

with Right/Left Mode Techniques (Barrington, Ill.: Excel, Inc.).

⁵ Coined by Area III, Fairfax County, Va., teachers as preferable to the term *peer coaches*.

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DEE BLAIR AND SHERRY SELPH JUDAH

Need a Strong Foundation for an Interdisciplinary Program? Try 4MAT!

Using the 4MAT System to help them work together, high school teachers in Monroe County Community Schools, Bloomington, Indiana, initiated a new program designed to prepare students for today's technological world.

Have you ever seen high school English teachers engaged in intense conversation about an exciting short story with their math and science colleagues? Or math and English teachers taking basic science concepts and integrating them into their own lesson plans? An innovative new state program called Technology Preparation is creating outcomes such as these in Monroe County high schools.

"Tech Prep" prepares high school students for the realities of the workplace by ensuring that their course of study offers practical applications of

academic concepts to real-life situations. Too often, we teach children to appreciate academic skills like reading literature for their own sake, not for their universal applications to today's society. Tech Prep can help students take a piece of literature like *The Scarlet Letter* and apply it to today's world where debates on abortion and single parenting are relevant to teenage students.

We found the 4MAT model a natural and perfectly compatible structure on which to build our Tech Prep Program. It helped us accomplish the feat

of getting teachers to work together by sensitizing them to individual learning styles, including their own.

First, we administered the *Learning Styles Inventory* and the *Hemispheric Mode Indicator* to our teachers. We compared the results to see who was similar and who was different in style and what teachers' particular "comfort zones" with various styles were. This provided essential information on team members' working and teaching styles.

Second, we moved ahead to use 4MAT as a curricular model for teachers' lesson plans. The 4MAT wheel with

its eight sections provided the structure for teachers to alternate left-mode, theoretical concepts with right-mode, concrete, real-life applications. For example, a math teacher who had previously used only left-mode instructional techniques involving lecture, workbook problems, and tests was able to take ideas offered by an English teacher to design creative interactive activities with manipulatives, visuals, and role-playing, all of which allowed students to practice and apply the math concepts he wanted to teach. To his great delight, he discovered that student interest and motivation were high and that they

learned the concepts quicker and retained them longer.

And how have other Tech Prep teachers responded to our training efforts? Listen to the words of one of our team members:

As an English teacher, I am used to working by myself. I get ideas from other English teachers, but what I teach and how I teach has been pretty much my own preference. With Tech Prep, we were encouraged to work together—the science, math, and English teachers all sharing what we might teach in a normal year. Taking the two learning styles inventories made it easier to understand and talk about our individual differences as learn-

ers and teachers, as well as to prepare lesson plans. 4MAT became the basis for a working relationship for those of us in different subject areas—something that is difficult for high school teachers. The 4MAT Model has made collaboration possible. 4MAT works! □

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— LYNN S. KELLEY —

Using 4MAT to Improve Staff Development, Curriculum Assessment, and Planning

4MAT can help schools structure their staff development efforts and manage the integration of innovations in curriculum and instruction.

How could the Littleton, Colorado, Public School District continue to meet the challenge of change and improve its own excellence? We were proud of our long, successful history of staff development and instructional improvement efforts—95 percent of our teaching administrative staff participated in ITIP (Instructional Theory Into Practice) classes and cadres during a period of rapid change from 1982 until 1986—and we were searching for a follow-up program.

When we began looking at the next steps to professional growth, we sent seven of our Horizons staff development members to an I/D/E/A conference in Monterey, California, to hear Bernice McCarthy and her staff talk about 4MAT learning styles. Little did we know that this pleasant, exciting experience would not only grow into a major staff development program, but would also have a marked effect on our curriculum and assessment projects.

After the conference, three of the explorers taught a class on learning

styles to a group of our peers (easy for a Quadrant Four learner but harder for the Quadrant Two and Quadrant Three learners.) The other four conference-goers taught a site-based staff development program at Franklin Elementary School. We learned a lot from the experiences and proceeded to offer the class for both college and re-certification credit over the next three years. More than 400 of our 900 teachers and administrators have voluntarily taken the course for one semester hour of credit, and many have taken

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