

Book Review
**Job-Embedded Professional Development: Support,
Collaboration, and Learning in Schools**

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Book Review

This book examines how teacher leaders and school leaders can stimulate job-embedded professional development through active learning. The author, Sally J. Zepeda, who is a professor in the Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy, illustrates key theories and translations of research through various concrete “cases” that not only provide an answer to this question but also lead the reader through ways in which key approaches can be implemented in schools.

The book is organized into ten sections. In the first section, professional development, job-embedded learning, collaboration, self-efficacy, human agency, and collaborative professional learning concepts and their effect on student learning and achievement are discussed within the framework of teacher professional development. Section 2 highlights the necessity of adult learning, and perspectives on adult learning in the US and in the international arena are comparatively evaluated. As Professor Zepeda states, “Learning is a proactive, collaborative, and reflective process. The journey continues and widens” (p. 19). Zepeda argues that digital environments offer new professional development opportunities to teachers as adult



learners and that through digital learning environments, teachers can be in contact with one another more easily, which helps improve their practices. Section 3 examines the concept of job-embedded learning thoroughly and highlights the importance of teachers' meeting with their colleagues in digitally rich learning environments, exchanging information with one another, and team-work based on foundations of trust. Parallel to Section 3, Section 9 underscores the significance of technology as well and informs the readers about how it is possible for teachers to benefit from technology and the opportunities digital environments offer to combat teacher isolation and to promote collaboration with colleagues. Digital learning opportunities can help teachers, as adult learners, increase their own success rate and improve student engagement as well. In this section, Zepeda guides teachers and others about how they can take advantage of the digital environment and use digital tools to improve their learning.

Section 4 looks into the POP Cycle, which involves the three stages of peer observation, namely the pre-observation conversation, the classroom observation, and the post-observation conversation. In this section, Zepeda explains peer observation, which supports teacher learning, and the stages of the POP Cycle using figures, tools, tables, and sample questions. The author also demonstrates how mutual dialog could be achieved via rational and constructive statements. Section 5 outlines the main characteristics of peer coaching, which is a part of professional development. The author enriches the book through examples that promote collaboration among teachers.

Section 6 briefly discusses collaborative and reflective professional development models and approaches. This section also examines the technological and digital learning environment within the scope of professional development and discusses how such an environment could be created and applied in schools. Authentic action research, which is related to peer coaching, is explained in Section 7. Action research in this section emphasizes reflection; the applications are based on data; and the model is continuous and cyclic for individual-level and school-level improvement; thus, action research helps

teachers to solve the problems they encounter in lessons and to grasp the meaning and importance of the applications. Section 8 focuses on evidence for student learning. Zepeda argues that student work in lessons may help teachers evaluate themselves. The author maintains that the work of students who are learning not only informs teachers about what students think, know and do, but also encourages reflection on the program and teaching that the teacher can apply to improve practice. Finally, Section 10 concludes the book with a summary of the key points and with recommendations for readers.

In sum, using clear and easy-to-read language, Zepeda discusses job-embedded professional development in nine sections and ends each section with a summary, a list of suggested readings, and a case from the field. Without hesitation, this book is an excellent work with its rich analysis of job-embedded professional development in every section and with the examples it provides. There is no doubt that Zepeda has made a significant contribution to the field with this influential book, which provides valuable implications for the professional development of teachers, school leaders as well as other stakeholders.

References

Zepeda, S. J. (2015). *Job-Embedded Professional Development: Support, Collaboration, and Learning in Schools*. New York, NY: Routledge. , 184 pp. ISBN: 978-0-415-73484-4

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