

As we wait to get started . . .

- Brief intros at tables
 - Name
 - Institution
 - Role
 - How are you currently using Peer Leaders?



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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

The Trusted Expert and Internationally Recognized Leader
for all Postsecondary Student Transitions

Upgrade Your Peer Leader Program by Creating High-Impact and Transformative Experiences

Bryce Bunting, Brigham Young University

**Dallin George Young, National Resource
Center for the First-Year Experience and
Students in Transition**

Transformative Learning

- Reflect on one of your own transformative learning experiences . . .
 - *What did you learn? How were you changed?*
 - *What made this experience so impactful?*

Transformative Learning

What were the common characteristics of these experiences?



Hopes for Today

What do you hope to gain from the session?



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Goals for the Workshop

1. Briefly review key research on Peer Leadership
2. Introduce 3 tools or lenses for strengthening the PL experience
3. Discuss practical strategies for increasing transformative potential of the PL experience
4. Work collaboratively to develop concrete plans for improving the PL experiences on our campuses.

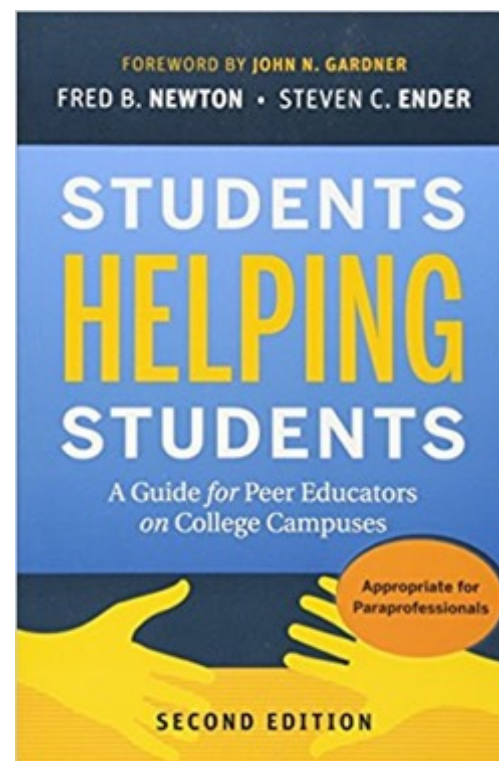
What is Peer Leadership?



Toward a Definition of Peer Leadership

“Students who have been selected, trained, and designated by a campus authority to offer educational services to their peers. These services are intentionally designed to assist peers toward attainment of educational goals”

(Newton & Ender, 2010, p. 6).



Toward a Definition of Peer Leadership

- **Common Elements in Definitions and Descriptions:**
- Legitimacy within the institution
- Responsibility to provide services related to educational mission of the institution
- Asymmetry in experience between the peer mentor and the student recipient of the service
- Proximity in situation such that they can still be considered peers
- (Collier, 2015; Newton & Ender, 2010; Whitman, 1988).



Synonymous Terms?



- Peer Leader
- Peer Educator
- Peer Mentor



Examples of Campus-Based Organizations with Peer Leader Roles

- Athletics
- Academic – peer advisor
- Academic – Supplemental Instruction leader
- Academic – tutor
- Academic –teaching assistant, lab assistant
- Admissions
- Campus activities
- Community service or service learning
- Counseling or mental health
- Financial literacy
- First-year experience
- Greek life
- International student office
- Judicial affairs or student conduct
- Multicultural affairs
- Orientation
- Outdoor or recreational sports
- Physical health
- Religious
- Residence hall
- Student clubs and organization(s)
- Student government
- Student productions or media
- Study abroad
- Others?



What do we NOT mean?

Consider the Teaching Assistant



<http://www.phdcomics.com/store>

- Not a PL:
 - Grading (feeding the Scantron machine)
 - Proctoring Tests
 - Passing out homework

High-Impact PL:

- Engaging with students
- Leading a recitation or lab section
- Good mentoring from faculty member

What benefits have you
observed from Peer Leader
experiences?

Benefits of Peer Leadership

- The use of Peer Leaders provides benefits to:
 - Programs
 - Students
 - Peer Leaders

Benefits of Peer Leadership

- Ability to manage groups, empathize with students, and facilitate learning
- Development in
 - Communication and leadership skills
 - Knowledge of campus resources
 - Interaction with faculty, staff, and peers
 - Critical thinking
 - Decision making
 - Problem solving
 - Ability to work under pressure
- Factual knowledge, helping others, friendships, personal growth, positive regard for instructor skills,
- Peer leaders are also more likely to experience integrative and applied learning in their educational experience which can positively impact employability.

2013 National Survey of Peer Leaders

- Student survey administered from 3/26/2013-6/1/2013
- 4,932 student peer leaders responded to the survey (28.6% response rate)
- 49 Institutions in the US
- Student sample over-represents women and high academic performers
- Student sample has adequate representation by race/ethnicity, class standing, & Pell Grant eligibility

Connection with the Institution

Undergraduate Experience	% Increased
Knowledge of campus resources	83.6
Meaningful interaction with peers	81.2
Feeling of belonging at institution	76.6
Meaningful interaction with staff members	75.9
Interaction with people from different backgrounds	75.6
Meaningful interaction with faculty	73.3
Understanding people from different backgrounds	72.9
Desire to engage in continuous learning	71.8
Desire to persist at institution	68.9

Interaction with Faculty and Peers

Undergraduate Experience	% Increased
Knowledge of campus resources	83.6
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Real-World Applications

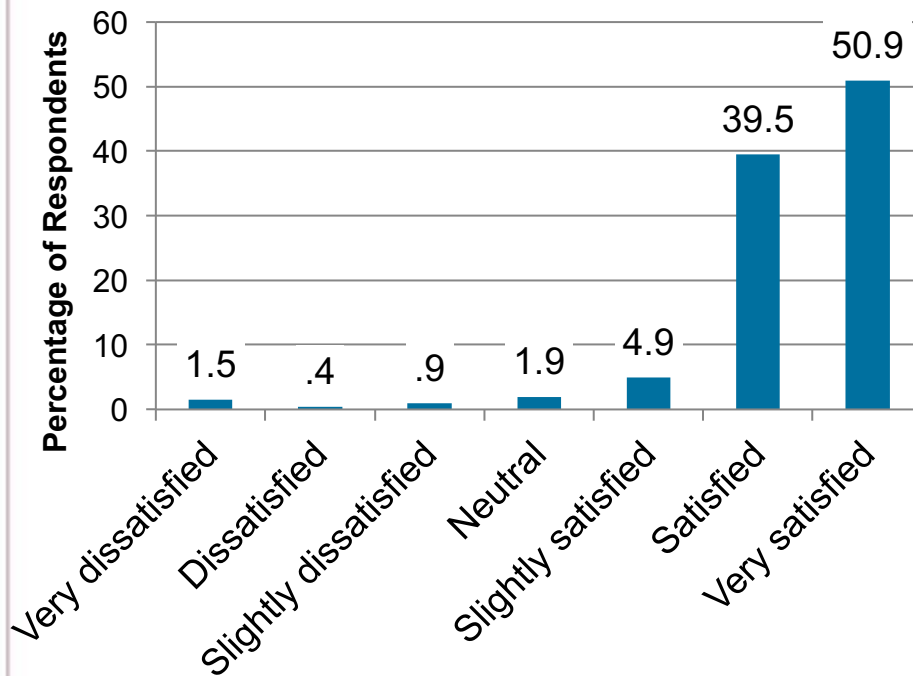
Skill Development	% Increased
Leadership	87.3
Interpersonal communication	82.5
Teamwork	77.5
Time management	73.6
Project management	72.9
Organization	71.5
Presentation	67.5
Critical thinking	65.8
Written communication	53.4

