Chapter 4
From the Classroom to the Startup Playground:
An Insider's Story

Gittel T. Grant
HAFTR Middle School, USA

ABSTRACT

The goal of the author's curriculum is to create a foundational understanding of engineering. Creating this program was a long and bumpy road. The methodology was important. The author has long been a fan of inquiry-based science, and her classes were very often hands-on and discovery aligned. It took a few years, but eventually she ironed out the social setting, the real-world connections, and the hands-on open-ended challenges that allowed students to apply their science information. Originally, the author only intended to use the materials in her own classroom, but when she felt it would be a huge benefit to other educators who were grappling with similar challenges, she began to seek publishers. She went through quite a few false starts—scams, lazy publishers, and rejections—until she decided to self-publish. The author discussed, marketed, strategized, and partnered, and now the curriculum is approved for government funding and will be live in January on global digital platform. For every success, there are a dozen failed attempts. However, she had a great support system that was always ready to help her to the next opportunity. This chapter explores that journey.

INTRODUCTION

When I first began my foray into the curriculum development field, I had zero intention of monetizing my products. I had a very brilliant class of 8th graders, who, in teacher speak, would literally eat me alive if I tried to teach them an outdated, lecture based earth science curriculum. (I am not hating on earth science, but rather, highlighting the fact that it happens to be s subject that lends itself towards uninviting, memorization required, no fun experiments, chalk and talk science class.)

I began looking for hands on updated curriculum that would meet certain standards I was mentally setting for my classroom. Unknowingly, I embarked on a course of professional development, where I expanded my understanding of student skills, engagement, and learning in the classroom. I discovered that there was a lot more to creating an active workspace where students are motivated to learn by the culture and value of education than simply doing fun or new activities. I learned about social learning, active collaboration to grow tolerance, responsibility, leadership, and critical thinking. I learned how the coming century will require adaptation; and that we can model the process and skills students need to succeed in the future. I developed skills in formative and sums time assessment, identified new methods for creating inquiry based learning, and removed myself from the center stage of the classroom, making space for students to take charge.

Administrative Support

I was very lucky to be working in a private school with an amazingly supportive administrator. This administrator was super old school, and I expected to meet with a significant amount of resistance to creating a progressive, new system in my classroom. I was dead wrong. Not only did this amazing educator grant me the go ahead, he secured funding for me to purchase many new kinds of manipulative and curriculum packages for my classroom. I definitely felt the pressure to use the money and confidence he gave me correctly, but that was just another motivator for me to try my best. What followed was a few years of trial and error, as I sorted through the available (very expensive!) curriculum options in attempt to create a great program for my students. I came to several useful conclusions that propelled me to develop my own curriculum.

Identifying the Pain Point, and Researching for Solutions: Research and Development

I firstly noticed that active learning was a key to creating engraved students. If I wanted students to be lifelong learners who were self-motivated, it was my responsibility

13 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/from-the-classroom-to-the-startup-playground/212888

Related Content

Thinking Outside the Box
Andrew Brooks (2010). *Interprofessional E-Learning and Collaborative Work: Practices and Technologies (pp. 382-390).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/thinking-outside-box/44456

Relevance of Teaching Values and Ethics in Management Education
Damini Saini (2017). *Management Education for Global Leadership (pp. 90-111).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/relevance-of-teaching-values-and-ethics-in-management-education/170288

Classroom for the Semantic Web
Goran Shimic, Dragan Gasevicand Vladan Devedzic (2005). *Intelligent Learning Infrastructure for Knowledge Intensive Organizations: A Semantic Web Perspective (pp. 251-283).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/classroom-semantic-web/24418

Assessing Electronic Records Management Systems at South African Universities
Nkholedzeni Sidney Netshakhuma (2021). *Handbook of Research on Future Opportunities for Technology Management Education (pp. 436-452).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/assessing-electronic-records-management-systems-at-south-african-universities/285385

Rethinking the Contribution of Organizational Change to the Teaching and Learning of Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management: The Quest for Balance
John Mendy (2018). *Teaching Human Resources and Organizational Behavior at the College Level (pp. 103-132).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/rethinking-the-contribution-of-organizational-change-to-the-teaching-and-learning-of-organizational-behaviour-and-human-resource-management/187396