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

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

References


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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, theo-
retical concepts with right-mode, con-
crete, real-life applications. For exam-
ple, a math teacher who had previ-
ously 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 activities with manipula-
tives, 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 re-
tained 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 work-
ing 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 sci-
ence, math, and English teachers all shar-
ing 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 pos-
sible. 4MAT works[1]

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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, Colo-
rado, Public School District
continue to meet the chal-
lenge of change and improve its own
excellence? We were proud of our
long, successful history of staff devel-
opment and instructional improve-
ment efforts—95 percent of our teach-
ing administrative staff participated in
ITIP (Instructional Theory Into Prac-
tice) classes and cadres during a pe-
riod 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 develop-
ment members to an I/D/E/A confer-
ce in Monterey, California, to hear
Bernice McCarthy and her staff talk
about 4MAT learning styles. Little did we
know that this pleasant, exciting experi-
ence would not only grow into a major
staff development program, but would
also have a marked effect on our curric-
ulum 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 con-
ference-goers taught a site-based staff
development program at Franklin Ele-
mentary School. We learned a lot from
the experiences and proceeded to of-
fer the class for both college and re-
certification credit over the next three
years. More than 400 of our 900 teach-
ers and administrators have voluntar-
ily taken the course for one semester
hour of credit, and many have taken

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP