

Evaluating Professional Development: Did it Make a Difference?

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Who Am I?



- Director, McKinney Center for STEM Education, Philadelphia Education Fund.
- Certified teacher; Master's and Doctoral degrees in education.
- Experience in informal science education, out-of-school time, sports-based youth development, staff training, and research and evaluation.
- Born, raised, and living in Philadelphia, PA.



Session Goals

- Agree on a common definition of “professional development” (PD).
- Review promising practices in designing and implementing PD.
- Explore quantitative and qualitative methods for evaluating the impact of PD.
- Share additional resources on the topic.



Who's In the Audience?

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Two Must-Reads



Dr. Thomas Guskey:

The Age of Our Accountability (1998)

“For many years, educators have operated under the premise that professional development is good by definition, and therefore more is always better. If you want to improve your professional development program, the thinking goes, simply add a day or two. Today, however, we live in an age of accountability. Students are expected to meet higher standards, teachers are held accountable for student results, and professional developers are asked to show that what they do really matters. “

Dr. Sara Hill:

Leap of Faith: A Literature Review on the Effects of Professional Development on Program Quality and Youth Outcomes (2012)

“We often assume, quite logically, a connection between professional development and improved program quality and youth outcomes. We make a leap of faith that our work with practitioners will trickle down to their programs, and, ultimately, to the children and youth with whom they work. However, virtually no studies, in either the out-of-school or the school-based literature, present empirical evidence to support this belief.”

Defining PD



***Professional development* refers to a spectrum of activities, resources, and supports that help practitioners work more effectively with or on behalf of children and youth. Professional development formats include workshops, technical assistance, apprenticeships, and additional diverse offerings. Practitioners can be full-time staff, part-time staff, volunteers, teenagers, parents, or other non-staff members, provided that the professional development experience culminates in supporting youth participants. (Peter, 2009)**

Types of PD

- Workshops and trainings
- Technical Assistance (TA)
- Conferences
- Peer networking
- Peer mentoring
- Coursework
- Professional memberships
- Certifications
- Supervision
- Other?

Best and Worst Workshops

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Promising Practices in PD Workshops

Effective Presenters:

- Begin and end on time.
- Are prepared and organized.
- Explain and ask for input into session goals.
- Have command of the content.
- Are charismatic/are good presenters.
- Use diverse teaching strategies.
- Balance staying on track with being responsive.
- Encourage attendees to share expertise.
- Make real-life connections.
- Offer follow-up resources and support.

Types of PD Evaluation

Quantitative

Qualitative

Formative

Summative

Process

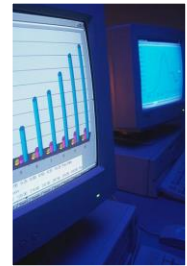
Outcome

Long-Term

Short-Term

PD Evaluation Instruments

- Paper and online surveys
- Interviews and focus groups
- PD and program observations
- Databases and tracking



Levels of Evaluation

- **Satisfaction**
- **Acquisition of knowledge and skills**
- **Institutional integration**
- **Application**
- **Extension**
- **Student impact**
- **(Professional Identity)**

PD Survey Tips (especially online)

- Start with a plan
- Respect confidentiality and anonymity
- Avoid respondent overload
- Don't gather more information than you can use
- Avoid jargon
- Keep questions short and simple
- Make questions objective and specific
- Ask one question at a time
- Adapt existing surveys
- Test surveys ahead of time
- Present your data intelligently



What's Wrong Here?



Your Name:

Your Social Security Number :

Your Ethnicity: African American Caucasian Other

Your Age: 20 years or below 20-30 years 30-40 years 40-50 years 50 years or above

