

Project 6 - Developing A Personal Learning Network EDM 310 - Fall 2009

What is a Personal Learning Network of a Personal Learning Community?

It is those people, places, organizations and activities which enable you to learn.

What are the characteristics of a PLN?

It changes frequently.

It is worldwide.

It is like a stream. You can dip into it, and it keeps on flowing. You can get into it, and it keeps on flowing. And you can flow with it.

It provides more opportunities for you to learn than you provide it. But you do affect it.

It is collective in nature.

It is not yours alone.

It is usually free, or close to free.

It is totally dependent on the new communications technologies.

To take full advantage of it you must

- change your old ideas about teaching and learning

- want to learn

- be willing to try new things

- learn collectively

- acknowledge that you will never "learn it all" and that "learning never ends"

- attain new skills in using new communication skills

- understand that you will never master those skills either, but that you must constantly use them to learn more

- appreciate

 - that you will learn from experience in a PLN

 - that information is everywhere, is not scarce, and need not be memorized

 - good learning starts with a good question

 - that questions are more important than answers

 - that learning must involve an acknowledgement of not knowing AND a desire to find out

 - that old "authorities" are no longer "authorities"

In other words, a Personal Learning Network is the replacement for the classroom which no longer works as it did in an earlier day and time. It is a revolutionary change in education!

How do you establish a PLN?

1. You formulate questions, or identify a subject area of interest to you.
2. You search out people, places, organization and activities through which you might learn. In the past, you would go to the library. Today you start with clouds. You search on the internet, in YouTube. You follow conversations about the questions or subjects that interest you on Twitter, or in Facebook, or in Delicious. You dig below the surface in these searches. On Twitter, you follow people, listen to them, watch those with whom they are conversing on the topics that matter to you. You communicate with them using the tools available in the new media. You form a team of those nearby and share the work. You ask more questions, and you continue to search. You are more detective than student. A LOT more like a detective!

3. Richard Byrne has prepared a presentation on How To Build a Personal Learning Network. Check it out at <http://is.gd/2h0Xu>.
4. Beth Still, Scottsbluff, Nebraska has a list of 50 educators to follow in creating a PLN. Her blog is [Nebraska Change Agent](#). The list can be found in her post of August 8, 2009 entitled [Looking for a Unique Gift for an Administrator? Give 'em a PLN!](#)

I have several. let's take a look at them. First, my "Education" learning community. I am interested in the impact of technology on education. So I have a subject matter, and lots of questions flow from that. I am told to use twitter. I resist, but then decide not to make judgements before I try it. I start with @wmchamberlain. I see who he talks to. I follow them to see their side of the conversation. I look up their profiles to get a sense of who they are. I look at their blogs. I read those blogs. If the people interest me, i follow them and dig deeply into their conversations, their followers. I read the blogs or other materials they suggest as being worthwhile. I find some real gems, such as the videos of Michael Wesch, the speeches and books of Sir ken Robinson. An on and on it goes. i search YouTube. I order books from Amazon. I write my thoughts in my blog. I generate more questions. I look in iTunesU for materials. I watch the. I search for podcasts and listen to them. And suddenly I have a PLN.

What constitutes the PLN? As I noted earlier, it changes. But here is a start:

Teachers (the @means a twitter name):

Mr. William Chamberlain, Noel, MO @wmchamberlain

Mr. Joe McClung, Fayetteville, Arkansas @jkmclung

Mr. Jarrod Lamshed, Adelaide, Australia @jlamshed

Mr. Michael Fawcett, @teachernz

Mrs. Kelly Hines, Washington, N.C. @kellyhines

Mrs. Candace Follis @iMrsF

Alec Couros regina, saskatchewan, Canada @courosa

Jarod Lamshed, Adelaide, Australia @jlamshed

Christy Vogel, South Carolina @MrsFrenchteach

John McCullough@cubprof

Ms. L. Lee, Washington State@stardiverr

Melissa Techman, Charlottesville, VA @mtechman

Ms. Wendy Drexler, Florida @wendydrexler

Steven W. Anderson, Utah @web20classroom

Crista Anderson Missoula, Montana @cristima

Alice Barr, Maine @alicebarr

Larry Ferlazzo, Sacramento, CA @larryferlazzo

Peter Vogel, Vancouver, B.C., Canada @PeterVogel

Beth Still, Scottsbluff, Nebraska @bethstill

YouTube

Delicious

Angela Rand @allonsdanser

Ms. Jenny She, Auckland, New Zealand @jshe

Edutopia

I recommend you follow the contributors to this blog. You will use this blog a lot in this class:

<http://attheteachersdesk.blogspot.com>

Suggestions from Larry Ferlazzo of people to follow on Twitter: <http://is.gd/2gMgt>

Larry Ferlazzo's blog: <http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/>

Suggestions from Beth Still for 50 educators to follow on twitter: <http://is.gd/2kfLa>

Beth Still's blog: <http://bethstill.edublogs.org/>

Charles Strange @cstrange69

Leslie Strange

Blair Strange

Shane Hipps

Karl Fisch @karlfisch

TED

Michel Wesch, Kansas State University @mwesch

Richard Miller, Rutgers University

Sir Ken Robinson and on and on and on.

Two very different PLNs of mine.

For my interests in Photography and Macintoshes I have very different PLNs. Both emphasize podcasts instead of Twitter contributors, but both include twitterers as well.

Macintosh

Central to this PLN is the weekly podcast MacBreak Weekly. I never miss it. And I follow all of the members of that cast - on the internet and on Twitter

[Andy Ihnatko](#) on Twitter (@ihnatko) and also on the Podcast [mydl](#)

[Scott Bourne](#) on Twitter (@scottbourne) and also on the Podcast [mydl](#) and on the podcast [photofocus](#)

[Alex Lindsay](#) on Twitter (@alexlindsay)

I am a fan of Don McAllister's (@donmcallister) [Screen Casts Online](#), excellent Mac instructional videos!

I also read MacWorld and MacLife regularly

I subscribe to the electronic bulletins of MacWorld

I follow a number of Apple sites like The Apple Blog

I use the Apple web site as a source for a lot of good instructional videos

I dabble in many of the other podcasts related to Apple

I consult with my friend Jeannine Griffin

Photography

My Photography PLN relies on Alex Lindsay, Scott Bourne, [Rick Sammon](#) (@ricksammon), the Canon web site, several camera review sites such as [The Digital Picture](#), the podcast This Week in Photography, and my friends

Jeannine Griffin and Arnold Schwarz