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‘Celebrating Success’ –
a Continuing Professional Development Project in
Information and Communication Technology within a
Teacher Training Institution
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Abstract

Within any Initial Teacher Training (ITT) institution, there will be both those members of
staff who are forging ahead at the cutting edge of the technology and applying Information
and Communication Technology (ICT) in every possible way to assist them with their
daily work, and there are others who remain committed to the ‘old’ ways of working. This
developmental project has been designed to encourage and support Continuing
Professional Development (CPD) in ICT, where those members of staff with experience
share and support their colleagues who have not yet fully embraced the technology. The
outcomes were interesting in that not only were ICT skills generally enhanced and applied
more ‘effectively’ and ‘efficiently’, but also that a much richer research culture developed.

1 Introduction

The current situation with regard to the application of Information and Communication
Technology (ICT) by members of staff within Initial Teacher Training (ITT) institutions, is
highly variable. At one extreme there are the staff who are advanced practitioners (‘early
adopters’) using ICT extensively, whilst at the other end of the spectrum there are those
who are struggling to come to terms with the ‘new’ technology within their daily work, and
rarely apply it, if at all. This raises an important question as to how the difference in the
level of competence can be reduced by helping those with less ability? What are the
problems which generate this gap and how can they be overcome? The School of
Education and Training at the University of Greenwich, trialed a methodology of
Continuing Professional Development (CPD), which was designed to not only improve
ICT knowledge and skills level of staff, but also to ensure that they were
able to apply the technology appropriately to enhance their daily work. The Greenwich
CPD Project utilized ‘early adopters’ as mentors to guide and support a colleague’s
(‘buddy’) ICT development. The project lasted one year, from January to December 2006
and involved two departments within the School of Education and Training, the
Department of Primary Education and the Department of Education and Community
Studies. Four mentors and four buddies were chosen from each of the two departments, to
be involved in the project. The low numbers involved was governed by the fact that there
were only a few members of staff who had the necessary skills and competence to be
selected as mentors.

2 Research

According to the University’s ‘Strategy for Development’ document, there is:

‘… an increasing expectation of ICT competence of all its staff as appropriate to their
role, experience and responsibilities (administration, technical, general Higher
Education Teaching and Learning, Initial Teacher Training teaching and assessment). In this context the University intends also to build an ethos of staff entitlement to CPD to support their attainment/ extension of relevant skills where they are missing / weak / have potential to be extended.’ The key word in the above statement is ‘entitlement’, and it was the work of the Greenwich CPD Project to examine how this could be achieved at a local level. The School of Education and Training ICT Strategy provided greater detail relating to ICT CPD. It states;

- All staff to be entitled to ICT induction and on-going development appropriate to their levels of responsibility and roles.
- All departments to exploit technology effectively in all aspects of their work including, learning, teaching, research and administration.
- To model best practice in the use of ICT with students at all levels and in all departments.
- To seek to strategically develop (through appropriate resourcing and CPD) and periodically review our use of ICT over an agreed number of years (e.g. 3 years).

These points formed the specific core objectives of the Greenwich CPD Project and were constantly revisited.

Two major research projects were analysed and provided extremely useful guidance for the Greenwich CPD Project. One project was the National (UK) ‘New Opportunities Fund’, or NOF Training Programme (1999-2003), and the other was entitled ‘Teacher Institute for Curriculum Knowledge about Integration of Technology’ (TICKIT) Project, which was based at the Indiana University over a similar time period. The NOF programme was a bold step to use innovative teaching methods, such as applying elearning, and to emphasise pedagogy rather than just ICT skills. The aim was to provide training opportunities to all teachers in the country and was certainly ambitious. Few training programmes in any sector have ever been undertaken on a similar scale. The OF programme found that there was a need for ‘flexibility’ and the ‘ability to modify/adapt to local conditions’. Although the University of Greenwich has a central elearning support team to assist staff with ICT developments, it was considered important that the School of Education & Training should be represented by its own co-ordinator (“champion”) who not only would have a much greater understanding of the staff involved, but also have a close affinity for the School’s idiosyncrasies.

