Chapter XVIII

An E-Workshop Model for Teacher Training

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Abstract

In China, teacher training plays a very important role for the improvement of education. E-learning, as a new and effective life-long learning method, plays an increasingly important role in teacher training. It is well known that teacher training and e-learning are all open and developing domains. So, the integration of two domains will certainly bring about many new problems. The case focuses on how does the e-workshop model, which is designed specially for teacher training by the Distance Education College of East of China Normal University find a way to solve the problems. By way of analyzing the successful factors of e-workshop model and following the problem clues of the above-mentioned two domains, this chapter shows the corresponding solutions.

Background

In China, teacher training plays a very important role for the improvement of education. In order to meet the requirement of education reform, the Ministry of Education has conducted several five-year training plans for whole in-service teachers in the recent two decades. Tak-
ing the (2003-2007) training plan as an example, the Ministry of Education has instituted the following tasks:

1. Organize and implement 1,000 rural back-bone-teachers’ training
2. Organize and implement one million primary and middle school teachers’ training
3. Support 2,000 primary and middle school teachers to meet the standard of teachers’ educational levels.
4. Implement 1,000 back-bone-teachers’ (except rural teachers) training.

Based on the whole training plan, the educational bureaus of provinces or cities will take corresponding training measures. Most educational bureaus ask their primary and middle school teachers (PMST) to get certain training credit hours. For example, such a five-year teacher training has been implemented three times (within 15 years), and a new five-year training plan is just on the road.

In the face of the massive and routine PMST training, the training content needs to be updated often, and trainers’ competence needs to be improved often too. It can be said easily that the present PMST training is bringing pressure to bear on the local training centers. As a result, former closed PMST training systems (the Ministry of Education-local educational bureaus-local training centers) have been broken to open one—normal universities and teacher research institutes become an important part in PMST training. At the same time, the former simplex training model becomes multiform. E-learning, as a new and effective life-long learning method, plays an increasingly important role in PMST training (China Education News, 2005; MOE, 2002). With such background, the e-workshop model, which is designed specially for PMST training by the Distance Education College of East China Normal University, had its start in July 2003.

Profile of E-Workshop Model

In order to give readers an overall impression of the e-workshop model, we introduce several key elements of the model next (Yan, 2004):

- **Goal:** To make PMSTs’ learning activity and instructional activity changed, so that they can meet the requirements of educational reform.
- **Tenet:** Based on e-learning, PMST-center, active-learning, and active-research.
- **Workshop content:** Problem-oriented or task-oriented, the workshop aims to support PMSTs to solve the problems they may encounter in their professional development; in the training process, learning content would be dynamically updated.
- **Form:** Face to face at key stages (for example, the first day of e-workshop), online at other times (BBS, audio classroom, blog, product-sharing system, e-mail).
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