



Randall Davis
English Language Institute
University of Utah

Reimagining the Traditional Paradigm of Professional Development

Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab
esl-lab.com

Bolivia English Teachers' Association - 25th
International Virtual Convention for English
Teachers, January 6-9, 2021.

Purpose

1. Discuss current challenges facing teachers and students in the new learning environment.
2. Describe the inadequacies and limitations of current professional development practices.
3. Propose fundamental changes to current PD that reflect a broader vision for the future.

Question

1. What are the greatest challenges that you face in teaching in this pandemic era?
2. What activities do you engage in to deal with these challenges?

Current Challenges

1. Teachers and students often have a difficult time juggling work, family, and self-care.
2. Teachers feel overwhelmed with the expectations to revolutionize their online teaching in days or weeks.
3. Teachers experience a loss of connection with students and colleagues.

Quote

“We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations.”

How do we develop to
be able to see new
possibilities?

Goals of Professional Development

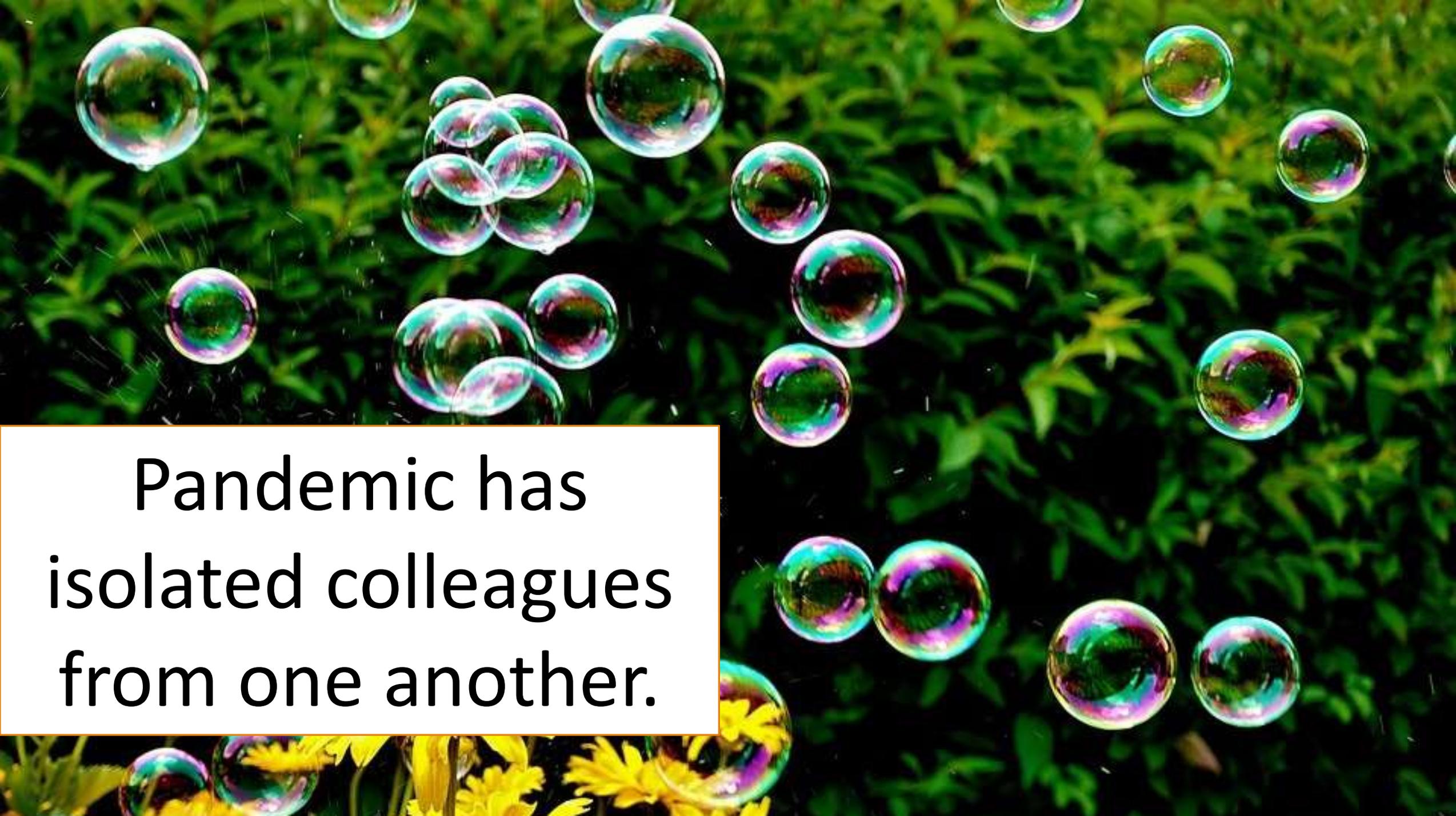
1. Experience personal enrichment
2. Learn new teaching skills for different learning environments
3. Become a teacher trainer or public speaker
4. Find a new job
5. Seek a promotion and get a raise