Real-World Applications

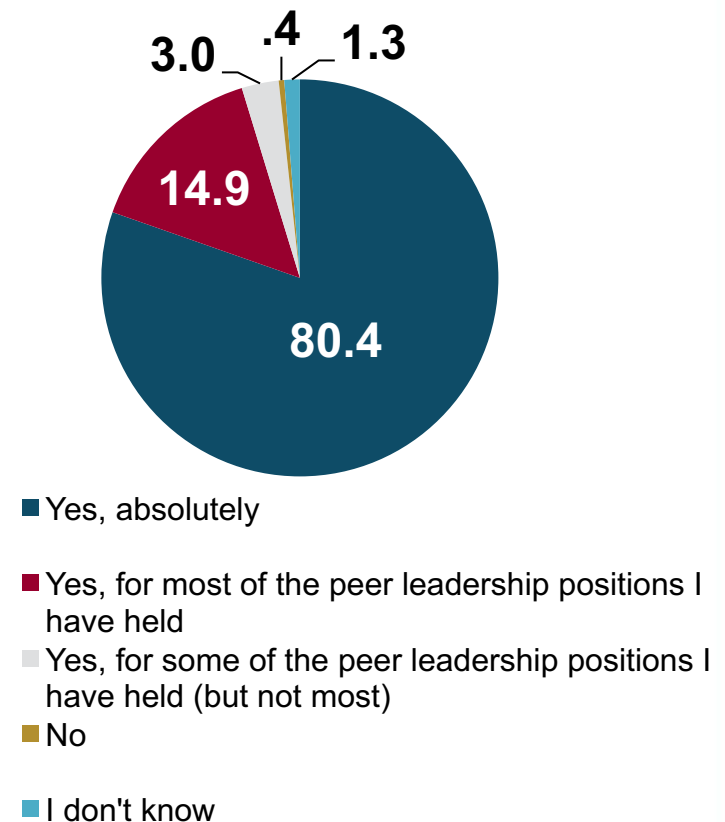
Employability Outcomes	% Increased
Building professional interpersonal relationships	77.9
Applying knowledge to a real-world setting	72.7
Bringing together info from different places	71.2
Providing direction through persuasion	67.8
Analyzing a problem from new perspectives	65.8
Expectations for success in a FT job after grad	65.5
Creating innovative approaches to a task	65.4
Engaging in ethical decision-making	64.5
Sharing ideas with others in writing	46.2

Satisfaction with PLEs

How would you rate your overall satisfaction with your peer leadership experiences?



Would you recommend being a peer leader to other students?



In their own words...

It helps me because I learn to better manage my time, and since I can manage my time more efficiently I feel like I perform better in class. Tutoring in subjects also helps because I need to stay updated with the information I tutor, so it's almost like I'm studying as well when I tutor others. It has also helped me give better presentations because I am more comfortable now talking in front of others.



In their own words...

My experience as a peer leader has been invaluable. Once I began to realize that this was an opportunity for my own personal growth as well as the growth of my students, my experience changed. I have become a better mentor, a better student, a better family member, a better friend, and a better person as I have sought to apply the principles I have learned to all aspects of my life.



How do we provide a PL
experience with
transformative potential?

3 Tools for designing transformative PL experiences



#1 – Legitimate Peripheral Participation

#2 – High Impact Practices

#3 – Stories of Transformation

#1 – What is Learning?



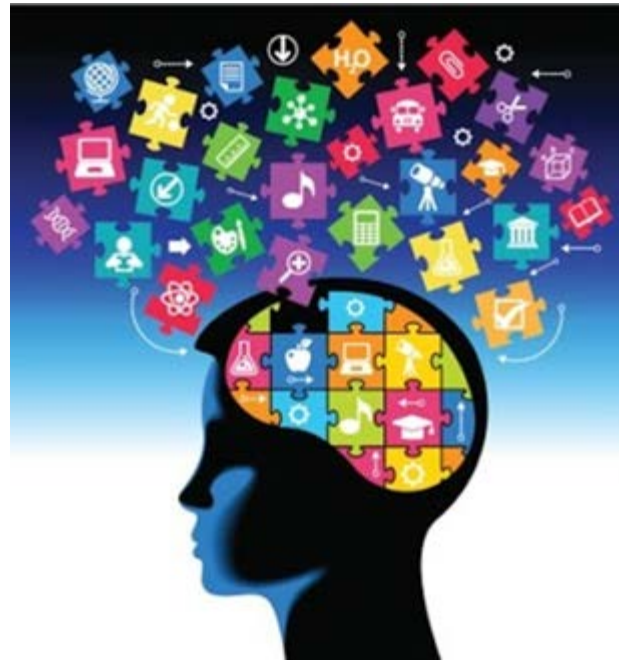
Acquisition Metaphor

Learning =



Acquisition Metaphor

Learning =



Significant Learning Experiences



Participation Metaphor

Learning =



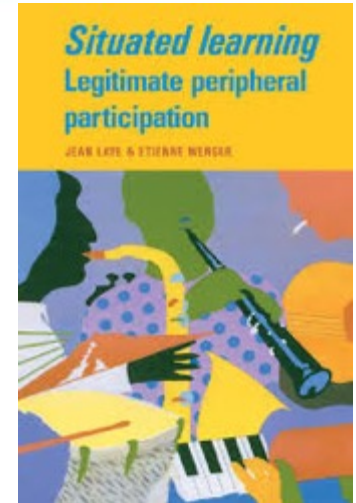
Two Metaphors for Learning

	<i>Acquisition</i>	<i>Participation</i>
What is learning?	Gaining knowledge/skill	Becoming a participant or member of a community
Student role	Recipient, consumer, constructor	Co-participant, apprentice, newcomer
Teacher role	Provider, facilitator, trainer	Experienced participant, master, advanced peer
What is knowledge?	possession, ownership, accumulation	Activity, discourse, practice
What does it mean to know?	To have or possess	To belong, participate, become

(Sfard, 1998)

Legitimate Peripheral Participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991)

- Learning = becoming a full participant in a “community of practice”
- Learning occurs through
 - a) Acting or participating,
 - b) In legitimate/meaningful practices,
 - c) With more experienced members of the community



Learning as Transformation



“[Learning], in its deepest sense . . . concerns the *opening of identities* – exploring *new ways of being* that lie beyond our current state. . . . It places students on an outbound trajectory toward a broad field of possible identities. *[Learning] is not merely formative – it is transformative.*”

(Wenger, 1998)

#2 – High-Impact Practices



High-Impact Practices

“Teaching and learning practices that have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds. These practices take many different forms, depending upon learner characteristics and on institutional priorities and contexts. [*HIPs are*] practices that educational research suggests increase rates of retention and student engagement.”

(Kuh, 2010)

10 High-Impact Practices

- ✓ First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- ✓ Common Intellectual Experiences
- ✓ Learning Communities
- ✓ Writing-Intensive Courses
- ✓ Collaborative Assignments & Projects
- ✓ Undergraduate Research
- ✓ Diversity/Global Learning
- ✓ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- ✓ Internships
- ✓ Capstone Courses and Projects

Characteristics of High-Impact Practices

- Creates an investment of time and energy
- Includes interaction with faculty and peers about substantive matters
- Real-world applications
- High expectations
- Includes frequent feedback
- Exposure to diverse perspectives
- Demands reflection and integrated learning
- Demonstration of competence/Accountability

(Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013)

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- ☒ Capstone Courses & Projects
- ☐ **Peer Leadership?**

In their own words . . .

“When I became a peer mentor, **my whole academic focus changed**. . . .

This was a very influential turning point for me. . . . I was able to **become the type of learner** that every college student has the responsibility to be.”

