



# COLLECTIVE GROWTH

An introduction to collaborative and networked professional development for anyone involved in K-12 education. Collective growth includes PLCs, PLNs, the Commons, Collective Teacher Efficacy, and more.

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 *Version 1.1*

## REQUEST TRAINING

For additional help with collective growth, contact a TIE representative. We can provide training on ed tech, student-centered learning, and more for school districts.

## GET CREDIT

You may be able to get credit for this work by participating in TIE's online courses & pathways. Go to the website listed above to sign up for graduate credit opportunities.

## SHARE

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*No man is an island,  
Entire of itself;  
Every man is a piece of the continent,  
A part of the main.*

*If a clod be washed away by the sea,  
Europe is the less,  
As well as if a promontory were:  
As well as if a manor of thy friend's*

*Or of thine own were.  
Any man's death diminishes me,  
Because I am involved in mankind.  
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;  
It tolls for thee.*

John Donne



# Overview

Welcome to TIE's Collective Growth. This may be available as both a shareable PDF and through the TIE LMS. The shareable PDF is under a *CC BY-NC-ND* license. Any online course version may be completed as a part of different collective growth courses for graduate credit such as Collective Growth: Blended Learning or Collective Growth: Classroom Management if the documented workshop totals at least 15 hours. The PDF on its own may not be completed for credit. Consult with a TIE Learning Specialist beforehand for further information.

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## Outcomes & Success Criteria

This has three primary outcomes and several sub-outcomes or success criteria. Success criteria are small goals that should be able to be met by the end of their corresponding section. You can use them as self-assessments: if you feel that you have met the success criteria, move on; if you have not met the success criteria, review the section, explore any additional materials, and reach out for help.

- I can articulate the importance of collective growth.
  - I can differentiate between fixed, growth, beginners, and innovator's mindsets.
  - I can summarize research on collective efficacy.
  - I can identify the benefits of adding resources to the commons.
- I can use strategies for local collective growth.
  - I can identify the five aspects of a learning organization.
  - I can identify the characteristics of professional learning communities.
  - I can summarize the form and function of plc meeting processes.
  - I can use at least one strategy for peer-to-peer support.



- I can use strategies for global collective growth.
  - I can develop a professional learning network.
  - I can join and follow professional writers, speakers, and organizations.
  - I can identify strategies that may make conferences more beneficial.

## Minimum Time Estimates

You can anticipate spending a minimum of time for each part of this document:

- Reading through the document - 15 minutes
- Completing all “try this!” activities - 2 hours
- Completing the three self-assessments - 4 hours
- Exploring all of the additional resources - 5 hours
- Using the reflective journal - 3 hours and 45 minutes at 15 minutes per entry x 15 entries (or less depending on the number of entries used)
  - Alternative time estimates:
    - 2 hours and 45 minutes at 15 minutes per entry x 11 entries
    - 1 hour at 45 minutes at 15 minutes per entry x 7 entries

Keep in mind that these are estimates of the minimum amount of time. To complete everything in the list of time estimates above, you will need at least 15 hours.

Given all of that, *at least three hours* should be allocated to read through this document and complete eleven entries in the journal.



# Individual vs Collective Growth

**Outcome: I can articulate the importance of collective growth.**

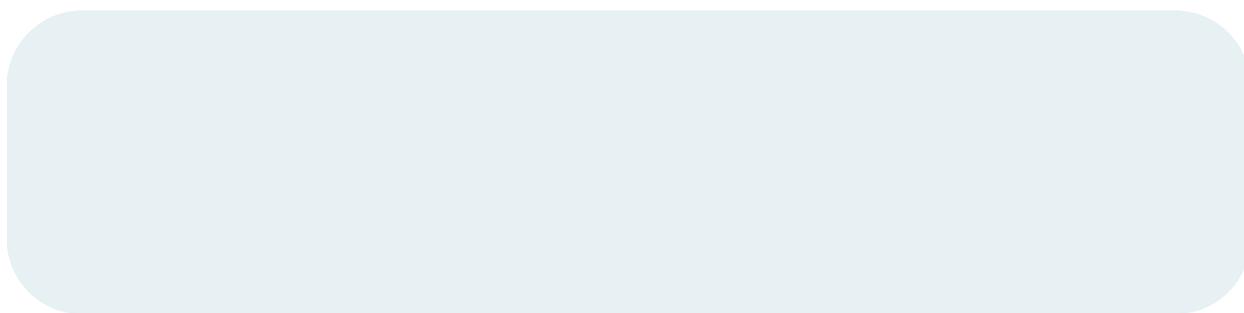
When educators, administrators, and other professionals seek professional development, they usually do so to better their own practice. Often, this is in the form of a new degree, certificate, online course, workshop, book, podcast, conference, or coaching opportunity. While it is true that any of these can help spur your own professional growth, they can do even more. Any opportunity for you to learn is also an opportunity for your team and your profession as a whole to learn.

The aphorism “a rising tide lifts all boats” is especially true in the world of professional development. When educators are sharing their best ideas, everyone benefits. This is what we mean by “collective growth.” Beyond collective learning, collective growth is about sharing and using these ideas. There are many ways to take part in collective growth from informal, local team meetings to structured, global networks.

No matter the scale, each teacher’s work is connected to every other teacher’s work. The ability of a teacher a grade level below or in another department affects your students. These students go on to affect the next generation. It is true, then, that “no teacher is an island.”

## "Try this!" Activity

Activity: Why else is it important to help others in your profession? Jot your answers in the space below.



## Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [How To Differentiate Learning From Growing by Svetlana Whitener](#)

## Types of Mindsets

**Success Criteria: I can differentiate between fixed, growth, beginners, and innovator's mindsets.**

As we consider collective growth, it is important to begin by examining our own perspectives. We call these ways of viewing the world, these perspectives, mindsets. Familiar to many educators, one's mindset can greatly affect the outcome of a task or experience. If a student walks into a classroom with a closed mindset, they are unlikely to benefit from the experience. So too with ourselves and collective growth.

The two most commonly discussed mindsets are "fixed" and "growth" mindsets. These were largely pioneered by Carol Dwek in her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. In short:

**Fixed** - the fixed mindset is characterized by the belief that one's abilities are "set in stone" and are unable to change. This leads to individuals "staying in their lane" and not trying new approaches. After all, if one cannot change, what is the point of trying? If one does not try, how is one to get better?

