This study assessed the delivery effectiveness of a communication workshop for teachers, "How To Talk So Kids Will Listen." The workshop included presentations and opportunities to take part in role plays, simulations, reflection activities, and group discussions. Teachers completed a survey rating the presentation in four areas (organization and structure, delivery and communication, audiovisual displays, and usefulness of information) and responded to open-ended questions about positive aspects of the session and how to improve the presentation. Presenters kept journal notes, completed a self-report using the same four categories as the participants, and elaborated on the same open-ended questions as participants. Results indicated that participants were positive about the workshops. They felt the material delivered was practical, they valued the way the information was delivered, and they considered the presenters knowledgeable. Respondents noted that the sessions could have been longer, with more examples and stories included. Presenters believed that the presentations could have been more effective if the front-end and back-end tasks were given more attention. Lack of attention to audiovisual equipment, room arrangement, and session pacing were noted by both participants and presenters. (Contains 29 references.) (SM)
Playing the Staff Development Game:  
Assessing a Communication Workshop to Improve Learning

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Assessing a Communication Workshop

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Playing the Staff Development Game:
Assessing a Communication Workshop to Improve Learning

ABSTRACT: The guiding purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of a communication workshop by using multiple data sources. In-service participants were asked to complete a pilot survey that provided two sources of data: a rating of the presentation and responses on open-ended questions. Based on the ratings in the four areas of organization & structure, delivery & communication, audiovisual displays, and usefulness of information, the overall response from participants was positive. Responses on the open-ended questions resulted in three assertions that noted participants felt the material delivered was practical, the way information was delivered was valued, the presenters were knowledgeable, and the sessions could have been longer, with more examples and stories included. Finally presenters believed that presentations could have been more effective if the “front-end” and “back-end” tasks were given more attention. Lack of attention to audiovisual equipment, room arrangement, and pacing of sessions was verified by responses from participants, as well as self-assessment measures from presenters.

KEY WORDS: Improving the effectiveness of teacher training; professional development; reflective practice; action research; improving learning environments

1. Introduction

In Smart Schools, Smart Kids (1991), Edward B. Fiske reminds us that we can no longer use a “nineteenth-century institution to prepare young people for life in the twenty-first century” (p. 14). He describes schools and classrooms where teachers are treated as professionals, encouraged to think for themselves, and invited to teach students how to become independent thinkers and life-long learners.

Given this image of teachers as professionals, educators need to become critical consumers of their own professional development. Promoting this belief, Chase (1998) said, “We (teachers) have been passive for too long about our own
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professionalism. The teaching profession must assert itself. ... And we must take control of our own professional development" (p. 18, 20). For the past several decades, teachers have been provided the opportunity (and at times coerced) to participate in in-service or workshop training that promotes the latest teaching and learning fads. Yet, how effective are these professional development sessions? Responses to this question are mixed.

Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) share their views of workshops for teachers. They say, “Nothing has promised so much and has been so frustratingly wasteful as the thousands of workshops and conferences that led to no significant change in practice when the teachers returned to their classrooms” (pp. 316-317). Supporting Fullan and Stiegelbauer’s thoughts on training sessions for teachers, Trubowitz and Longo note, “In-service education limited to teaching methodology and to classroom management gives an incomplete picture of the scope of responsibility faced by teachers” (pp. 151-152).

On the other hand, proponents of teacher workshops paint a much different picture of staff development. Meek (1998) states, “Even no-frills staff development resulted in teachers’ willingness to try new strategies to improve classroom instruction” (p.15). Also promoting a positive view of in-service training, Spodek (1996) notes that teacher development is a career-long venture comprised of reflecting on practice, getting suggestions from other teachers, reading the literature, and participating in staff development activities. Like Meek and Spodek, we believe that it is important to provide educators with comprehensive, well planned, and ongoing staff development to prevent stagnation and burn out. This is the premise that guided our purpose and
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2. Purpose

Researchers conducting this study wanted to determine the delivery effectiveness of a communication workshop by using multiple sources of data. Participant completed rating forms and responded to open-ended questions. Whereas, presenters completed self-reports and wrote reflective (journal) notes. These methods guided presenters in improving the presentation of the How To Talk So Kids Will Learn workshop. Embedded in our purpose were the following questions:

- How do participants assess the How To Talk So Kids Will Learn workshop?
- In what ways can the presentation be improved?
- In what ways can presenters capitalize on positive aspects of delivery?
- Are presenter's comments on self-reports and in journal notes similar or different from results of participants' ratings?
- Can presenters improve the effectiveness of in-service training by using action research and reflective practice?