One paragraph of the NOF programme findings was particularly enlightening: (the author has used bold lettering to highlight key issues)

‘From the quality assurance perspective, the most successful schools seemed to enjoy good strategic leadership and collegiate work patterns. In these schools ring-fenced time, technical support and general encouragement, contributed to staff enthusiasm. The schools used strategies like regular workshops, informal problem solving pairs and groups that helped to balance staff strengths and weaknesses’. (Mirandernet 1994)

The most important point is the need for ‘good strategic leadership’. This can be taken at two levels, not only that of the Senior School Management (Head of School plus Heads of Departments), but also at Project Co-ordinator level. It was important that these two bodies worked closely together and kept the other informed of any developments. Technical support is a key issue for all the ‘cogs’ had to be in the correct place at the right time and suitably ‘oiled’ / maintained regularly. What ever was required of the system, it had to work well. The NOF report highlighted that the majority of teachers preferred to seek help
from colleagues rather than be taught by trainers and only a few were interested in participating in accreditation. The research findings of the NOF project went on to explain that a successful training programme advocated a ‘blended learning’ approach to teaching and learning. Staff involved in the Greenwich CPD Project would need to be initiated into ways in which such an approach can enhance more ‘traditional’ methods.

The allocation of time for staff development was given several mentions within the NOF Project report. It states:

**Time** was a major issue. Requests included more time to explore new ideas, more meeting and sharing with colleagues from the school and beyond.

In the UK teachers generally feel that they have been living in a time of constant change and that if they adopt these further changes, then they need to be given the necessary time and therefore ‘space’ to come to terms with that which is expected of them. Too often, teachers have been asked to make changes to their teaching (sometimes against their better judgement) and yet they have had to do it in their ‘own’ time. The NOF report goes on to elaborate exactly how this time should be best spent:

Teachers must have **time** for practice based research learning cycle: learning skills and understanding concepts, consolidation of skills, implementation, reflection, sharing with colleagues, re-construction of concepts and embedding in curriculum.

What is being advocated, is the need for greater action research and a coming together of staff to share their findings. It is the author’s view that this does not happen as often as it should. Some staff can be very insular or simply reluctant to make public their good work. Certainly there is still room for possible development in this area. To foster a caring, sharing community became a guiding principle of the Greenwich CPD Project. In some cases this would mean a ‘cultural shift’ from staff working in isolation, to a more positive, collaborating culture.

Another statement from the NOF report provided beneficial guidance: (the author has again used bold lettering to highlight key issues)

**Positive attitudes**, good leadership and **strong community building**, as well as a tendency toward **enthusiasm and good humour**, seemed to be paramount in overcoming the ICT programme’s challenges. **Risk taking** appeared to be encouraged where relationships were good.

In order for the Greenwich CPD Project to have any degree of success, it was important that all staff participants needed to be interested in developing their ICT capability. Positive attitudes were therefore an essential prerequisite before being chosen to take part in the project. Good leadership, enthusiasm and a good sense of humour’, were considered to be the important qualities of both the School co-ordinator and the mentors. All staff were taking some kind of risk and therefore the conditions had to be right so that people felt comfortable about undertaking this venture. It was important to build in a strong sense of ‘community’ of support staff and failure was to be avoided at all cost.

The other major research project studied in some depth was that undertaken at the Indiana University America (1999-2003). This research, entitled ‘Teacher Institute for Curriculum Knowledge about Integration of Technology’ (TICKIT) Project, established the University as the hub of several schools, in which a small group of teachers were developing their ICT capability within the classroom. In the report of the project (Ehman 2005) it is interesting
that a strong correlation was found between the findings of the TICKIT and the NOF projects. Common issues within these two projects included promoting collegial collaborations, using a ‘blended’ instruction approach, participants engaging in action research and sharing their findings. The TICKIT project highlighted that teacher beliefs were considered particularly important in professional development programs, because teacher change is more successful when both teacher beliefs and new teaching practices are aligned (Richardson, 1994). The TICKIT project provided a degree of teacher choice within their professional development activities, which has been found to be an important part of successful professional development programs (McKenzie, 2001; Richardson & Hamilton, 1994).

The approach of the Greenwich CPD project was to encourage staff to take the ‘best’ of their previous practices and apply ICT to do what they do, even ‘better’. This would mean that staff were being encouraged to take risks and try something new, but this begs the question, how can this be achieved? According to Clark (EPIC 2004) and November (2002), the greatest obstacle to success is ‘cultural resistance’, which is in its most extreme in education where 63% of workforce place greater focus on the ‘Technology’ (skills) and not enough on the ‘Process of Learning’ (applying those skills). Clarke, in the first instance raises issues related to bringing about change:
- It is not just about keeping people happy
- Reactive behaviour is normal
- It is about managing expectations
- Participants will feel uncomfortable
- It is important to help them succeed despite their discomfort

Clarke then goes on to provide guidance to help ICT change-makers:
- Sell a vision
- Encourage participants not to get left behind
- Appeal to their personal goals
- Saves participants time
- Highlight benefits of 24/7 access
- Reposition, not as training but part of the job
- Embed change in performance reviews

