



## Design learning that drives satisfaction

Recently, *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Teachers, Parents and the Economy* (2011) indicated that challenging economic times, ever-increasing demands, and dwindling resources have taken a toll on

teachers, contributing to the largest decrease in teacher job satisfaction in more than 20 years. Findings concluded that, “teachers with low job satisfaction are less likely to say they are treated as a professional, compensated fairly, or have opportunities for professional development or collaboration with colleagues” (p. 22).

In his book *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, Daniel Pink identifies three key elements of motivation that address internal drive and

increase job satisfaction:

- **Autonomy:** People want to have control over their work.
- **Mastery:** People want to get better at what they do.
- **Purpose:** People want to be part of something that is bigger than they are.

When thinking of ways to create a new system for professional learning, consider how to embed these powerful motivators into learning designs.

**“Theories, research, and models of human learning shape the underlying framework and assumptions educators use to plan and design professional learning.”**

— *Standards for Professional Learning*, p. 40

### AUTONOMY

Support learners in taking an active role in their learning by giving them the autonomy to choose when, where, and how they learn. Use technology to offer flexible learning opportunities, including web-based courses, blended learning, self-paced courses, and online communities. Develop a variety of learning tasks during face-to-face professional learning — including examining student work and curriculum development — and outside of the face-to-face professional learning environment — such as study groups, professional reading and discussion, and action research.

### MASTERY

Align learning designs with intended outcomes and clear expectations to support mastery and move learners beyond comprehension of the necessary knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices. Schedule job-embedded learning opportunities for classroom observations, lesson study, and peer coaching.

### PURPOSE

Share learners’ successes, impact, and results of professional learning to provide a constant reminder of the overall purpose — improved student results. Facilitate professional learning teams where teachers analyze data, share lessons, demonstrate teaching practices, and celebrate successes.

These three concepts reinforce that how we design professional learning

affects its quality and effectiveness. Consequently, they can also serve as signposts for creating a new operating system for professional learning.

As teacher leaders, learning, studying, and understanding theories and research about how people learn can heighten your level of awareness and inform your practices to motivate teachers to change their practice.



Knowing that learners’ motivations influence decisions about professional learning will help you better identify and select the designs that best support changes in educator practice. It also acknowledges the significance and importance of your role to support educator effectiveness and student learning, as described in the Learning Designs standard.

### REFERENCES

**MetLife. (2011).** *The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Teachers, parents and the economy*. New York: Author. Available at [www.metlife.com/teachersurvey](http://www.metlife.com/teachersurvey).

**Pink, D. (2010).** *Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us*. New York: Penguin.

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