[Jennifer]

(Bunting, et al., 2012, p. 67)



#3 – Transformative Peer Learning

- Research Q?: *What are the characteristics of transformative PL experiences?*

Bunting, B. D., & Williams, D. D. (2017). Stories of transformation: Using personal narrative to explore transformative experience among undergraduate peer mentors. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in learning*, 25(2), 1 – 19.

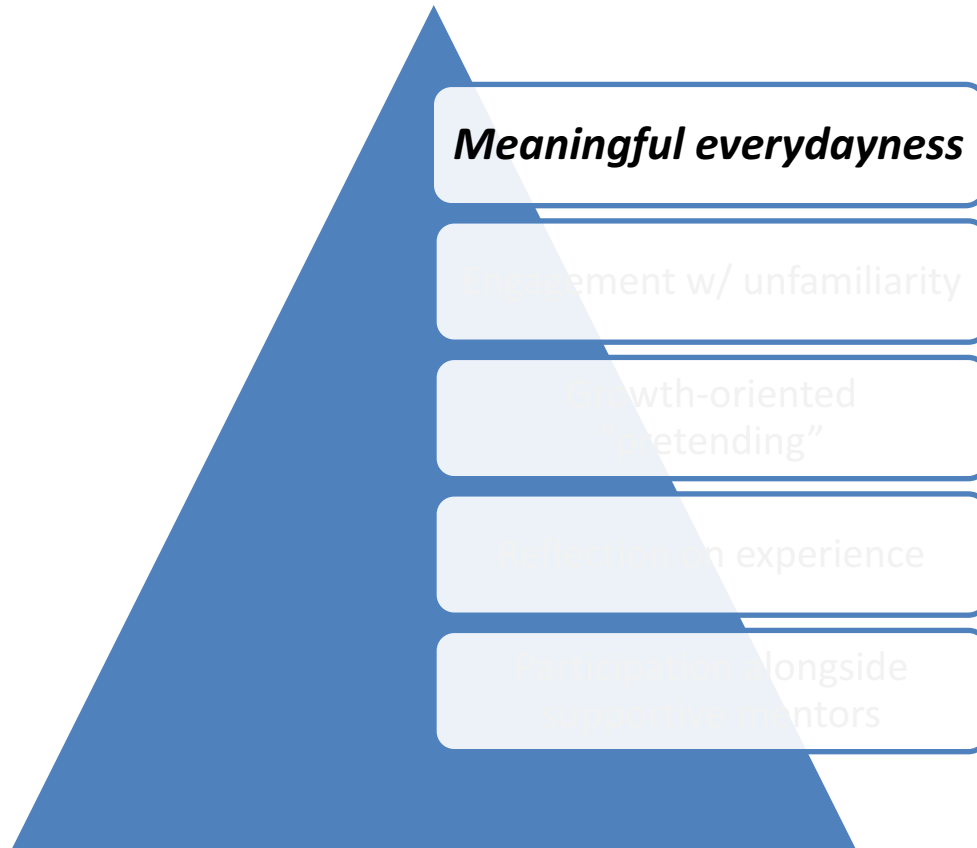
Free ePrints:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/8H63BxX45nVC7ev5mpwE/full>

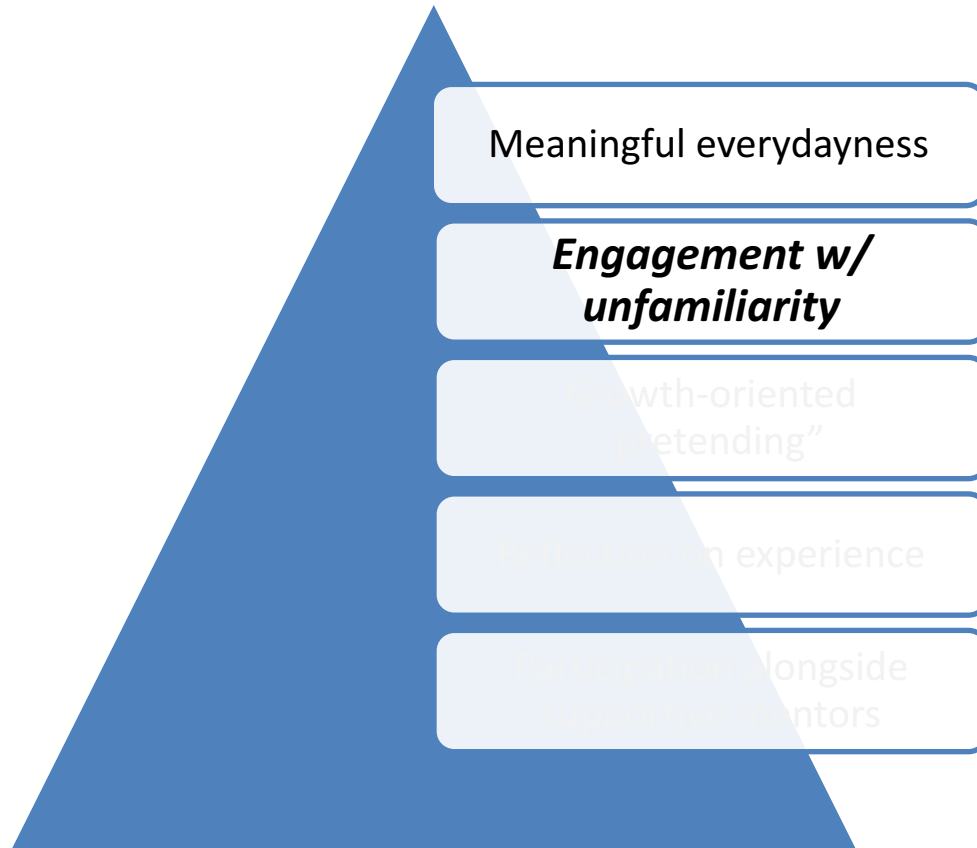
Stories of Transformation

- Narrative analysis of the critical incidents of 12 experienced peer leaders (2+ years of exp.)
 - Purposeful & theoretical sampling (Patton, 2012)
 - Participants created timelines of their “critical peer leader experiences”
 - Timelines informed/guided semi-structured interviews
- Applied thematic analysis to identify themes of transformation across the narrative data

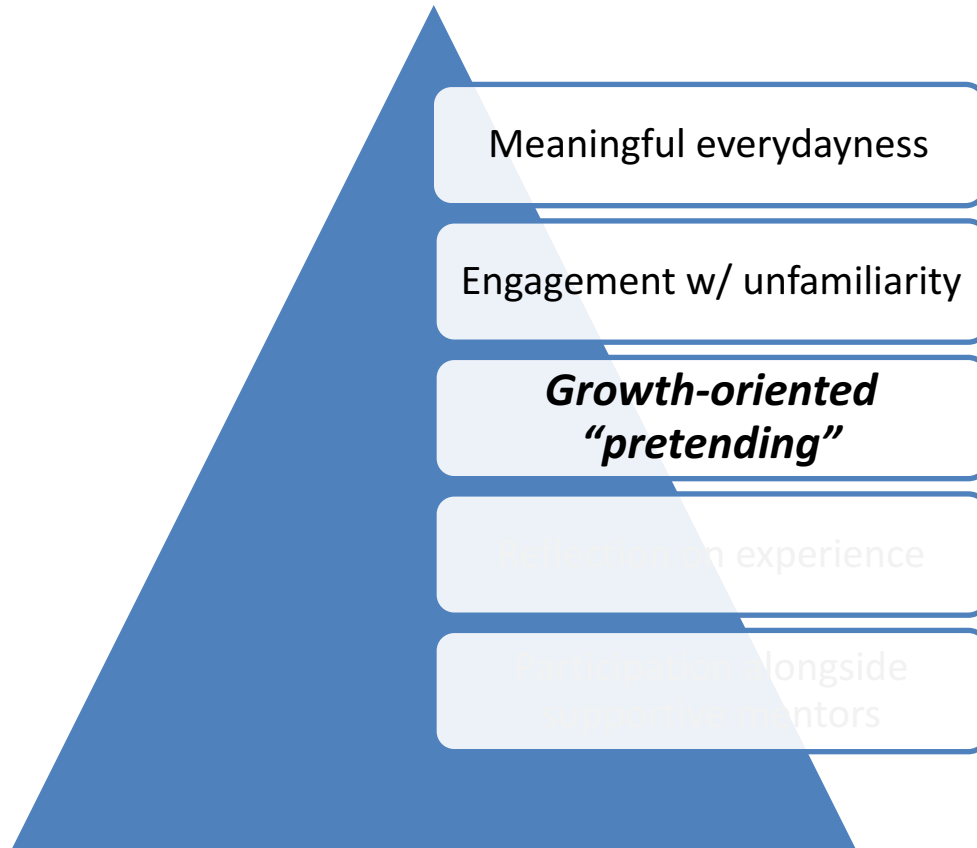
A framework for high-impact and transformative PL experience