Selling what the future could be like but without making false claims would be critical in order to enlist staff’s support for change. They have to want to be a part of the future so changes need to be both realistic and in keeping with their own personal goals. This is not simply change for the sake of change, but rather in order to move forward. Change has to be accepted as inevitable in order to keep pace with modern developments and as such needs to be included in our CPD training and work performance reviews. Kotter and Cohen (2002) provided a little more guidance with regard to managing a project in his eight steps of change management:
- Urgency
- Guiding coalition
- Vision
- Communicate to get buy-in
- Empower to succeed
- Celebrate quick wins
- Momentum must be built
- Reinvigorate continuously
Like Clarke (2004), Kotter and Cohen see the need for vision as an essential key to success. A sense of urgency is also seen as important in terms of keeping up a momentum of a project. However, Kotter and Cohen place great importance on empowering staff to succeed and this became a central focus of the Greenwich CPD Project. The theme of ‘celebrating success’ was adopted for all project meetings and became the title of the website used to communicate ideas, developments, and progress reviews.

3 Potential Barriers

The research highlighted barriers to overcome and possibly hinder progress. Two main types of barriers presented themselves immediately, that of INSTITUTIONAL and those pertaining to the individual member of STAFF. A summary of the findings is presented in Fig. 1 and 2.

![Diagram of Institutional Barriers]

Fig. 1. Institutional Barriers
On studying the two figures, there is a high correlation between the institutional and staff barriers. Resources are a key issue and feature, both from the point of view of the provider and the user. Unfortunately the budget for the Greenwich CPD project was limited, and therefore there was not going to be a significant change in the area of resources. Staff time figures highly in both mind-maps and needs to be considered sufficiently important by management to allocate and budget for it in order to allow changes to take place. The bulk of the Greenwich CPD Project funding was to be allocated to buy staff time in order that they may accommodate the changes more readily (NOF).

Several researches show a strong importance of staff attitudes and beliefs as a key influence on success, e.g., Veen (1993), Simpson (1999), Ertmer (1999), Mumtaz (2000), Snoeyink and Ertmer (2001). The extent to which the staff value those skills and see them as relevant and useful, could make or break the project. It is interesting that Yuen (2002) in his article explores the variables affecting teachers’ acceptance of computers, with a focus on gender differences in computer acceptance. A questionnaire was administered to 178 pre-service teachers, comprising of two independent variables (perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use), together with a dependent variable (intention to use). The results indicate that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use directly affect the intention to use computers. Significant gender differences were also found: perceived usefulness will influence intention to use computers more strongly for females than males; perceived ease of use will influence intention to use computers more strongly for females than males; perceived ease of use will influence perceived usefulness more strongly for males than females. As it is the appropriate application of computers to teaching which is at the heart of this project and not simply skills for skills sake, this should influence a more positive outcome.

In his investigation into the study of US elementary teachers’ personal experience with computers in classroom instruction, Guha (2000) identified key causes of comfort or discomfort with computer use in the classroom. Ten teachers taking part in a larger related study were selected for interview and classified as either more comfortable with computers...
or less comfortable. The interviews revealed that both groups believed computers could enhance student learning and all wanted to be competent in their use. It is interesting that the less comfortable teachers tended to prefer networked computers, while the more comfortable teachers preferred stand-alone machines. The less comfortable group mentioned workload and time management as barriers to implementing computers in classroom instruction. Whilst the Greenwich CPD Project can assist in staff workload by buying them out temporarily, time management presents a greater challenge. However, through the intimate contact of the ‘mentor-buddy’ system, it was foreseen that the ICT could play a large part in overcoming this problem and make life easier and not more difficult as a result of its adoption and application.

Mumtaz (2000) agrees that teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning with ICT are central to the integration of ICT. He goes on to reveal a number of factors that influence teachers’ decisions to use ICT in the classroom: access to resources, quality of software and hardware, ease of use, incentives to change, support and collegiality in their schools, school and national policies, commitment to professional learning and background in formal computer training. All of these issues were endorsed by the Greenwich CPD Project’s coordinator and considered important for its success. An investigation by Russell & Bradley (1997) of teachers' computer anxiety through a questionnaire survey of 350 Australian primary and secondary school teachers, found that although teachers were generally positive about the use of computers in education, they reported moderately low levels of computer competence and one-third of the sample found computers to be a source of anxiety. The reasons for this anxiety are categorised in the following order of importance: relating to tasks involved in using computers; fear of causing damage to the computers; embarrassment associated with the inept use of computers. Snoeyink and Ertmer (2001) found that ‘first-order’ (extrinsic) barriers to computer use, such as problems with equipment, were often found to mask ‘second order’ (intrinsic) barriers, such as lack of computer skills. The high level of support within the Greenwich CPD Project was chosen deliberately to overcome such problems. It was envisaged that the close-at-hand support would reduce the negativity of any problems generated by the learner because it would be immediate, as and when needed, always on call. Strategically, the developmental approach is very expensive in terms of labour, but it is often forgotten that staff are an institutions greatest resource and as McKenzie (2001) puts it:

The better the job we do of identifying, grooming and rewarding local talent, the greater the professional growth and development we will see. It is a simple [but usually ignored] truth. We are too often penny wise and people foolish.’