**Growth** - the growth mindset is characterized by the belief that one's abilities can be improved through effort. According to Dwek, this leads to individuals who are more willing to work around obstacles and persist over time. As these individuals are more likely to put in work to grow, they are more likely to see positive results.



Beyond the fixed and growth mindsets, there are also two more mindsets that are worth exploring as we begin our journey into collective growth.

**Innovator's** - George Couros proposed an "innovator's mindset" in his book, *The Innovator's Mindset* in 2015. Similar to the growth mindset, the innovator's mindset is the "belief that abilities, intelligence, and talents are developed so that they lead to the creation of new and better ideas" (Couros, 2015, p. 34). Key to his definition is the idea that individuals with the innovator's mindset take action & create things with their new knowledge and that they are networked risk-takers and problem-finders who seek new opportunities to innovate.

**Beginner's** - "beginners mind" or "Shoshin" is a concept shared by the Zen monk and teacher, Shunryu Suzuki. In short, the beginner's mindset is characterized by being open, nonjudgemental, curious, and present with a situation. Suzuki states, "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, in the expert's mind there are few."

As you head into your next PLC meeting, conference, or other opportunity for collective growth, start by considering which mindset you are bringing to the experience and if that mindset will benefit all involved.

### "Try this!" Activity

Reflect on a recent experience related to your profession. What mindset did you have going into it? Did your mindset help others and the situation?

### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [Carol Dweck's TED talk on fixed vs growth mindsets](#)
- [Six Ways to Foster a Growth Mindset by Margaret Wilson \(ASCD\)](#)
- [The Innovator's Mindset Podcast by George Couros](#)
- [Shoshin: A Beginners Mindset by Lawrence Hitches](#)

## Collective Teacher Efficacy

**Success Criteria: I can summarize research on collective efficacy.**

Collective teacher efficacy is “the shared belief by a group of teachers in a particular educational environment that they have the skills to positively impact student outcomes” (VisibleLearningMetaX). In other words, it is a sort of shared growth/innovator’s mindset. It is the belief that their practices as a team make a difference in how well students learn. Schools with strong collective efficacy often use “we” language over “I” language, focus on the big picture, rely on data to make decisions, and make time to collaborate. Like all organizational culture, it is largely driven by leadership, but individuals can support or harm this shared belief.

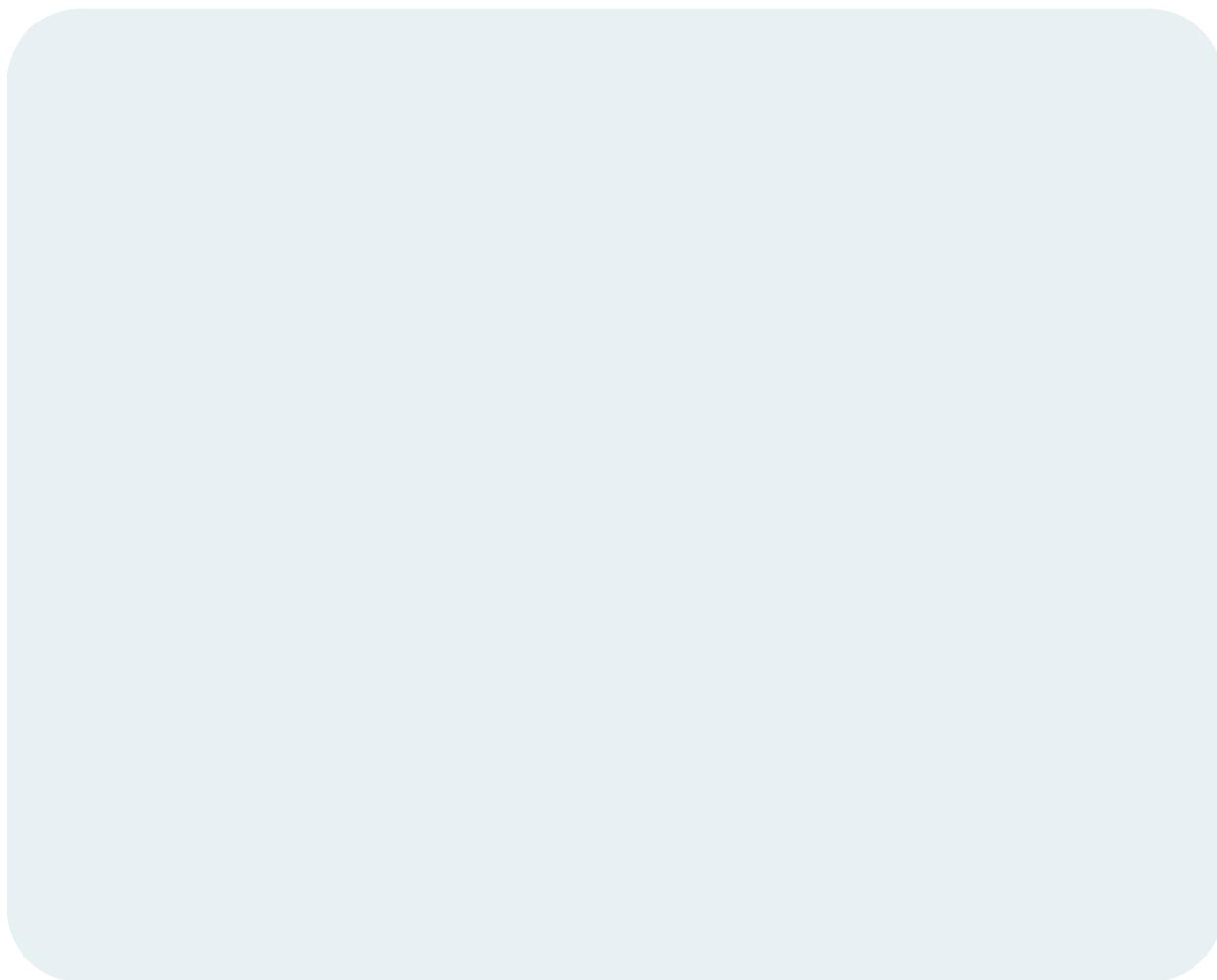
Research suggests that collective teacher efficacy may be one of the single most important factors in a student’s success, even over factors such as student prior achievement, socioeconomic status, home environment, motivation, engagement, or homework. This comes from the Visible Learning® research base by John Hattie and others at Visible Learning MetaX. Their work is a combination of over “1,850 meta-analyses comprising more than 108,000 studies involving more than 300 million students around the world.” For every strategy and potential factor, they calculated an effect size that indicates how likely it is to affect student achievement. The average effect size was .4, an average year of growth in school for a student. As of 2022, below are just some of the scores. You can see the full, current list at [visiblelearningmetax.com](https://visiblelearningmetax.com).