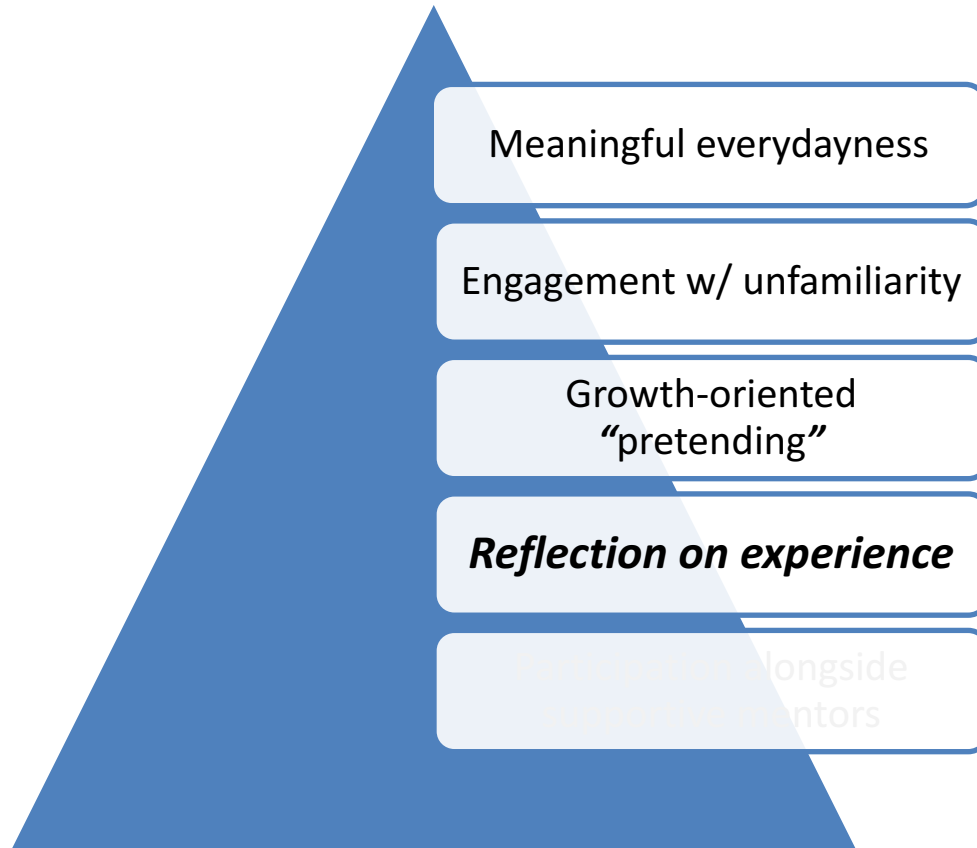
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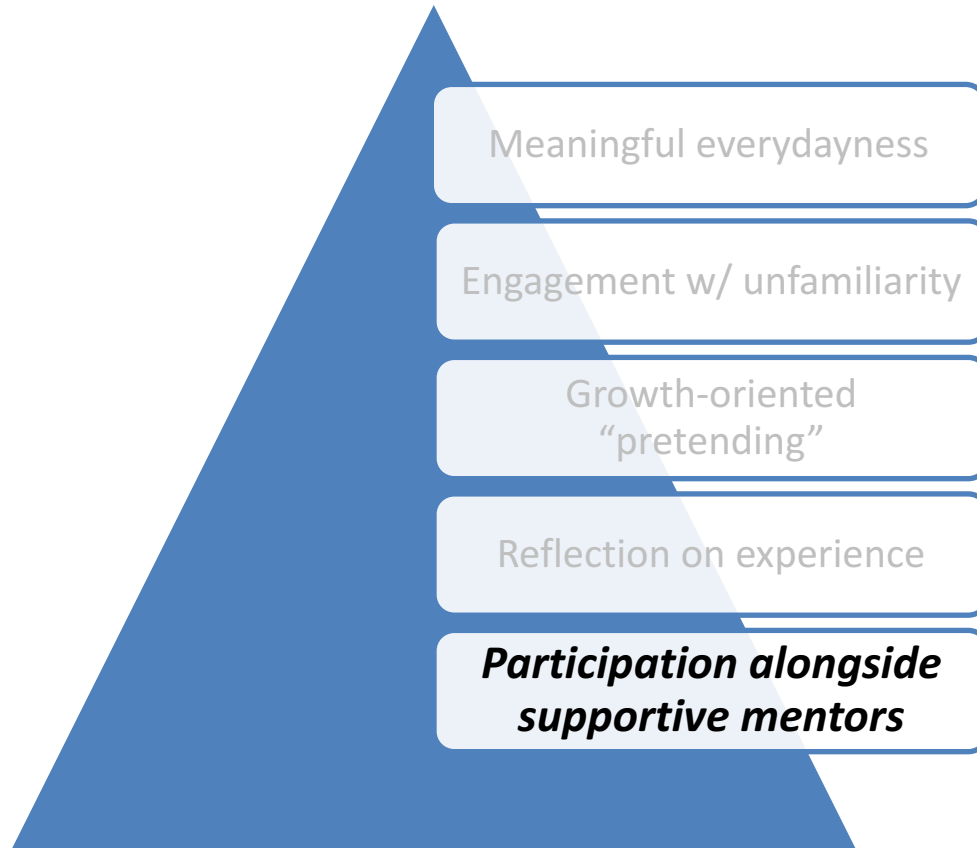
A framework for high-impact and transformative PL experience



A framework for high-impact and transformative PL experience



A framework for high-impact and transformative PL experience



If we were to end the workshop right now, what would you do to strengthen your peer leadership program?

So What?

What does this all mean?

Graffiti Board

What Q?s do you hope will be answered during Part II of the Workshop?