In addition to the questions listed above guiding this research, certain attitudes (discussed next) influenced this study.

3. Perspectives

At a recent countywide Teacher Institute day, while waiting to present a workshop to approximately 115 educators, I overhead a group of sage teachers sharing insights on in-service training. One teacher said, "You know, in all my years of teaching, I have never stayed for one of these things." Several teachers chuckled.
Another teacher pondered what the first educator had said and added, "Yeah, I know what you mean. I usually come, listen to the key note speaker (who usually isn't that great), make sure I am seen by administration, and then spend the rest of the day shopping." Although, not being able to hear direct quotes from the rest of the conversation, a few words, body language, and gestures told me that the dialogue was running in the same vein.

One might wonder if these teachers represented the poorest examples of what schools have to offer our students. I think not. In the process of eavesdropping, I heard these teachers sharing strategies that are considered "best practices" by today's standards. Then, why do university faculty, research practitioners, policy makers and educational reformers, continue to play the staff development game?

Most likely, because of almost three decades of research that indicates that there is a clear link between staff development and school improvement (Friend & Cook, 2000; Sparks & Hirsh, 1997; Joyce & Showers, 1995). However, it is obvious that my group of teachers may have experienced fragmented, one-shot workshop presentations that still can be found with too much frequency in professional settings (Friend & Cook, 2000). Often, this type of staff development is where attendance is mandated, and educators sit passively and have no input. Furthermore, once the session is over, participants are provided little, if any follow-up or feedback, so actual use of new strategies is minimal. Supporting this notion, Joyce and Showers (1995) noted that when teachers are presented with new approaches to teaching and learning, as few as 5-10 percent implement those techniques into their classrooms.

This phenomena even holds true for those of us in higher education. Where,
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university faculty usually, as times, have choice in selection and attendance of specific conferences and are given no follow-up on how to implement new strategies.

On the other hand, current research indicates that when teachers are provided with opportunities to self-assess, reflect, and have collegial support and collaboration, the rate of learning and implementing new strategies increases dramatically (Friend & Cook, 2000; Sagor, 2000; Ekbatani & Pierson, 1998; Shulman, 1997; & Hargreaves, 1996). To this end presenters, whether university faculty or staff developers, should be critically aware of how to design sessions that allow participants to begin the process of self-assessment, reflection, and collaboration with colleagues. If one promotes these techniques to ensure that new approaches are used in classrooms, it stands to reason that those designing and delivering such in-service sessions would use the same strategies to assess the effectiveness of their own staff development workshops. In the next section, researchers will discuss the use of multiple data sources (as promoted by Fraser, 1998; Tobin & Fraser, 1998) to assess the effectiveness of their communication workshop.

4. Data Source

The How To Talk So Kids Will Learn workshop was presented to three groups of educators in three different US states. Although each staff development session had a different theme, the delivery of each workshop was similar in topics and format. Content for each of the three sessions was developed from How to Talk so Kids Will Learn at Home and in School (1996) by Faber, Mazlish, with Nyberg and Anstine Templeton. With the presentation, participants of each session had the opportunity to take part in role plays, simulations, reflection activities, small and large group
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discussions, as well as listen to presenters. All three staff development sessions were considered daylong events, with morning and afternoon activities.

The first How To Talk workshop was presented to 40 educators from 16 states who attended the Responsive Leadership Institute in Greenfield, MA (18 completed the survey). The second How To Talk workshop was delivered to 120 educators affiliated with the Central Florida Association of Nonpublic Schools in Maitland, FL (65 completed the survey). Fifty-two educators attended the third workshop session sponsored by Peoria County Regional Office in Peoria, IL (52 completed the survey). At the end of each session, participants and presenters devoted time to assessing the workshop they had just experienced or presented. Of the 220 participants that attended the workshops, 135 completed surveys. Table I displays the affiliation of participants in the three workshops. Specific methods used for data collection are examined next.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop</th>
<th># of Participants</th>
<th>% of Total Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsive Leadership Institute</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield, MA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Florida Assoc. of Non-public Schools, Maitland, FL</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria Co. Regional Office of Education, Peoria, IL</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Method

For this study, the goals for collecting data were two fold. First, researchers needed methods that would allow participants to not only rate but reflect upon the presentation they had experienced. Second, at the end of the session and prior to
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seeing data results from participants, researchers wanted the opportunity to reflect and self-assess their delivery of the communication presentation. In this way, we acted as action researchers, since we were studying and reflecting on our own teaching (Herndon & Fauske, 1994). A one-page, pilot survey (See Appendix A) was created to collect rating data and responses to reflective questions.