Teacher estimates of achievement	1.46
Collective teacher efficacy	1.36
Outcomes-based education	.97
Success criteria	.88
Flipped classrooms	.57
Teacher-student relationships	.47
Building quality	.24

Note that collective teacher efficacy was found not only as having one of the greatest potentials to accelerate student achievement but that it is also almost double some of the other factors.

### "Try this!" Activity

Take a moment to explore the [Visible Learning MetaX](#) research. How does this research support the importance of collective growth?



### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [What Drives Collective Efficacy by Jenni Donohoo and Steven Katz \(ASCD\)](#)
- [The 5 Steps of a Collective Efficacy Cycle by Toni Faddis, Douglas Fisher, and Nancy Frey \(Corwin Connect\)](#)
- [Leading Collective Efficacy in Your School by Jenni Donohoo \(Corwin Connect\)](#)
- [Leaders Coaching Leaders Podcast: Demystifying Collective Efficacy](#)

## Ownership & The Commons

**Success Criteria: I can identify the benefits of adding resources to the commons.**

One of the great barriers to collective growth is possessiveness. Educators demonstrate possessiveness when they are unwilling to share teaching strategies, resources, and ideas with colleagues.

A number of things cause this possessiveness. Often, it is a misguided attempt to stand out amongst one's peers: "After all, if I give away the secrets to my success, I may not be viewed as special and may not earn the promotion or role that I was seeking." This may also be done if educators feel that their work might go unrecognized: leadership or their peers may not recognize the effort that an individual put into developing a high-quality common formative assessment. This occurs even more when physical resources are involved: a teacher may be hesitant to share a set of books if their colleague lost things previously. No matter the cause, possessiveness among teachers leads to worse outcomes for students.

A solution to this is to embrace the concept of "the commons." Indiana University states "The commons is a general term for shared resources in which each stakeholder has an equal interest." While the commons typically refers to physical resources, it is increasingly used in broader contexts. Rather than developing resources for one's own classroom or school, resources can be developed for and shared with all those who would benefit from them.



Educators can and should share their resources under a "[creative commons](#)" license. These licenses allow you to share in a way that you are comfortable sharing. For example, one can place a work under an attribution, CC BY, license to allow it to be shared as long as you are credited for the original work. One can also place it under a noncommercial, CC BY-NC, license to prevent others from selling it. The goal of the creative commons is to allow you to share your work and innovate on others' work in a way that all parties are comfortable with. When educational resources are shared in the public domain or through other open licenses (such as the creative commons), they are part of the OER, Open Educational Resources.

Examples of creative commons license icons are below. These are from creativecommons.org and The Noun Project.



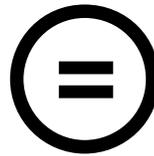
Creative  
Commons



Attribution



NonCommercial  
Only



ShareAlike  
Only



No  
Derivatives

### "Try this!" Activity

Identify something that you have developed such as a lesson plan, resource, or assessment, and practice sharing it under a creative commons license on the platform of your choice. In the space below, write down the steps you took to share it as an open educational resource.

### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [Creative Commons Website](#)
- [Open Education by Creative Commons](#)
- [Creative Commons and Open Educational Resources](#)
- [Guide to Open Education Resources from Gutman Library at Harvard](#)
- [OpenStax: Free and flexible textbooks and resources](#)

## Individual vs Collective Growth Self-Assessment

Before moving on, take this opportunity to assess yourself on the outcome and paired success criteria.

You can do so by writing a statement outlining why you feel it is important to promote collective growth. In this, try to touch on the following:

- The role mindset plays in professional development.
- Research on collective efficacy
- How contributing to the commons helps everyone.



# Local Collective Growth

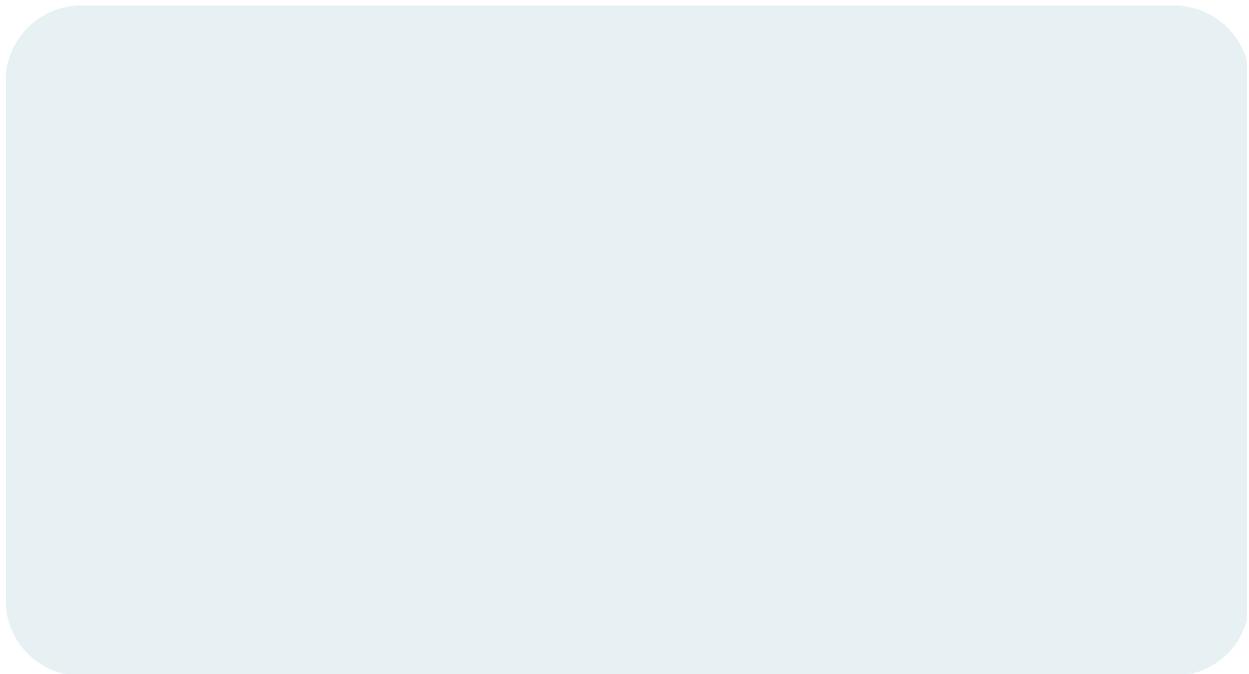
**Outcome: I can use strategies for local collective growth.**

Collective growth is local when it is focused on one's own department, school, or district. This is often where collective growth is most powerful as the resources, ideas, and practices may already be tailored towards its particular context.

