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Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Communities at Work - a practical guide for PLC teams and leadership

Richard Dufour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, Thomas Many

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Finalist--2011 Independent Book Publishers Association Benjamin Franklin Award

Since the publication of the first edition of Learning by Doing, the authors have made presentations to tens of thousands of educators, served on dozens of panels to answer their questions, worked with several districts on a long-term ongoing basis to assist with their implementation of the professional learning community (PLC) concept, and participated in ongoing dialogue with educators on the allthingsplc.info website. This continuing work with teachers, principals, and central office staff from schools and districts throughout North America has given them a deeper understanding of the challenges educators face as they attempt to implement the professional learning community process in their organizations. This second edition attempts to draw upon that deeper understanding to provide educators with a more powerful tool for moving forward. Like the first edition, the second edition of Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work helps educators close the knowing-doing gap as they transform their schools into professional learning communities (PLCs). This handbook is a guide for action that will: - Help educators develop a common vocabulary and consistent understanding of key PLC concepts. - Present a compelling argument that the implementation of PLC concepts will benefit students and educators alike. - Help educators assess the current reality in their own schools and districts. - Convince educators to take purposeful steps to develop their capacity to function as PLCs. The second edition of Learning by Doing addresses seven critical questions encountered when shifting from a traditional school to a PLC: 1. Why questions. Why should we do this? Can you present a rationale as to why we should engage in this work? Is there evidence that suggests the outcome of this work is desirable, feasible, and more effective than what we have traditionally done? 2. What questions. What are the exact meanings of key terms? What resources, tools, templates, materials, and examples can you provide to assist in our work? 3. How questions. How do we proceed? How do you propose we do this? Is there a preferred process? 4. When questions. When will we find time to do this? When do you expect us to complete the task? What is the timeline? 5. Guiding questions. Which questions are we attempting to answer? Which questions will help us stay focused on the right work? 6. Quality questions. What criteria will be used to judge the quality of our work? What criteria can we use to assess our own work? 7. Assurance questions. What suggestions can you offer to increase the likelihood of our success? What cautions can you alert us to? Where do we turn when we struggle? The second edition of Learning by Doing is specifically designed to provide leaders with the information and resources that they need to answer these questions for each element of the essential work of PLCs.

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