4 Implementation

It was Hannan and Silver (2000) who raised the issue:

those initiatives to improve teaching and learning that were located in departments or drew respected representatives from departments into schemes run at the centre, were more likely to succeed.

It was therefore important that the Greenwich CPD Project Co-ordinator (ICT ‘champion’) was a member of staff within the School of Education and Training, so that they would be closely affiliated with the needs of the departments involved (Department of Primary education and Department of Education and Community Studies).
The NOF Project found that staff preferred to learn from their colleagues and it was Kotter and Cohen who said that if staff can be empowered to change their teaching methodology by supporting them on a one-to-one basis, then there was every chance of success. Such research work led to the Greenwich CPD Project to adopting a mentor – buddy approach to staff training. Four members of staff were chosen from each of the two departments, via discussions with the Heads of Department, to become ‘mentors’. The numbers were low because relatively few staff were suitably skilled to be allocated this role. They were selected on the basis that they not only already had a good level of ICT skills (‘early adopters’) but also would be keen to help colleagues to come to terms with the appropriate application of skills to meet their individual needs. These mentors were to be the key players in the process of bringing about change and it was they who had a major say in the choice of their ‘buddies’, i.e. a person with whom they could work closely in order to develop their ICT skills. It was considered very important that all taking part had a positive attitude to be involved (Ertmer (1999), Mumtaz (2000), Snoeyink and Ertmer (2001). Giving responsibility to the mentors would mean a close bonding and support for their buddies. See the structure diagram in Fig.3.

![Fig. 3. Project Structure for each Department](image)

The quality of the buddies experiences were considered to be critical to the overall success of the Greenwich CPD Project, for if others could begin to see exactly what can be achieved, this could stimulate some staff to try a similar experience. It would be like throwing a few stones into a pond and the ripple effect moving others to become part of the overall movement. Trying new ventures would mean staff having to take risks and therefore a safety net was required to help provide them with confidence to take the ‘leap of faith’. As the NOF findings highlighted, risk taking was encouraged where relationships were good, which was an inherent quality of this mentor-buddy approach. This methodology already had this feature in-built because they could work so closely.

The Greenwich CPD Project was ‘sold’ to the participants by highlighting the benefits to be gained by taking part. These can be seen below (Figures 4 - 6). In the words of Clark (2004) and Kotter and Cohen (2002), the Greenwich CPD Project was ‘selling a vision’, though this had to ‘appeal to their personal goals’ (Ertmer (1999), Mumtaz (2000), Snoeyink and Ertmer (2001)), by enhancing their teaching. All the advantages of participation would have to be clarified, together with an explanation of how the mentoring works, particularly when things become a little uncomfortable. Participants would have to fully understand that the way ahead would be a little difficult at times, but be reassured that the methodology was able to provide support exactly as and when required.

All staff had to agree to the taking some risk (NOF and TICKIT projects) to try something new, as well as share their findings with the project community. The strength of
the bond between the participating staff supporting one another in times of need was seen as crucial for success. The community was seen as the ‘heart’ and the individuals the ‘organs’ of the ‘body’. The success achieved was the ‘lifeblood’. Without any of these parts, the body would not function healthily, i.e. the project would not succeed.

Clark’s (2004) statements about including ICT as part of personal annual performance management discussions, together with analysis of its application and future use in course reviews were issues not being addressed at the outset of the Greenwich CPD Project, but were by the end of the project. It has to be said that this was not a direct result of the CPD Project, but it was a useful inclusion to further develop ICT developments in parallel with the project. It meant that periodic reviews would have to be undertaken to check members of staff’s progress applying ICT in their daily work and thereby make suitable adjustments and prioritise new directions, as found to be necessary.

