Inquiry Based Action Plan

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"
"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.
"I don't much care where –" said Alice.
"Then it doesn't matter which way you go."

Alice Through the Looking Glass,
Lewis Carroll

Learning Outcomes:
   To engage in professional growth through an inquiry learning process.
   To identify best practices in online learning.
   To use your learning to contribute to your current or future teaching.

Identify the <u>key topics or contexts</u> of interest for an inquiry

Identify a <u>central inquiry question related to online learning</u>.

Implement a <u>plan of action informed by research</u>.

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Proposed Plan Approved By:	
Date Approved:	

1. Identify Key Topic of Interest and Context

Managing the changing of technology pedagogy in a blended learning environment. In my work environment, my role as Technology Coordinator puts me in a position to roll out new initiatives to staff and faculty so I'm very interested in ensuring that the process is as smooth as possible.

2. Identify a Central Inquiry Question (related to your topic, context)

Central Inquiry Question:

How do you manage pedagogical change, with respect to technology, within a blended learning environment?

3. Design and Implementation

Design an action plan for your inquiry question by:
a) identifying relevant sources of information and background knowledge (i.e. primary and secondary sources, research studies, people, courses, associations, units or programs of study, contexts, relevant theories of teaching and learning, etc.)

b) creating "Specific Actions" i.e. What will you do to gather the above information? (eg. read journal article entitled ____; speak with ____; watch video entitled ___; etc.)

1.
Holmes, K., Clement, J. and Albright, J. (2013). The complex task of leading educational change in schools. *School Leadership & Management*, 33 (3), pp. 270-283. Retrieved from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2013.800477 [Accessed: 28 Sep 2013].

This article focuses on the role of the principal within an overarching change project. It outlines five key areas that it has determined are "practices of effective leaders". These areas are:
1. **Development of a shared vision**
2. **Development of relational trust with staff**
3. **Use of multiple sources of information to solve complex problems**
4. **Maintaining a focus on the core business of teaching and learning**
5. **Responding to external demands**

For each practice it has used examples and interviews with teachers and principals to explain the process used to "accomplish" the effective practice.

The development of a shared vision is focused on ensuring that the various stakeholders – principals, administrators, teachers, learners, etc. all gather together in an effort to

ensure that the outcome of the project is what they all want to occur. In one case this took upwards of 9 months to achieve through a steering committee.

The principal next went about ensuring that the staff felt trusted to speak their minds and feel like they will be heard. The principal asked for feedback often and made the giver of the feedback feel "listened to" and empowered.

By using multiple sources of information the principal was able to convince staff members of the need to change, as well as what was working and what wasn't. Data-driven decisions were only part of the approach, as were surveys and information conversations. Testing data was included within the data driven decisions.

Throughout the entire process it was important that the teaching and learning take priority. Teachers discussed the changes with each other, and the principal, in relation to how it was impacting their classes and learners. Days were given for teachers to evaluate the effects that the changes were having on their teaching practices.

Finally, the wider community was engaged through the use of reports, or simple question and answer periods. The chamber of commerce was included in the project because it impacted careers and transitions. Essentially, the wider community was brought on board throughout the process rather than at the end.

The article ends by summarizing the key points and emphasizing that the relationships built throughout the process was a driving factor in ensuring the success of the project. Also, a common purpose between principal and staff, as well as multiple schools, was seen as a contributing factor.

2.
Mcnish, M. (2001). Guidelines for managing change: A study of their effects on the implementation of new information technology projects in organisations. *Journal of Change Management*, 2 (3), pp. 201-211. Retrieved from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/738552754 [Accessed: 28 Sep 2013].

This article focuses on a survey of a number of successful, and unsuccessful, information technology (IT) deployments in business.

It begins by describing the two approaches to implementing and managing change – the planned approach and the emergent approach. The planned approach has been around much longer (1947) and the emergent approach (1992). The emergent approach is seen as being "more suitable for the new environment of the twenties century and perhaps the early part of the twenty-first century." The article, however, doesn't focus on describing these approaches.

The major goal of the article is to analyze a series of survey questions given to successful and unsuccessful IT projects.

The article outlines the major decisions and steps that must be completed to lead a successful IT deployment.

1. **Obtain commitment from senior management**
2. **Seek support of a strong champion**
3. **Use adequately skilled people**
4. **The team must be committed to change**
5. **The successes must be widely published**
6. **The benefits must be widely published**
7. **Studies must be completed with respect to the changes actually required**
8. **Resources should be made available as soon as difficulties arise**
9. **Affected staff should be well informed about expectations**

Within each of these points the author explains the results and editorializes with their own thoughts. It is noted that while many of the survey results did not have 100% acceptance, these results together tended to indicate a successful IT change.

The article concludes by noting that these guidelines are not the "be all and end all" and should not be applied in isolation. It is important that top management express their support of any IT project for it to have any chance of success. The organization itself has a responsibility to contribute to the project as it is able, and the author comments that the success of a project may depend on this communication amongst the company.

3.
Steckelberg, A., Li, L., Liu, X. and Kozak, M. (2008). A Rubric for Self-Assessment of Essential Technology Conditions in Schools. *Computers in the Schools*, 25 (1-2), pp. 81-89. Retrieved from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07380560802157899 [Accessed: 28 Sep 2013].

This article focuses on discussing the effects of the state of Nebraska implementing an online self-assessment rubric with respect to integrating technology into its schools. This rubric was created in 2004 in an effort to "identify the essential conditions for technology integration in schools and develop a method to quantify this progress toward meeting these conditions."

This self-assessment rubric is completed as part of a larger technology planning process and is completed totally online. The results are immediately available to important stakeholders in the various planning groups.

40 educators developed the rubric and developed 5 categories of essential technology conditions. Smaller groups used online collaboration tools to develop benchmarks and elements for each of the individual rubric areas.

The five subscales are: Technology Administration and Support, Technology Capacity, Educator Competencies and Professional Development, Learners and Learning and Accountability. Each of these categories is broken down further inside the rubric.

The article comments that the rubric has shown a high degree of reliability and within each subscale the reliability is acceptable enough to be used.

The results are included in the article and an analysis is completed as to the current results (2006). The rubric has provided the state of Nebraska with both a framework of

conditions and a descriptive categorization of levels of progress. While the article does mention that there are problems with relying heavily on self-assessment, the results do appear to be consistent year-to-year.