Supported experiments

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This is a continuous improvement strategy. Reviews of research show this strategy works best, and the teaching methods experimented with are also what works best.



Teacher Control and Ownership: Each teacher identifies tough topics or concepts that their students find it hard or boring to learn.

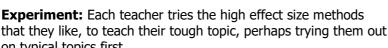
Training: Teachers get training in the teaching methods or strategies that work best in trials. Some of these have raised students' attainment by two grades on average.



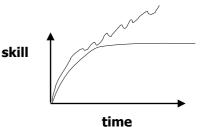
Effect size



Team discussion: The teaching team listens to each teacher's plan as to what they will try, and on what topics.



that they like, to teach their tough topic, perhaps trying them out on typical topics first.



Peer Coaching: Teaching teams meet, say fortnightly, for an hour to discuss experiments. What has worked? What hasn't? What will each teacher try next to improve their use of the method(s).? The experiments above are tried repeatedly with this Peer Coaching support. Teachers may also be coached by Advanced Skills Teachers or similar.



Success is celebrated: Teaching teams meet with other teams to tell each other about what they have tried, and what has worked.



Success is embedded: The experiments that have worked well are shared and embedded in schemes of work etc, and any resources required are shared with everyone on the team, and perhaps beyond. A new cycle of experiments starts.....





Why does this work?

Teachers are engaged because they are solving their own problems, and they are in control. They take the credit for the improvements they develop, and tell others about them – which can create a real 'buzz'. Everyone improves, not just the weakest.

Major problems are solved, and high performance teaching methods are used more often.

How do we know it works?

Two comprehensive summaries of all good research on CPD have concluded this approach is by far the best, and most other approaches hardly work at all. See the references below for Joyce & Showers & Helen Timperley's reviews.

There are hundreds of thousands of rigorous studies that show that high effect size methods work best. They engage students, motivate them, and help them learn. This is probably because they set a challenging task, and then give the teacher and student feedback information on how well the task was done, and the learning understood.

Its not surprising that Supported Experiments work, the idea has been found to work in all professions, medicine nursing for example. It is in line with what we know about motivation at work, see for example the research summary in book form, by Daniel Pink called 'Drive'.

References:

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Petty, G. (2009) "Evidence Based Teaching" 2nd Ed, Nelson Thornes <u>www.geoffpetty.com/experiments.html</u> Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student Achievement through Staff Development' 3rd ed. ASCD <u>www.ascd.org</u> Maynard and Martinez (2002) "Pride or Prejudice? College Teachers' Views on Course Performance"

Pink, D. (2009) Drive: the surprising truth about what motivates us. Riverhead books

Search for RSA Daniel Pink to find an engaging summary of his ideas here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6XAPnuFjJc

Timperley H et al (2007) "Teacher Professional Learning and Development" www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/2515/15341

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http://www.selfdeterminationtheory.org/

