Personal Technology: SWOT Analysis, Goals, and Plan

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**Introduction**

Taking time to reflect on your personal strengths and weaknesses can be a pivotal point in maturing and improving. Confucius said, “[By three methods we may learn wisdom: first, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third, by experience, which is the most bitter.](http://thinkexist.com/quotation/by_three_methods_we_may_learn_wisdom-first-by/10494.html)” Embarking on the noblest way to learn, I have taken an opportunity to evaluate my strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to my success. Through this experience, I have created professional goals and a plan to meet these goals.

**Strengths**

After reflecting on my personal strengths, I realized that I have some attributes that will allow me to be more successful in incorporating technology into my classroom. I have a willingness to learn, and I work very hard. Because of my strong work ethic, I put in long hours to be successful. I have strong organizational skills. I personally own several computers, two scanners and copiers, an SLR digital camera, and IPODs. Having this access helps me improve my technological skills because I can practice the skills at home. I am acquiring knowledge and skills that will help to increase technological fluency in my classroom which satisfies Ely’s second condition of his change model. In order for any innovation to be implemented, the person must possess sufficient knowledge and skills to do the job. Working towards my Specialist degree in Instructional Technology, I am acquiring knowledge and skills to increase my technological fluency.

**Weaknesses**

Even though I have a strong work ethic, there are times I become overwhelmed and panic when I am working with technology. I still have a lot to learn about technology, but at least I have the desire to learn. I have a low comfort level with new technology, and sometimes I become worried that it will be too hard for me to learn. I have limited money so I can not purchase all the new software and better equipment to use.

**Opportunities**

Georgia educators have a wonderful opportunity to help our state meet the Georgia Technology Vision that “Georgia will lead the nation in improving student achievement by ensuring that all educators and students have the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in a global learning community” (Georgia Department of Education, 91). Since I am learning new technology, I have the opportunity to take technology back into my classroom to improve my teaching. This will help me meet goal number two which is to “increase educators’ proficiency in effective instructional uses of technology in order to incorporate 21st Century Technology and thinking skills into the Georgia curriculum (Georgia Department of Education, 94). Learning new technology that I can take back to my classroom will ultimately increase the technological fluency of my students. Perhaps if I improve with my skills, I could become a go-to-technology person for my school and ultimately become my county technology specialist. Acquiring new skills can also increase my leadership opportunities. More importantly than professional opportunities, I can become a change agent for increasing technological fluency in my school. If I can be a catalyst for change, this would have a profound impact on many teachers and students.

**Threat**

Time to research and implement new web 2.0 applications is one of the major threats to my success and this is Ely’s fourth condition that is necessary in order to successfully incorporate change into an environment. I have little time to learn how to integrate technology into my classroom. At school during the work day, I have no time to try new technology. It is difficult to attempt to try new technology without any support which is another threat. Since I have limited support, it can be difficult to try new technology for fear that if it does not work I will have no help. Also, it can be difficult to delve through all the resources on the web and know which resource is the best match for my curriculum. “Knowing how to select the best technology tools to support and enhance learning and instruction in English or any other content area eludes many teachers” (Plair, 71). I wish I had more time to become more technologically fluent so that I would know which technology tools to use to enhance my teaching and my students’ learning. I can not search for resources at my house because the resources will probably not be available at my county due to all the filters. The county where I work is struggling to keep up with Georgia’s 2007-2012 vision for our state. We have limited available resources which makes it difficult to elicit positive change into my classroom.

**Personal Technology Goals**

I am aligning some of my personal goals with the Georgia Department of Education Technology Plan. I need to increase my proficiency in effective instructional uses of technology in order to incorporate 21st Century technology and thinking skills into my curriculum. Eventually I wish to be one of the trained teachers who will train peer educators within my school system. I would like to add more technology into my classroom. A set of classroom responders would be a wonderful asset to my classroom. I believe it is essential to continue to learn best practices in the use of technology. I need to look for ways to use technology to differentiate student instruction and ensure that I am not merely using new tools while keeping the same projects that have been used for decades. In the future, I would like to use more student-centric programs. Another personal goal would be to increase my own students’ proficiency in technology literacy and 21st Century skills. I am improving with incorporating more technology into my classrooms and I need to continue to do so. The state of Georgia has created a plan to ensure that Educators will use technology to: (Georgia Department of Education, p. 91)

* Facilitate new ways of implementing instruction and of assessing learning with data utilization;
* Develop instructional strategies targeted towards needs;
* Keep abreast of emerging trends and new technologies; and
* Enhance their professional skills and knowledge.

The vision that the state has for educators must be a central focus for my personal technology goals.

**Personal Technology Plan**

I will use technology in my classroom that is diverse and will enhance learning. The technology will be central to the learning, and I will not be content to merely have the same assignments from years gone by that simply use new technology. No longer will that be sufficient. I will continue to improve my technological skills and will graduate with my Specialist degree in the spring of 2011. I will continue to write grants to seek funding to support the teaching of 21st Century skills. I should often look at the Georgia website www.usg.edu/regents/vision\_mission\_goals/ - 17k - 2010-01-1 to ensure that I hone my technological skills.

**Conclusion**

In order to make a personal technology plan I needed to first reflect on my strengths and weaknesses. Confucius is quoted as saying “Study without reflection is a waste of time; reflection without study is dangerous.” My time is much too valuable to waste so taking the opportunity to evaluate my strengths and weaknesses has given me the opportunity to focus on what is truly important. Being a catalyst of positive technological change at my school is crucial to my success.

**References**

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