Effect of a Teaching Consultation Process Upon Personal Development in Faculty

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Launching or Revitalizing a Teaching Center:

Portraits of Practice

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Abstract

Some teaching centers flounder while others flourish. One of the authors [“Teresa”] was placed in charge of a floundering center. Dramatic changes transformed it from a “forgotten unit” to a flourishing center. The other author [“Sandra”] launched a new center, which is well on its way to playing a central role in university life. This paper provides concrete suggestions for successfully launching or revitalizing a teaching center, drawn both from our experience and from principles in the literature.

Introduction

Faculty developers often ask about how to launch or revitalize a teaching center. A small body of literature has outlined principles for building and sustaining a successful teaching center. These principles are important to the success of a teaching center. Certainly, to launch or revitalize a center, center directors and other staff must consider how these principles are best applied on their campus. In some cases, however, even thoughtful consideration of these principles can still leave a director with a murky sense of where, exactly, to begin the work. Some cases require concrete examples (e.g., about funding) as guides. This paper is designed to provide just such concrete examples.

What are the principles put forth in the literature? One essential element is to create buy-in from faculty and key university personnel (Ambrose, 1995; Diamond, 1984; Fideler & Sorcinelli, 1992; Nemko & Simpson, 1991; Sorcinelli, 2002). Another principle is to involve faculty in the work of the center (Ambrose; Fideler & Sorcinelli;
Nemko & Simpson; Sorcinelli). These strategies help to underscore the credibility of the center and ensure that the center is leveraging available faculty resources to best effect.

It is also important to situate the center’s work appropriately in the institutional culture and to organize the center’s work around clearly defined goals (Ambrose; Diamond; Fideler & Sorcinelli; Nemko & Simpson; Nyquist, 1986; Sorcinelli). These principles keep the center’s work focused and responsive to the needs of faculty on the campus and help to determine an appropriate center structure. For example, on one campus a focus on consultations (Neel & Peed-Neal, 2008; Nyquist) may work well, while another campus may find success by focusing on workshops, at least in the early years, while building a clientele for consulting (XXXXX, 2007).

Another principle for successful teaching centers is to build collegiality and community (Fideler & Sorcinelli; Nemko & Simpson; Sorcinelli; XXXXX) because connecting with other faculty reduces isolation, provides opportunities for sharing of ideas, and makes center programming more enjoyable. Finally, in beginning a center, it has been suggested to lead with strengths and to begin slowly, offering high-quality programs that can be practically executed with the resources of the center (Ambrose; Sorcinelli).

This paper is designed to provide ideas about how to apply these principles by describing how the two authors applied the principles to their centers. We present a focused “to do” list to get a center moving. The authors of this paper are two center directors who have successfully built or rebuilt teaching centers. Teresa’s (not her real name) university, XXX University, is a Carnegie research extensive, XXX XXX, land grant institution, with 650 full-time and 400 part-time faculty members. Teresa was
placed in charge of an older center that was struggling. Dramatic changes transformed it from a “forgotten unit” to a flourishing center. Sandra’s (not her real name) university, YYY University, with 500 full-time and 500 part-time faculty members, is a comprehensive metropolitan university currently in transition to a research intensive university. Her new center is well on its way to playing a central role in university life.

Our suggestions are divided into the broad categories of Administration and Programming and are focused on the development and activities of the center. Suggestions for other priorities, such as your development as a faculty developer, are eloquently described elsewhere (Neal and Peed-Neal). Here, we provide concrete suggestions for successfully launching or revitalizing a teaching center, drawn from our experience and from principles in the literature.