Traditional Model of Face-to-Face Training



Question

1. What shortcomings do you see in this traditional training model today?

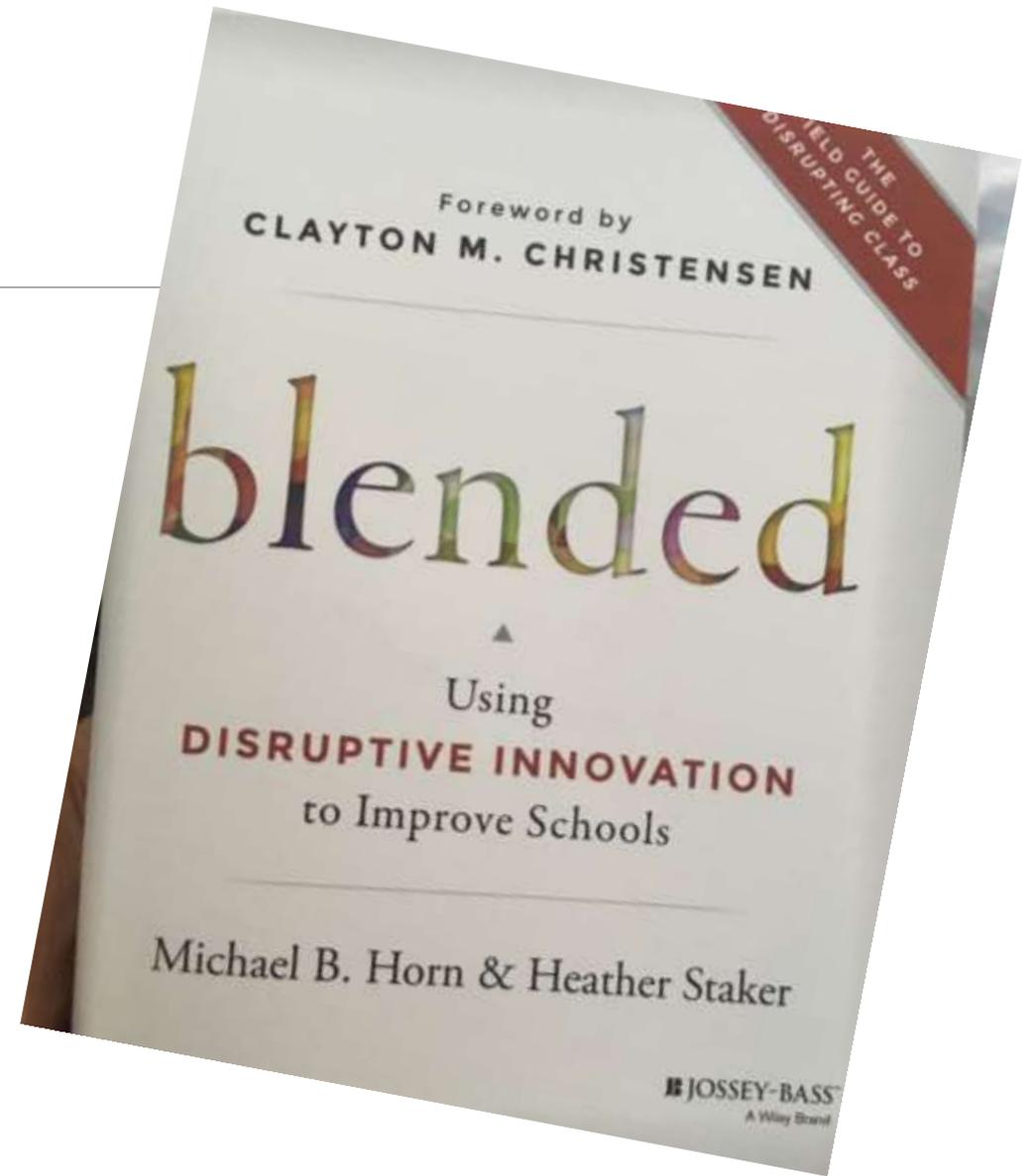


Pandemic has
isolated colleagues
from one another.



Thought

Disruptions in traditional models during periods of change and turmoil can lead to accelerated innovation and growth.



"The mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions."

- Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.



How can we help each other stretch and enlarge our minds and skills in new directions?

Quote

“If you want to improve the organization, you have to improve yourself and the organization gets pulled up with you.” – *Indra Nooyi, Former Pepsi CEO*

“I was a rebel in every way.”

What is the Answer to Supporting Teachers?

Professional development (PD)

“Just get a good speaker to talk to our teachers, show them a few features on Zoom, and they will improve. That will fix any teaching problems.”



Dilemma

“Professional development cannot be part of the solution until it is no longer part of the problem.”

Hayes Mizell

Professional Development Educator

Mizell, H. (2009). Ineffective PD often part of the problem in low-performing schools.



