a spectator sport.”
– Chickering & Gamson (1987, p. 4)

Learners are not attentive to what is being said in a lecture 40% of the time.¹
Learners retain 70% of the information in the first 10 minutes of a lecture but only 20% in the last 10 minutes.²

¹ Pollio, 1984, p. 11
² McKeachie, 1986, p. 72
Learning by doing

“Students do not learn much just by sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.”

– Chickering & Gamson (1987, p. 4)
Learning by doing (continued)

“My content is not as important as the audience interaction with the content.”

– Garmston (2005, p. 50)

“[Lecturing is the] best way to get information from teacher’s notebook to student’s notebook without touching the student’s mind.”

– George Leonard (as cited in Kohn, 2007, p. 114)
Learning by doing: Weighty words

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Organizing content: Meaningful chunks

“10:2” or “chunk and chew”\textsuperscript{1}

Accommodates limitations of working memory
  Provides processing time
  Limits “information in, information out”

\textsuperscript{1}Rogers (2005)
Chunking with active learning

- The “chew” should focus on active learning through productive language opportunities.
- Think “RAP”: opportunities to Reflect, Apply, or Practice
- Remember: The person “doing the doing” — that is, talking, reflecting, writing — is the one doing the most learning.
Organizing content: Meaningful chunks

- Grouping (individual, structured partners, table groups, pairs to square)
- Conversation Placemat
- Talking chips
- Quick writes
- Weighty words
- Whip around
- Cold call
- Inside-outside circle
Presenter checklist for effective delivery

- Preparation and content knowledge are evident.
- Objectives or outcomes of training are clear.
- Training environment is conducive to the use of various grouping types.
- Rationale for training is provided.
- Pacing is conducive to high engagement.
Presenter checklist for effective delivery (continued)

- Engagement structures enhance the content of the presentation.
  - 10:2 / chunk and chew
  - “RAP” with productive language opportunities
- Clear directions are provided for all activities.
- Signals are established for getting participants’ attention and pulling the group together after an activity.
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References


References (continued)


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