Fig. 4. Mind map 1
Fig. 5. Mind map 2

Fig. 6. Mind map 3
The Project Coordinator held interviews with individual members of staff, who when approached, expressed an interest to be part of the Greenwich CPD Project. Interviews were chosen to establish staff ICT capability in preference to a paper audit, which was recommended in the findings of the NOF training programme. It was felt that an interview would be much more flexible, adaptive and solicit this information much more readily than a questionnaire. In the interviews, possible ways of applying ICT were presented to the members of staff and then discussed to establish which of these ‘new’ teaching methods they felt could possibly enhance their teaching. (This range of applications included topics as can be seen in Fig.5). From this choice, a particular skills audit was established in order for the member of staff to be able to achieve the desired outcomes. As Wild (1996) points out, ‘there is a need to demonstrate the relevance of ICT in teaching and to design CPD courses around successful pedagogical strategies rather than the now-discredited model of predominantly teaching ICT skills’. It was important within this project that the ‘new’ methodology which the member of staff wanted to adopt decided the skills to be acquired (‘top-down model) and not vice versa (‘bottom-up’ approach), i.e. skills training and then the member of staff analyzing how those skills could be applied in their own teaching (see Fig.7). By adopting a ‘top-down’ approach this does not negate the member of staff being creative with their newly learnt skills after their training, in fact this was to be encouraged, though prioritizing skills over application of those skills was seen to be a weaker base on which to build for the ‘beginner’.

![Fig. 7. Establishing learner needs – ‘top-down’ v ‘bottom-up’ approach](image)

An objective of the Greenwich CPD Project was to concentrate effort with highly focused activities. Each buddy had to take small steps and be successful. Well ‘nurtured’, well ‘fed’ participants, with just the right amount of ‘nutrition’ as and when needed to meet their individual needs, was planned. After all, ‘from little acorns, do oak trees grow’, which in time can become whole forests. What was not clear in the beginning though was which nutrients to apply, together with when and how they would be applied. It was important in other words, to initially determine what the needs of the individuals taking part were, and then begin to formulate individual programmes to meet those requirements, as recommended in the TICKIT Project findings. This approach was taken for mentors as well as buddies because it was considered that all participants should develop their ICT skills in some way, no matter how skilled they may be. For the mentors this meant that it was not just about giving, but also receiving. Once an individual action plan had been generated, the project adopted an approach as shown in the Fig.8 below. A period of time was allowed to focus and possibly remodel thinking if necessary. This would involve further discussions between mentor and buddy, in the preparation for the initial trialing of the ‘new’ (to the buddy) approach. Unavoidably there had to be some risk taking, as this
was necessary if gains were to be made. However, with careful prior preparation and setting the level of risk within the ‘comfort zone’ of the buddy (TICKIT Project), the chances of failure could be minimized. If possible failure had to be avoided, or certainly minimized, at all cost. This was the main function of the mentors, who because of their proximity to the buddies, were able to provide the necessary support as and when needed. It was crucial to evaluate all stages of development at every opportunity in order to guide further work. This was to be done both by the mentors and the buddies. What was established to be worthwhile would be carried forward to further enhance both the teaching and learning experience of our students.

Fig. 8. Project Development

It was Hargreaves (2003), who from a study of shadowing his colleagues, pointed out that learning is most likely to happen if it involves:
- demonstration
- explanation
- replication (in a new context)
- repetition; and
- creative adaptation.

We can all learn something from each other by working more closely together. Mentors shadowing their buddy will have a much greater understanding of their needs and therefore work from a position of strength in terms of ‘demonstration’ and ‘explanation’. New (to the staff) approaches can be ‘replicated’, discussed and personalized for the buddy to try. Subsequent discussion can critically evaluate what was achieved within the lesson, draw out the essential ingredients, and plan stages of development, with a view to future alterations to improve performance. A buddy can then plan a similar session but with a different context (‘creative adaptation’). Again, after the event, these results can in turn be examined and improvements considered for re-trialing. By this process of ‘repetition’ ways of working can be internalized.

What the Greenwich CPD Project has done from the outset was to run with the motto, ‘people matter’. People need to feel wanted, cared for, after all it is a basic instinct. A project website (see Fig.9) was created to begin to develop this sense of belonging to a ‘community’. This website used another project motto for its title, ‘Celebrating Success’.
We work from day to day with little praise or thanks and this website was trying to redress this situation (McKenzie 2001). All staff involved in the Greenwich CPD Project had their achievements made public. This is based upon the principle that all children like to see their work on display. Members of staff are no different to the children. What was interesting was the fact that the participants began to feel special. Instead of working within their own little environment they were coming together. Collectively they felt a much stronger force in the movement of taking teaching and learning to a higher plane, one in which ICT figured, not as an add-on, but rather as an essential component.

Fig. 9. Project Website

The website was created, not only as a source of ‘information’, but also a source of ‘inspiration’. Everyone’s successes were made public to the community (this was only to the departments involved in the project and not the whole School). The emphasis of the project was always based upon sharing and caring, no matter how trivial the result may be to some, all developments mattered. Staff could see and relate to other staff’s problems because they were having similar problems and therefore they felt that they were not alone. A mutual support community was being established.