As noted earlier, at the end of each session, participants were asked to complete the brief, pilot survey. Surveys were anonymous to provide a component of safety and comfort when responding. Researchers used the same categories of the pilot survey as a guide for studying and reflecting upon their presentations. Notes were recorded in the form of journal entries and written self-reports.

5.1. Participant Survey

5.1.1. Rating Component:

Workshop participants were asked to assess four aspects of the How to Talk so Kids Can Learn session. On organization of workshop and content delivery, presenters were appraised using five categories from "extremely well organized" to "very disorganized" and "very well delivered" to "poorly delivered" respectively. For usefulness of information and audiovisual displays, participants evaluated presenters using three categories from "very useful" to "not useful" and "very helpful" to "not helpful" respectively.

5.1.2. Open-ended Questions:

Defined as questions that have an infinite range of responses, open-ended questions were selected by researchers, since it would allow participants opportunity to offer freely any information (Friend & Cook, 2000). Educators were asked to reflect
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upon and respond to the following two open-ended questions: 1) Please describe one positive aspect of the presenters’ session; 2) Please make one suggestion to improve the presentation. From participants’ responses, information was analyzed and the analysis was used to find common patterns and themes.

5.2. Researchers’ Reflection:

Reflection for presenters took shape in the form of journals notes recorded at the end of each presentation. Supporting the technique of reflection, Lee S. Shulman stated:

As with students, reflection is needed in the lives of teachers. They cannot become better teachers through activity and experimentation alone. Schools must create occasions for teachers to become reflective about their work, whether through journal writing, case conferences, video clubs, or support for teaching portfolios (1997, p. 100).

Although journals have been used extensively for novice teachers, educators (including university faculty) sometimes forget the merits of reflecting on their teaching (presenting) as a means of guiding their own professional growth (Korthagen, 2001). For this study, journal notes were read and re-read to identify reoccurring themes among the different presentations. These broad themes were then compared to data results of participants to support and/or refute, as well as define and redefine all similarities and differences.

5.3. Researcher’s Self-Assessment:

As promoted by Barber (1990), teacher self-assessment is not an individual concept, but rather an important strategy for professional development. It is under this premise that researchers in the current study adopted self-reporting as a partial means to assess delivery effectiveness of their communication workshop. At the end of each
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presentation, researchers completed a self-report using the categories of organization & structure, delivery & communication, audiovisual displays, and usefulness of information. Researchers using the same open-ended questions as participants, elaborated, with reflective journal notes, upon all aspects of presentations that needed to be changed, modified, or kept the same. Self-reports were analyzed for similar and different patterns, and broad themes were then compared to journal entries and participant results.

In analyzing responses to open-ended questions, journal entries, and self-reports, as with any interpretive method, the researchers in the current study used a self-reflexive stance and acknowledge, up front, their biases, beliefs and life experiences may have had an impact on the research process (Franklin, 1996). Researchers incorporated a methodology that drew on the interpretive methods and knowledge of Erickson (1998) and Shagoury Hubbard and Miller Power (1993). The themes that continued to surface in data results were written into assertions, both of which are discussed in the next session.