This local collective growth can take many forms such as professional learning communities, peer-to-peer support, and other collaborative/democratic leadership structures such as Senge's Fifth Discipline Framework.

## "Try this!" Activity

In the space below, make a few predictions about what the barriers may be to local collective growth.



## Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [Are You a Collaborative Leader? By Herminia Ibarra and Morten T. Hansen \(HBR\)](#)
- [Eight Ways to Build Collaborative Teams by Lynda Gratton and Tamara J. Erickson \(HBR\)](#)

## Learning Organizations

### **Success Criteria: I can identify the five aspects of a learning organization.**

Our organization considers collective growth as largely an extension of learning organization practices. The term “learning organization” was used by Peter Senge in *The Fifth Discipline* originally to describe certain corporate and non-profit organizations, but it has increasingly been applied to academic organizations as well.

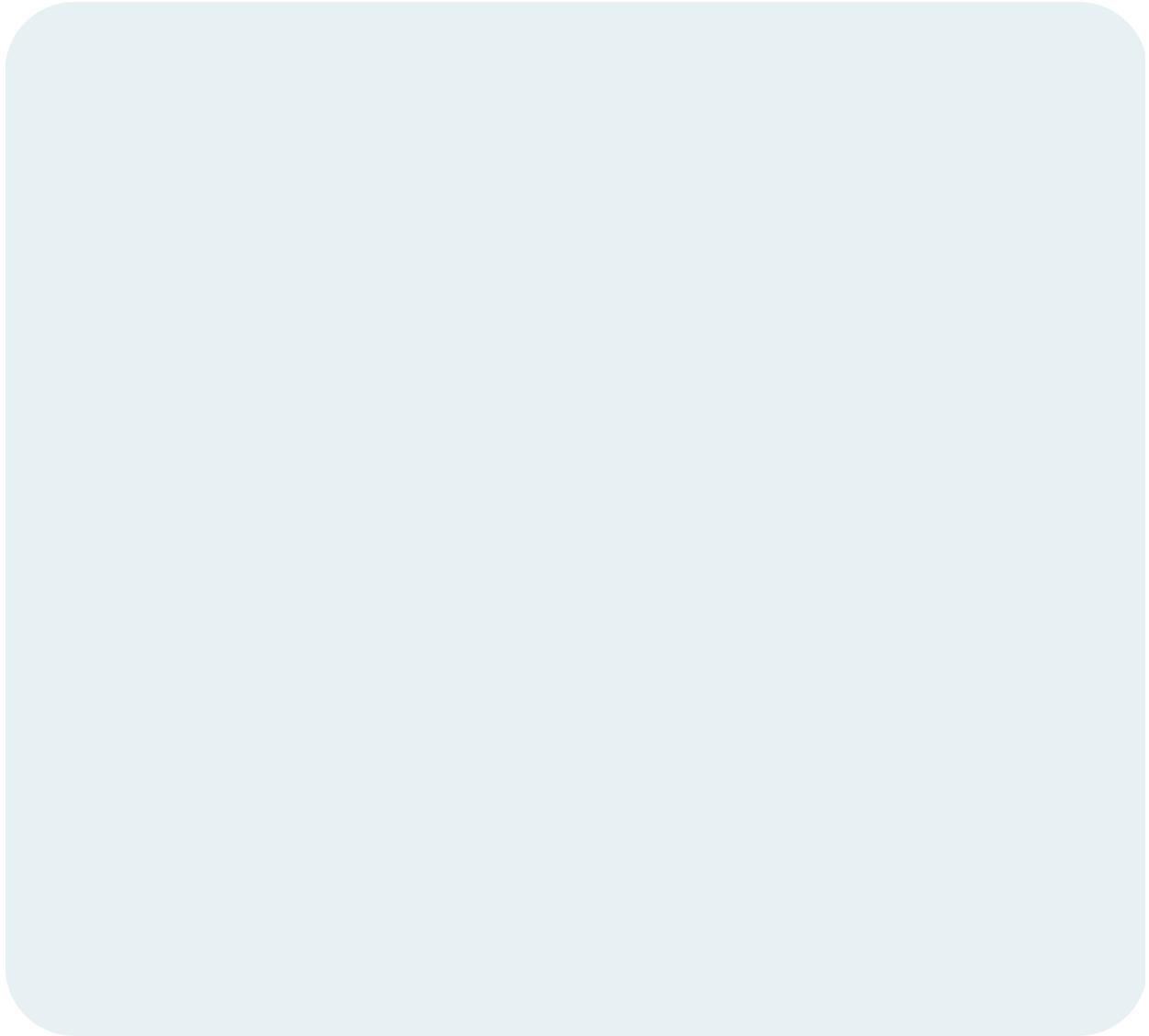
A learning organization is one that continuously seeks out new knowledge and uses that knowledge to improve and adapt. It is characterized by a culture of continuous learning, in which all members of the organization are encouraged to learn and grow both personally and professionally. This can take the form of formal training programs, but also includes informal learning opportunities such as mentorship, collaboration, and experimentation. A learning organization is committed to creating a culture of learning and innovation and, as such, is able to adapt and evolve in response to changing circumstances.

Peter Senge characterized learning organizations by identifying five disciplines practiced and embodied by such organizations. The five disciplines are:

- **Systems thinking:** This discipline involves understanding how different parts of an organization are interconnected and how they affect one another. It helps individuals and organizations recognize and change the underlying patterns that contribute to problems and challenges.
- **Personal mastery:** This discipline is focused on individual growth and development. It involves developing a deep understanding of one's own values, vision, and capabilities, and using that understanding to continually improve and achieve personal goals.
- **Mental models:** This discipline is about the underlying assumptions, beliefs, and values that shape an individual's perception of the world. It involves examining and challenging these mental models in order to gain a deeper understanding of reality and to identify and change limiting beliefs.
- **Shared vision:** This discipline is about creating a shared understanding and alignment around a common purpose or goal. It involves building a sense of community and commitment to a shared vision among members of an organization.
- **Team learning:** This discipline is about creating an environment in which teams can continuously learn, experiment, and improve together. It involves developing trust, open communication, and a willingness to embrace diversity and learn from mistakes.

