

My Future As a Learner

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I am very grateful and fortunate to serve a newly created role this year as Instructional Technology and Data Coach for our local Educational Service District. This position includes training professional staff, implementing new technologies in classrooms, and understanding the learning and background of the districts I work, with I am extremely blessed to immediately be able to use what I have learned in my current studies within my professional position. The theories, tools, and implementation of technologies all apply and are relevant in application of my services to local school districts. Since this position is so new, maintaining the foundation and knowledge rooted in the Masters of Educational Technology for the continued growth of the position is essential to best meet our needs. To further develop my knowledge as professional expertise, I will develop my understanding of the cognitive learning process, increase my familiarity and analysis of educational technology research and increasing my professional learning network.

Working with learners of all ages in my new position requires me to understand the process of learning and the background of the people I instruct. Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000), explain that, "Teachers then need to build on these ideas in ways that help each student achieve a more mature understanding. If students' initial ideas and beliefs are ignored, the understandings that they develop can be very different from what the teacher intends" (p. 10). I want to continue using this book as a learning guide because it analyzes learning and how it affects the brain. By using it as a professional guide, I can approach learning using multiple strategies. Acknowledging previous experiences is an essential component when introducing new ideas. In order to enhance learners engagement with new information, I must maintain familiarity with previous practices and past experiences in schools that I work with. This might mean attending conferences that are relevant to the district, accessing my local districts' school improvement plans, maintaining fluent communication with administration and staff, keeping up to date with state and national government education laws and attending school improvement team meetings.

Not only understanding previous background knowledge and how it affects learning is important but to be able to explain educational technology research is necessary in my position as well. Prior to beginning my studies at Michigan State University, I had the confidence and desire to implement any type of technologies in my classroom. At the time I saw it as a way to

become more efficient and connect digitally with my students. What I lacked was the ability to not only cognitively understand what I was doing but to be able to describe the reasoning behind my technology integrations. Currently my new position often involves working on classroom initiatives and school wide technology implementation into curriculum. Two major theories that drive educational technology are the Technology, Pedagogy and Content Knowledge theory and the Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition model. I need to continue working with these models and understanding them on deeper level by furthering my involvement and research. I have registered to become a member of the TPACK website and plan to purchase literature on the TPACK theory. To further my involvement with the SAMR Model, I have created a list of websites that offer more in-depth analysis of the SAMR model in classrooms.

Lastly I can enhance my experience with educational technology and school programs by enhancing my professional learning network. An island is extremely difficult to live on because the resources, land, and materials are so limiting. It is often easier to have more resources, land to travel and materials when living in a bigger area with a more dense population. The development of a professional network is also something that I will take with me as I progress in my career from the Masters of Educational Technology program. Throughout the program we were asked to make our ideas, work, and selves public. Signing up for twitter, maintaining a blog, conference opportunities showcasing our work and communicating with classmates/professors all supported the idea of a Professional Learning Network. By establishing my own "PLN" I have created a virtual professional family that is a short message away to help me find a resource, bounce ideas off and discuss educational technology implementation. My master's program has also taught me that a PLN should not be one sided and your daily news feed should include ideas or social accounts that you may not necessarily agree with. I want to continue to develop my professional learning network by participating in Twitter chats like #miched #MASSP #BFC530 to gain ideas from around the country and interact with multiple types of educators from all over the world. To continue developing my virtual relationships, I would also like to continue speaking and attending educational technology conferences to meet up with others from my field who share my interests. Several conferences that support my ongoing learning are the [Michigan Association of Computer Users in Learning](#) conference and the [MiGoogle](#) Conference. Attending these conferences can help with problem solving, new technology integration and networking and

make sure I never feel like I'm on an island. This can help with problem solving, new technology integration and networking and make sure I never feel like I'm on an island.

Overall I wouldn't be where I am at professionally without the skills and ideas and I have learned in this program. Maintaining professional relationships, reinforcing theory behind technology integration and understanding how people learn are all key factors in supporting local districts. I leave this program with the confidence and understanding how educational technology can help shape the future of schools and student learning.

References

Bransford, J., Brown, A.L. & Cocking, R. R. (Eds.). (2002). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience and school* (pp. 3-27). Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press. Retrieved from <http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309070368>.