6. Findings

6.1. Quantitative

The four items on the pilot survey pertaining to the rating of the presentations were aggregated to derive the mean scores. The results of this portion of the survey indicate that the participants in all three workshops viewed the organization and delivery (5pt. scales) as extremely well organized with mean ratings of 4.5 (MA), 4.2 (FL), and 4.9 (IL); and very well delivered with mean ratings of 4.7 (MA), 4.3 (FL), and 4.8 (IL). Additionally, the audio visual displays and usefulness of the information (3 pt.
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scales) were rated as very helpful with mean ratings of 2.8 (MA), 2.6 (FL), and 2.9 (IL); and very useful with mean ratings of 2.8 (MA), 2.8 (FL), and 3.0 (IL). As can be seen in Table II, there was consistency in the ratings at all three workshop sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 pt. Scales:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization &amp; Structure</td>
<td>18 (MA)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 (FL)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 (IL)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery &amp; Communication</td>
<td>18 (MA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 (FL)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 (IL)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 pt. Scales:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Visual Displays</td>
<td>18 (MA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 (FL)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 (IL)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usefulness of Information</td>
<td>18 (MA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 (FL)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 (IL)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results from the rating of each workshop was further verified and validated by the results from the interpretive data, which is discussed in the following section.

6.2. Qualitative

Researchers identified eighteen recurrent themes in the interpretive data collected on the How to Talk workshop. When researchers reanalyzed these broad themes, re-compared all data sources to each other, and discussed and reflected upon each session, it became clear that the themes could be grouped under the headings of “information or content presented to participants” and the “style of delivery.” With these headings, the data became more manageable and the eighteen themes were rewritten into five major repetitive patterns. After careful analysis and
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reexamination of the themes, much reflection, and many discussions, three assertions surfaced from the five reoccurring themes.

6.2.1. **Assertion One**: Participants believed the information and strategies presented were practical or valuable and that sessions could have been longer.

   Many researchers have supported the notion that the value educators (or students for that matter) see in their learning is critical to their application of new ideas and strategies in their classrooms (Shulman, 1997; Cuban, 1993; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993). Participants in the three workshops repeatedly addressed the practical nature of the material presented and wanted more. Selected responses that support Assertion One are as follows:

   - Very useful and practical tips that are “take and do” things for the classroom.
   - The information was so useful that perhaps the session could be longer.
   - Very practical in changing perspective and beliefs—longer, more techniques from the presenter.
   - I learned a lot. Make this a two-day presentation, so we can get more and go further in-depth.

   Presenters, in journal notes, verified participants’ concerns about wanting more information.

   **Statement from Presenter’s Journal : August 12, 1998**

   *I think participants enjoyed and valued what they’ve heard but seemed to want more? Not a bad idea to leave them wanting more, but I’ll have to answer their questions and mail responses to CFANS to distribute. Hope I have time! Maybe on the flight home?*

   Participants had other insightful advise for presenters, as noted in the following
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assertions.

6.2.2. Assertion Two: Workshop attendees believed the content was presented in a knowledgeable manner, with insightful examples, stories, and ideas; participants wanted more of the same and less introductory information.

As an undergraduate elementary education major, my professor told us that if we learned to tell stories well and give good examples, we would be excellent teachers. Little did I realize that it would take almost 20 years for this bit of wisdom to surface from the subconscious to the conscience. Presenters made a direct effort to build into the How to Talk workshop examples, stories, role-plays, and discussions that would be connected to teachers' lives in the learning environment. Additionally, participants preferred less background knowledge and wanted more stories, as evidenced in the comments below. Peppering the sessions with humor and enthusiasm was intentionally done to keep participants interested and actively involved. "Studies indicate that not only do students (participants) like enthusiastic teachers (presenters) but that teachers' enthusiasm facilitates student (learning)" (Jones & Jones, 2001, p. 276). Affirming our style of delivering workshop content, participants made the following comments:

- Good subject matter. I would have liked more practical ideas—less time spent on introduction or what doesn't work.
- A little less intro—more practical examples and stories.
- The session provided our "home groups" with lots of discussion.
- Useful information—fun role playing—even to watch.
- Great job! I liked the group activities and role-playing.
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Usually, involving participants, using humor, and sharing personal stories and examples goes a long way to insure a successful presentation. However, occasionally these techniques have the opposite effect, as witnessed by the following remarks:

- It's not in my comfort zone to "act" out in front of peers.
- Talk about energized and excited—like presenter was trying to convince herself—and for me, it had the opposite effect.

It is difficult to know when a participant, who has been volunteered by colleagues, wants to contribute or feels pressured. Presenters will reduce introductory material and continue to use the same style of delivery and workshop format but will make sure that participants know they do not have to volunteer to lead discussions, do role plays, or head an activity.

6.2.3. **Assertion Three**: Although, the workshop sessions were perceived positively by participants, presenters believed they could have been more effective, if "front-end" and "back-end" tasks were given closer attention.

Presenters define "front-end" tasks as those things that should be in place prior to the session starting. More specifically, room arrangement, public announcement (PA) system, overhead projector and screen, tables, chairs, and flip charts all need to be appropriately set-up to help create the optimal learning environment. "Back-end" responsibilities can be defined as those tasks presenters facilitate at the end of the session and prior to participants leaving. In other words, provide a sense of closure and satisfaction for participants by covering all main points listed on agenda and allowing enough time for questions and answers.

Teaching is the most important, challenging, and complex professional career.
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Yet, somehow there is an attitude that teaching is neither—that it is something we do "on the side" and is not particularly complicated. Many of us have heard our colleagues in higher education say, "I have to teach two (maybe three courses), but I get reassigned time to do research and writing." Or, "I am hoping to get this grant, so I can buy out my teaching load and spend more time doing research." So, in essence teaching becomes something we "have" to do (a load) and research and writing becomes something we "get" to do. Refuting the premise that teaching is a simple and "on the side" profession, Lee Shulman (1997) tells the following story:

I have spent most of my scholarly career trying to understand teaching. I interrupted this effort for a period of about 10 years when I tried to ask similar questions about the practice of medicine. ... What I have found in years of studying the men and women engaged in these professions is that, of the two, teaching is by far the more complex and demanding. ... After 30 years of doing such work, I have concluded that classroom teaching—particularly at the elementary and secondary levels—is perhaps the most complex, most challenging, and most demanding, subtle, nuanced, and frightening activity that our species has ever invented. In fact, when I compared the complexity of teaching with that much more highly rewarded profession, "doing medicine," I concluded that the only time medicine even approaches the complexity of an average day of classroom teaching is in an emergency room during a natural disaster (Shulman, 1987, 369-386). When 30 patients want your attention at the same time, only then do you approach the complexity of the average classroom on an average day (p. 90).

Although, ninety-five percent of workshop participants made positive comments concerning the workshops, how much did they know about the "before" and "after" situations surrounding the sessions? According to their responses—quite a bit.
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Front-end Issues:

- Speaker's overhead could have been moved into place by someone while she was beginning or ahead of time and a second microphone for the teacher-student role playing may have cut down on delays for the speaker and volunteer actors passing the microphone back and forth. Were the hostesses aware of the format the speaker would use for today's presentation?

- The pages she had on the O.H.P. were hard to find and to follow along because they were buried in the packets. Number pages and tell us were to look.

- It was hard to hear when in small groups around the room. Also, different seating arrangements so seeing could be better.

These comments were further verified by presenters' own words:

Comments from Presenter's Self-Report: July 16, 1997

Handouts and other audio went really well. But, the overhead and transparencies were a struggle. The overhead projector was on a cart, so there was no room to spread out materials. Plus had to keep returning to the projector to hunt for and place another transparency on screen. Man, I really need to find a better way—maybe assign someone to handle the transparencies?

Presenter's Journal Comments: August 12, 1998

I was surprised that the room set-up was so awkward. Thought I was pretty clear on what I needed? Who does straight rows of fold-up chairs, anymore? ... Struggled with handling the PA and overhead projector. The projector was a mile away from participants and the mic had a short cord.

Presenter's Self-Report: June 27, 2000

Sure could've used an extra mic today for the role-plays and sharing. And as long as we are wishing—make them wireless.

Taking participants' suggestions to heart, presenters will give close attention to their "front-end" responsibilities.
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In addition to “front-end” suggestions, participants had helpful recommendations for providing a smoother closure to sessions. Following are their comments:

**Back-end Issues:**

- More concrete concepts. Check in with audience halfway through to see where you are on agenda to make sure we cover the important stuff.

- More question time. I wish my question had been answered.

- The afternoon was dragging-on during the personal opinion and sharing part. Somehow encourage individuals to share only brief stories or examples, so more people can have their questions answered.

Once again, attendees' comments were reflected in presenters' own words.

