

Learning consulting: Translating research into practice

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"... the literary translator is necessarily engaged with far more than words, far more than techniques, far more than stories or characters or scenes. [She/he] is ... engaged with worldviews and the passionately held inner convictions of men and women ... A large part of [his/her] task, and perhaps the most interesting ..., is the mining out and reconstruction of those world views, those passionately held and beautifully embodied inner convictions."

—Burton Raffel, (1989). Translating Medieval European poetry.
In J. Biguenet & R. Schulte Eds., The craft of translation.
Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 53.

Calendar

Feb. 5-6, 1999
Far West/Midwest
Regional Update Meeting
Las Vegas, NV

March 4-6, 1999
Southeast Regional
Update Meeting

March 26-27, 1999
Northeast Regional
Update Meeting
Marriott Hotel,
Charleston, West Virginia

April 21-23, 1999
Update Meeting
St. Johns Island

July 8-10, 1999
National SIM Trainers'
Conference

When talking about staff development, we commonly describe the activity as "translating" research into practice. However, we seldom reflect on what it means, precisely, to translate. As Burton Raffel suggests in the above quotation, translation involves "mining out" and "reconstructing" "passionately held ... inner convictions." In other words, a translator identifies the essence of a work created in one culture or worldview and then reconstructs the work so that it can be appreciated by people living in another culture or worldview.

Burton's description of translation provides another way of understanding school improvement. Staff developers understood as translators are people who need to know a great deal. First, they must fully understand the essence of the content they want to make available to teachers. Second, they must understand the culture or worldview of the teachers with whom they are working. Third, they must be able to transform the content they are making available so that it can be understood within a teacher's particular worldview.

In the past year, the Center for Research on Learning has experimented with a new approach to staff development that explicitly positions the staff developer as a translator. In this new change model, Learning Consulting, staff developers focus their efforts on reframing research so teachers can see how it is relevant to their most immediate concerns. ►

Award opportunity

The National Center for Learning Disabilities offers a wonderful opportunity to recognize general education teachers who incorporate strategic instruction and content enhancement routines in their classrooms.

The Bill Ellis Teacher Preparation Award is given to general educators who would otherwise not be able to participate in professional meetings that focus on the needs of individuals with learning disabilities. The award honors the memory of Bill Ellis and his work at the National Center for Learning Disabilities, the Orton Dyslexia Society (now the International Dyslexia Association), and other organizations.

The award includes reimbursement of conference-related expenses to the 49th Annual International Dyslexia Association Conference in San Francisco in November.

The application for the award must be completed and returned to NCLD no later than October 18, 1998. For a copy of the application, call David Fleishman, assistant director of professional services, at (212) 545-7510.

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Learning Consulting

The learning consultant's main task is to help teachers see how research-validated practices offer useful solutions to the problems they face, thereby making it easier for teachers to add such practices to their repertoire of teaching skills, strategies, structures, and beliefs.

A learning consultant is more than an expert in instructional practices. She or he is part coach and part anthropologist, offering advice to teachers about how to contend with the challenges and opportunities they face while recognizing each school's unique culture. A learning consultant's job is to make it easy for teachers to find solutions to their problems.

While each consultant approaches his or her work uniquely, researchers at the Center for Research on Learning have identified a generic model for Learning Consulting. The model involves the following eight components:

1. Meet with departments or teams

The learning consultant begins the change process by holding a short meeting with each school department or team. During the meeting, the consultant explains that teachers have an opportunity to learn about new research-validated teaching practices if they are interested. The consultant also explains how Learning Consulting works, that the focus is on real classroom practice, that research should be tried out only if it responds to real, pressing concerns, and that teachers will be paid an appropriate fee for the additional time they spend learning. At the end of the meeting, the consultant asks for volunteers and leaves a telephone number teachers can call if they're interested in being involved in the project either now or at a later date.

2. Meet one-on-one with interested teachers

Once teachers express interest in the project, the learning consultant schedules a series of one-on-one or small group meetings to identify what research the teacher is interested in learning about and to discuss how that research can be translated into practice. Meetings are short, sometimes less than 20 minutes, and always scheduled for the time that is least inconvenient for

A learning consultant is...part coach and part anthropologist, offering advice to teachers about how to contend with the challenges and opportunities they face while recognizing each school's unique culture

teachers. In schools, time is the most important currency, and any change effort taking too much teacher time will have difficulty succeeding, no matter how powerful it might be.

3. Immediately work on real content

Each meeting focuses on real applications for research, and theoretical discussion should be kept to a minimum. For example, a consultant and teacher discussing Concept Mastery should quickly move to developing a Concept Diagram that the teacher can use right away.