### "Try this!" Activity

Reflect on your own place of work. Would you consider your place of work a learning organization? Why/why not? If necessary, which discipline should your organization spend more time on? Why is that?



### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [The Society for Organizational Learning North America](#)
- [Schools That Learn website](#)
- [Peter Senge: "Systems Thinking for a Better World"](#)
- [The Fifth Discipline in Three Minutes](#)

## PLC Characteristics

**Success Criteria: I can identify the characteristics of professional learning communities.**

As learning organization practices were being developed in the 1990s, educators and researchers began to experiment with how such ideas could be incorporated into school systems. One way these ideas have been applied is through the development of professional learning communities.

In contrast to top-down professional development efforts, professional learning communities (PLCs) are often groups of teachers who come together regularly to share best practices and collaborate on ways to improve student learning. Early PLCs were often informal groups of teachers who met regularly to discuss teaching strategies and share ideas for improving student achievement. Later, the concept of PLCs was honed by Richard DuFour and others to include an emphasis on data and organizational culture. Now, PLCs can mean many different things depending on the context. Unfortunately, there are many schools that have adopted PLCs in name only, missing some of the key characteristics of PLCs.



Some of the characteristics of PLCs are:

- **Collaborative culture:** PLCs are built on a foundation of collaboration and collective responsibility. Members work together to achieve shared goals and support one another's professional growth. Teachers view themselves as team members teaching the entire school rather than individual teachers in classrooms. The success of students is everyone's responsibility.
- **Learning & growth:** PLCs prioritize continuous learning and improvement for both individuals and the organization as a whole. Members are committed to staying up-to-date on best practices and using research to inform their practice. Members abandon practices shown to be less effective as new information becomes available.

- **Use of data:** PLCs rely on data to identify areas for improvement and track progress toward goals. Members regularly collect and analyze data to inform their decision-making and plan for the future. The data gathered and used is both qualitative and quantitative.
- **Shared leadership:** PLCs involve shared leadership and decision-making, with all members contributing to the development and implementation of goals and strategies. This leadership extends upwards through the organization as PLCs bring ideas to administration. This often leads to PLC groups proposing topics for professional development days (in contrast to PD decisions being guided solely by the administration).
- **Beyond meetings:** While PLCs include small-group teacher meetings, these “PLC Meetings” are not the end-point of the professional learning community. The characteristics extend beyond the time allotted for meetings.

Contemporary PLCs may be mandated, directed, or guided by leadership, but it is important to remember that PLCs were originally developed by and for educators. Educators must be empowered to make decisions about how to hold and form PLCs. These may be formal meetings on campus, but may also take the form of educators meeting informally at a coffee shop or contributing to a Google Group discussion as time allows.

### "Try this!" Activity

In the space below, briefly compare and contrast professional learning communities with similar concepts such as team planning periods. What makes it unique?



### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- ["History of PLC" on AllThingsPLC.info](#)
- ["The Origins of Professional Learning Communities" Documentary on AllThingsPLC.info](#)
- [Richard DuFour on the Importance of PLCs](#)
- ["Cultural Shifts in a Professional Learning Community" from SolutionTree](#)

## PLC Meetings

**Success Criteria: I can summarize the form and function of plc meeting processes.**

PLC meetings are a critical piece of building a professional learning community. However, remember that PLCs must extend beyond meetings to be successful. These meetings are often comprised of 3-8 educators and can be independent or part of a larger professional learning community. These meetings should be planned regularly (at least once a month) and occur for at least an hour at a time. It is helpful to maintain a consistent membership so that ideas can carry over from one meeting to another. It may make sense to organize membership for these meetings around department, grade level, or interest (such as technology integration across the curriculum).

At the first meeting, it is important to set group norms, roles, and communication lines.

Consider the following:

- Will this same group meet all year? Will this group only meet for a set number of times or until a goal is reached?
- How often and when will this group meet?
- What meeting norms should be established? How will they be encouraged?
- What roles are necessary to have the meetings function? How often will these roles change? How will these roles be determined?
- What is the best way to get ahold of one another? Will the group use an application or website to hold asynchronous discussions and share ideas?

Before each meeting, an agenda should be created. This agenda should include

- The date, time, and location of the meeting
- The goal of the meeting and any questions to discuss
- A list of things that need to be brought to the meeting (such as data discussed at a prior meeting)

Each meeting should conclude with a clear plan of what needs to occur next. This could include implementing new teaching techniques, using technology in the classroom, or providing additional support for struggling students. It could also include plans for additional research or data collection.

Participating in a PLC meeting can be a valuable and rewarding experience for educators, but it can also be challenging at times. Here are some tips for educators participating in a PLC meeting:

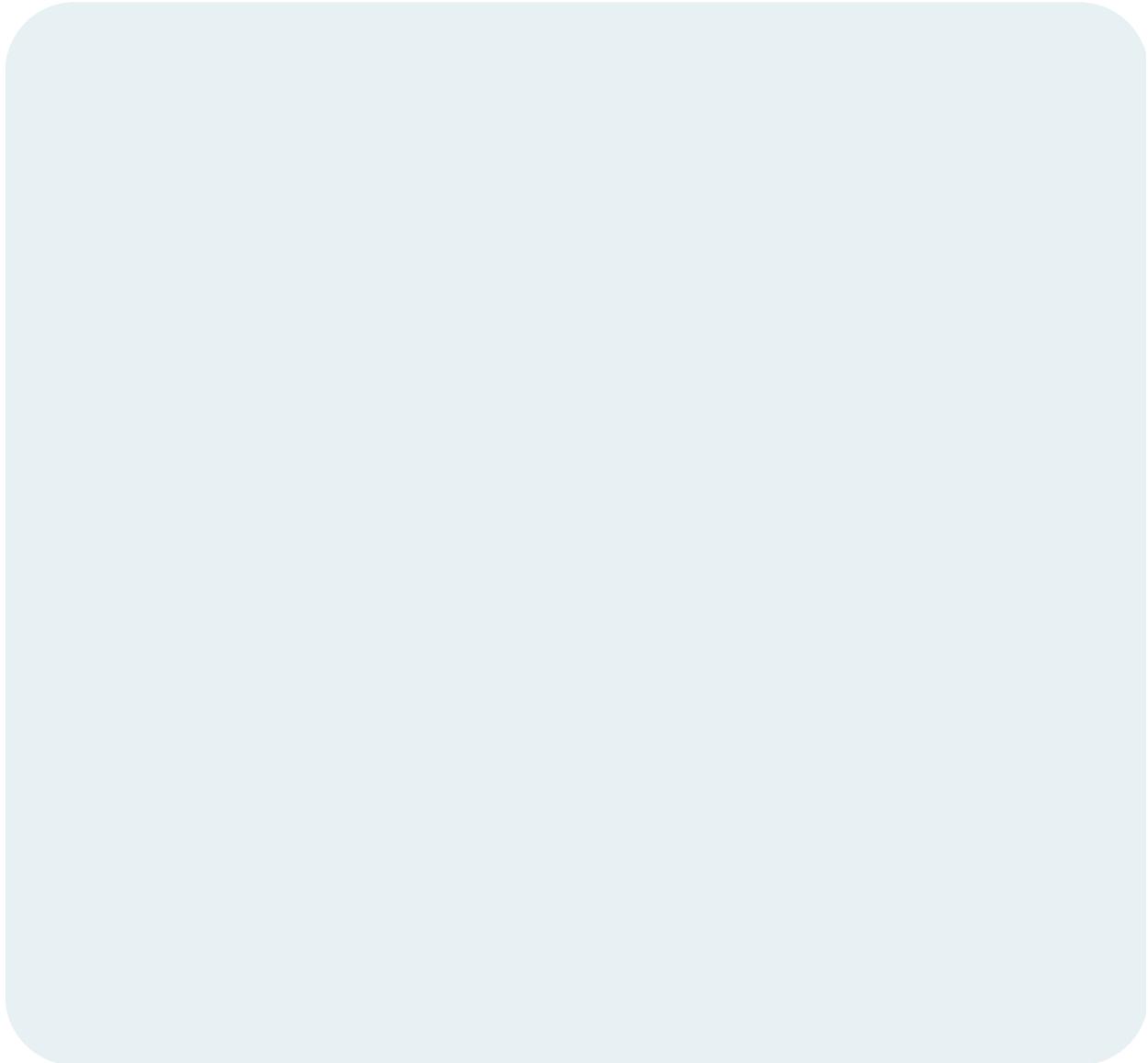
- **Be open-minded:** PLCs are all about learning from each other, so it's important to approach discussions with an open mind. Listen to the ideas and perspectives of others, even if they differ from your own, and consider how they might be relevant to your own practice.
- **Be proactive:** To get the most out of a PLC, it's important to be proactive and engaged. Don't be afraid to share your own ideas and experiences, and be open to feedback from others. Take the initiative to ask questions, offer suggestions, and participate in discussions.
- **Be respectful:** PLCs are a place for respectful, constructive dialogue. It's important to be respectful of other's ideas and perspectives, even if you don't agree with them. Avoid being confrontational or dismissive, and focus on finding common ground and solutions that can benefit everyone.
- **Be collaborative:** PLCs are all about collaboration, so it's important to be open to working with others. Consider how you can collaborate with other members of the PLC to achieve shared goals, such as developing new teaching strategies or creating resources for students.



As these meetings occur, take time to evaluate the effectiveness of the PLC. This could include conducting surveys or focus groups with members of the PLC to gather feedback on their experiences, as well as analyzing student data to determine the impact of the PLC on student achievement. Additionally, adjust and refine the PLC based on feedback and data analysis. This could involve changing the focus of the PLC, modifying the strategies and approaches used, or providing additional professional development for members of the PLC.

### "Try this!" Activity

What are the barriers to holding meeting in your context? Is it a lack of time, a lack of energy, or something else? How could you overcome those barriers?



### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [\*PLCs at Work: Analyzing and Using Formative Assessment Data\*](#)
- [\*PLCs at Work: Analyzing and Using Summative Assessment Data\*](#)
- [\*Unpacking Standards in Middle School PLC\*](#)
- [\*Unpacking Standards in the Elementary School PLC\*](#)

## Peer-to-Peer Support

**Success Criteria: I can use at least one strategy for peer-to-peer support.**

Beyond PLC meetings, there are many ways that educators can support and share best practices with their colleagues. These can even be done on an individual-to-individual basis, without the need for PLC practices. Some of the most common ways include

- Conduct and share action research:** action research is a method of inquiry in which individuals, such as teachers or school leaders, study their own practice in order to identify areas for improvement and develop solutions to challenges. It involves collecting and analyzing data, reflecting on the results, and using the insights gained to inform and improve practice. Action research is often used to address specific problems or challenges in a particular context, such as a classroom or school. It is characterized by a cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, which is repeated until the desired changes are achieved. One of the unique things about action research is that it is shared in an accessible and appropriate format. In other words, sharing out action research does not need to be done through an academic journal; instead, it can be done by making an infographic that you email out to other teachers in your school or by a quick 5-minute presentation at a staff meeting. You can learn more about action research through another TIE document similar to this one. It is titled "Simplified Action Research."



**SIMPLIFIED**

**ACTION RESEARCH**

An introduction to a simplified form of action research for the busy educator. Action research is a powerful tool to improve an individual's or a team's practice in any domain.

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**REQUEST TRAINING**  
 For additional help with action research, contact a TIE representative. We can provide training on ed tech, student-centered learning, and more for school districts.

**GET CREDIT**  
 You may be able to get credit for this work by participating in TIE's online courses & pathways. Go to the website listed above to sign up for graduate credit opportunities.