Problems with Professional Development

- Not relevant to teachers' needs.
- Too generic and superficial.
- Too short with no follow-up support.
- Focus on novelty tools assuming they are better.
- Too much information to process.
- No specific process to determine PD outcomes in instruction. Examine outcomes in depth, not superficially.
- Peer feedback from colleagues isn't the norm.





What PD Will Serve Me Best in the Coming Year? How Can I Be a Leader?

- What do I want to learn more about?
- What would be a good idea for me to learn about/how to do?
- What “holes” do I have in my training/education?
- What “new learning” can I take on this year?
- How might I help my colleagues or institution or field of EL Teaching?

Ernesto Correa



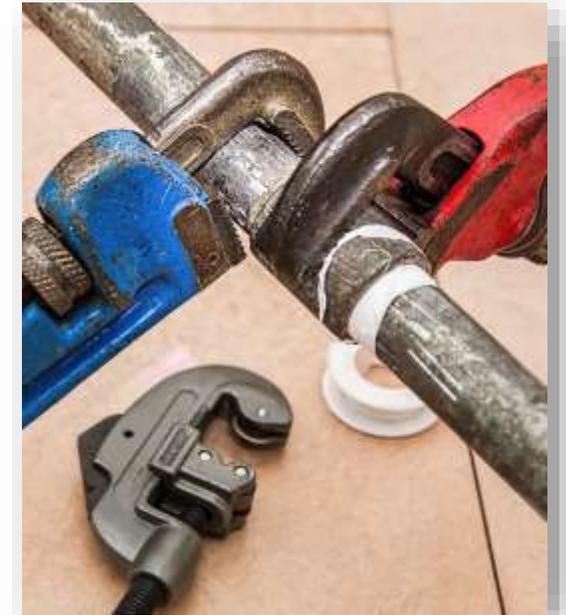
Laura Holland

Issues with Current Professional Development

Step One

People sometimes make unfounded assumptions and blame teachers for why they struggle.

Recognize that teachers are human beings with skills to be developed; they are **NOT** a problem to be fixed.



Develop Soft Skills

Understand that the reasons for struggle can be very individual and personal . . . outside of the classroom.

"The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend."

