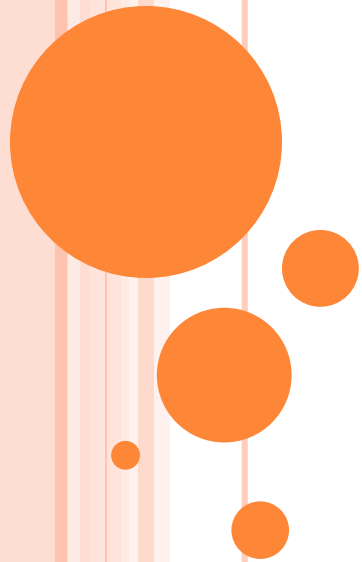




PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: A BALANCING ACT

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LEARNING

- An active process done by the learner
- Engagement in the process is key
- Learning and development build on where the learner is currently
- Learners have a unique history of past learning: skills, knowledge and understanding, attitudes

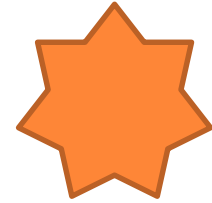


PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (PL) AND DEVELOPMENT

- Is complex learning: knowledge and practice
- Reflection on practice important
- Is costly to the person: it involves changing established behaviour
- Important to avoid guilt: a waste of time!
- ..and maintain confidence to learn and change in the future



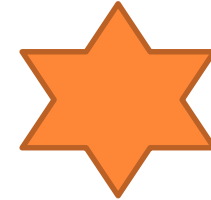
LEARNERS



- Unique
- Needs reflect current development
- Novice teacher reported different major challenges (class management, time management, assessing/ meeting individual needs..and more) (Draper et al,1991)
- For effective professional learning one size cannot and does not fit all
- Learning opportunities need to be relevant and differentiated



HOWEVER



- Presence of others is helpful
 - Learning in a social context (Vygotsky + many others)
 - Collaborative reflection helps (confluence is key!)
 - Learning from and with others is stimulating
 - All participants learn
 - Novice-expert gap (but complex)
 - Similar stage colleagues (but varies with context)
 - Different subject expertise



TIME FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IS LIMITED

- Collaborative learning: time consuming, but can bring twice the learning!
- Additional alternatives include
 - individual reflection and problem solving,
 - reading,
 - observing teaching
 - engaging in action research to develop one's own practice
 - ..but still useful to share outcomes



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RECOGNISED AS 'A GOOD THING' MANY YEARS AGO NOW

- In 1976, qualify, prove competence..that's it
- Some committed to improvement
- But major changes in economies and work:
automation, IT, globalisation, competition ...
- Education the engine of economic growth

- Now PL expected and mandatory in most
systems
- But teachers not satisfied with
 - development opportunities, amount and
content
 - time available for development (OECD, 2013:)



WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT TO MAKE AVAILABLE EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES?

- Different levels of need:
 - system (often learning for policy changes, through courses)
 - school (contexts very different, focus of development different: whole school development)
 - Individual teachers with **individual needs**
- Identifying needs a difficult and complex task
- Different opportunities: whole/part group/individual
- Resourcing a wide range of needs very resource intensive: very expensive.....AND



TEACHERS NEED

- Time and opportunities to learn
 - BUT ALSO
 - Time and opportunities to implement new ways
-
- Effective Induction at each new career stage can save some time
 - Ignore this at our peril



NEED TO ACHIEVE A BALANCE

- Between day to day work and PL..and life!
- Between system, school and individual PL needs
- Between innovation and tried and tested effective practice: not every new idea is worthy
- Between different types of effective PL
- Between encouraging PL and sustaining confidence in own capacity
- Between giving, receiving and sharing in PL



IS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Part of the job (in time and energy terms)?
- Or an add-on in teachers' "own time"?

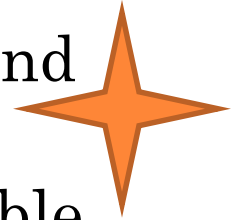
- A collaborative approach requires protected time for each person to engage
- Are we willing to do that?



CONCLUSION



- PL is essential to maintain a healthy profession
- PL opportunities must be relevant to current and future needs,
- Realistic expectations of PL in the time available (the impossible is demotivating)
- May need to review time made available!
- Effective PL not easy nor cheap
- BUT
- The consequences of ineffective, irrelevant, undifferentiated PL are serious.
- Today's symposium will highlight the complexities and the joys of effective PL



THANK
YOU



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