5 What was achieved?

Adopting a ‘top-down’ approach in the initial interviews worked successfully in the sense that the focus was not simply on skills, but rather on their appropriate application to enhance teaching and learning. This necessitated the buddies being exposed to several different possible ways of employing ICT in order to make an informed judgement as to which would be most appropriate for them. As the mentors were early adopters, their experience was able to provide these examples. By adopting such an approach the skills were put into context (Veen 1993) and it was found that this generated a good level of incentive on the part of the buddy, to want to learn the necessary skills. The one-to-one interviews were appreciated by the staff as it made the process much more personal. Embarrassment of inadequacy in ICT was minimised at an early stage in the project (Snoeyink and Ertmer, 2001)

Prior to the commencement of the Greenwich CPD Project most staff, although part of a departmental team, tended to work in isolation. Collectively, staff may have discussed the content of sessions, but rarely had they talked about the delivery of the content. The
Greenwich CPD Project sought to correct this situation by encouraging staff to discuss possible ways in which ICT could be applied appropriately to meet their own needs. The introduction of using ICT through ‘blended learning’ (NOF, TICKIT) was the main focus for all staff, though accepting the concept, has been for many, a revolution in itself. What staff had to appreciate is that ‘blended learning’ is not new as all would probably have been practicing a mix-and-match of ‘chalk and talk’ with some question / answering, together with discussion about the topic. What the project needed to achieve was to incorporate ICT to complement and enhance the student learning experience through some of these existing blends. Some staff had already begun to use PowerPoint for presentations, although this invariably was simply ‘death-by-bullet-point’. (In defence of PowerPoint this need not be the case and indeed the national examination boards are now beginning to use it for portfolio work and there are many other exciting possibilities). However, for staff to begin the internalisation of these ‘new’ ICT approaches, they first needed to be exposed to them and then encouraged / supported to use them (Hargreaves 2003). This is where the mentor/buddy system excelled, by being always in the proximity and providing the necessary drip feed of ‘nutrients’ at exactly the right time.

The methodologies to put the individual action plans into practice, utilised a range of techniques, including blended learning, 1:1 face to face and/or e-mentoring and ‘tutoring—at—the—desk’. All participants gained something from the experience, although some much more than others, depending upon the initial targets set and level of previous experience. Some partnerships flourished in abundance, though not necessarily because of the correct ‘nutrients’ being applied at the correct time, but more a situation waiting to happen. Such cases occurred simply by bringing people together who really did want to get together, and which because of lack of previous communication, had not occurred to the extent in which it did during the Greenwich CPD Project.

Strategically, such a developmental approach does have a serious flaw in that it is so labour intensive and therefore expensive. On this basis alone, such an across institution adoption of this approach to ICT CPD may not happen. However, this current situation need only be seen as a temporary measure, for as more and more staff become proficient in using and applying the technology, and as new staff have this as a pre-requisite of their taking up post at the University, the problem will diminish. In time, the current hype surrounding ‘e-learning’ will change from defining what it is, to exploring its possibilities, through to an established way of working. For as Professor Mark Stiles said at a conference at the University of Greenwich (June 2006), ‘When we stop labelling it (‘e-learning’), we will have it’.

As well as the website praising successes, it provided a very important means of communication for staff. Unfortunately there is currently no means of centrally communicating exactly what research is being undertaken across the University. Several people could well be working on the same research topic and there is no means of knowing. This website provided a means of communication to keep all participants informed of what was currently taking place, as well as reporting experiences from prior activities. For the duration of the Greenwich CPD Project, the website was only made available to those participating, though in view of its success, it will subsequently be made available to all in the School of Education and Training. Small steps in ICT development were encouraged in order to maximise the chances of success and this worked very well. It also meant that activities were much more manageable and easier to record on the website. Colleagues presented techniques and tricks to aid personal learning, and as a consequence staff were more likely to try what was being proposed (NOF training programme). Through the website, staff were provided with a point of contact should they wish to discuss issues further or indeed try a similar experience.
One of the most difficult barriers to break down in both the NOF programme and the TICKIT projects was getting staff to overcome their personal anxiety and in some cases, fear of working with the computer. All staff taking part in the Greenwich CPD Project had used a computer to some extent, mainly Microsoft Word, but getting them beyond their ‘comfort zone’ was one of the greatest challenges to the project. As the two large projects (NOF, TICKIT), also Russell and Bradley (1997) pointed out, a major staff concern was of personal embarrassment or ridicule from making mistakes, or another, getting into trouble and not being able to correct the situation. This is where this project’s design pre-empted such issues and the intimacy of the mentor-buddy partnership was highly effective in allaying fears and overcoming these difficulties. All problems, no matter how great or small, were treated with respect. Working closely together helped the project grow from strength to strength, but also by highlighting achievements and experiences on the website increased the chances of success, for in the words of the old adage, ‘nothing succeeds like success’.