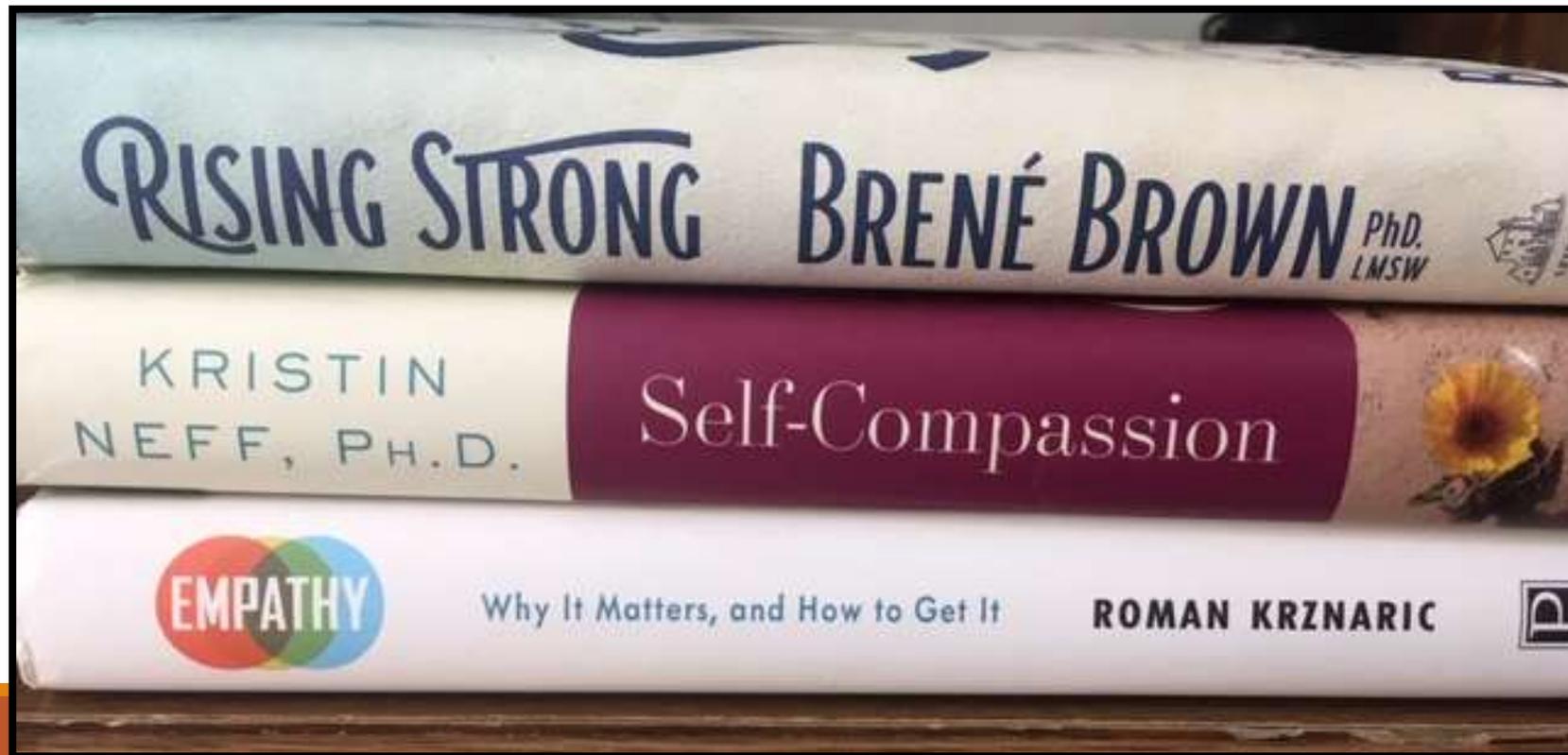
- *Henri Bergson, French philosopher*

Death
Illness
Divorce
Financial stress
Depression
Struggles with family

Empathy = the ability to sit with someone in their discomfort and pain

Build Your Empathic Muscles

Work on developing an empathetic spirit toward those who struggle: teachers, parents, students, and strangers.