**Administration**

*Perform a needs assessment or reassessment*

*Write a mission statement and goals*

*Lobby for adequate resources*

*Acquaint your campus with the concept of your center*

*Design a simple, streamlined Web site*

*Attend POD Network Conference and International Institute for New Faculty Developers*

*Perform a needs assessment or re-assessment.* Find out what your stakeholders want and need. This can be done in a variety of ways. The most common way may be through a survey, but there are better ways, such as individual interviews and focus groups. Talking to faculty—as many as you can, as often as you can—will yield far richer data than a paper survey (Neal & Peed-Neal). Surveying faculty “may only reflect their
ignoreance of the possibilities rather than rational choices among programs” (Neal & Peed-Neal). In contrast, when you talk to faculty and they are unresponsive, you can offer “ideas for programs and services and draw them into a conversation” (Neal & Peed-Neal). One author reports spending a semester (Ambrose 1995, p. 80) interviewing “all of the senior academic administrators, all seven of the deans, all 27 department heads, about a dozen influential senior faculty members, about a dozen junior faculty, and a sampling of graduate and undergraduate students.”

Both Teresa and Sandra spent considerable time talking with people to assess campus needs. On Teresa’s campus, the task force that formed the center spent 6 months giving a wealth of guidance and direction to the new center. This task force was followed by open forums in which the entire campus community was invited to help shape the mission, vision, and goals of the center. On Sandra’s campus Sandra met with the Dean’s Council and attended a meeting of department chairs in each of the university’s colleges. Several departments invited Sandra to a departmental meeting. She used all of these occasions to gather information about how the new center could best support faculty. On each campus an advisory board was established to give continuing feedback to the staff of the center.

Write a mission statement and goals. Write a mission statement and goals that define the scope of your activities (Diamond, 1984, p. 52). Before writing your statement, look at several mission statements of various teaching centers as published on the Web and find a few that you like to give you some direction. Include as many people in the writing of this short statement as possible so that you will get their input as well as their buy-in. During this process, determine whether you will become a faculty development center in the sense that you help faculty (and graduate students?) to perform all of their professional responsibilities or an instructional development center that confines its
activities to improving teaching and learning (Ambrose, 1995, pp. 79-80). The broadest possible mandate may give you more ways to support faculty and may give faculty more reasons to use the center.

Teresa determined the mission and goals of her center by hosting three open forums. About a dozen faculty, graduate students, and staff came from all over campus to envision what the XXX Teaching Center could be. This was great for getting faculty buy-in as well as for creating a broader, more inclusive statement of mission and goals than the center staff could have created alone. The faculty chose three goals: supporting teachers, enhancing learning, and building community. Two of these three goals gave the center the broad mandate that it has today: supporting teachers and building community. These goals mean that the center can address issues beyond teaching such time management and publishing, both “deal breaker” issues for faculty. On Sandra’s campus, the new center’s mission statement was framed by a steering committee with representation from across campus. The mission is focused on supporting teaching and building a sense of community around teaching on campus.

Lobby for adequate resources. At least four kinds of resources are critical: time, staff, space, and money. The responsibilities of the center director will expand to fill all available time. You may be asked to be involved in all kinds of campus initiatives and committees. If it is at all possible, negotiate a teaching load that will allow you time for this involvement. Further, be cautious about making too many commitments of your time (e.g., committee assignments), at least at first.

Request the most staff that you can reasonably ask for, including a full-time director and at least a half-time assistant (Sorcinelli, 2002). Even with this staff, you will
be very, very busy. With less staff, you may have to limit the number of workshops, programs, or consultations that you provide. As you hire your assistant, think about who is going to handle your Web site, or whether you will outsource it. Designing your Web site is the most technical job that your center will perform (unless you also have a participant database). It is not enough to have a “director” and an “administrative assistant” if neither can handle the Web site—unless you have a concrete plan for outsourcing it.

Lobby for adequate space, whatever that means on your campus. On a large campus, it might mean an office for each staff person, and a good-size workshop room in your suite. A workshop room is one way to create a true “center” for teaching and learning. Also, having space is symbolic of status and legitimacy (Ambrose, 1995, p. 84; Sorcinelli, 2002, p. 17). It prevents you from constantly having to reserve other spaces and haul everything for every workshop to another space. It also allows you to host a variety of gatherings, some of which may not be your own programming, which facilitates community building on campus. The size of the workshop room is important. Try to get a room that seats at least 50 comfortably so it will handle large events as well as small ones. A 1,200-square-foot room is ideal: it does not feel too big when only a few people attend and it does not feel too small when 60 attend.