Practical Recommendations

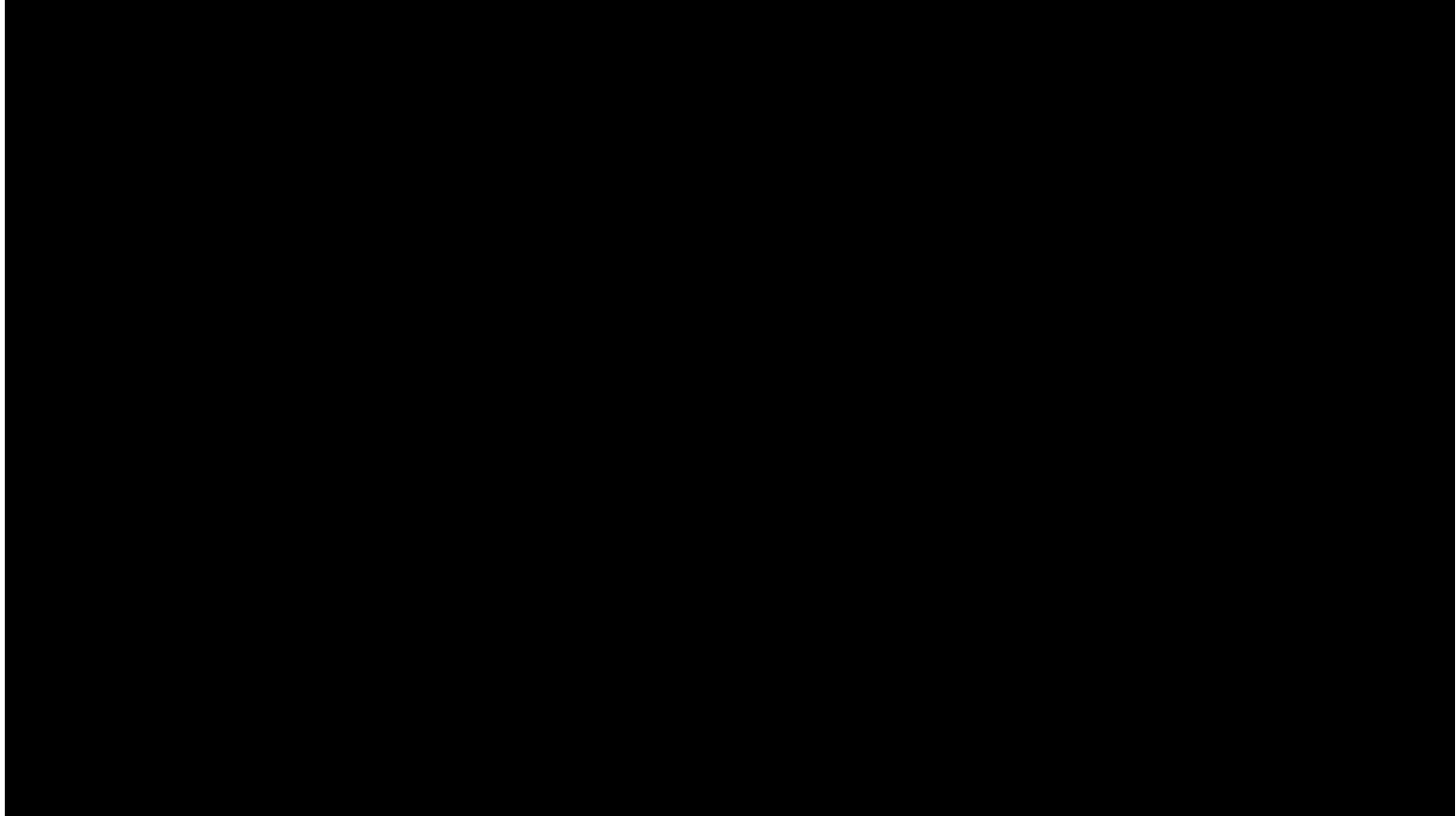


a) Educative Experience

b) Reflection on Experience

c) Relationships that Support Learning

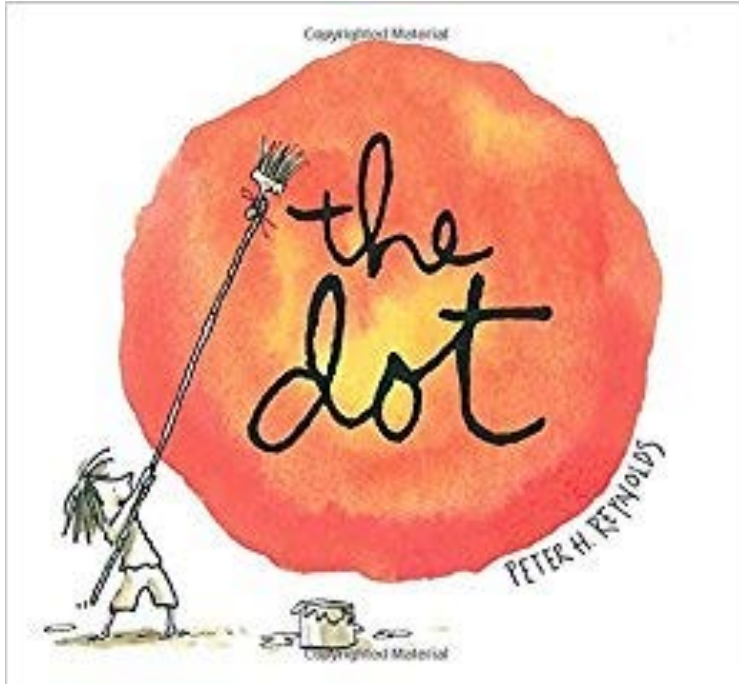
Educative Experience



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Table Discussions



- What was it about this experience that led to growth?
- How might things have been different?

Not all experiences are created equal

Miseducative Experience

Closes off future opportunities; inhibits future growth

Vs.

Educative Experience

Expands opportunities for future growth

(Dewey, 1938)

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(Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013)



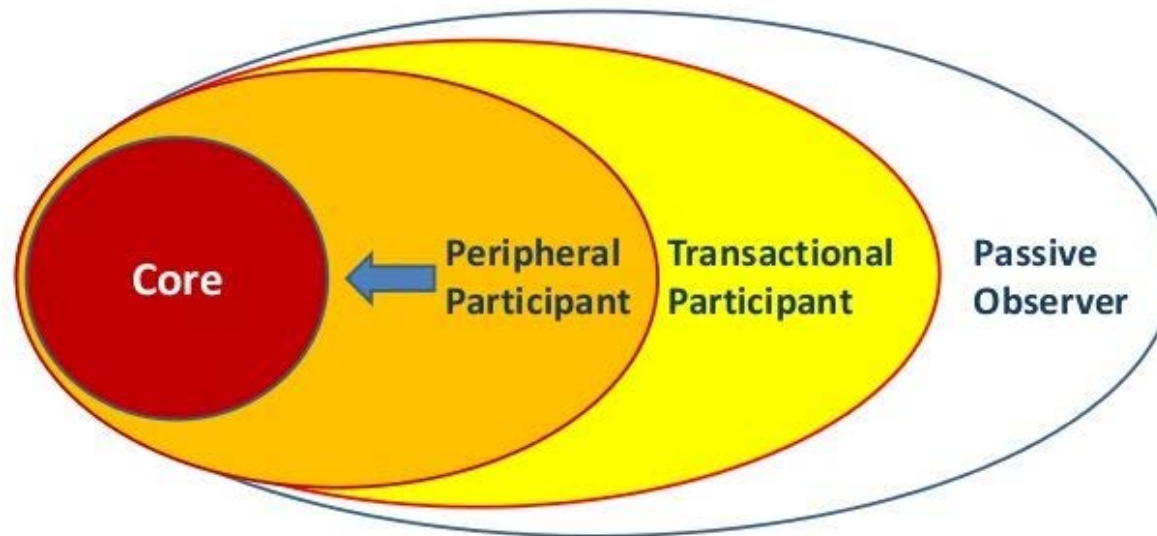
“Superlative performance is really a confluence of dozens of small skills or activities . . . done consistently or correctly, and all together” (Chambliss, 1989)

Meaningful “Everyday” Experiences

- Clear connection to “the whole” (legitimate)
- Safe & low-risk
- Eventually lead to more advanced/skilled participation
- Include regular interactions with Senior PLs, supervisors, faculty, etc.

