For some time educators have been concerned about the quality and effectiveness of staff development programs provided to school personnel. Unfortunately, until recently, there have been few comprehensive models that offer a systematic approach to designing staff development. However, the RPTIM Model described in Chapter 4 of the 1981 ASCD Yearbook is one approach that seems to hold promise for planning and implementing effective inservice for professional educators. It is a definite attempt to describe a research-based process for designing inservice education that is systematic and comprehensive. This model identifies what happens before, after, and during the planning and training, and specifies the practices that should be used in designing staff development programs.

The following is a brief description of five stages in the RPTIM Model and the practices advocated in that process. We will also examine the results of a national study conducted in early 1981 to determine the extent to which practitioners and professors of education with expertise in staff development believed those practices should be used to design inservice programs.

The Staff Development Model
The RPTIM Model is based on ten basic beliefs or assumptions. They include the beliefs that:

1. All school personnel need inservice throughout their careers.
2. Significant improvement in educational practice takes considerable time and long-term inservice programs.
3. Inservice education should focus on improving the quality of school programs.
4. Educators are motivated to learn new things when they have some control over their learning and are free from threat.
5. Educators vary widely in their competencies and readiness to learn.
6. Professional growth requires commitment to new performance norms.
7. School climate influences the success of professional development.
8. The school is the most appropriate unit or target of change in education.
9. School districts have the primary responsibility for providing the resources for inservice training.

10. The principal is the key element for adoption and continued use of new practices and programs in a school.

The five stages that grew out of these assumptions and the research literature include Readiness, Planning, Training, Implementation, and Maintenance (RPTIM).

Stage I, Readiness, emphasizes selection and understanding of, and commitment to, new behaviors by a school staff or group of educators. In Stage II, Planning, the specific plans for an inservice program (to be implemented over three to five years) are developed to achieve the desired changes or professional practice selected in Stage I. In the Training Stage, Stage III, the plans are translated into practice. The Implementation Stage, Stage IV, focuses on ensuring that the training becomes part of the ongoing professional behavior of teachers and administrators in their own work setting. Stage V, Maintenance, begins as new behaviors are integrated into daily practice. The aim of this final stage is to ensure that once a change in performance is operational, it will continue over time.

Each stage is defined by a set of practices that identify specific tasks that are to be completed in the stage and the personnel who make key decisions. The 38 practices that are included in the RPTIM Model are noted in Figure 1. A more detailed explanation of the practices with examples of how they have been implemented in schools is presented in the 1981 ASCD Yearbook.

Appropriateness of Model Practices
In an effort to determine the extent to which the practices included in this five-stage process for designing inservice actually represented what should be operational practice, a national study was conducted in spring of 1981. To collect expert opinions concerning the appropriateness of the 38 practices and ten underlying assumptions, a questionnaire—"The Survey of Effective Staff Development Practices"—was mailed to the regular membership of the Council of Professors of Instructional Supervision (COPIS) and the National Staff Development Council (NSDC). The response options for indicating the extent to which the practices should be used included "almost never," "some-
Commitment to the RPTIM Model
The results of this national survey showed strong support for all practices in the model. Ninety percent or more of both the practitioners (NSDC) and professors ( COPIS) believed that 32 of the 38 practices that define the Readiness, Planning, Training, Implementation, and Maintenance Stages should be used "often" or "almost always" when inservice programs were designed. Over 70 percent reported similar support for the remaining six practices.

Nine practices were viewed as essential by both practitioners and professors; that is, at least 70 percent of a sample group indicated that the practice should be employed in the design of almost every inservice program. These practices were items 1, 4, 7, 9, 19, 29, 34, and 38. Practitioners reported seven additional essential practices: items 3, 5, 13, 15, 25, 26, and 30.

Strong positive support was also found for the ten assumptions the RPTIM Model is based on. Well over 90 percent of both the practitioners and professors agreed or strongly agreed with all of the assumptions except that "the school is the most appropriate unit of change, not the district or the individual." While about three-fourths of the professors agreed or strongly agreed with this assumption, only a little more than half of the practitioners agreed with it.

Since there appears, with limited exception, to be such strong support for these assumptions and practices among practitioners (NSDC) and the professors(COPIS), and since there were some differences in the proportion of each group reporting varying degrees of support, the mean differences between these two groups were tested on all assumptions and practices to determine whether either group reported stronger support for this model. Using simple t-tests and a significance level of .01, only two items revealed a statistically significant difference in support between practitioners and professors. These items showed that practitioners were significantly more supportive than professors of (1) having staff development programs include plans for activities to be conducted over a three- to five-year period, and (2) providing an opportunity for individual staff members to choose objectives for their professional learning. It should be remembered, however, that over 70 percent of the professors had supported the first practice and over 90 percent had supported the second practice. The differences were in degree of support given by each group.

Factors Related to Commitment to the RPTIM Model
While the primary concern for the survey was to determine the face validity of the RPTIM Model practices, a secondary concern was to determine whether experiences, training, knowledge, and interests were related to commitment to these practices. To assess these relationships, Pearson-Product Moment Correlations were run between each of the practices and the respondents' number of years in their current position; estimated percentage of time spent designing, delivering, and evaluating staff development programs; extent of interest in staff development; current knowledge of inservice practices in schools; extent of interacting with school personnel who plan, deliver, and evaluate inservice programs; extent of interacting with school personnel who plan, deliver, and evaluate inservice programs; extent of personal work in schools planning, delivering, and evaluating inservice programs; extent of interaction with central office personnel, building administration, teachers, and so on to plan, deliver, and evaluate inservice; and extent of formal and informal training in staff development.

