

Becoming a more reflective practitioner

Course rationale

Are you a better teacher now that you were last year? Five years ago? If so, then it's almost certainly mainly because you've been learning from experience. But how do we learn from experience? It's such a natural process that we just learn to do it by doing it, like we learn to run. But what if you want to become a professional runner? Then you need to work with a coach to help you train and improve your technique.

Reflective practice in teaching is like that. Just as we can all run, all teachers can reflect on experience in order to learn from it. And just as one becomes a better runner by practising and improving techniques, we can also become better and more professional teachers by improving our techniques for reflection in order to enable us to learn more about teaching from our daily experience of doing it.

The purpose of this course is therefore to offer teachers an opportunity to learn more about recent developments in reflective practice with a view to enabling them to become better reflective practitioners themselves, and better to teach it to others.

Course outline

The main focus is on strategies for reflection on critical incidents as a means of learning from experience to improve practice. It begins with participants identifying and sharing their current strategies before moving on to using critical incident analysis in an applied reflective practice cycle.

Course process

The course will be run as a teachers' learning circle in much the same way as those of the Teachers Network. That means it will be facilitated rather than taught, and will require active participation including some writing. It is spread over four weeks so that participants can work on the real events that they encounter in their everyday practice between sessions.

Course outcomes

Intended outcomes include —

- a better understanding and general improvement of reflection;
- specific expertise in the reflective practice cycle and critical incident analysis;
- practice in using the reflective practice to improve practice;
- experience of the kind of collaborative collegial learning that is key to the development of learning organisations.

Course facilitator

The facilitator is David Tripp who is an Associate Professor at the Australian Institute of Education, Murdoch University in Western Australia. Currently he is visiting the National Institute of Education, Singapore, as a Senior Fellow in Policy and Management Studies.

Dr Tripp specialises in action learning processes in learning organizations. He has pioneered a journal writing and critical incident approach to reflective practice, and his book on the method is a widely used text¹. In 1996 he wrote the SCOPE Program,

¹ Tripp, D. (1993) *Critical Incidents in Teaching: The Development of Professional Judgement*, London and New York: Routledge.

and last year action learning and facilitation materials for the Western Australian Ministry of Education's new *Quality Teaching Program*.

Currently he is teaching a course on teacher professional development for the NIE Diploma in Departmental Management, and facilitating a participatory action evaluation for the Singapore Teachers Network.

Dates

Fridays 25 April; 2, 9, 16 May.

Time

2.30 – 5.30.

Please let us know if you would like to attend but cannot at these times or days.

Venue

Townsville

Max 20 participants.