**Presenter's Self-Report: June 27, 2000**

*Rushed the end part, again. Needed to cover some stuff but ran out of time.*

**Presenter's Journal Comments: August 12, 1998**

*Sure didn't have enough time but things went well. Needed more time to go into certain techniques and allow individuals time to practice.*

**Presenter's Self-Report: July 16, 1997**

*Ran out of time and had to rush the end. Need a way to address this reoccuring issue.*

As evidenced on the previous pages, time is definitely an issue that plagues educators. Wilson & Daviss (1994), take the problem of time to a more serious level. They stated: “Teachers whose hours, energy, and imagination are drained away by the relentless demands of moment-to-moment and day-to-day obligations (of teaching)
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can't be expected to engage in serious reflection or study at the same time." On the other hand, serious reflection and time to study is exactly what is needed, if new strategies are going to be implemented in today's classrooms. In Common Schools, Uncommon Futures (1997), Shulman expands the need for teachers to have reflection and learning time. He said:

As with students, reflection is needed in the lives of teachers. They cannot become better teachers through activity and experimentation alone. Schools must create occasions for teachers to become reflective about their work, whether through journal writing, case conferences, video clubs, or support for teaching portfolios. Such work requires both scheduled time and substantial support.

Presenters will continue to incorporate reflection time into their presentations and follow-up sessions. While at the same, look for better ways to pace sessions, so important topics are fully covered and all questions have been given serious thought.

7. Conclusion

The guiding purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of a communication workshop by using multiple data sources. In-service participants were asked to complete a pilot survey that provided two sources of data: a ratings of the presentation and responses on two open-ended questions. Based on the ratings in the four areas of organization & structure, delivery & communication, audiovisual displays, and usefulness of information, the overall response from participants was positive.

Responses on the open-ended questions resulted in three assertions that noted that participants felt the material delivered was practical, the way information was delivered was valued, the presenters were knowledgeable, and the sessions could have been longer, with more examples and stories included. Finally presenters believed that presentations could have been more effective if the “front-end” and “back-end” tasks
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were given more attention. Lack of attention to audiovisual equipment, room arrangement, and pacing of sessions was verified by responses from participants, as well as self-assessment measures from presenters.

8. Last Minute Thoughts

Generally, educators get approximately three, student-free days per year to devote to professional development activities. With this limited time, educators have to be critical consumers and take control of their own learning and professional development. In conducting this study, presenters have come to understand, even more clearly, two “musts” for effective presentations. The first “must” involves the need for workshops to have "connectedness" and follow-up. Research tell us that “teachers who participate in peer coaching teams as follow-up to training attain a 75 percent or better implementation rate. This rate is a marked improvement over the 5-10 percent implementation rate for teachers who are not provided follow-up or support (Joyce & Showers, 1995; Friend & Cook, 2000).

A second “must” is for schools to create supportive teaching cultures, where educators use self-assessment strategies to become aware of their instructional practices and evaluate the effectiveness of their instructional methods and materials. In such a culture, teachers are active learners, reflect, collaborate, feel they belong and are passion about teaching. It is to this end, that researchers of this study continue to assess their own teaching and learning. Without this type of inquiry, teachers will forever believe that in-service is something that happens to them. Furthermore, with this attitude, teachers will continue to view presentations as worthless and use their professional development days for shopping.
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9. Importance of Study

Since the reviews on the effectiveness of in-service workshops are contradictory, more research needs to be completed. Based on the results of this study, it appears that workshop presentations were effective when presenters met their audiences' unique needs and were able to provide teachers with feedback and consultation. Armed with this information, all in-serving can be a positive element of educators professional development and therefore, a needed force in educational reform efforts.

References


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APPENDIX A

How to Talk so Kids Can Learn at Home and in School
Session Evaluation Form

I have enjoyed sharing time with you today. I hope each of you leave better prepared to help students. Please take a moment after the session to give me feedback. Leave the form on your table.

Please rate session on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization and Structure</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Well Organized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Organized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptably Organized</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Disorganized</td>
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<th>Visual Displays (handouts, overheads, tape, etc.)</th>
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Please describe one or two positive aspect(s) of this session:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Please make one or two suggestion(s) to improve the next discussion:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

(Anstine Templeton, 2001)
Title: Playing the Staff Development Game: Assessing a Communication Workshop to Improve Learning

Author(s): Rosalyn Anstine Templeton and Celia E. Johnson

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Telephone: 309 677 3693 FAX 309 677 2952

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