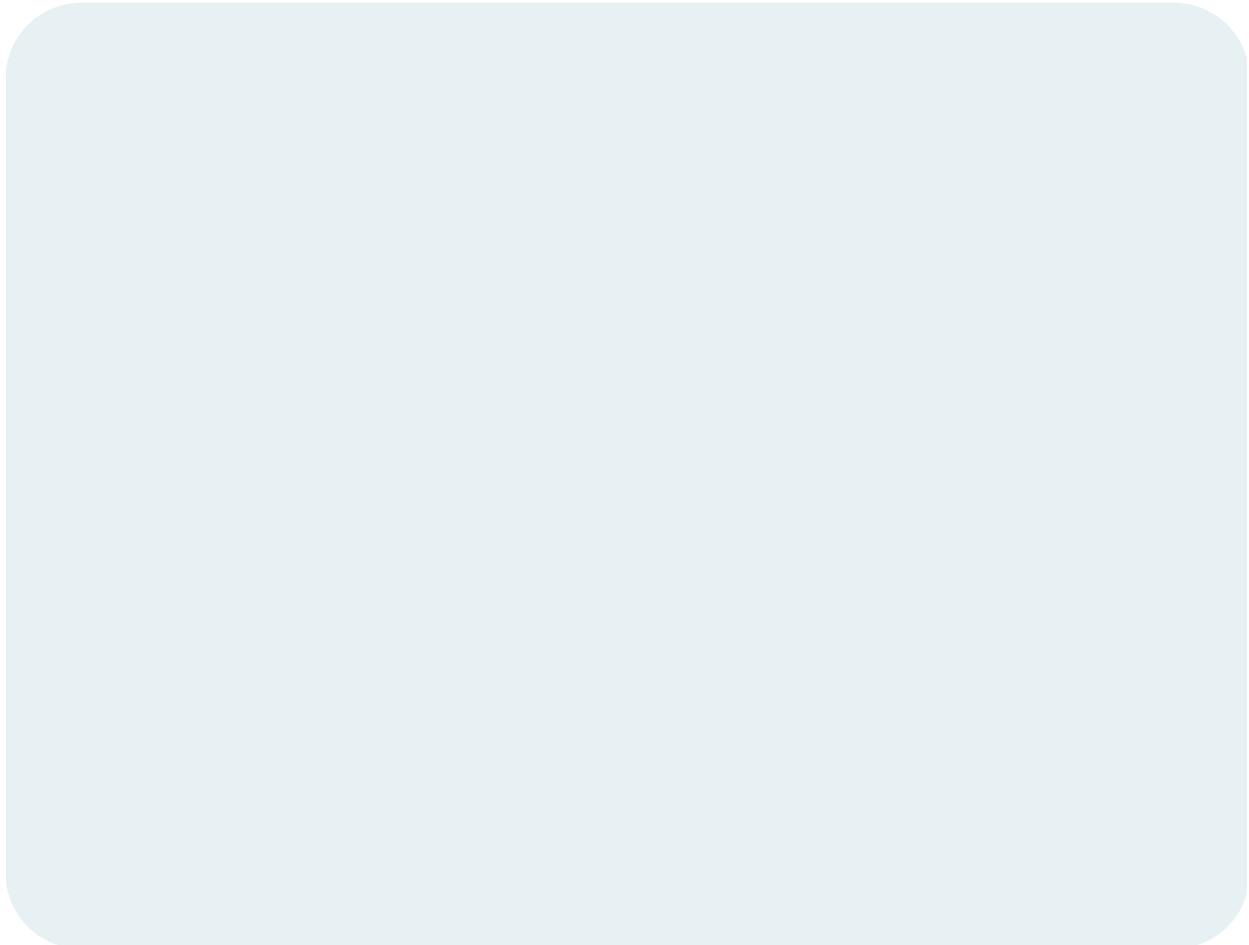
**SHARE**  
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- **Use peer walkthroughs and recordings:** One version of a peer walkthrough is where one teacher observes another teacher's classroom and provides feedback on the teaching and learning that is taking place. These peer walkthroughs are typically focused on specific areas of teaching and learning, such as classroom management, student engagement, or the use of technology. They are usually conducted by a peer who has expertise in the area being observed and can provide constructive feedback to the teacher. Such peer walkthroughs can be a useful tool for teachers to gain new insights into their practice, identify areas for improvement, and receive support from their colleagues. Alternatively, peer walkthroughs can also be where one teacher observes another teacher's classroom with the intention of observing and learning a specific strategy modeled by the teacher. Both of these forms of peer walkthroughs can be conducted during the planning period of the visiting teacher. These can be arranged rather informally beforehand: "would you mind stepping in during 3rd period to give me some feedback on a lesson" or "that sounds exciting; do you mind if I watch to see how you do it?" If there is no time for the visiting teacher, teachers can also record themselves or their lessons to be reviewed asynchronously. These "micro-teaching / video reviews of lessons" have been shown to be considerably effective according to Visible Learning research.
- **Develop a shared resource space:** Departments and teams may find it useful to build a shared resource space. Various social bookmarking tools can be used for this purpose, but the best ones will allow teams to organize content by topic, rate the resources, and provide notes on how it was used. In contrast to larger, open educational resource collections, these are curated collections for your specific context. A great way to start is by building a Google Sheet or Excel Spreadsheet with at least one other teaching the same content as you. By pooling your links, you are saving each other time spent searching for high-quality and relevant resources for your students.
- **Form a mentor/mentee relationship:** Whether formal or informal, mentoring relationships between teachers can be very beneficial. Mentors can provide support and guidance, such as sharing resources, answering questions, and providing feedback and encouragement. They can also collaborate on lesson planning and instruction, participate in professional development activities together and provide emotional support. Many states (such as South Dakota) have state-wide mentoring programs. Additionally, mentors do not have to be relegated to one school. Mentoring relationships via email or video conferencing can also be beneficial. Even if it is not explicitly a mentor/mentee relationship, having a workplace friend or collaborating is invaluable for developing professionally.

Lastly, one should not underestimate the value of shared social support. While being there for one another emotionally as colleagues does not explicitly build professional growth, it can help with one's capacity to pursue professional growth.

### "Try this!" Activity

Can you think of another way teachers can support one another and share best practices? What peer-to-peer support strategy would work best for you? Why?



### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [Integrating a Peer Walkthrough Model into the School Improvement Process: An Action Research Study](#)
- [How to Conduct Action Research for Teachers: A Step by Step Guide by Learning with Doc Levz](#)

## Local Collective Growth Self-Assessment

Before moving on, take this opportunity to assess yourself on the outcome and paired success criteria.

Write a personalized plan for how to promote local collective growth. What specific steps will you take for this?



# Global Collective Growth

**Outcome: I can use strategies for global collective growth.**

There are also plenty of opportunities for collective growth beyond one's own region. Things such as professional learning networks, conferences, organizations, and a number of teacher blogs, podcasts, videos, and more are all great ways to grow professionally and help others do the same on a global scale.

When we think about collective growth on this global scale, it is important to recognize that we are also talking about a type of global collective efficacy, a belief that all educators around the world can collaborate and improve the entire profession and practice, leading to a more educated populace everywhere.

Undoubtedly, the ideas listed above are only some of the ways to promote global collective growth. Advances in technologies such as video conferencing, virtual reality, 3D printing, and more may help give way to novel strategies. Through these, might we see the start of a learning society?

## "Try this!" Activity

Write down other ideas for how one can promote global collective growth. It is okay if it starts to sound like science fiction!



## Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [The Future of Your Office Is in a VR Headset | WSJ](#)

## Professional Learning Networks

### **Success Criteria: I can develop a professional learning network.**

One of the primary ways to promote global collective growth is through a professional learning network. A professional learning network, or PLN, is a group of educators who come together online to share ideas, resources, and best practices in order to improve their teaching skills and better support their students. These networks are often formed through social media and can be formal or informal, large or small. Some networks have to be “joined” like an organization, but most are simply informal discussions open to anyone.

To participate in a PLN on social media, you can start by searching for relevant hashtags on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. For example, an educator interested in joining a PLN focused on science education might search for hashtags like #scienceteacher, #scienceeducation, or #teachingscience. By following these hashtags and engaging with the posts and discussions that come up, you can get a sense of which PLNs are active and relevant to their interests. Additionally, you may want to find new individuals to follow by looking through the friend lists/followers of well-known education leaders.

Once you have identified a PLN that you would like to join, you can participate in the group by commenting on posts, sharing your own resources and experiences, and engaging in discussions with other members. Don't be afraid to share your own ideas and resources with the PLN; most individuals welcome new points of discussion. It's also a good idea to reach out to other members of the PLN and connect with them directly. This can help build relationships and create a sense of community within the PLN.





### "Try this!" Activity

Identify at least five innovative educators that you could connect with on social media to start building a professional learning network.

### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [What's a PLN? And 3 Ways Teachers Can Get Connected](#)
- [GotTechED the Podcast Episode 19: PLCs vs PLNs...](#)
- [Professional and Personal Learning Networks from NCTE](#)

## Blogs, Articles, and Organizations

**Success Criteria: I can join and follow professional writers, speakers, and organizations.**

A second approach is through following professional writers, speakers, and organizations. This work can be beneficial for your own professional growth, but it can be difficult to ensure that the growth is shared.

To do so, it is important to begin by spending your time with high-quality sources. A teacher venting about their day on a YouTube video is unlikely to contribute to professional growth. Instead, look for individuals who cite specific research in their claims and are not trying to sell you on a product. Additionally, the information should be in an accessible format. While a full research paper on ERIC may be useful, you have to ask yourself if you are realistically going to make time to read through it in full.

As such, we recommend following individuals who publish short, accessible articles, podcasts, and videos with cited information. Jennifer Gonzalez from "[Cult of Pedagogy](#)" or Dr. Catlin Tucker's "[The Balance](#)" are good examples of this. As stated above, it is not simply enough to read/watch/listen for your own growth, make sure to take notes and share ideas from these individuals with your professional learning network or your local community.

Additionally, educators can also join professional organizations to connect with other educators and access a wealth of resources and support. Professional organizations often provide access to online communities, professional development opportunities, and other resources that can help educators improve their practice. Some examples of professional organizations for educators include the National Education Association (NEA), the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA), and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).

We mention these professional organizations in this same section as these are often opportunities to not only follow education leaders but also as they are opportunities to become such a leader. Most of the organizations listed above have a publication or workshop structure where individuals can submit work. While you can share ideas freely without such organizations, these organizations can lend credibility to your ideas and already have an audience.



### "Try this!" Activity

Search online for an educational organization that you would be interested in joining. In your own words, how could you both learn from and contribute to the organization?

### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [ASCD Website](#)
- [ISTE Website](#)

## Maximizing Conferences

**Success Criteria: I can identify strategies that may make conferences more beneficial.**

Lastly, attending conferences can be a great way for educators to learn from experts, network with other educators, and stay current on the latest developments in the field of education. However, a conference is only as beneficial as you make it. Here are some tips for making the most out of attending conferences:

- **Plan ahead:** Before attending the conference, take some time to research the sessions and speakers that will be featured. Identify the sessions that align with your interests and goals, and plan your schedule accordingly. This will help you make the most of your time at the conference.
- **Network:** Conferences are a great opportunity to connect with other educators and build your professional network. Introduce yourself to other attendees, exchange contact information, and follow up with them after the conference. This can lead to valuable collaborations and professional relationships. After the conference, reach out to the speakers and other attendees to continue the conversation and follow up on any connections or ideas that you discussed.
- **Take notes & summarize information:** During the sessions, be sure to take detailed notes. This will help you remember what you learned and refer back to it later. After attending a conference, take some time to write a summary of what you learned. This can include key takeaways, interesting ideas, and new perspectives that you gained from the conference. Share your summary with your colleagues, either in person or through email, to give them a sense of what you learned and how it could be relevant to their work.
- **Present a workshop:** If you learned something particularly valuable or interesting at the conference, consider presenting a workshop for your colleagues. This can be a more interactive way to share what you learned, and it gives your colleagues an opportunity to ask questions and engage with the material.
- **Host a book club:** Many conferences feature authors and experts who present on a specific topic. If you attended a conference that featured a speaker who wrote a book on a topic that you found particularly interesting, consider starting a book club with your colleagues to discuss the book and its ideas.

Overall, sharing what you learn at conferences with your colleagues can be a valuable way to spread new ideas and best practices throughout your school or district. By using one of the strategies above, you can help your colleagues stay informed and continue to grow and improve as educators.



### "Try this!" Activity

Search through this year's upcoming TIE conference or last year's conference. Jot down how you could make the most of this conference. Alternatively, search online for another educational conference that you are interested in attending. What about it interests you?

### Additional Resources

Click on the hyperlinked text below to explore.

- [How to Make the Most of In-Person Conferences from WIRED](#)
- [3 Goals for Making the Most of a Conference from Medium](#)

## Global Collective Growth Self-Assessment

Before moving on, take this opportunity to assess yourself on the outcome and paired success criteria.

Write a personalized plan for how to promote global collective growth. What specific steps will you take for this?



# Reflective Growth Journal

## Step 1: Identify the Timeline

In the space below identify when you like to start reflecting on your collective growth and when you would like to conclude it. Additionally, identify how frequently you will be reflecting on your growth.



## Step 2: Reflect on Growth

In the journal spaces below, document how you have promoted collective growth over a set period of time. For each subset of time (each day, each week, or each month depending on your needs), record your experiences.

Date:

What I've shared with others:

What others have shared with me:

How I have used what others have shared with me:

Date:

What I've shared with others:

What others have shared with me:

How I have used what others have shared with me:

Date:

What I've shared with others:

What others have shared with me:

How I have used what others have shared with me:

Date:

What I've shared with  
others:

What others have  
shared with me:

How I have used what  
others have shared  
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How I have used what others have shared with me:

Date:

What I've shared with others:

What others have shared with me:

How I have used what others have shared with me:

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