You will need an adequate budget. Think carefully about your budget needs and talk with other center directors about the size and type of budget needed to support the organization that you want to build in your campus context. Make sure that you are funded with hard money; grants are very competitive and demand much time without any guarantee of success (Sorcinelli, 2002, p. 17). To get advice from other center directors
about how big your budget should be, join the listserv of the faculty developer’s network, POD Network, at http://www.podnetwork.org/publications&resources/mailing_list.htm. Post a question in which you ask how much money you will need to accomplish your goals. Sandra did just this in the early planning stages of her center. She received several off-list responses that allowed her to defend a well-crafted budget request.

How did Teresa and Sandra fare with regard to resources? Teresa serves as the director of a six-person full-time equivalent unit. She has a graphic artist on staff who created the Web site. Another staff person (a computer programmer) is specifically devoted to the database. Teresa was not asked to teach, but she teaches one undergraduate course every 2 years to maintain teaching skills as well as credibility and legitimacy with the faculty. Sandra was asked to become a full-time director and assigned a full-time assistant. Sandra teaches one class per year, allowing her to connect with students and maintain credibility with faculty. When the center was created, the decision was made to fold the campus Academic Technologies unit and the Service-Learning program into the umbrella of the center. Staff from Academic Technologies worked with Sandra to modify existing database capabilities and to create the center’s website over the course of the center’s first semester.

Both Teresa and Sandra were assigned workshop spaces as well as adjacent offices for each of their staff. Teresa was assigned a workshop room with 1,200 square feet of meeting space in an older building right in the middle of campus. Sandra was assigned 1,000 square feet of new meeting space, which was under construction in the first year of her center, with larger spaces available in the student union for bigger events.
Teresa inherited an operating budget of $40,000 a year, which she found woefully inadequate on a mid-sized campus. She responded by raising almost $100,000 a year from various other units on campus, including all deans. Of course, her budget is gathered from various units on campus, so it is not as secure as if it were hard money. Nonetheless, with this budget she can bring in seven external speakers, send five people each to two national teaching conferences, support three semester-long programs, and otherwise support her center. Sandra’s budget was planned to be phased in over several years. Initially, she was provided an operating budget of almost $50,000. She found this budget to be adequate for the first year to begin a library, offer limited travel opportunities, and bring in four outside workshop facilitators. In subsequent years, as the center matures, the operating budget is expected to grow to approximately $150,000 and an additional staff position is anticipated. In year two of her center, the increased funds have been used to fund three faculty learning communities.

*Acquaint your campus with the concept of your center.* Buy-in is very important for a new center (Ambrose, 1995, p. 79), both before and after the center opens. To get buy-in from the “powers that be,” make people aware of your center and the roles it plays. Perhaps you can arrange to meet with the Provost or chief academic officer once a year or once a semester. Also, invite him or her to key events at your center. Be sure that you are invited to the meetings of important administrators at your institution, such as Dean’s Council meeting or chairs meetings. Prepare a short (less than 10-minute) explanation of the center’s mission and how participation will benefit colleges and departments. Listen to the input of the department heads and deans so that you can respond to their needs and desires (Ambrose, p. 80). By having such conversations, you
will begin the process of getting buy-in from the key players on your campus from whom faculty “take their cues” (Ambrose, p. 83). You will also begin to “brand” your center so that, when you send flyers, people on campus will know where the flyers are coming from.

Teresa has been to the Associate Deans Council several times. She meets individually with each dean each year in August. During her fourth summer as director, she met individually with over 50 department heads. Sandra attended Deans’ Council and chairs meetings in each of the colleges of her institution during the first year of her center. In the second year, she met with all new department chairs. These meetings have been an excellent way of “getting the word out” about the center.

*Design a simple, streamlined Web site.* On many campuses, faculty members have become accustomed to easy access to information on the Web. As a result, centers should develop Web sites. It is best to develop a simple, streamlined site that is easy to navigate. Think “less is more” as you design it. Think about what you want your site to do for visitors and for your center. *You* already know what your site and center provides and can do, but it’s not likely that visitors to your site know this until they have visited it several times. So, think about what visitors to your site are most likely to be searching for and how they might search for what they need, and make those things easy to find and easy to use. Build a navigation tool that prioritizes the functions of your site, groups similar functions, makes the most frequently used functions most prominent, and supplies appropriate links to parent and child organizational units. Make the navigation links available on every page of the site to make it easy to get around in the site.