Step Two

Speakers lecture on things that are irrelevant to the teachers' needs.

CONDUCT A NEEDS ANALYSIS: Determine what teachers need in advance of any training.



“Drop-in” Training Model



Speakers lecture on things that are irrelevant to the teachers' needs.

Step Two

- (For trainers/presenters): Make direct contact with teachers, not just with school administrators or conference organizers who are inviting you to come.
- Administer a detailed survey to all teachers.
- PD tends to crash when implemented from the top down.



Step Three

Schools only organize training in short bursts with the hope that such training will “fix” instructional issues.

ACTION PLAN: No “drive through window” workshops. Provide long-term, sustained, and cumulative practice (job-embedded training).



Step Four

Workshops dump information without providing time for digesting and practicing the skills.

TRAINING: Avoid the lecture model or marathon training sessions that become an information dumping ground.

Provide small, digestible chunks of learning.

----- No 500-slide show in 15 minutes.



Step Five

Teachers feel alone without follow-up support after training has finished.

- Develop and assign expert teacher mentors and coaches to other teachers.
- Foster a creative, supportive, and collaborative culture.



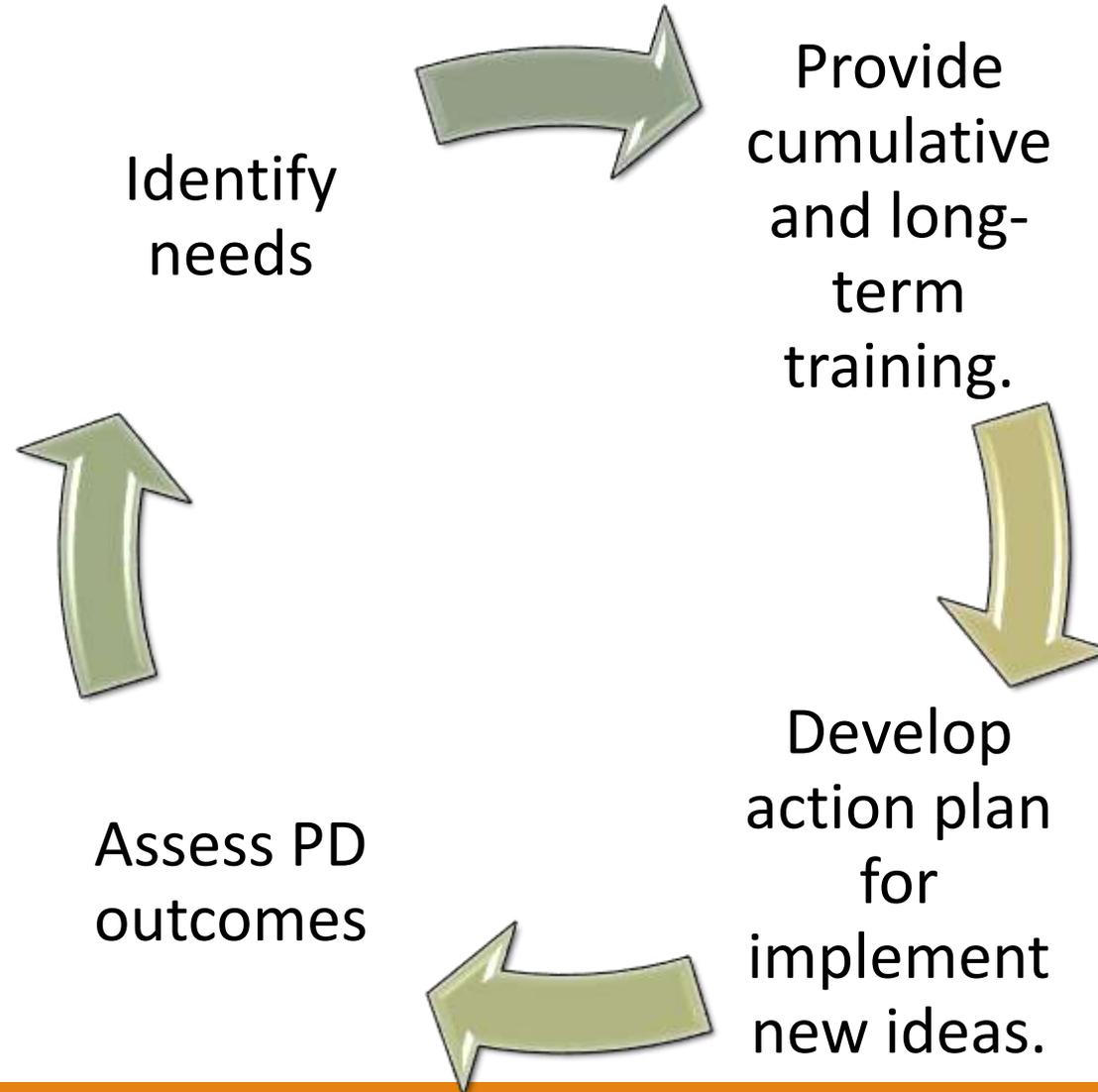
Step Six

Teachers aren't provided follow-up support and feedback.

- Implement a system of evaluation on the impact of the training to determine the value and return gains.
- Teachers come up with an action plan and report on 2 or 3 changes they have made as a result of training.



Professional Development Model



Reimagining Current Professional Development

Quote

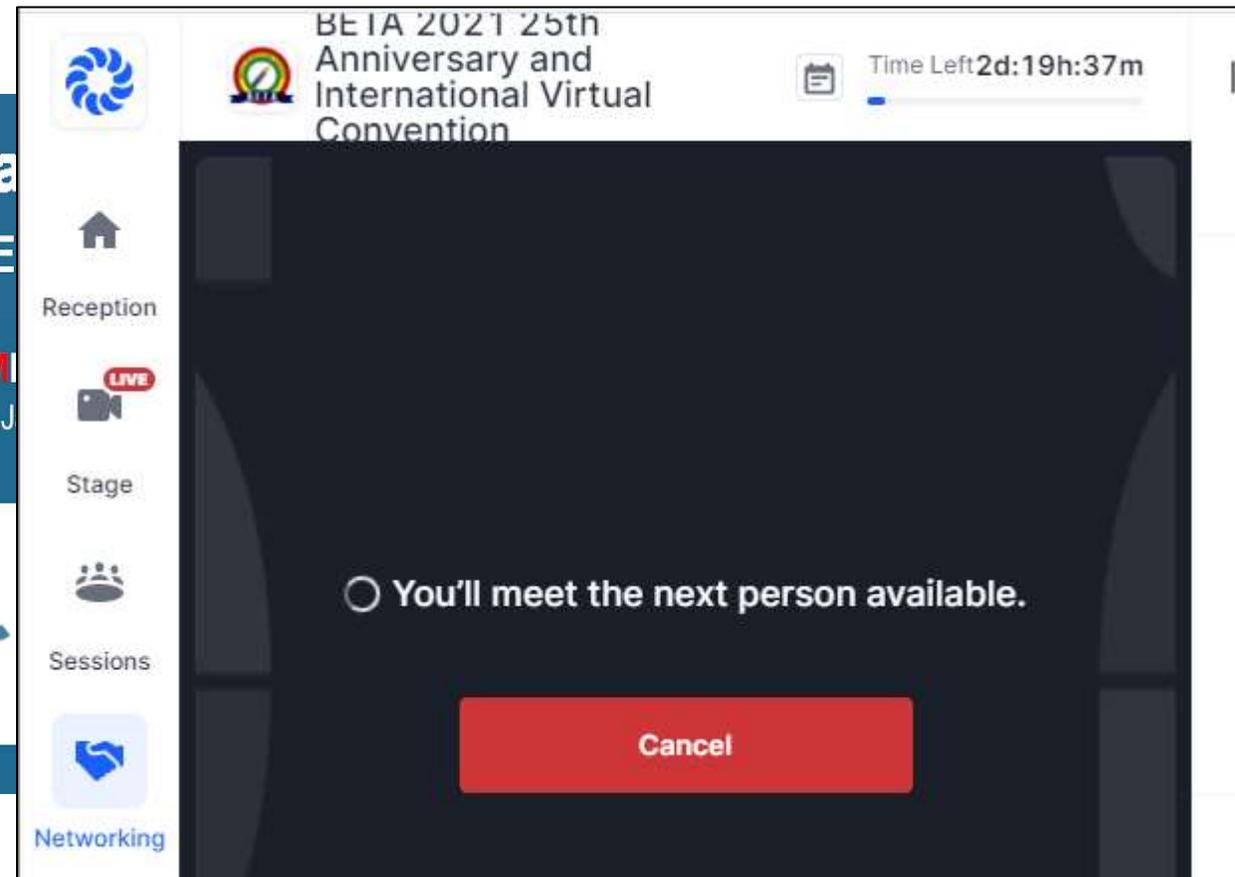
“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

