

TL Module 5: Teacher Professional Development

Unit 1: Teacher Productivity Strategies



Objectives:

Teachers should be able to use ICT to enhance their own productivity. (UNESCO ICT-CFT, TL.6.a)



Duration:

Total of 3.5 notional hours – 1.5 hour tutorial, 1.5 hour computer practical session and 30 minute self-study session, preferably at a computer.



A] Tutorial (1.5 hours)

Notes to Facilitator

Here you will introduce participants to the topic of teacher productivity. Distribute copies of the table below to the participants, who should be grouped in pairs. This table clearly identifies activities and how they are currently performed by teachers, using traditional approaches. The participants should discuss in pairs how each of the activities can be handled more efficiently using ICT tools and then brainstorm ideas for sharing with the entire class. Although ICT enables us to perform a wide variety of tasks with great speed and efficiency, it also poses some challenges. Instruct the participants to also discuss amongst themselves examples of what some of the challenges might be. Then facilitate a group discussion sharing the ideas amongst the entire group. A completed version of the table with sample answers can be accessed [here](#). Please note that this text has only been provided as a guide.

Background Reading:

- [The question is not whether, but how ICT can be useful in education](#)
- [Literature Review: The Impact of ICT on Learning and Teaching](#) (requires internet access)
- [The ICT Impact Report: A review of studies of ICT impact on schools in Europe](#) (requires internet access).

Introduction

The 2005 UNESCO study, *'Information and Communication Technologies in Schools: A Handbook for Teachers on How ICT Can Create New, Open Learning Environments'*, describes how ICT is said to enable teachers to save time and to increase productivity in such activities as¹:

- preparing and updating daily lessons;
- planning, making hard copy visualisations and handouts for classes, as well as individualised educational plans for slower students and students with disabilities or with special problems;
- presenting visual/oral content materials, tasks and questions to the audience;
- maintaining grade books;
- compiling a data bank of exam questions;
- online inspection and correction of students' work on their computers;
- keeping records, chronicles and archives of all the above-mentioned events and proceedings with fast retrieval and easy access to any entry.

Harnessing ICT for Routine Tasks

As a teacher you will do more than just teach your students. You will also have various planning, coordination and administrative tasks to attend to. Can you complete these tasks more efficiently by using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools?

Broadly speaking, the tasks (other than teaching) that you will need to perform on a daily basis include one or more of the following activities:

- Planning
- Keeping records
- Assessing
- Coordinating and communicating
- Collaborating.

This table shows how these activities are currently performed by many teachers.

Activity	The Traditional Approach
Planning	Printed forms or specially designed books provide templates that teachers can fill out for planning their lessons.
Assessing	Paper-based assessments are taken by students in the classroom and teachers physically mark these.
Keeping Records	Files and specially designed books are used to keep a record of documents, such as lesson plans, marks and syllabi.
Coordinating and Communicating	Exchanging notes and using paper diaries are common ways in which teachers coordinate meetings and other events. Several teachers also rely on notice boards or word of mouth to pass on information.
Collaborating	Teachers physically meet to discuss and

¹ *The ICT Impact Report: A review of studies of ICT impact on schools in Europe.* (2006). Available online at http://ec.europa.eu/education/pdf/doc254_en.pdf.

	brainstorm their ideas.
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(From Microsoft Educator Learning Journeys)

Activity:

1. In pairs, discuss how each of these activities can be handled more efficiently using ICT tools.
2. Discuss and also list some of the challenges that might be encountered in the use of ICT across these situations.
3. Share your ideas with the entire class in a tutor-led discussion.

Activity	The Traditional Approach	The ICT Approach
Planning	Printed forms or specially designed books provide templates that teachers can fill out for planning their lessons.	
Assessing	Paper-based assessments are taken by students in the classroom and teachers physically mark these.	
Keeping Records	Files and specially designed books are used to keep a record of documents, such as lesson plans, marks and syllabi.	
Coordinating and Communicating	Exchanging notes and using paper diaries are common ways in which teachers coordinate meetings and other events. Several teachers also rely on notice boards or word of mouth to pass on information.	
Collaborating	Teachers physically meet to discuss and brainstorm their ideas.	
Challenges:		



B] Computer Practical Session (1.5 hours)

Notes to Facilitator

Here you will introduce the participants to the topic. You should have prior knowledge of a range of tools available to assist the teachers in enhancing their own productivity. The introductory text below has been provided as a guide only. Once the session has been introduced, participants should be supported in the completion of the activity.

Background Reading:

- [What every teacher should know about technology](#) (requires internet access).
- [What are online productivity tools?](#)

The competent teacher will integrate advanced features of technology-based productivity tools to support instruction, extend communication outside the classroom, enhance classroom management, perform administrative routines more effectively, and become more productive in daily tasks.

But, as a novice, how exactly do you begin to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools to enhance productivity?

