

Chapter VI

Collaboration and Networks: Basis for the Management Based on Knowledge in Education

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents the course School Management and Technologies, and what emerged from the discourses of subjects that make it possible to deduce that the educational managers successfully learned to use of technology in school management and the formation of networks and of partnerships during the course. Through the curriculum developed in the course of School Management and Technologies, as well as the interfaces offered in the learning environment, participating managers have the opportunity to rethink everyday practice, the educational contexts, and ways to work on communication with people, both in the same school or other. It was possible to perceive the potentials for the suggestion of network formation and community building, primarily Communities of Practice (CoP), as the basis for knowledge-based management in education.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes what was revealed in the process of developing the curriculum in a School Management and Technologies course. The goal is to create work teams in the schools and among schools so that the managers should be capable

of thinking about the context, the function, and technologies that are part of the daily life in schools—that is, to promote an environment in which the school manager could articulate the educational policy at the school for utilization of technological and media resources.

The case presents an examination of the partnership for the execution of the course, the professors, the modules, the interfaces, the purpose, and the methodology, as well as what emerges from discourses of school managers. The interaction that enables the formation of collaborative networks and partnerships among educational managers is emphasized. Attention is focused on practices that allow accessibility to develop educational and administrative activities. Social and cultural practices considered for analysis concern the inclusion of subjects who strive to become part of the culture of technology, even without previous technological ability, and succeed in changing their realities to permit the inclusion of media and technological resources.

Through the learning environment, the managers understand the possibilities of interaction, organizational and document exchange that allows for theoretical and practical discussions with local peers and with peers of other institutions. The course offered an opportunity for synchronous and asynchronous communication with managers and university professors. The knowledge produced through the course interactions is reflected in actions and in the activities at the schools. The course belongs to all who participated in the teaching and learning process, and in their actions contributed to the building of each course. Application of the course material consists of a written project in the last module of the course based on the reality in the participating schools. It is possible to verify the potential for the continuation of exchange initiated in the School Management and Technologies course. By reviewing ongoing participation in the Communities of Practice (CoP) in online discussions and constant participation of representatives from education department.

In daily activities, the possibility of acquiring knowledge socially, across bureaucratic barriers, helps in the sharing of ideas.

THE PROJECT

School Management and Technologies Project

The formation of the course of School Management and Technologies aims for the incorporation of technologies into the school management, recognizing the specifics of managing performance. Educators of the university work with (Imbernon, 2005) the managers' performance, with the articulation of theory and practice (Freire, 2003), with the social interaction (Vygotskii, 1986), and with the collaborative production of knowledge (Almeida, 2005; Almeida & Prado, 2005; Shön, 1987).

The project allows public school managers to be connected to the Secretary of Education office of the State of São Paulo, so they can use the technological resources of the school in school management and promote the best conditions for teachers to incorporate technologies into pedagogical practices, into quality learning experiences for students.

The course started in the second semester of 2004 and ended in the second semester of 2006.

Approximately 12,000 school managers were certified by the university in three distinct stages in project. In the first stage, the teaching team consists of professors of the Pontifical Catholic University of the State of São Paulo (PUC-SP), and officials from the Secretary of Education office of the State of São Paulo who are educational supervisors and technicians of technology centers. In the second and third stages, the course is given by officers of the Secretary of Education office who are educational supervisors, and are assisted by technicians of technological centers. All receive guidance, assistance, and didactic and educational support by professors of the Pontifical Catholic University of the State of São Paulo (PUC-SP).

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