Legitimate Peripheral Participation

(Lave & Wenger, 1991)



© Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2013

Adapted from: Karalis, T. (2010) Situated and transformative learning: exploring the potential of critical reflection to enhance organizational knowledge, *Development and Learning in Organizations*, Vol. 24 (1), 17 - 20



Meaningful “Everyday” Experiences (New Peer Leaders)

- Phone calls to prospective students
- Working alongside senior PL
- Documentation of student contacts
- Weekly reports
- One-on-one meetings w/ supervisors
- Readings, training videos

Meaningful “Everyday” Experiences (Experienced PLs)

- Involvement in developing new programming/resources
- Responsibility for developing training for new PLs
- Mentoring new PLs
- Personal learning plans
- Research & presentations

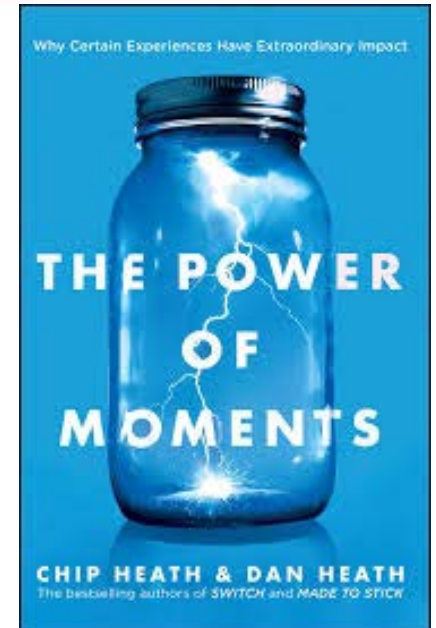
High-Impact Moments

- Elevation

- Surprise, meaning, fulfillment, integration
 - Initial training/orientation experiences
 - “Capstone” experiences
 - Introduction of “threshold concepts”

- Pride

- Celebration, milestones, transitions, triumph
 - Meaningful award recognitions
 - Senior PL opportunities
 - Letter to a new PL



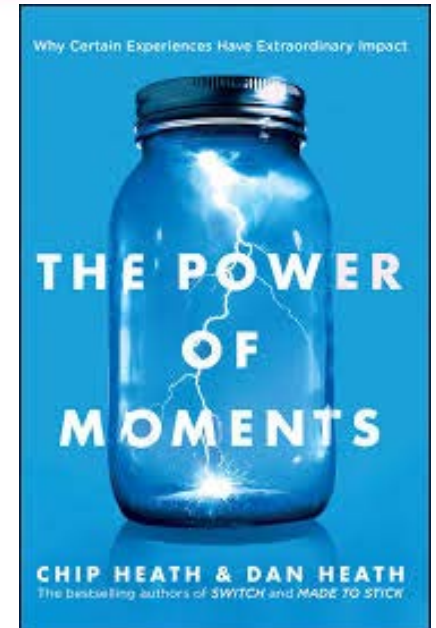
High-Impact Moments

- Insight

- New understanding, reflection, dissonance
 - Seminal concepts (e.g. readings, videos, etc.)
 - Recorded roleplays/simulations
 - Summative reflections

- Connection

- Shared experiences, vulnerability, sense of community/belonging
 - Inductions/Graduations
 - Celebrating learning (e.g. Senior PL Showcase)
 - Sharing of failures



Work Time

- What are the simple, “everyday” experiences you could provide?
 - Does timing matter?
 - How might brand new PLs be asked to “participate?”
 - What about more experienced PLs?
- **What are the small changes you could make that would have an outsized impact?**

Reflection on Experience



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Reflection on Experience

- "We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience."

– John Dewey



Reflection on Experience

- “Reflection is an important human activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it. It is this working with experience that is important in learning.”

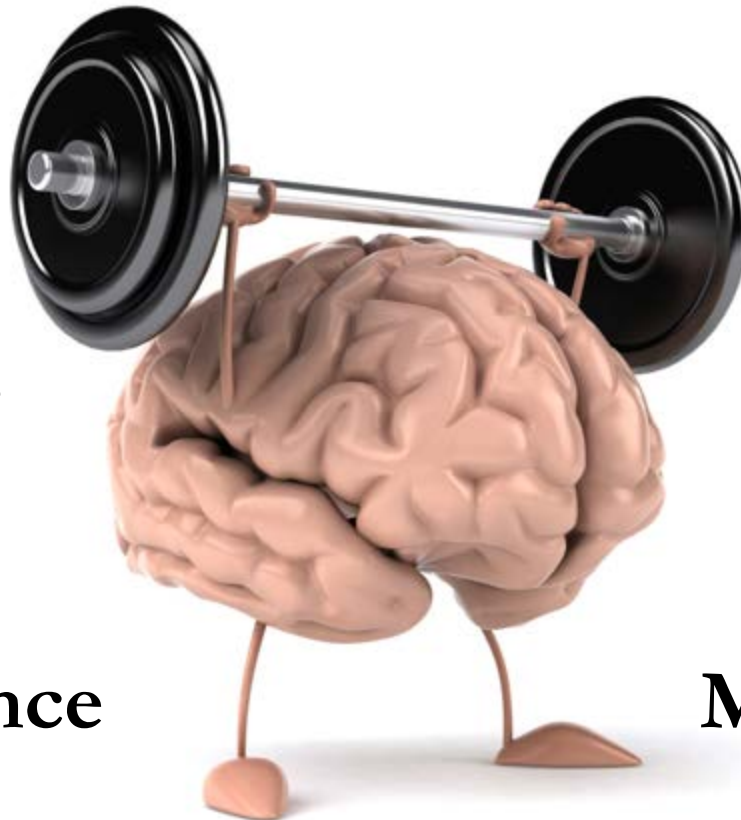
– Boud, Keogh, & Walker



Why does reflection matter?

21st
Century
Learning
Outcomes

Improved
Performance



Opportunity
to challenge
fundamental
assumptions

Develops
Metacognitive
Abilities

Why does reflection matter?

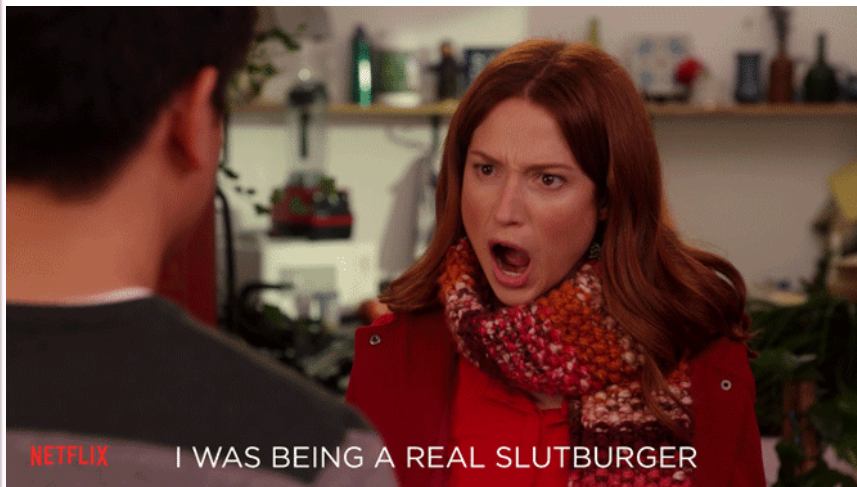


**Opportunity to
develop the
teacher/learner
relationship**

**Communicates
an investment in
the PL as
learner**

How to Build in Reflection to PL Experiences

- Reflection on action
- Reflection in action

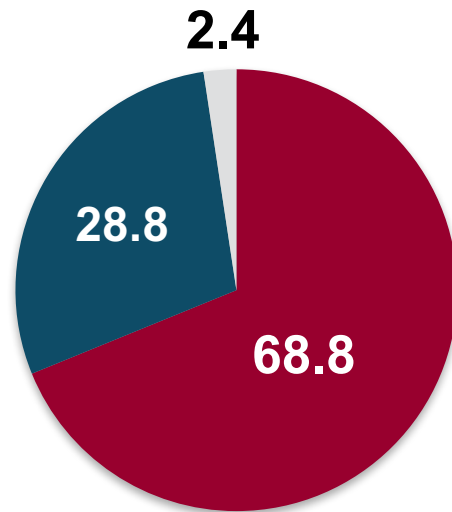


How to Build in Reflection to PL Experiences

- Reflection on action
 - 1-1 Meetings
 - Staff Meetings
 - Retreats
 - Training
- Reflection in action
 - Planning
 - Informal interactions
 - Role playing
 - Training
 - Making reflective thinking part of the culture

