Facilitating a Virtual PLC

Competency

Educator uses online collaborative tools to facilitate a virtual (online) professional learning community.

Key Method

Educator creates an online professional learning community (PLC) in which a group of educators meets on a 3 - 4 week (approximately) cycle in order to address a problem of practice, examine data, collaborate on actions to take, and then review the results.

Method Components

Effective Professional Learning Communities

Whether face-to-face or online, a thriving professional learning community focuses on three main components: learning, collaboration, and results.

- Learning: In an effective PLC, educators focus on learning - both theirs and the students'. Educators work together to study a particular topic and collaborate around how to apply their learning for the betterment of their students.

- Collaboration: In an effective PLC, educators collaborate, give and receive feedback, and share classroom practices to achieve common goals for their grade level/subject and their school.

- Results: In an effective PLC, educators actively respond to data. This includes ongoing assessment of common formative assessments, as well as

programs and initiatives in the school. When meeting, the focus is not on a teacher whose performance indicators might be low, but instead on creating a culture where the success of others is shared and can be replicated.

Facilitating Effective Online Meetings

- **Before the Meeting**
  - It is essential to prepare ahead of time for all online PLC meetings. Facilitators should send a message to all educators before the meeting with instructions, a custom URL for easy entrance into the online meeting, and a prepared agenda.
  - Be inclusive by asking educators to assume roles such as note-taker, timekeeper, and technical support;.
  - Practice with whatever online medium you will be using for your meetings ahead of time so that you can confidently navigate the tool during your meetings.

- **During the Meeting**
  - Be sure to facilitate introductions, and resist the urge to multi-task.
  - It is often a good practice to put participants' microphones on mute if you will be doing an introduction of the topic(s) for the meeting.
  - One good general rule of thumb is that participants stay on mute and then unmute themselves when they have something to add to the group/meeting. Background noise is not a big deal between two or three people. However, if the meeting is larger than that and multiple participants have their microphones on, the background noise for the participants can drown out the meeting.
  - Ask educators to use the electronic tools (such as "raise hand") to signal that they have a question. As the facilitator, it is your responsibility to notice if some members of the group are not participating - call on them gently and ask them to add to the content of the meeting.

- **After the Meeting**
  - At the end of the meeting, recap the information that was shared, what the next steps are, and the next meeting time.
  - Be sure to "open the floor" for questions, clarifications, or last thoughts.

Supporting Rationale and Research

The Power of Virtual Coaching
http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct11/vol69/num02/The-Power-of-Virtual-Coaching.aspx

Mackey, Julie. "Blending real work experiences and virtual professional development." (2008).
https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/1966/12611007_mackey.pdf%3Bjsessionid%3DEAF47473986D9A185AF2D2CD761A84EF?sequence%3D1

Laxton, Amber, et al. A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market. Digital Promise, 2017, A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market.
http://digitalpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/accelerating-learning-for-adult-education.pdf

McConnell, Tom J., et al. "Virtual professional learning communities: Teachers' perceptions of virtual versus face-to-face professional development." Journal of Science Education and Technology 22.3 (2013): 267-277
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZAKnVW1BUazlZgJuDJFUCdMI5tNGFIm7/view?usp=sharing

King, Kathleen P. "Professional learning in unlikely spaces: Social media and virtual communities as professional development." International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET) 6.4 (2011): 40-46.
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dEjyJukVBz_aVd5sNybK3lejYaMsLWq_/view?usp=sharing

Knight, Jim. "What Good Coaches Do." Educational Leadership, vol. 69, no. 2, Oct. 2011,
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J5vl5fKsja-TbKpMtIyuev4qmA0N1JWh/view?usp=sharing

West, Lucy, and Antonia Cameron. Challenging Assumptions About Coaching. Challenging Assumptions About Coaching.
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vBA9LXPN1o6VX9MZ-9Hn68nqirpA2T0l/view?usp=sharing

Technology for Instructional Coaches
Last Revised on Mar 20, 2022

Resources

Support for Facilitating Professional Learning Communities
[K12 Blueprint - Professional Learning](#)

[Standards for Professional Learning](#)

[Professional Learning Communities Still Work (If Done Right)](#)

[Bolstering Collaboration Through Professional Learning Communities](#)

[Cycle of Inquiry for Professional Learning Communities Activities](#)

Technology Support
[Zoom Video Tutorials](#)