4. Establish a partnership

Learning consultants need to build a relationship, and research at the Center for Research on Learning suggests that Partnership Learning is an effective way they can achieve that goal. (See "Open conversations: The art and practice of Partnership Learning" by Jim Knight in *Stratenotes* volume 6, number 3.) Thus, learning consultants adopt a partnership posture, built upon principles of equality, dialogue, choice, praxis, voice, and symbiosis. They use learning structures that embody those principles: thinking devices, question ►

recipes, experiential learning, cooperative learning, reflection learning, and stories.

5. Pay for teachers' time

If teachers are going to commit extra time to any change effort, they will naturally be much more enthusiastic if they are paid fairly for their time. Payment can be cash, professional development points, or release time.

6. Make it as easy as possible

A learning consultant serves, primarily, as a steward and thus goes to great lengths to facilitate teachers' transferring research into practice. To make things easier for teachers, learning consultants might write lesson plans, help with evaluation, create overheads, or co-teach so as to provide additional time. The learning consultant's goal, always, is to remove barriers that might interfere with teachers implementing new ideas.

7. Respond quickly to teacher requests

Since teachers are constantly pressed to organize classes, evaluate students, and keep on top of their content for instruction, they often require material quickly. For that reason, learning consultants must reply immediately when teachers request new materials. If consultants take more than a few days to give teachers what they need, the opportunity for implementation may disappear.

8. Provide support

Many teachers, facing a variety of challenges in the classroom, may be worried about experimenting with new ideas simply because they are already dealing with several challenges. Learning consultants can ease teacher concerns by providing support through modeling teaching practices, providing peer coaching, or offering resources that help teachers become proficient at new teaching practices. Resources might include videotapes of model teachers, detailed lesson guides, checklists of effective teaching practices, and so on.

Conclusion

Learning Consulting involves the three tasks that Burton Raffel identifies in translation. First, learning consultants need to have a deep understanding of the materials they are making available to teachers; second, they must understand their teachers' cultures; and third, they must transform and explain content in a way that makes perfect sense in each teacher's unique culture. A staff developer who fails to successfully perform any of these tasks may be in for trouble. In contrast, since each school has its own culture and its own language, a learning consultant who learns to speak a school's language has a much greater chance of being heard.

As staff developers, as translators, we need to keep striving to learn to speak our teachers' language, to speak to our teachers' "passionately held and beautifully embodied inner convictions."

Conference notes

Kansas ranked No. 1 as the state with the largest number of SIM Trainers (45) attending the 1998 National SIM Trainers' Conference in July in Kansas City. Other top states were Florida (17), Minnesota (16), Iowa (14), Texas (11), California (10), Missouri (9), and Virginia (8). The special 20th anniversary conference drew a total of 190 registered participants from 31 states.

A number of past and present KU-

CRL doctoral students attended the conference: Gwen Berry, Dan Boudah, Jan Bulgren, Steve Carlson, Fran Clark, Sid Cooley, Ed Ellis, Joe Fisher, Christie Forester, Pat Gildroy, Barbara Glaeser, Mike Hock, Cathy Kea, Frank Kline, Ann Knackendoffel, Jim Knight, Paula Lancaster, Keith Lenz, Daryl Mellard, Ed Pieper, Joyce Rademacher, John Schmidt, Tony Van Reusen, Sue Vernon, Mike Warner, and Ron Wolf.

Conference attendees recognized

Every year, the Center for Research on Learning recognizes SIM Trainers who are attending their fifth or tenth national conference. During the 1998 National SIM Trainers' Conference, the following people were honored:

Five-year pin recipients:

Dan Boudah, Michael Brown, Victoria Cotsworth, Cathleen Duncan, LuAnn Glaeser, Suzanne Hays, Alice Henley, Martha Hogen, Susan Howell, Emi Johnson, Diane Larson, Brenda Lazarus, Judy O'Malley, Ruth Ann Rankin-Meleen, David Scanlon, and Mary Wiesen.

Ten-year pin recipients:

Janet Jones, Ann Knackendoffel, Carl Skordahl, and Jane Stevenson.

CRL news

- **Barbara Glaeser, Jim Knight, and Mike Hock** all received their doctoral degrees in special education from the University of Kansas in May. Barbara has accepted a position at California State University at Fullerton. Mike and Jim remain on staff at CRL.
- **Julie Tollefson**, CRL managing editor, and her husband, John, welcomed the birth of their first child shortly after the national conference. Jacob Martin Mangan Tollefson (so many names, poor kid!) was born July 24, 1998.