It's important to reflect on the following:

- *What skills and knowledge would you need to begin using ICT tools?*
 - *What steps would you take to develop these skills?*
1. Firstly, make a plan. Identify steps that you will need to take for each skill you want to improve or knowledge you want to gain. When conceiving your plan, try and keep goals smart, measurable, accurate, realistic and time bound.
 2. Identify any changes to the traditional way the task is performed to gain additional benefit.
 3. Identify peers, support staff and others who could serve as resources, mentors or collaborators in the use of ICT.
 4. Identify the most appropriate ICT tool for the task. Do not make the mistake of using ALL the available tools just for the sake of it. Make sure you are aware of the capabilities, strengths and weaknesses of the ICT tool you have chosen.

Activity: Teacher Productivity

This activity is a recommended **Portfolio Task** and the answers to question 1-4 should be prepared for submission.



Portfolio Task

Lucy is a mathematics teacher at a primary school. She is not at all confident in her use of ICT and will often sketch out her lesson ideas using a pen and paper. She is located in a region where children are prone to sickness and she struggles to capture all the absentees daily on her printed form, which often goes missing. She also spends a huge amount of time writing out test questions and exam papers and would love to be able to re-use some of her ideas for future classes, but never remembers what she asked. She will often send out hand-written notes to parents which are attached to her learner's homework books. Lucy is extremely busy and helps out with many of the school's extra-curricular activities. In addition to the school monthly newsletter (which is handwritten and passed onto the secretary for typing), she coaches the girls' netball team.

Refer to the case study above in order to answer the following questions. Use the computers at your disposal to conduct any research you might need to further your understanding and aid you in

completing this activity. Remember, there are a variety of templates available on the Web to assist you. You can also refer to some of these tools provided to you [here](#).

1. Identify three opportunities from the case study above in which Lucy might increase her productivity through the explicit use of a Word Processing Tool, such as MS Word.
2. Select one of the above opportunities you have identified and create a sample document using a word processor program.
3. What is the biggest problem that could arise in Lucy's current method of communicating with parents? How might she improve this process with ICT? Provide an example and a justification for your answer.
4. What skills and knowledge would Lucy need to begin using ICT tools? Can you suggest steps that she could take to develop these skills? Develop the outline of a plan Lucy could follow to increase her confidence, knowledge and skills set in using ICT.



C] Self-Study (Total 30 Minutes)

Reflection Activity: Think of your own experiences in performing the various duties that make up a typical day at school. What duties or responsibilities take up too much of your time? Might technology help you become more productive? Consider these obvious 'time wasters' and rate them on a scale of '1' (Time needed is appropriate to task) to '5' (Time needed is in excess of task value). Note that '0' means this is not applicable to your current duties.

#	Task	0	1	2	3	4	5
1	Creating class lists						
2	Setting Up and Keeping Class Mark Book						
3	Doing Absentee Checks						
4	Circulating Memos to Staff						
5	Chasing up Students to Submit Late Work						
6	Drawing up New and Revising Worksheets & Student Notes						
7	Setting Tests and Examinations						
8	Marking Examination/Test Scripts						
9	Writing Reports						
10	Preparing Ministry Schedules of Student Promotions						

Choose one and consider what skills you would need in order to use technology to make that task more time efficient. Perhaps this needs to be a priority? Who do you need to talk to get things moving? Is this course going to satisfy that professional development need?



Resources Used in this Lesson Unit

Van Son, R. *The question is not whether, but how ICT can be useful in education*. Available online at: <https://edutechdebate.org/ict-in-schools/the-question-is-not-whether-but-how-ict-can-be-useful-in-education/> (CC: BY: NC: SA)

Newhouse, Dr. C. Paul. *Literature Review: The Impact of ICT on Learning and Teaching*. Available online at: <http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/cmisis/eval/downloads/pd/impactreview.pdf> (All Rights Reserved).

Poole, B. *What every teacher should know about technology*. Available online at: http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/tech/tech227.shtml (All Rights Reserved).

What are online productivity tools? Available online from WebTools4u2Use website at: <http://webtools4u2use.wikispaces.com/Word+Processing+%26+Productivity+Tools> (CC: BY: NC: SA)

Microsoft. (n.d.). *Microsoft Partners in Learning: ICT Skills for Teachers*. Available online at <http://schoolnet.org.za/PILP/scenarios/index.htm>.

Microsoft. (2011). *Educator Learning Journeys: Technology Literacy Curriculum – Technology Literacy and Your Professional Development*. Available online at <https://eljmicrosoft.intuition.com/Rubicon.aspx>. Accessed 25/07/2011 (All Rights Reserved).

Balanskat, Anja; Blamire, Roger; Kefala, Stella. (2006). *The ICT Impact Report: A review of studies of ICT impact on schools in Europe*. Available online at http://ec.europa.eu/education/pdf/doc254_en.pdf. Accessed 04/08/2011. (All Rights Reserved).