[Google Meet Tutorials](#)

[Google Classroom for Professional Learning](#)

Professional Development Through PLC's
[Join a Professional Learning Community](#)

[Professional Development Through Learning Communities](#)

[Professional Learning Communities](#)

[Three Steps to Facilitating an Effective Online Meeting](#)

Technology for Instructional Coaches
Last Revised on Mar 20, 2022

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must answer the questions with a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and receive a proficient for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

(175 - 250 words)

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

1. What was your experience level with facilitating face-to-face and online professional learning communities prior to your work on this micro-credential? What was the experience level in participating in a professional learning community with the educators who participated?
2. What are the individual or unique needs of the students who were served by this professional learning community?
3. How did you integrate the skills developed from this micro-credential into the PLC's (or PLC) that you facilitate?

Passing: Response provides reasonable and accurate information that justifies the reason for choosing this micro-credential to address the specific needs of both the teacher and the student. Educator includes a learning goal that describes what they hope to gain from earning this micro-credential.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following **two artifacts** as evidence of your learning. *Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

Artifact 1: Agenda and Notes
Agenda and notes from meetings in the 3 - 4 week PLC cycle. The cycle could be longer, depending on the needs of the educators you are serving, but the agendas and notes should reflect the PLC cycle of analyzing data, framing a question based on data, developing an action plan, and finally, carrying out the plan and collecting data for the next cycle.

Artifact 2: Video Recording
(5-10 minutes)
Record of one of your online PLC meetings. Your video should show evidence of:

- A prepared agenda,
- Introduction of all participants,
- Participants' voices in the meeting
- Opportunities for participants to ask questions

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	**Basic**	**Developing**
Artifact 1: Agenda and Notes	The agenda and notes are in a running record style, with dates of the meetings, agendas for each meeting, and notes during each meeting. The agenda and notes clearly display the cycle of inquiry for professional learning communities: analysis of data, formation of the key question to be addressed based on the data, the development of an action plan, along with the results of carrying out the plan. Time constraints may dictate the time interval between meetings, but there should be at least two meetings in order to review the results of	The agenda and notes are in a running record style, with dates of the meetings, agendas for each meeting, and notes during each meeting. The agenda and notes display some parts of the cycle of inquiry for professional learning communities, but parts of the cycle are missing or are incomplete. The agenda and notes demonstrate that data was analyzed, but the action plan that was created to address the key questions is not related to the data. There is evidence that the meetings were conducted virtually (online) and	The agenda and notes are in a running record style, with dates of the meetings, agendas for each meeting, and notes during each meeting, but the agenda and notes do not display the cycle of inquiry for professional learning communities. There is no evidence that data was analyzed, nor was there an action plan created to address key questions raised by the data. There is no evidence that the meetings were conducted virtually (online) and collaboratively.

	the action plan that was created. The agenda and notes demonstrate that data was analyzed by all members of the PLC and that the action plan was created to address the key questions developed through an analysis of the data. There is evidence that the meetings were conducted virtually (online) and collaboratively by the use of some sort of collaborative software/tool to take the notes such as (but not limited to) Google docs, Dropbox, Onenote, or Evernote.	collaboratively by the use of some sort of collaborative software/tool to take the notes such as (but not limited to) Google docs, Dropbox, Onenote, or Evernote.	
Artifact 2: Video Recording	Video demonstrates that the facilitator had planned ahead with a prepared agenda, introduced all participants, provided all participants a voice in the meeting, and allowed a safe environment for meaningful and respected dialogue. .	Video demonstrates that the facilitator had planned ahead with a prepared agenda and introduced all participants, but there may be participants who were left out of the conversation or otherwise did not participate in any way.	Video does not demonstrate that the facilitator had a planned agenda nor did the facilitator attempt to engage all members of the PLC in the meeting.

Part 3 Reflection

(350 - 500 words)

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?

Please answer the following reflective questions. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

- How did this micro-credential impact your practice as a facilitator for a Professional Learning Community?
- In this particular cycle of PLC meetings, what impact did you see your meetings have on identifying, addressing and meeting the diverse needs of students, as well as the educators in the PLC?
- How will this work affect your facilitation of PLC's in the future?

Passing: Reflection fully addresses all questions in the prompt with specific work-related examples. The reflection provides evidence that their facilitation of a virtual professional learning community has positively impacted the educators they work with and, in turn, the students that the educators work with.