Reflection in PL Experiences

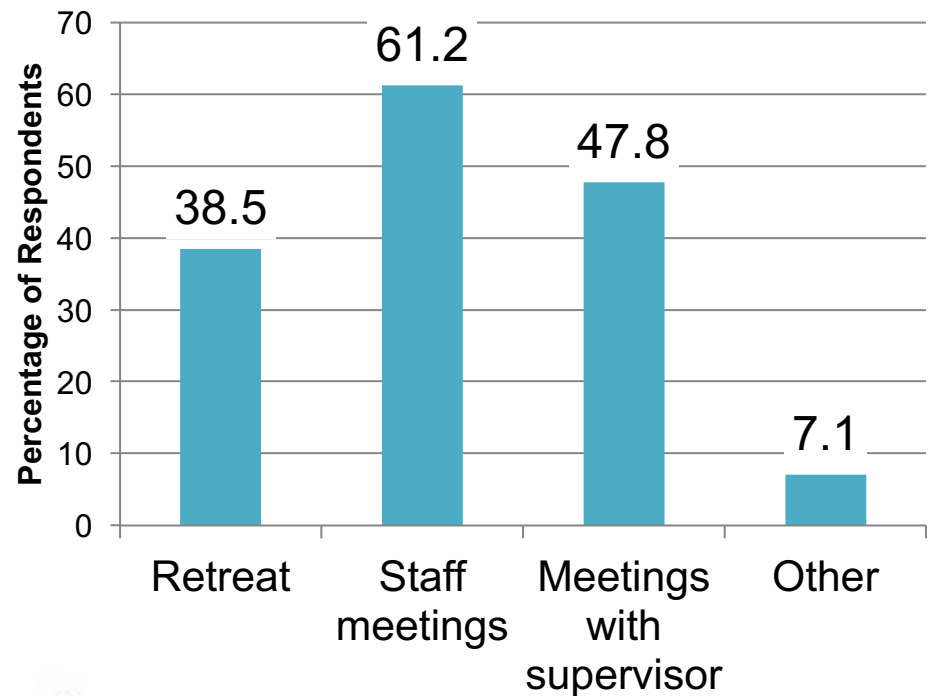
Did you receive any additional ongoing formal training after the initial training? (n = 3,353)



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't know

(2013 National Survey of Peer Leaders)

What type of additional ongoing formal training did you receive? (n = 2,303)



Models for Facilitating Reflection

- Borton:
 - What?
 - So What?
 - Now What?



Models for Facilitating Reflection

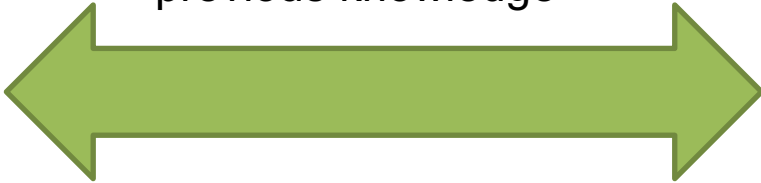
- Borton:
 - What?
 - Describe what happened
 - So What?
 - Talk about any successes or disappointments; what did you learn?
 - Now What?
 - If you could do this again, what would you do differently?

Kolb's Learning Theory: Prehension

- Prehension – how we grasp information
- Dialectic:
 - Concrete experience
 - We gain knowledge through our actions, perceptions, emotions, senses
 - Abstract conceptualization
 - We gain knowledge through exposure to new ideas, logical reasoning

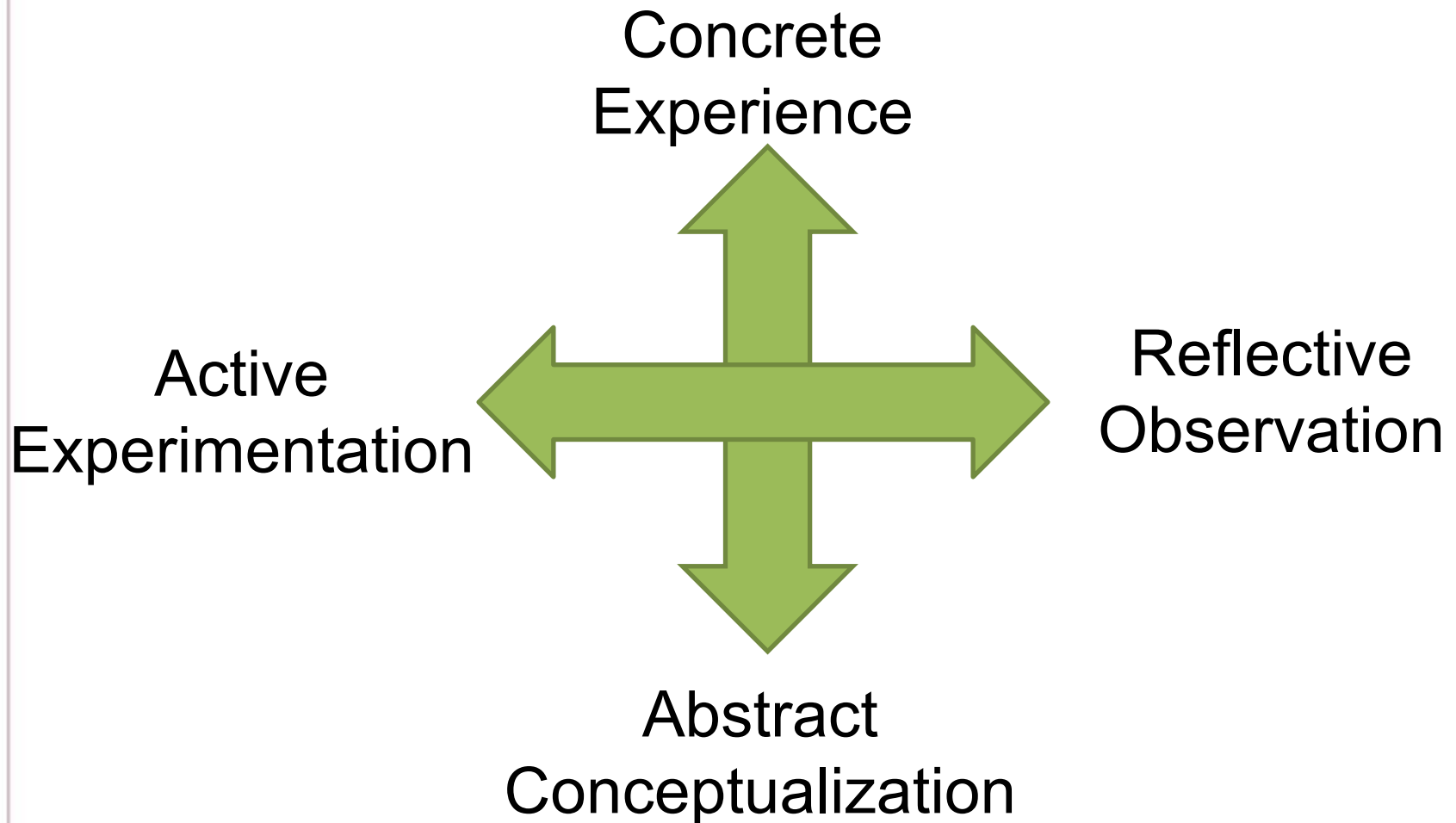


Kolb's Learning Theory: Transformation

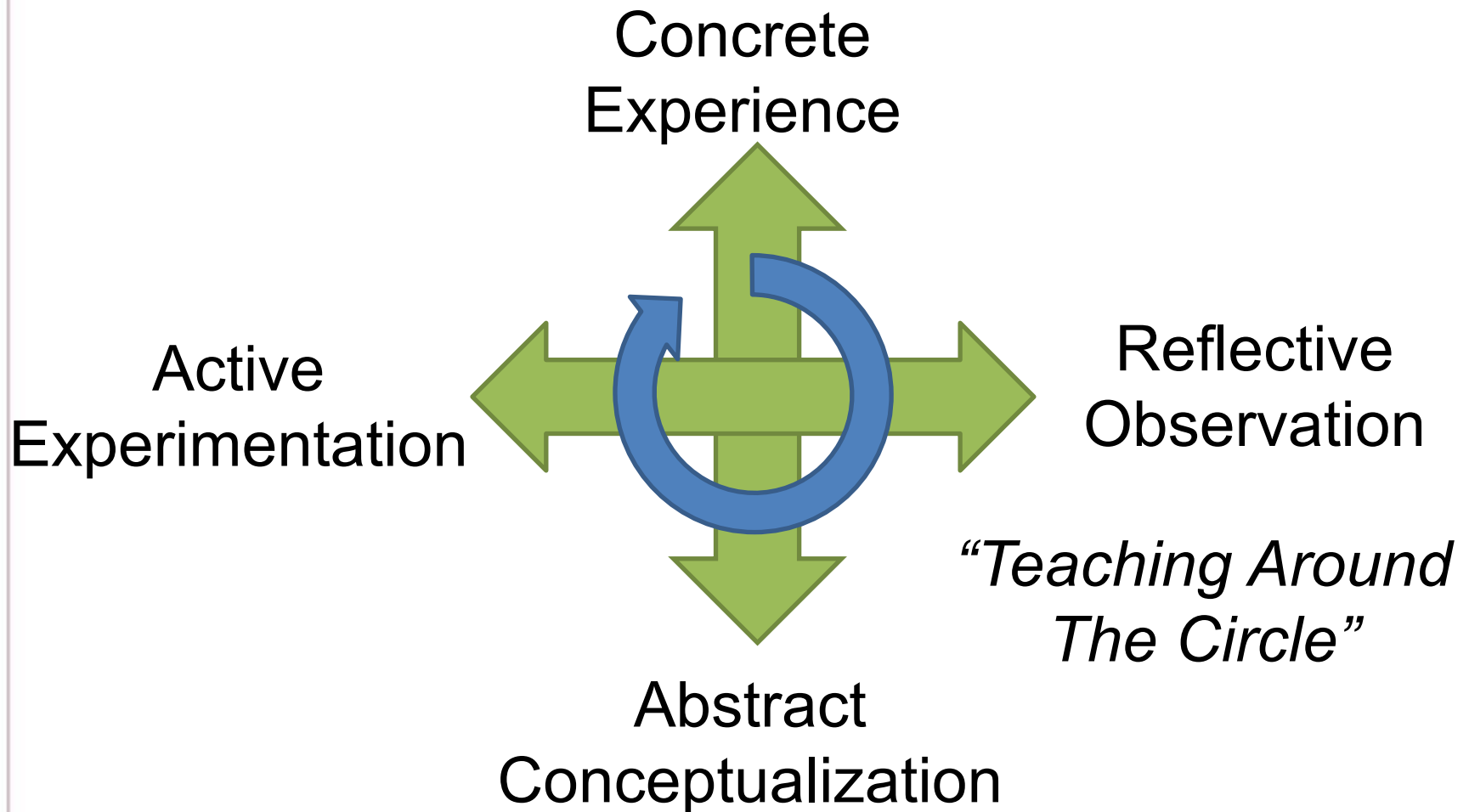
- Transformation – what do we do with new information, how do we make meaning of it
 - Dialectic
 - Reflective Observation
 - We make meaning of new information by comparing it to previous knowledge
- 
- Active Experimentation
 - We make meaning of new information by using it



Kolb Learning Theory



Kolb Learning Theory



Kolb Learning Theory: Application

- Concrete Experience:
 - Interviews
 - Field experience
 - Observations
 - Demonstrations
 - Simulations/case studies/role play
 - Stories, videos
- Reflective Observation:
 - Journals
 - Discussion – small groups, class
 - Silent reflection
 - Asking for reactions
- Abstract Conceptualization
 - Print materials (books, articles, etc.)
 - Lectures
 - Programmed instruction
- Active Experimentation:
 - Papers
 - What-if situations
 - Lab experiences
 - Devising and executing action plans
 - Problem-solving activity

Kolb's Learning Theory: Application – Time management

- Ask students to spend a week tracking their time hour-by-hour (**Concrete Experience**)
- Start class with small group discussions about their time-tracking experience (**Reflective Observation**)
- Present material on time management strategies, prioritization, and suggest approaches to improve use of time (**Abstract Conceptualization**)
- Have students engage in an exercise where they plan their next week (**Active Experimentation**)



Making Reflection Manageable

- “Micro-reflective activities”
 - 1-minute message
 - Highs and lows
 - Looking back, looking forward
 - Involving prompts in reports:
 - “How was the time spent effective?”
 - Keys: Flexible, spontaneous, authentic

Application

- Respond to the prompts asking you to reflect on... reflection.
 - What is salient to you about incorporating reflection in PL experiences?
 - How will this improve the learning experiences of your peer leaders (in other words, so what)?
 - What are some ways you can build this into your PL program (Now what)?

Relationships that Support Learning



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(Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013)

Relationships Matter



- *How College Affects Students*, Mayhew, et al; 2016
- *How College Works*, Chambliss & Takacs; 2014
- *Thriving in Transitions*, Schreiner, Louis, & Nelson; 2012
- *Student Success in College*, Kuh, et al; 2005
- *Making the Most of College*, Light, 2000
- *What Matters in College?*, Astin, 1993

Long-Term Impact



GALLUP-PURDUE INDEX

Students who had a meaningful relationship with one faculty member were twice as likely to report

- (a) being engaged at work
- (b) an overall sense of well-being

*Gallup & Purdue University, 2014

Long-Term Impact

“Good developmental relationships promote socialization, learning, career advancement, and preparation for leadership. . . . Those with mentors tend to be more satisfied with their careers, enjoy more promotions and higher income, and report greater commitment to the organization or profession.”

(Johnson, 2007)



The Power of Relationships



Problematic Relationships



Balancing Tensions



Compensation	< ----- >	Volunteer
Mentor	< ----- >	Supervisor
Autonomy	< ----- >	Direction
Learning	< ----- >	Satisfaction

What makes the difference?



GALLUP-PURDUE INDEX

- (a) Genuine concern interest in the student as an individual;
- (b) A focus on and excitement for learning;
- (c) Connection to future goals/plans

*Gallup & Purdue University, 2014

Practical Recommendations

- Regular one-on-one meetings between PLs and faculty/staff
- Staff-led project/research teams
 - Design & delivery of training
 - Research/assessment
- Personal Learning Plans
 - **Relationships w/ Senior PLs

Personal Learning Plans

Objective: Create a learning plan that connects your PL role with future goals/aspirations

- a) Submit proposal to staff mentor
- b) Complete readings (i.e. articles, book chapters, TED Talks)
- c) Seek out growth experiences
- d) Engage in regular written reflection to integrate learning
- e) Meet regularly w/ staff mentor
- f) Celebrate and share learning through final “capstone”

Application

- How are you creating structure, environments, and experiences that encourage meaningful relationships between PLs and others in your program?
- Are there any current barriers that might be inhibiting the formation of productive learning relationships?
- What are you doing already that is working?
- What could you implement to improve relationships
 - In the next month?
 - Next 6 months?
 - Next year?

Thank You!

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