Designing a Successful Professional Development Initiative

Nora Galbraith

Resource Sharing Librarian, Roux Library, Florida Southern College, Lakeland Florida

The Teaching and Learning Center at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida, offers professional development initiatives (PDI) to the faculty every fall and spring. For two years the librarians at Florida Southern's Roux Library offered to conduct a PDI, but not enough faculty members signed up for the classes and they were cancelled. To increase the appeal, we decided to rethink our proposal and considered what has been successful for us.

For the past three years the library has offered a two-day summer research marathon during which we close the library to all but the faculty participants. We offer them breakfast, lots of coffee, lunch, and space to work on their own projects with no interruptions. We are here to help them and expedite whatever services we can. It has been a very successful project and we have a few who return every summer.

Working with the research marathon as our model, we designed a PDI class to work along a similar structure. We called it the Faculty Research Sprint.

We planned to offer a relevant topic and time it to last 30 or fewer minutes. At that point the faculty participants would have an hour to work on their own projects. We could sit with them after the discussion or move just beyond the room they were working in, to be nearby if they needed our help. We also

offered individual consultation time with a librarian.

The PDI classes were broken up into four sessions, offering a different topic for each month of the semester. During that month, the session topic was offered twice, on different days of the week, in order to accommodate various scheduling and work needs.

For the first session, we decided to start with Finding Roux Library's Resources. Our topics included learning to navigate the library's web page, helping them become familiar with the databases and resources in the various disciplines, maneuvering through the print resources and finding the useful features of Google Scholar and Scopus, our abstract and citation database.
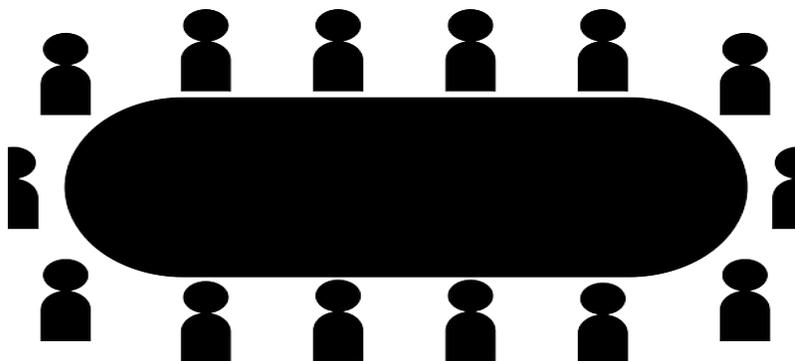
Upcoming LearnRT Board Meetings

ALA Annual In-Person Meeting -
Sunday, June 24, 2018 8:30am - 10:30am
Location TBD

All LEARNRT members and interested members are welcome to attend the board meetings.

President's Message

Dustin Fife, LearnRT President

Recently we held a Kaizen meeting at my university to try and eliminate student bounce. We gathered stakeholders and department heads from across campus to discuss students being sent from department to department without anyone ever taking responsibility. This is a normal problem on university campuses, but not a problem we should accept. We brainstormed and came up with the beginnings of a plan. Most importantly though, we decided that we were going to return to the plan, with both a smaller group and then the entire group, to reassess and make changes as we go along. We understood that this was a process that would need continuous improvement or several iterations.

Since that meeting, continuous improvement has been on my mind. It is a term that has been around for a long time, especially in manufacturing, but appears more and more frequently in other types of organizations. Just recently I came across The University of Texas at Austin's continuous improvement plan and framework (https://provost.utexas.edu/iae/assessment/continuous-improvement-framework-templates). These types of plans usually build in a mechanism for review or assessment and generally have four simple steps: identify, plan, execute, and review (and repeat as necessary).