Trainer news

- **Marty Beech** of Tallahassee, Florida, received two large grants from the Florida Department of Education, co-wrote a manual on developing IEPs, and wrote four books on classroom assessment.
- **Nancy Burton** of Athens, West Virginia, was hired as the Section 504 Coordinator and Home-Hospital Specialist this past year. She is also an adjunct instructor at Marshall University, where she teaches graduate classes (that emphasize SIM!).
- **Molly Edelen's** family grew by one member in March when Jacob McDonald Edelen was born. Molly lives in LaVale, Maryland.
- **Laurie Feinberg** of Fanwood, New Jersey, was awarded the 25-year pin from her district for her service in a self-contained special education classroom.
- **Teresa Forseth** of Hillsboro, North Dakota, welcomed her first son to her family in August of last year. She has been hired by UND to teach strategy workshops in the summer and also taught a strategies class in Bismarck in June.

If you have news you would like to share with other members of the International SIM Trainers' Network, please send the details to Julie Tollefson at the Center for Research on Learning, 3061 Dole, Lawrence, KS 66045, or e-mail the message to Julie at jtollefson@ukans.edu.

CRL scenario planning

A Center for Research on Learning study group has spent several months researching, discussing, and developing scenarios outlining possible futures for special education and special education research. The study group, which used a methodology described by Peter Schwartz in *The Art of the Long View*, presented the scenarios to participants of the 1998 National SIM Trainers' Conference in July. Trainers who attended the presentation were asked to address the following questions:

1. Which aspects of the scenario seem realistic to you?

2. Given those possibilities, what research should the Center conduct in the future?

Participants also were asked for general comments about the future. The following is one of the scenarios presented during the conference. Two scenarios were presented in the Summer 1998 issue of *Stratenotes*. Look for more information about how the scenario process will shape the future of the Center in coming issues of *Stratenotes*.

If you have any comments or suggestions, contact Jim Knight at the Center, (785) 864-4780. He also can be reached through StrateNet.

Their Last Good Chance

Julie Vetter was thinking about Joey Winslow as she walked through the doors of John Dewey Sr. High, the school where she had taught for the past seven years. Over the last week, Joey had been making real progress on the Theme Writing Strategy, and she wanted to make sure that she told him just how well she could see he was doing.

As a strategy teaching partner in English classes, Julie had many chances to monitor students and interact with them one-on-one, and Joey was just one of many she had seen making progress this year. "Yes," Julie thought, "things are still a long way from perfect, but they are definitely getting better."

Julie's assessment was correct. Like many schools across the country, John Dewey was making real progress finding ways to help more students be successful in school. For one thing, across the school, most teachers happily used a variety of Content Enhancement Routines. Almost all courses, now, were organized around Course and Unit Organizers, and students habitually used organizers as aids when studying for tests. What's more, since most

organizers were posted on teachers' individual home pages, students and parents could keep track of what was happening in classes.

Julie believed that the on-line library of Concept Diagrams had really helped both teachers and students. The teachers at John Dewey had a resource to go to whenever they needed to teach a new concept in their classes, and students knew where to go to learn about concepts they really needed or wanted to master.

Of course, the students were learning about learning in a lot of other ways around the school. Most computers at John Dewey were loaded with programs that taught students the specific learning strategies they needed to do well in school. The Listening and Notetaking Strategy had been a real favorite over the past few years. What Julie especially liked was that since every student worked on computers, students could learn cyber strategies without feeling singled out in any way. Sure they were learning special stuff, but that's what everyone was doing.

Many students seemed pretty excited about what they were discovering about themselves while ►

using the cyber versions of Possible Selves and the Self-Advocacy Strategy. "Yes," thought Julie, remembering Jasmine Ortega's excitement when she had recently completed Possible Selves, "I think a lot more of our students have a sense of purpose, and that has made my job a lot easier, thank heavens."

Julie shook her head as she thought about the many new challenges her school had to face. The truth was that students had never had so many diverse needs. For whatever reason, the students coming to John Dewey seemed to be having more and more significant problems learning. Too many kids couldn't read, write, or reason, and what was worse, in many cases, school was the least of their worries. Since the turn

of the century, students had found it more and more difficult to feel safe, to feel loved. Crime was up, and family stability was down.

