Discussion Guide

From Staff Room to Classroom

A Guide Planning and Coaching Professional Learning
Robin J. Fogarty and Brian M. Pete

Introduction

In addition, to the team activities suggested in the "Tools to Use", at the end of each chapter, to encourage reflection and processing, this set of discussion questions is intended to accompany the book study, From Staff Room to Classroom: A Guide to Planning and Coaching Professional Learning by Fogarty and Pete. The questions are catalysts for the rich and robust professional conversations that are part and parcel of every study.

The sequence of questions moves from criterion-based questions related to the various chapters, to a final, overarching question that speaks to the essence of the concept highlighted in the chapter. In turn, some questions serve to crystallize pertinent information, while, the essential questions seek to illuminate philosophical insights about professional learning.

The questions can be cut apart and used as bookmarks for each chapter. Also, the questions may be used, effectively, as a pre-reading strategy, as a guide, during the reading or as post reading prompts for lively discussions. In addition, teams might assign various questions, target one question as the pivot point for discussion or, embrace the essential question for an in-depth professional, conversation.

At the end of the day, the questions are only as integral to the book study as the collegial conversations they generate. Enjoy!

Robin and Brian
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Chapter 1

A Guide to the Change Process

1. Tell a story of a school change that you have experienced and assess the stages that Guskey (2000) delineates: 1) Professional Development 2) Change in Practice 3) Change in Practice 4) Change in Beliefs.

2. Discuss a professional development initiative that has followed Fullan's (1982) change process: 1) Initiate 2) Implement 3) Institutionalize

3. Discuss other books, in addition to, *Who Moved My Cheese*-Johnson *(1998)*, *If the Horse You're Riding Dies Get Off* -Grant and Forsten *(1999)*, and, *The Tipping Point*-Gladwell *(2000),* that you have used with staff as you talk about how we, as adult learners, respond to change.

Essential Question

If the truth is inevitable that, "the only constant is change", what profound insights about change will impact the work we do everyday with adult learners?

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Chapter 2

A Guide to the Adult Learner

1. Explain why you think Malcolm Knowles (1973) called adult learners, "the neglected species" and if you agree or disagree with this assessment.

2) Compare and contrast adult learners to typical school-age learners.

3) Using Zemke and Zemke's (1995) ideas about 30 things we know for sure about adult learners, share one take away you will incorporate in your everyday work with adult learners.

Essential Question

Knowing that adult learners are, "a neglected species", yet, the most pragmatic learners on the face of the earth, how do we, as change agents, address this constant challenge?

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Chapter 3

A Guide to Site-Based Professional Learning

1) Cite one reason that professional development fails (Lieberman) and provide a personal experience story as an illustration of what happens.

2) Knowing the seven critical qualities that accompany sound professional learning experiences (sustained, job-embedded, collegial, interactive, integrated, results-oriented and practical), select one element and decide what happens when that element is missing.

3) Understanding that professional development means finding time in the schedule, review the ten "time options" delineated in the chapter and add other "finding time" strategies that you have used successfully.

Essential Question

"Change is what teachers do and think. It's as simple and as complex as that" (Sarason). Thus, with the classroom as the ultimate site of change, what are "critical lessons learned" about site-based professional learning?

Chapter 4

A Guide to the Role of Designing Professional Learning

1) Discuss the pros and cons of using graphic organizers or, planning templates, as a way to organize your thinking in the planning process.

2) Explain how the designer role requires expertise in both the art and the science of planning, preparing, and providing professional learning.

3) Describe how the fishbone analysis is like an outline delineation and discuss one advantage of the fishbone graphic as a planning tool.

Essential Question

With the rapid rate of change in an information-laden, technology-rich century, how does the "less is more" principle apply to professional learning?

Chapter 5

A Guide to the Role of Presenting Professional Learning Experiences

1) How is the presenter the messenger? What are some of the pitfalls of this messenger service? How does that messenger deliver with sweeping success?

2) Share what it means to, "read the audience", by citing several telling examples.

3) Agree or disagree with the slide presentation "Rules", heard from a techno-savvy presenter: "Use Visuals. Use color. Use animation. Use sound. Limit words per slide 5-8. Do not read slide to audience. Provide your own narrative to the slide."

Essential Question

 "Tell them what you are going to do. Do what you say you are going to do. Tell them what you did" are the guiding principles for the perfect presentation. Why does this "bookend model" of professional learning present a paradox of sorts for the modern day change agent?

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Chapter 6

A Guide to the Role of Facilitating Professional Learning

1) Facilitate means to step aside and "ease the way for the learner". What does that look like and sound like in a large group? Small group? Working with an Individual?