As the project gained momentum, the training for the buddies was sometimes opened to all staff within the school. In the first instance, all training was focussed on the needs of the buddy’s, but it was felt that others outside of the project may benefit from joining the presentation / workshop. This was always undertaken with the buddy’s consent and indeed the buddy’s sometimes preferred this approach for the camaraderie of working within a group. One such example was developing skills using the interactive whiteboard. Several members of staff came along who were not actually taking part in the project, but it was useful as they supported each other when practicing the skills. It was also a convenient way of advertising what was happening within the project and so stimulate interest in developing ICT skills of other members of staff and thereby widen the net.

The staff for whom the Greenwich CPD Project was largely intended, i.e. those who had not yet fully adopted an ICT approach to their career development, there has been some success. More resources still need to be set aside for this particular work, though the buddies have definitely benefited from the close support system. It was so important to have someone who is readily available to help them overcome their difficulties and therefore cut down on the level of frustration usually experienced when learning something new. For those at the forefront of developments, the mentors, it has added another dimension to their daily work. They are now not working in isolation, but within a group who want to talk to one another about sharing possibilities of incorporating more ICT into their work. Once the project’s website has been made accessible to nonparticipating staff, others will be able to benefit from the increase in communication. They will be able to easily isolate people to link up with, in order to work together towards a common ICT developmental goal.

6 To sum up

The essential themes or mottos running through the Greenwich CPD Project have been:
- ‘People matter’
- Develop a caring / sharing ‘community’
- There is strength in ‘collaboration’
- Learning should be a ‘quality experience’
- ‘Celebrate success’ at every opportunity

Through a learner–centred approach, contextualised by the individual departmental needs, the Greenwich CPD Project sought to raise the level of staff skills and application of ICT. Clearly, ICT was not going to make a teacher necessarily improve performance just
because they use it. What was needed was to develop a much greater understanding of how ICT can ‘enhance’ teaching and learning.

The aim of the Greenwich CPD Project was to assist teachers, through the application of ICT, to do what they do, ‘better’. The initial interviews established that a ‘culture change’ was necessary in order to begin to tackle the problems. Like all culture changes, there are no quick fixes. Certainly the mentor-buddy approach was very successful because the greatest need for any learner, is the appropriate support at the exact moment in time it is needed (i.e. the call out time in any emergency is critical and therefore needs to be reduced to a minimum). It was because of the intimate relationship between the mentor and the buddy, that the needs of the latter were usually met in full. Focusing on a small group of staff, whilst including others wherever possible, had impact and made the project manageable. By the end of the project an academic ‘community’ was beginning to emerge, which was not only based on action research, but also on sharing and collaboration. There is still work to be done to lure those members of staff who are reluctant to incorporate ICT into their teaching. However, it is envisaged by the author that there will shortly be a mounting pressure from students who are coming through the educational system, and who use ICT as their preferred style of learning, who could help speed up the cultural change. Time will tell.

References


“Merayakan Keberhasilan”
Sebuah Proyek Pengembangan Keprofesionalan Berkelanjutan di Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi Dalam Lembaga Pelatihan Guru

Rangkuman

PENGEMBANGAN KEPROFESSIONALAN BERKELANJUTAN /PKB (Continuing Professional Development /CPD) adalah upaya pembinaan bersistem, yang bertujuan meningkatkan dan mengembangkan pengetahuan, keterampilan, serta sikap para peserta agar senantiasa dapat berjalan dengan baik.


Dalam hal ini, PKB melatih peserta dengan “menjual impiannya” (selling a vision) seperti: membuat lebih mudah pembaharuan materi-materi; mendukung penambahan waktu pengajaran seiring meningkatnya populasi dan keanekaragaman siswa yang besar; menyalurkan kepada Agen Jaminan Kualitas lembaga audit; memungkinkan penggunaan sumber daya yang lebih luas; membuat komunikasi lebih mudah dengan siswa secara perorangan maupun kelompok; mengurangi beban administrasi dengan membuat informasi rutin yang dapat diperoleh secara online; mendukung dan mendorong siswa untuk bertanggungjawab dalam pembelajaran mereka; memberikan keleluasaan untuk lebih aktif dalam bentuk pembelajaran yang interaktif; dan mengurangi beban penilaian melalui penggunaan CAA dan CMC. 