"That's why our school is so important to so many students," thought Julie. "We are our students' last good chance. And we're getting better at making sure more and more of our kids are making it." As the bell rang, Julie caught a glance of Joey Winslow pulling out his essay, and she couldn't help feeling a flashing moment of satisfaction. "I'm glad we have learned how to help kids like Joey," she thought, "I'd hate to think what might have happened to our students if nothing had changed at our school."

New potential trainers join SIM fold

Welcome to all of the new potential SIM Trainers!

During the summer, four workshops were conducted to train people who will be working to become SIM Trainers. At the University of Kansas in July, **Connie Gentle**, **Jerri Neduchal**, and **Keith Lenz** led eight people through the paces of becoming Content Enhancement Trainers. Also in Kansas in August, **Fran Clark**, **Sue Woodruff**, and **Jim Knight** trained a group of 19 people to become Learning Strategy Trainers. In Connecticut, **Rosemary Tralli** and **Vicky Day** imparted their trainer knowledge to five Learning Strategy Potential Trainers during a week in June. Also in June, Florida's **Judy O'Malley**, **Patty Graner**, and **Debbie Cooke** taught a group of eight potential trainers the ins and outs of becoming Learning Strategy Trainers.

Learning Strategy Potential Trainers

Connecticut, June 1998

Cathy Buchholtz, **Barbara Cosineau**, **Susan Marie Gombar**, **Mary Pacinda-Turner**, all of Connecticut; and **Jim Lake**, Michigan.

Florida, June 1998

Annette Klabuhn, **Saundra Taylor-Ahota**, **Virginia Schipani**, **Hope Carter**, **Deborah Hughes**, **Terri Pinchevsky**, **Julie Drewes**, and **Sharon Hartman**, all of Florida

Kansas, August 1998

Deanna Bridges, Texas; **Anita Ens**, Manitoba, Canada; **Mindy Goldsmith** and **Sheryl Sternau**, both of Illinois; **Keli Gustafson**, **Jennifer Jones**, and **Cynthia Lindenmeyer**, all of Kansas; **Kent Jackson**, Pennsylvania; **Annette Jerome**, Utah; **Georgie Koenig**, Iowa; **Kit-hung Lee**, Nevada; **Susan Leggett** and **Mabel Norton**, both of Virginia; **Elaine Mehdizadeh** and **Jeff Roland**, both of Minnesota; **Holly Muenchow** and **Kim Price**, both of Michigan; **Marge Stein**, Wisconsin; and **John Sullivan**, Massachusetts

Content Enhancement Potential Trainers

Kansas, July 1998

Sandra Chavez, Illinois; **Jewel Dickson** and **Joyce H. Lubbers**, both of Florida; **Diane C. Gillam**, Virginia; **John P. Sullivan**, Massachusetts; **Norman Terry**, Kentucky; and **Kim Garrett** (CE Trainer), and **Lee Ann Brunson** (CE Trainer), both of Kansas

New trainers

The following people have completed requirements to become SIM Trainers since September 1997:

Arizona

- **Andrea Ivey**

Florida

- **Deborah Mouw**
- **Kathleen Dee Brown**
- **Iris Neil**
- **Celisa Walls-Cook**

Florida/Georgia

- **Beverly Brown**

Georgia

- **Sharon Segerhammer**

Illinois

- **Paula Cooke**
- **Anita Friede**

Iowa

- **Jo Ann Klocke**
- **Karen Koskovich**
- **Toni Van Cleve**
- **Donna Wood**

Kansas

- **Kimberly Cotton**

Minnesota

- **Candice Hollingsead**
- **Marc Markell**

Montana

- **Kim Paulsen**

North Dakota

- **Lana Anderson**
- **LaVone Mongeon**

Pennsylvania

- **Vlacia Campbell**

Singapore

- **Celeste Corey**

South Dakota

- **Kate Axlund**
- **Linda Corey**

Virginia

- **Joni Poff**

West Virginia

- **Tama Daniel**

Wisconsin

- **Susan Probst**

September 1998

Evaluation of SIM communication vehicles

If you have not already done so, please take a few minutes to complete the following survey by circling the appropriate responses or writing explanations and suggestions. Use a separate sheet of paper, if necessary. Send your responses to Janet Roth, Center for Research on Learning, 3061 Dole, Lawrence, KS 66045. Thank you.

Strategram (the gray newsletter published 6 times a year for educators)

1. I use Strategram. yes no
2. If your answer is no, please explain why you do not use it.

If yes, rate each of the following items from your viewpoint as a SIM Trainer.

