

FIGURE 3.5 SEVEN DESIGN ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND PITFALLS TO AVOID

DESIGN ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION AND KEY IDEAS	PITFALLS TO AVOID
1. Is discipline-specific	<p>Learning is focused on the content that teachers teach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is job-embedded learning. • Experiences are situated within the context of teachers' classrooms and current students. 	<p>PD is generic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PD is delivered by outsiders. • PD is divorced from teachers' classroom or school context.
2. Engages people through active learning strategies	<p>Professional learning addresses <i>how</i> teachers learn as well as <i>what</i> teachers learn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers' experience is utilized as a resource for new learning. • Adults choose learning opportunities based on their interests and needs. • Authentic artifacts, such as student work products, help teachers to construct learning that refines their practice. 	<p>PD is "done" through sit-and-get sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is passive. • Teachers' previous experience is disregarded. • New strategies are layered on top of the old.
3. Provides models of effective practice	<p>A vision of practice is provided to teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular models are provided. • Instructional models are provided. • Expert support and coaching are available. 	<p>Teachers refer to curriculum guides for support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers who utilize curriculum materials alone have lower student achievement than teachers who access materials <i>and</i> expert support.
4. Supports collaboration	<p>Collective work in trusting environments provides a foundation for inquiry and reflection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade levels, departments, and schools are the basis of teams who problem solve and learn together. • The equity of whole systems improves. 	<p>Individualistic work can be isolating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a business-as-usual approach. • PD is a single or isolated encounter.

(Continued)

FIGURE 3.5 (CONTINUED)

DESIGN ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION AND KEY IDEAS	PITFALLS TO AVOID
<p>5. Provides coaching and expert support</p>	<p>Experts, typically educators themselves, play a critical role by guiding and supporting colleagues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies are modeled. • Support for group processing and discussion is available. • Collaborative analysis of student learning is promoted. • Coaching (can occur in a teacher’s classroom) is offered. 	<p>Teachers are on their own to implement new curricula, tools, and approaches.</p>
<p>6. Offers feedback and reflection</p>	<p>There is built-in time for teachers to think about and adjust their practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is intentional time for feedback and reflection. 	<p>Feedback to teachers may be limited or misaligned with teachers’ learning needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection may or may not occur.
<p>7. Is of sustained duration</p>	<p>Meaningful professional learning that leads to changes in practice takes time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional learning is rigorous, cumulative, and organized around a single set of concepts or practices. • Learning may last for weeks, months, or longer as teachers apply and refine their practice. 	<p>PD does not afford the time necessary for teachers to learn at deep levels.</p>