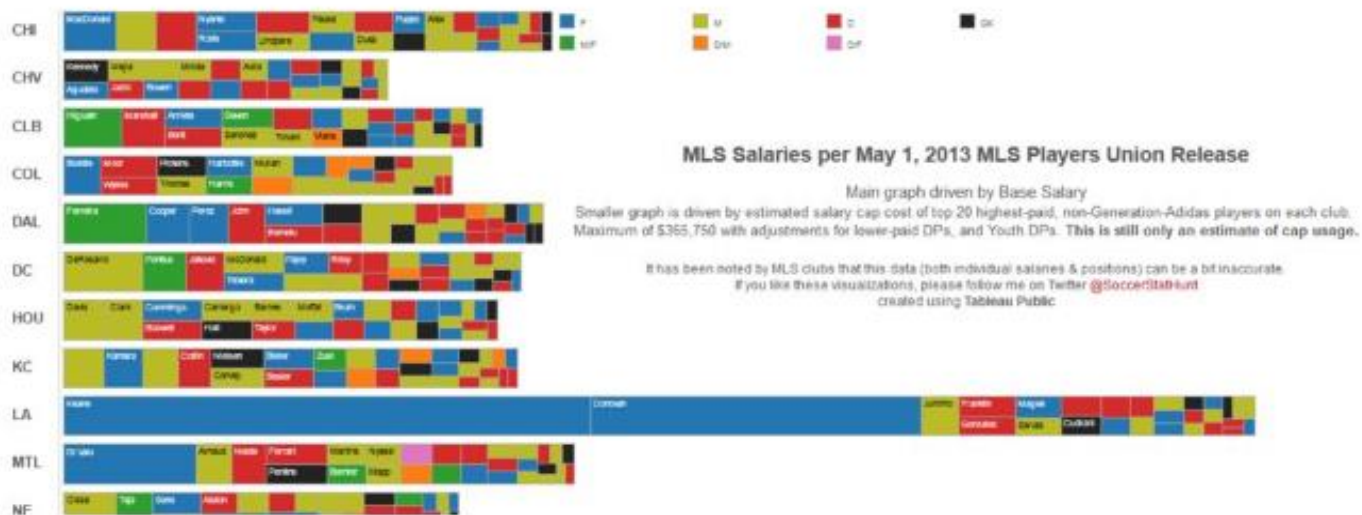
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree
The presenter was knowledgeable, engaging, and well prepared.					
The temperature of the room was:					
I believe that quality education is important in a young person's life.					

Bad Charts

(www.businessinsider.com/the-27-worst-charts-of-all-time-2013-6)

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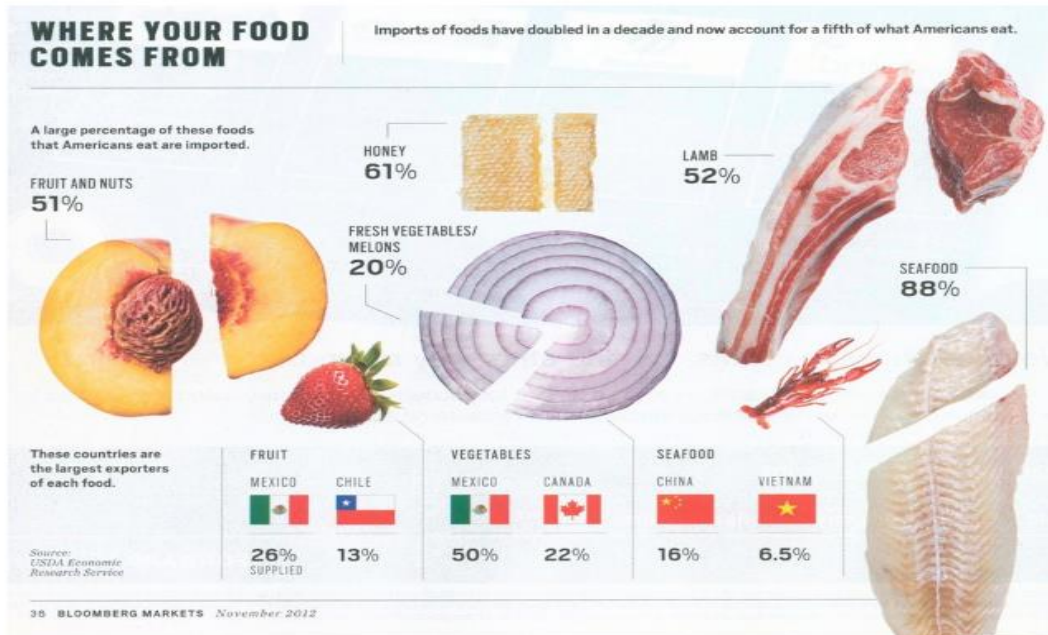
I never thought it was possible but I actually understand soccer less after looking at this chart.



Junk Charts

Bad Charts

There's a lot going on with this Bloomberg chart. That doesn't seem like an evenly cut lamb chop, and while I'm not a biologist I have a strong feeling an onion is not a melon.



The End



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