The reason I am so fixated with this idea is that it is absolutely how we should handle personal and institutional professional development. Do I have a personal plan for continuous improvement? Do I have a team plan for continuous development? Does my university have a strategic plan that reflects the essential process of continuous improvement or do I have a strategic plan that will not be looked at again until it is time to, once again, strategically plan?
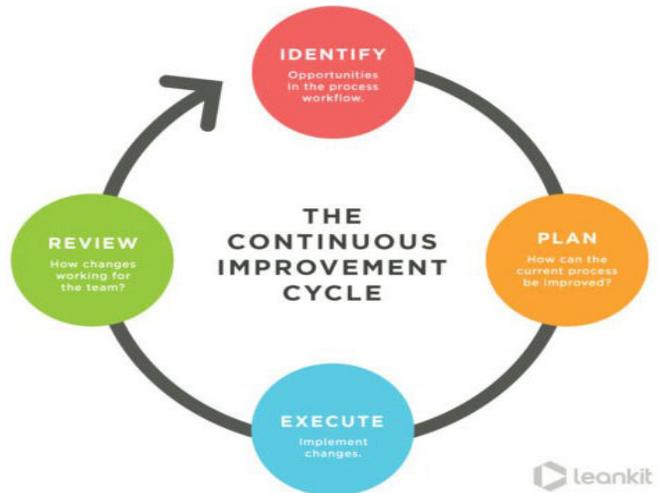

image source: https://leankit.com/learn/kanban/continuous-improvement/

Last year at Western State Colorado University, we did away with traditional employee reviews and started using Career Conversations. The main difference is that a Career Conversation is utterly forward looking. We make a plan for the person to develop individually and as part of the team, rather than trying to remember every bad and good thing that person did in the last twelve months. Success should be praised in the moment and failures should be addressed at the time, do not wait for review time in either of these situations. The more I think about it, and the structure of the Career Conversation which has frequent check-ins rather than a once a year methodology, the more I realized my university and team were moving towards a continuous improvement approach. This approach has made each of us more innovative and flexible. When you are looking forward, rather than backwards, you can adjust for success.

There are many articles about continuous improvement. Think about how this iterative process can make you and your organization stronger.

A Better Way of Evaluating the Impact of Our Training Programs

Andrew Sanderbeck - Trainer and Consultant for Library Organizations

Was the most recent training program in your organization a success? That probably depends on how you evaluated and measured the impact of your program.

In November of 2017, I completed an extensive three-day training course by the Kirkpatrick Partners on the 4 Levels of Training Evaluation. For many years, the Kirkpatrick family (father, son and daughter) have been challenging the training world to "go deeper" in our evaluation processes, and in-turn to reap the rewards of training as a process, versus training as an event…a one day, or hour, one and done experience.

In their book The Four Levels of Training Evaluation, the Kirkpatrick's detail the four levels of evaluation as:

- **Level One: Reaction** (Did the attendees like the training/trainer/room/food?)

- **Level Two: Learning** (What did the attendees learn/Were the training materials relevant/useful?)

- **Level Three: Behavior** (Did they Apply what they learned/How did their behavior change?)

- **Level Four: Results** (How did the behavior change affect the business?)

Most training programs evaluate their results at Level One and Level Two, partially because those levels are the easiest to measure, and because many organizations see training as an "event", and not as a process that will go on months after the training day.

The problem with not "digging deeper" as the Kirkpatricks encourage us to do, is that we truly do not know the impact of our training

dollars, time and resources. We can feel proud that "x" amount of people attended our training and that they had a good experience. We can also point to pre and post test results and surveys to measure what the attendees learned.

But, so what? Did they apply what the learned? Did their behavior change? Did the behavior change lead to the desired results? (Goals achieved…etc?)

In a program that I co-presented with Terry McQuown from the King County Public Library at ALA and the Washington Library Association Conference in 2017 titled "Making Training Stick for Supervisors", we discussed the impact that the supervisor can have in application of the information learned, and taking our training evaluation to Level 3 and beyond. I recommend that you listen to the webinar that Terry and I recently presented for Infopeople to learn more. https://infopeople.org/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=726

As you get ready to launch your next training program, I hope you will give the planning of the evaluation of your training as much time and thought as you give to the training itself.

Find ways to change your organizational thinking about what training is and isn't. Training should not be a one and done event…instead, it should be viewed as a process. For training to stick, it cannot be about about Level 1 (Reaction) and Level 2 (Learning) evaluation and results. How will you evaluate your training based on Application and Behavior Change?

The second session was Keeping Track of Research. This class covered how to keep track of research with database accounts, citation managers, such as Zotero, and setting up search or journal alerts.

Our third session was called Beyond the Library. We addressed requesting materials for purchase, interlibrary loan, copyright and creative commons issues and using the material that is available in the college's McKay Archives.

The fourth session was Presenting Your Research. This class consisted of learning how to publish research in the Florida Southern College Digital Repository, discovering ORCID - researcher persistent digital identifiers, and becoming familiar with SHERPA/RoMEO - a database of publishers' policies regarding the self-archiving of journal articles on the web and in Open Access repositories.

This new approach to the proposal proved to be a success, with ten faculty members signing up to take the classes. The participants consisted of a few brand new faculty and a number who had been teaching here for quite some time. Most of them were working on a book, a chapter or an article, and some were preparing to present at a conference.

We found that there was a distinct difference between our Wednesday and Thursday classes. The former wanted us to stay and spend more time exploring the topics chosen for that class and were content to expand on the topics, while the latter wanted us to zoom through our information so they could have more time to devote to their projects.

We had a lot of good feedback at the end of the sessions and we asked participants to fill out a survey using Survey Monkey, shortly after completing the course.

We were pleased when the survey revealed that they were all glad to have participated in the library's PDI. We had some enlightening comments that will help plan future sessions. One subject we received a fair amount of comments on was copyright. Another commenter said they would have liked a library tour. Someone would have liked more handouts. This is all valuable feedback for us. With this knowledge, we will work on creating an improved experience for the faculty participants the next time we offer the class.

Many thanks to my colleagues at Roux Library: Julie Hornick, who had numerous helpful suggestions, Marina Morgan, Gerrianne Schaad, and Steven Wade.

How will you measure what is really important, and not what just looks good and is easy to measure?

If you have any questions about the Kirkpatrick's Four Levels Model, please email me at Andrew@peopleconnectinstitute. com. I'm happy to share the knowledge I have learned and am continuing to learn as I consult with libraries and other organizations on getting more results for our training dollars. And do use the link above for our archived webinar. You just might find yourself thinking about training evaluation in a new way.

New ideas to share?

Send your articles to the editors at

editor@alalearning.org

Creating Competencies

Cheryl Wright Manager, Organizational Learning & Development
Indianapolis Public Library, Indianapolis, IN

In 2017, IndyPL began requiring all staff to complete yearly competencies. In previous years, we had suggested monthly safety trainings for staff to stay current on issues such as tornado response, fire safety, etc.

As we grow as an organization, we realized that we must focus on requiring all staff to complete some core competencies that support the mission of the library. All competencies were to meet and highlight safety and regulatory issues and to set expectations for our interactions with others. All trainings are required to be completed between our performance review period of September 1st to August 31st. If not completed, their performance review will be affected.

To build this system, we used Webjunction's Competency Index for the Library Field as a starting point and also looked at our own internal list of trainings and identified what other areas were fundamental to our mission.

Our final list is:
• Active Shooter
• Customer Service and Communications
• Ergonomics Part 1 and 2
• Exit Routes
• Fire Extinguishers
• Harassment in the Workplace
• Intellectual Freedom and Censorship
• Library Injury Prevention Part 1 and 2
• Severe Weather
• Slips, Trips, and Falls
• Workplace Violence

As you can tell, this is a varied list. We wanted to continue with some of the more important safety trainings but also include some basics of librarianship and library ethics.

All trainings are set as links on our Training Page and are PowerPoint presentations with a Survey Monkey quiz attached at the end. Staff can take the trainings at their own speed as long as they meet the final deadline. Each week our office reviews the quiz results and sends certificates of completion to those who achieved a score of 100%. If questions are wrong, the staff member must re-take the quiz until they achieve 100%.

This is our first year at this process, but so far so good.