

Julie Oltman - Case Study #2 – February 23, 2012

I approached this case study from the perspective of being an advisor to the instructional designer. It seemed to me that the issue was one of scale. Cynthia had a process of training teachers in her constructivist method that seemed to work well with the small groups of teachers she had trained previously. The challenge facing the designer was to deliver the training in such a way that a much larger audience could be successfully trained and supported.

It seemed to me that a thoughtfully designed online community of practice would be a good solution for this particular scenario. The design of this online community would really have to be well thought out in order to truly meet the needs of the teachers, be engaging enough to warrant the teachers' attention, and interactive enough so that there was adequate two-way feedback available. Without careful planning, any effort to scale up the in-person, small group training would assuredly fail (Dede, Honan, & Peters, 2005).

I tried to outline a community that could replicate the experience the original teachers had with Cynthia by utilizing the previously trained teachers as "mentors" on the site and providing multiple avenues for collaboration, feedback, and idea sharing. Technology today does offer many avenues to create these experiences virtually. For example, video can be uploaded to a site for feedback, forums can be places where lesson ideas can be discussed online, and live workshops can be broadcasted over the internet and viewed from anywhere.

In some ways, the online community may actually be better than the one-time training previously done. An online community can be referenced by teachers in an ongoing manner. They can always go back and re-read a sample lesson plan or view a video again. It provides the opportunity for just in time training that did not exist previously. The online community

provides many more resources to teachers than a single trainer ever could. It is a dynamic archive of information!

## References

Dede, C., Honan, H., & Peters, C. (2005). *Scaling Up Success: Lessons from Technology-Based Educational Improvement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.