- | | <u>High</u> | | <u>Neutral</u> | | <u>Low</u> | |
|--|-------------|---|----------------|---|------------|-----|
| 3. The <u>usefulness</u> of <u>Strategram</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 4. The <u>content</u> of <u>Strategram</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 5. The <u>format</u> of <u>Strategram</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 6. The overall <u>quality</u> of <u>Strategram</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 7. Suggest improvements for <u>Strategram</u> . | | | | | | |
| 8. Suggest future topics for <u>Strategram</u> . | | | | | | |

Stratenotes (the yellow newsletter printed 9 times per year for SIM Trainers)

9. I use Stratenotes. yes no
10. If your answer is no, please explain why you do not use it.

If yes, rate each of the following items from your viewpoint as a SIM Trainer.

- | | <u>High</u> | | <u>Neutral</u> | | <u>Low</u> | |
|--|-------------|---|----------------|---|------------|-----|
| 11. The usefulness of <u>Stratenotes</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 12. The content of <u>Stratenotes</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 13. The <u>format</u> of <u>Stratenotes</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 14. The overall quality of <u>Stratenotes</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 15. Suggest improvements for <u>Stratenotes</u> . | | | | | | |
| 16. Suggest future topics for <u>Stratenotes</u> . | | | | | | |

StrateNet (computerized bulletin board using FIRST CLASS)

17. I use StrateNet. yes no
18. If your answer is no, please explain why you do not use it.

If yes, rate each of the following items from your viewpoint as a SIM Trainer.

- | | <u>High</u> | | <u>Neutral</u> | | <u>Low</u> | |
|--|-------------|---|----------------|---|------------|-----|
| 19. The usefulness of <u>StrateNet</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 20. The content of <u>StrateNet</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 21. The <u>format</u> of <u>StrateNet</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 22. The overall quality of <u>StrateNet</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 23. Suggest improvements for <u>StrateNet</u> . | | | | | | |
| 24. Suggest future topics for <u>StrateNet</u> . | | | | | | |

Stratellite Connection (SIM videos produced three times a year. The first 200 copies are free to trainers. Other copies are \$15 each.)

25. I use Stratellite Connection. yes no
26. If your answer is no, please explain why you do not use it.

If yes, rate each of the following items from your viewpoint as a SIM Trainer.

- | | <u>High</u> | | <u>Neutral</u> | | <u>Low</u> | |
|---|-------------|---|----------------|---|------------|-----|
| 27. The usefulness of <u>Stratellite Connection</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 28. The content of <u>Stratellite Connection</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 29. The <u>format</u> of <u>Stratellite Connection</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 30. The overall quality of <u>Stratellite Connection</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 7 |
| 31. Suggest improvements for <u>Stratellite Connection</u> . | | | | | | |
| 32. Suggest future topics for <u>Stratellite Connection</u> . | | | | | | |

Name (Optional)

Position

Visual Imagery manual correction

The figure below is a corrected version of the Example Individual Score Sheet found on page 89 of the Visual Imagery Strategy manual. The feedback section of the figure is incorrect in the manual.

Visual Imagery Strategy Name: Forrest Date: 10/25

Example Individual Score Sheet

Pretest: Cont. Pract: Adv.Pract: Posttest: Activation: Maintenance:

Scores

Feedback

	Scene Named	Scene Described	Detail Picture Words Named	3 New Details Added		Scene not named	Scene not described (2 details)	Not enough picture words	Not enough new details (3 details)	Not complete thoughts	Not accurate	Repetitive	Doesn't make sense
1	1	1	1	1									
2	1	1	0	0			✓	✓					
3	1	1	1	1									
4	1	1	1	0				✓					
5	1	1	1	1									
6	0	0	1	0		✓	✓	✓					
7	1	1	1	1									
8													
9													
10													
11													
12													
13													
14													
15													
Totals													

Calculating the score:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Points}}{\text{Total Boxes Filled}} = \frac{21}{28} = .75 \times 100 = 75\%$$

(Mastery=80%)

It's time...

to renew your Strateworks membership for the 1998-1999 subscription year.

Take a look at the mailing label below. A green dot indicates you already have renewed your Strateworks membership. A red dot means that, according to our records, you have not renewed. If you don't act fast, this could be your last issue of *Stratenotes*, and you could be in danger of losing the other benefits you receive as an active member of the International SIM Training Network.

To ensure you continue to receive *Stratenotes*, *Strategram*, and other member benefits, complete the form at right and mail it and your check for \$35 to Strateworks, KU-Center for Research on Learning, 3061 Dole, Lawrence, KS 66045

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E-mail address: _____

Make check payable to Strateworks-KU-CRI.

FIRST CLASS

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