It would appear that the more practitioners were interested in and worked with inservice, especially in collaboration with principals and teachers, the more positive they were about the model. An examination of the significant correlations (.05 level or above) suggests that practitioners' commitment to the practices was related to the percentage of work time they gave to the design, delivery, and evaluation of inservice (significant correlations with Practices 9, 15, 22, 24, 28, 30, 32); extent of their interest in inservice (Practices 7, 11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 25, 29); and extent of their work with principals (Practices 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 28, 32, 35, 36) and teachers (Practices 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 22, 24, 26, 28, 35, 36) to plan, deliver, and evaluate inservice programs.

For professors, the more they worked with personnel who plan, deliver, and evaluate inservice, carried out similar activities themselves, and perceived themselves as knowledgeable about inservice practices in schools, the more positive they were about the model. Professors' commitment to the RPTIM practices was related to their current knowledge about inservice practices in schools (Practices 1, 3, 19, 20, 21, 23, 33, 37, 38); the extent to which they interact with school personnel who plan, deliver, and evaluate inservice programs (Practices 8, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 33, 34, 37); and the extent to which they personally work in schools planning, conducting, and evaluating inservice programs (Practices 8, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 30, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38).

Some Closing Thoughts
Based on the high degree of support for the practices and assumptions of the RPTIM Model, we can conclude that this five-stage approach to staff development does have face validity. It describes what a group of experts in the area of staff development believe ought to be operational practice when planning, delivering, and institutionalizing the results of inservice programs. Thus, we now have a framework that addresses the problems, recommends guidelines and characteristics of effective inservice programs, and provides us with what we needed so badly, a comprehensive, systematic process for staff development.

Those of us concerned with designing effective staff development need to begin to use this model to move beyond opin-
ions; to determine what really does work in school settings. We need to find out what is required to implement the five stages (such as personnel, time, and funds). Only through direct application of the RPTIM Model will we be able to determine its effectiveness.6 EL


* "The Survey of Effective Staff Development Practices" is an instrument developed and validated as part of a dissertation conducted by Steven R. Thompson in the spring and summer of 1981. It is available upon request from the author.

These two professional organizations represented a national sample of professors (COPIS) and practitioners (NSDC) with expertise in the area of staff development. The 50 COPIS members had a major commitment to research, teaching, and service in the area of supervision and professional development. The 578 NSDC full members were all actively engaged in planning and conducting staff development programs for school personnel as part of their current job responsibilities.

"IDEA's Secondary School Improvement Project is currently field-testing a school improvement project using an approach very similar to the RPTIM Model; with the results of their work, and that of other educational institutions, we hope to begin seeing more effective staff development practices in education.

More and more, authors use the terms staff development and inservice education interchangeably. They either equate the terms or fail to note the distinctions between the two.

I would like to suggest that:

Staff Development is the totality of educational and personal experiences that contribute toward an individual's being more competent and satisfied in an assigned professional role.

Inservice education is but one of the several functions of staff development.

Based on these definitions, the functions of a staff development program should be:

* Inservice education—improving skills; implementing curricula, procedures; expanding subject matter knowledge; planning and organizing instruction; and increasing personal effectiveness
* Organization development—building program climate; solving problems; increasing communication among staff members
* Consultation—conducting workshops; assisting with building staff development, implementation, and evaluation; assisting with administrative planning
* Communication and coordination—assisting with inter-building communication; organizing and providing information about resources; assisting with communication between administration and staff; providing central coordinating service
* Leadership—providing suggestions for new curricular, instructional approaches; informing about innovative approaches; identifying problems and suggesting solutions; researching ideas for evaluating practices and procedures; providing assistance with innovation processes
* Evaluation—conducting needs assessments; evaluating resources; evaluating staff development efforts

What Is Staff Development?

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New! THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION edited by George W. Noblit and Bill Johnston. Contributors analyze situations faced by school principals involved in school desegregation. Articles cover, among other topics, the establishment of a magnet school, reassignment of principals and staff, management of student desegregation, and how classroom spatial environments affect social interaction. B2, about $21.75

New! THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION by Jeremy Jane Lietz and Maxine Towle. This text is designed to help school administrator not trained in exceptional education to understand, supervise, and improve special education programs. Chapters cover long-term policies and objectives; transportation; staff selection; supervision and evaluation of staff, students, and programs; record maintenance; budget; and other topics. B2, about $13.95

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CURRICULUM PLANNING ON THE LOCAL SCHOOL OR DISTRICT LEVEL: A Guide for Committees or Individuals by Paul Westmeyer. The content of this curriculum development guide encompasses theory but emphasizes practical matters. It is applicable to all educational levels. Establishment of the rationale, analysis of needs, setting goals and objectives, content preparation, activity design and presentation, individualization, and evaluation all are detailed. B1, $24.75

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