Canvasing towards pedagogical intelligence

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The Modern Learning Canvas

According to Michael Fullan, "the foundation of teacher quality is pedagogical capacity – a teachers' repertoire of teaching strategies and ability to form partnerships with students'. So if pedagogical capacity is the building block for teacher quality, how is the pedagogical capacity of teachers developed at your school? At the start of 2015, I was looking for a way to work with staff at my school to develop pedagogical capacity and intelligence through a common language and my search led me to Richard Olsen's Modern Learning Canvas (*www. modernlearningcanvas.com*).

The Modern Learning Canvas

Inspired by the Business Model Canvas by Alexander Osterwalder, the Modern Learning Canvas is a way to visually represent any teaching and learning approach. The Canvas breaks teaching and learning into nine essential components allowing teachers to view the approach as a whole or through one of the nine lenses. The nine essential components are:

The Learner Role
Strategies
Enablers
Sequence
Culture
Policies
Educator Role
Outcomes
Pedagogical Beliefs.

The top of the Canvas can be viewed as two sides indicating the two relationships of teaching and learning, split by the Sequence or process.

The top left hand side is all about the Learner. What *Role* do they play in this teaching and learning approach? What *Strategies* do they employ to construct new knowledge? What *Enables* the strategies they employ to be effective?

The top right hand side is all about the Educator. What *Value* do they bring to this teaching and learning approach? What are the *shared feelings (Culture)* amongst educators that make learning successful? What are the external or internal *Policies* or rules that allow learning to be successful? The sequence of teaching and learning which splits the two is then the amalgamation of this relationship, i.e. the order and type of activities defining the roles and requirements of both Learner and educator.

Completing the Canvas is best done as a team activity as it facilitates rich discussion, provides clarity around beliefs and direction and allows for increased buy-in. Each box has guiding questions

that help facilitate discussion and as there is no predetermined sequence, teams can fill in the Canvas in any order that works for them. The bottom two sections provide learning direction and clarity around beliefs about pedagogy.

The *Outcomes* are the essential (or desired) learning results for this particular approach.

The Pedagogical beliefs are the heart and soul of the Modern Learning Canvas. This is what your group collectively believes about teaching and learning. Next to the title of the other eight boxes is a circle that asks you to validate that particular lens against your pedagogical beliefs, as Olsen believes that "in a balanced learning model, all eight other components should be justifiable in light of the stated Pedagogical Beliefs". If a particular component of your teaching and learning approach does not align with your pedagogical beliefs, then this should raise a flag and generate a discussion.

The Modern Learning Canvas can be used solely as a graphical representation of teaching and learning and is incredibly powerful as such but it is only one component of what Olsen calls the Inquiry Oriented Innovation (IOI) process. The IOI process is made up of four components.

- IOI Pedagogical Quality Framework
- IOI Learner Development Profile
- The Modern Learning Canvas
- Innovation Thesis.

The IOI process is designed to assist teachers and schools follow a process of 'disciplined innovation'. Moving from school-wide goals and compelling opportunities to developing 'ideal form' learners and increasing pedagogical intelligence using 'lean scientific evidence', the IOI process can deliver real value and significant school improvement.

Developing pedagogical intelligence

At my school, the Modern Learning Canvas was initially used to map out a Digital Coaching role for our newly appointed staff Digital Leaders. The staff Digital Leader role was designed as a situated coaching role to assist colleagues to develop innovative pedagogy and technology integration. Across our three campuses, we had six Digital Leaders working in primary, middle years and senior years and essential to the success of this role was a common language and framework.

Looking back on this Canvas, I think we missed the mark with our initial map. Our initial attempt shows that we viewed the nine components as separate entities in isolation from each other instead of interconnected relationships. Granted it's not often as educators that we get asked to map our pedagogical approaches and so it took a few goes to really develop this capacity. For those who are considering starting, start with explicit models or with behavior management at your school. For example, flipped learning is an approach that can be mapped easily as the roles of the Learner and Educator are quite clear and defined. It is

Validating the Learner role against our pedagogical beliefs

Comparing the Learner Role across two pedagogical approaches

also really beneficial to have a facilitator to lead the discussion as it helps to have someone tie the thoughts together and guide the process.

Our use of the Modern Learning Canvas has now expanded to rewriting and redefining pedagogy. We are in the process of reshaping our Multimedia course in the middle years, wanting to move from a didactic pedagogical approach to an inquiry-based approach. The first step was to map the current landscape and to then visually represent our new direction. A fantastic feature on the Modern Learning Canvas website is the capacity to compare across models. The image

above shows how the Learner role changes between the old approach (This Canvas) and the new approach (Current Canvas).

As you can see, there is an increased focus on Learner agency in the new approach but still a strong link to explicit frameworks and scaffolding (Design thinking). However, simply mapping a new pedagogical approach does not guarantee that it is the right way forward or that it will be successful. Olsen states that the "sole purpose (of the Canvas) is to visualise the complexity of a learning model and increase pedagogical intelligence" and so it is just part

Developmental Profile: Multimedia

Characteristics ◯	Motivations ◯
High capacity to generate rich open questions or problems	Desire to contribute to make the world a better place
Not afraid to find out & tinker	To fix known and unknown problems
Autonomous, motivated and empowered learner	High standards and challenge
A design thinker who can develop original and creative solutions to problems	Finds joy & passion in learning
Open & reflective	

Sources ◯	Results ◯
Peers	An improved Personal Learning Network
Industry partner	A record of the learning progress (outlining the conversations & ideas) presented at an expo
Personal Learning Network	A greater understanding of strong questions
Design thinking process	Problem solvers who follow the design thinking process
Thinker's notebook	An iterative solution to a challenging question

Multimedia Developmental Profile

of the journey. As a department, we are making assumptions based on experience, contextual understanding and our own learning. We are working towards developing a particular type of learner and have used Olsen's IOI Learner Development Profile to provide a direction for our pedagogy.

Profiling the 'ideal form' of the learner also provides validation for the mapped pedagogical approach. If you are working towards developing a student who is open and reflective as a characteristic, how are you allowing for this? Does the sequence of learning activities allow for reflection? Is it a strategy used by the learner? Is it listed as a specific outcome? Time is the enemy of all educators so the further substantiation helps to ensure that everything that is contained in the pedagogical approach is purposeful and aligned.

We are still in the early stages of engagement with Modern Learning Canvas and the IOI process but there has already been great progress. We are using the Canvas to map our new Appraisal process, our 1:1 program and current pedagogical approaches in Physical Education and the next phase for us is to test our ideas more thoroughly in our classrooms,

producing evidence that continues to increase our pedagogical intelligence.

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