2) How *easy* is it to invite the participants into the learning? How *hard* is it to get them intensely involved? Or vice versa!

3) How do you help participants "interpret" or reflect on the meaning of what they have been doing in an activity? What works for you, every time?

Essential Question

"It's not about us. It's about them." How do we, as change agents transfer our knowledge, skill and passion to the adult learners in our care? How do we garner genuine participant ownership?

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Chapter 7

A Guide to the Role of Coaching Professional Learning

1) Trust is the key to a coaching relationship. How do you develop rapport and a trust?

2) Coaching is about reflective conversations that foster transfer and authentic implementation. Rank the kind of collegial conversations you prefer.

"Collegial Conversations"   a.____face-to-face

b.____ hand-written journals

c.____electronic exchanges

d.____team time

3) Track and share a time you can recall from school or from your life, when you exhibited the characteristics of one of the six levels of transfer (Fogarty and Pete): Overlooked, Duplicated, Replicated, Integrated, Propagated, Innovated.

Essential Question

There's a folk truth that, "The most expensive suit a man buys is the one he only wears once." If the most expensive staff development is the one, participants don't ever use again, how do change agents foster change that lasts and endures?

Chapter 8

A Guide to the Anatomy of a Workshop

1) Discuss Joyce and Showers' research statistic that indicates, with coaching in place, peer coaching or expert coaching, the likelihood of authentic implementation of the skills and concepts (genuine transfer) increases to 95%. Hypothesize why.

2) "The person doing the talking is the person doing the learning." How do we as well-intentioned experts, "stop talking", and encourage the participant to do the talking?

3) How is accountability a factor in "practicing teachers into change" and how is this related to "fidelity of implementation"?

Essential Question

There is evidence that, "Real and lasting change results from both, top down initiatives or grass roots, bottom up initiatives. What matters is the design!" How might we validate that statement and embrace it in our work with adult learners?

Chapter 9

A Guide to Sustained Professional Learning

1) Discuss the following descriptions of the four roles of the change agent: Designer, one and self; Presenter, one with all; Facilitator, one with team; Coach, one with one.

2) If change occurs through, collaborative conversation, professional dialogue, and think tanks, how do change agents support professional learning communities in these endeavors?

3) Professional learning means, giving back to the profession. Share one idea that you champion that could be an article you might write or a presentation you might make at a conference.

Essential Question

If sustained professional learning means, "it's not going away," how can collegial, collaborative and reflective conversations permeate the climate and culture of the organization for enduring change?

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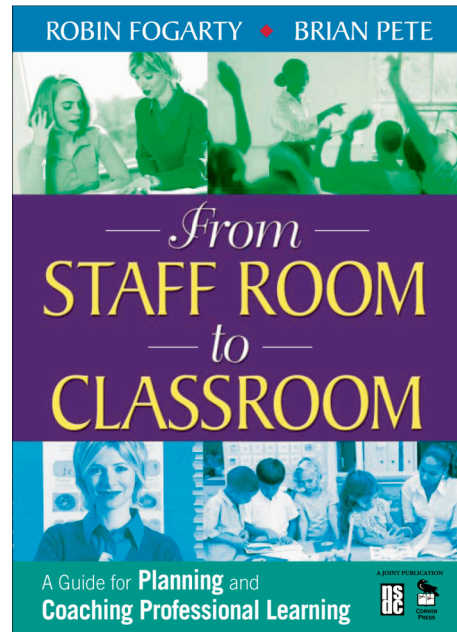
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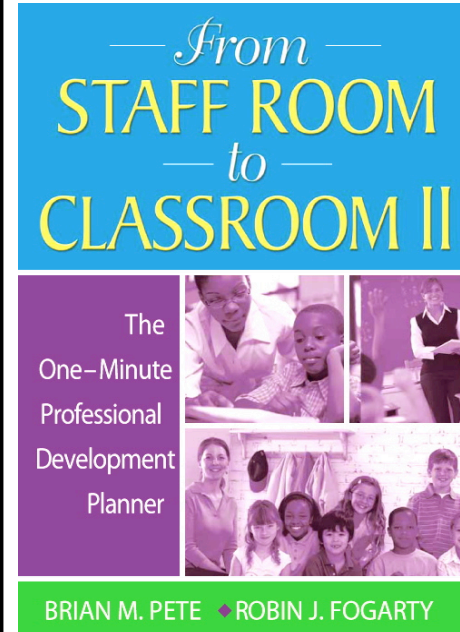
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