– *Ralph Waldo Emerson, poet and essayist*

Changes to Professional Development

1. Develop the soft skills of self-awareness, empathy, self-care, and self-compassion.
2. Expand your network of colleagues and online communities (friendships) through Social media and language-teaching events (and encourage others to do likewise).
3. Create a online mentor system of collaborative learning and accountability.
4. Develop remote group projects and course with colleagues to develop professional skills.
5. Present ideas to a global audience. <https://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn/calendar-of-events>.

2. Expand Your Network of Colleagues and Friendships Through Social Media and Language-Teaching Events.



2. Expand Your Network of Colleagues and Friendships Through Social Media and Language-Teaching Events.

- Join networks and actively engage. Don't create a profile and then disappear.
- Create our own online communities.



3. Create a Mentor System of Collaborative Learning and Accountability.

- Task-based mentoring
- Experience-based mentoring
- Just-in-time mentoring
- One-to-one mentoring
- Team mentoring



Online Teacher Support Programs: Mentoring and Coaching Models
North American Council for Online Learning
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED509629.pdf>

Task-based Mentoring



- Creative Solutions for Teaching and Assessing Listening/Speaking Skills
- "Help! My Class is Out of Control!"
- Activities and Games to Spice Up Your Grammar Classes

Zoom Swap Shop Gatherings

Organize a meeting with once a month with teachers from around the world to share ideas.

- Select of specific topic (e.g., classroom management techniques).
- Invite teachers to participate in a group event for a Zoom meeting.
- Give each teacher 5 minutes to share their idea followed by questions.
- Record the meeting for public release after the meeting.



Benefits of Collaborative Learning

- Promotes human connection across geographic and cultural boundaries.
- Expands teaching perspectives outside of our egocentric worlds.
- Encourages feelings of reciprocity.
- Promotes concrete, meaningful feedback.

4. Create New Projects with Colleagues to Enhance Professional Skills

English Language Institute
University of Utah
eli.utah.edu

Social Media Content

- Teacher Tips
- Alumni Interviews
- Facebook Live Broadcasts



5. Present Ideas to a Global Audience.

Bolivian English Teachers' Association

25th Anniversary & International *Virtual* Convention for English Teachers

DEVELOPING A POST-PANDEMIC PARADIGM IN ELT

January 6, 7, 8, & 9, 2021



an affiliate of
tesol
international
association



Changes to Professional Development

1. Develop the soft skills of self-awareness, empathy, self-care, and self-compassion.
2. Expand your network of colleagues and online communities (friendships) through Social media and language-teaching events (and encourage others to do likewise).
3. Create a online mentor system of collaborative learning and accountability.
4. Develop remote group projects and course with colleagues to develop professional skills.
5. Present ideas to a global audience. <https://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn/calendar-of-events>.



“chameleonic”

Quote

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

– *Ralph Waldo Emerson, poet and essayist*

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

– *Barack Obama, former U.S. President*



Randall Davis
English Language Institute
University of Utah

Reimagining the Traditional Paradigm of Professional Development

Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab
esl-lab.com

Bolivia English Teachers' Association - 25th
International Virtual Convention for English
Teachers, January 6-9, 2021.