Melalui PKB pembelajaran dan pengajaran dapat dilakukan dengan penggunaan audio dan video termasuk penerimaan digital audio dan video melalui web; pengujian secara online dengan Penilaian Dengan Bantuan Komputer (Computer assisted Assessment); penggunaan World Wide Web yang menyediakan akses untuk sumber-sumber digital seperti perpustakaan, jurnal, database, dan kumpulan data; model dan simulasi yang memungkinkan siswa untuk menjelajahi lingkungan di dunia nyata, pengembangan keahlian praktek; penggunaan bahan-bahan multimedia (grafik, gambar, foto, animasi, film, video, suara); penggunaan konferensi video termasuk komunikasi visual, jaringan telepon dan web; penggunaan konferensi dengan media komputer (email, media diskusi, bulletin dan percakapan); penggunaan teknologi presentasi (Powerpoint, LCD proyektor); penggunaan berbasis web secara online untuk penerimaan tugas, penilaian, pembimbingan siswa; penggunaan microworlds dan game yang memampukan siswa untuk belajar melalui eksperimen; dan penggunaan perangkat lunak (word, database, dan spreadsheets).

Arah dan tujuan proyek PKB terhadap siswa antara lain: mendukung penggunaan sumber daya ekonomi berkualitas tinggi (sumber yang mahal); memberikan pengawasan yang ketat terhadap siswa di mana dan kapan mereka belajar; menciptakan lingkungan yang mendukung pendekatan pembelajaran yang aktif; mendorong siswa melalui penggunaan yang cocok untuk pelajaran interaktif; mendukung intensitas komunikasi antara
staf dan siswa, dan sesama siswa; menyediakan kepada siswa lingkungan pembelajaran yang terpusat yang dapat disesuaikan dalam rangka mempertemukan antara kebutuhan belajar dengan pribadi para siswa; mendukung dan mendorong pembelajaran yang kolaboratif; menyediakan umpan balik sesering mungkin dan sewaktu-waktu kepada individu, contohnya melalui penilaian dengan bantuan komputer serta penguatan-penguatan yang positif; mendorong siswa untuk bertanggungjawab terhadap pembelajaran mereka dan mengijinkan para siswa untuk belajar berulangkali.

Pentingnya proyek PKB ini sebagai metodologi baru untuk mendemonstrasikan relevansi TIK dalam pengajaran karena desain PKB sebagai strategi pedagogi yang berhasil dari model lama yang sedang dipakai.

Dibuatnya website dengan motto yang berjudul “Merayakan Keberhasilan”, tidak hanya sebagai sumber informasi, tapi juga sebagai sumber inspirasi sehingga Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi dapat meningkatkan pembelajaran dan pengajaran.

**Keuntungan**

Menurut penulis, dengan Pengembangan Keprofesian Berkelanjutan akan menguntungkan, karena:
1. Meningkatkan keahlian TIK dengan penerapan secara efisien dan efektif, serta akan banyak budaya yang dapat dikembangkan dalam penelitian
2. Mampu memperbaiki pengetahuan dan keahlian pada tingkat guru, serta memberikan kepada mereka keyakinan bahwa mereka dapat mengaplikasikan teknologi untuk meningkatkan kenerja mereka sehari-hari.
3. Dapat membangun etos para guru dalam rangka mendukung pencapaian/perluasan keahlian yang relevan, dimana mereka tertinggal/lemah akan tetapi mempunyai potensi untuk dikembangkan
4. Melalui website “Merayakan Keberhasilan”, sesama teman guru dapat saling membantu mengatasi kesulitan ketika menghadapi pelajaran yang masih baru sehingga mampu mengatasi persoalan dan memungkinkan untuk saling berbagi dan berkolaborasi dalam komunitas akademik

**Kelemahan**

Adapun kelemahan penerapan metode ini pada guru adalah:
1. Harus menggunakan software dan hardware yang memadai dan mahal
2. Harus mendapatkan dukungan dari teman sesama sekolah dan sulitnya mendapat suntikan dana dari sekolah dan pemerintah
3. Masih belum ada satu pemahaman untuk sama-sama menguasai serta tidak didukung oleh latar belakang kemampuan pengoperasian komputer yang memadai

**Pertanyaan Yang Muncul**

Dari rangkuman yang di uraikan di atas, muncul pertanyaan sebagai berikut:
1. Apakah metode PKB dapat meningkatkan pengetahuan TIK para guru dalam upaya pengaplikasikan teknologi?
2. Sejauh mana pengaruh signifikiany proyek PKB dalam meningkatkan kinerja para guru sehari- hari?