



Doing What Works: Why, What and How

Linda M. Kott, M.A.

C. Bobbi Hansen, Ed.D

About the Presenters

“When you make a difference in the classroom, you make a difference in the World!” This motto has reflected the education consulting and training team of Linda M. Kott, M. A. and C. Bobbi Hansen, Ed. D. for the past 15 years. With a combined 60 years of teaching experience



Kott and Hansen’s programs have brought information, motivation, transformation and inspiration to schools and school districts throughout US, Canada, and Eastern Europe. Using the latest research-based information to design specific programs to meet the needs of each client, they deliver workshops and trainings on standards-based, curriculum-fueled classroom methods. They provide powerful

interactive programs based on planning and implementing The 9 Best Practices, Project Learning, Differentiated, “Personalized” Instruction and Assessment with next day application tools and templates.



“...No matter what task(s) they take on, their performance is always outstanding. They are exemplary teachers of educational leadership in all ways. They are teachers’ teachers.”

– James Roulsten,

Superintendent of MIRAS Schools, The Republic of Kazakhstan

Linda M. Kott, M. A. - President of Educating Concepts, an internationally recognized educator, trainer, speaker and author.

Bobbi Hansen, Ed. D. - Dr. Hansen, University of San Diego, is a nationally acclaimed workshop leader and presenter on cutting-edge research and educational strategies.

Contact Linda and Bobbi to design a program for your school or school district at **530-581-1226**.

Twelve Brain/Mind Principles that Make a Difference

from Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain (Caine & Caine, 1991, ASCD).

1. ***All learning engages the physiology***
2. ***The brain/mind is social***
3. ***The search for meaning is innate***
4. ***The search for meaning occurs through patterning***
5. ***Emotions are critical to patterning***
6. ***The brain/mind processes parts and whole simultaneously***
7. ***Learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception***

8. ***Learning always involves conscious and unconscious processes***

9. ***We have at least two ways of organizing memory: an autobiographical memory system and a set of systems for rote memory***

10. ***Learning is developmental***

11. ***Complex learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat associated with helplessness***

12. ***Each brain is uniquely organized***

WHAT?

...Teaching Strategies Qualify as 9 *Best Practices*

“...the ‘art’ of teaching is rapidly becoming the ‘science’ of teaching...”

Robert Marzano, 2001

Today, with the gigantic impetus of No Child Left Behind, universities and research centers have attempted to isolate those teaching practices strongly supported by research. Although this research is being conducted all across the nation, investigators at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) have moved into the forefront as they have analyzed selected studies on K-12 instructional strategies. A technique called, meta-analysis (combining the results of a number of studies) was used. In “Classroom Instruction That Works” (2001, Marzano, et.al., ASCD) Robert Marzano identifies nine categories of teaching strategies found to hold up under intense scrutiny. Today these strategies are called, *The Nine Best Practices*. T

hey are listed and briefly explained below.

1. *Identifying Similarities and Differences, which includes Comparing, Classifying, Metaphors, and Analogies.*

This first category of instructional strategies is most basic for human thinking. From the time that we are babies, our brains are constantly attempting to categorize people and objects so that we may better understand our world. Even an infant is able to discern a familiar face from one that is unknown. Research is finding that teachers may be able to increase learning by employing methods that consciously draw students’ attention to traits that are “alike” and “different” in any given learning environment.

2. *Summarizing and Different Note Taking Formats.*

When students are able to put information into their own words, learning is more likely to happen. This restating, or summarizing, can be accomplished by both speaking and/or writing. Also, it can occur throughout the learning (formative) or at the end (summative), but it does need to happen! And the summarizing needs to be in the student’s words, not the teachers, for it to be most effective.

3. *Nonlinguistic representations, which includes graphic organizers, physical and mental models, drawing pictures, and engaging in kinesthetic activity.*

Some of the most powerful instructional strategies are ones that augment our linguistic system and use other centers of the brain, specifically visual and movement centers. These other areas of the brain seem to work independently from the verbal systems providing parallel memory and storage centers. Therefore, the research suggests that teachers who use this category of strategies, along with the more familiar ones of speaking and listening, increase opportunities for learning.

4. *Cooperative Learning*

Perhaps the most researched class of instructional strategies are those termed cooperative/collaborative learning. Cooperative learning first achieved popular support in the 1980s. Until that time, it was relatively rare to find classrooms where students were encouraged to talk with one another, to consider each other's opinions and to share ideas or answers. Now, we are learning that collaboration, being the norm in the adult working world, is also a common instructional strategy in many classrooms across the nation. This is for good reason. It is powerful and produces achievement results that are long lasting.

5. *Generating and Testing Hypotheses, which includes, decision making, Inquiry/problem solving, and investigation.*

Humans are natural problem solvers. Our brains are wired for complex thinking and parallel processing. Additionally, people love the challenge of a good puzzle. So when teachers consciously choose instructional strategies that engage and provoke students' curiosity, they provide an environment that is immensely supportive of learning.

6. *Cues, Questions, and Advance Organizers*

At any single moment in the school day, there is tremendous competition for the attention of learners' brains. Therefore, any mechanism employed that says, in effect, "Hey, this is important! Pay attention!" will serve to put the learner *on notice* that something important is coming. The research suggests that teachers are better able to accomplish this with specific cues, questions and/or the use of advance organizers. Once alerted, the learners will more likely attend to the salient features of the lesson.

(Note: The last three categories are slightly different from the first six because they are not so much teaching *strategies* as they are teaching *behaviors*. Still, the research suggests that these are "best practices" because they are associated with student achievement.)

7. Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition

There is a strong body of research that indicates that what teachers do in the classroom as they respond to student work, makes a difference. When teachers reinforce student effort and when they provide recognition of learning, sometimes referred to as *praise*, they create an environment that advances student learning.

8. Homework and Practice

It is impossible to think of any group of instructional practices more traditional than homework and its faithful companion, practice. Surprisingly, it has been only in the last twenty-five years that researchers have seriously begun to investigate the efficacy of the highly entrenched practice or homework. Results have been mixed; however, homework and practice can lead to higher levels of learning for some students. A cautionary tone is made for the role of practice in learning. It has been said that, "Practice makes perfect." But, a more accurate saying would be, "Perfect practice makes perfect." Immediate feedback must be given for any student practice. Without feedback students may be "fixing" erroneous concepts in their brains to be recalled at a later time.

9. Setting Goals and Objectives and Providing Feedback

When we involve students in setting goals for their own learning, we are engaging them in some of the highest forms of metacognition. We are making the invisible, visible, as students are invited to become co-determiners of the direction of their own learning. As for feedback, research indicates that the feedback must be immediate and specific to affect student learning.



The 9 Best Practices must now become part of the Teacher's Personal Planning routine. The 9 Best Practices is the WHAT of the planning process and it becomes part of a powerful roadmap to reach ALL the children in your classroom. Come see How in the breakout session: Putting It All Together.