Make the “look and feel” of your Web pages consistent throughout the site and consistent with your institutional look (if there is one). If your institution provides
templates (a pre-formatted Web page into which you put your own information), use
them. It’s much easier to make a copy of a template and plug information into it than to
make every page from scratch.

Before your public launch, make sure your Web pages load quickly and
predictably in multiple browsers a rough and ask several people to browse through your
site and report any problems or concerns. They will tell you if you have broken links or if
something seems out of place or is hard to use.

Teresa inherited a skeletal Web site, but within 18 months of reopening her center
she launched a fully functioning Web site at http://www.xxx.xxxx.edu. As mentioned
earlier, Sandra launched her website within a semester of the founding of the center
(www.xxx.xxxx.edu).

Attend the POD Network Conference and International Institute for New Faculty
Developers. There are two national meetings that you will want to attend. First, the
International Institute for New Faculty Developers occurs in June of odd-numbered years.
For more information, see http://www.iinfd.org/. Second, you will want to attend the
POD Network (Professional Organizational Development in Higher Education Network),
which is the faculty development organization for North America. Its conference, which
occurs in late October or early November (see http://www.podnetwork.org/), is well
worth the investment. Both conferences provide a wealth of information about how to
start a center, as well as programming ideas and personal contacts that can be invaluable
as the center’s work gets underway. POD Network also hosts a wonderful listserv for
faculty developers, which you can join at http://listserv.nd.edu/archives/pod.html.

Sandra attended the International Institute for New Faculty Developers, which she
found invaluable, after a year as center director. Teresa attended POD Network 3 years
before she became director. Sandra started attending POD Network 2 years before her center was formed, initially as a steering committee member. Neither Teresa nor Sandra can imagine doing their jobs without the POD Network because of the numerous occasions on which each has received advice or obtained materials, ideas, or strategies from a POD meeting or a POD member. POD Network members go out of their way to help each other, and it is a much more collaborative community than many in academe.

**Programming**

*Offer consulting services to teachers*

*Address the programming needs of your institution*

*Address the full range of needs of the teacher*

*Schedule a (light) first semester of programming*

*Host a very special Grand Opening*

*Publicize well*

*Assess your work from the beginning*

*Create a workshop of your own*

*Offer consulting services to teachers.* Volunteer to help faculty one-on-one through consulting services (e.g., by visiting a class and/or performing mid-term evaluations 3 to 4 weeks into the class). Consulting is one way instructors “translate” what they have heard in workshops into application in their classes; consulting, then, is arguably the most important work we do (Neal & Peed-Neal). Therefore, it is not unreasonable for you to increase consulting activity on your campus until you spend 50% of your time on it (Neal & Peed-Neal).
It takes a long time to get a lot of clients in a consulting program, and it is probably best to start early with a few clients and let the word get around among faculty that this is a good thing to do. Send a flyer to the campus that publicizes your consulting services and makes it clear that these services are confidential. Personally invite each new faculty member to try consulting (personal communication, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, August 1, 2007). If your campus does not use a nationally-normed evaluation, consider paying for faculty to use the IDEA evaluation or some other such evaluation tool. Then, schedule appointments for them to meet with you and discuss it.

Sandra offered some limited confidential consultation services in the first semester of her center. She made herself available for classroom observations and for mid-term assessments (also called small group instructional diagnoses (SGIDs). Although a half dozen instructors took advantage of the opportunities, the number was not overwhelming. Instructors and department chairs across campus were clearly appreciative that the services were available. Discussing the services with people across campus, especially administrators, quickly made it clear that the center was offering something new and of value. The confidentiality of the consultations allowed Sandra to communicate that the center’s mission is to support faculty development, not to make summative evaluations of faculty teaching. Teresa was more cautious about offering consulting services: She waited until the third year to start publicizing them because she worried that the center might be overwhelmed by a large number of requests. Looking back, she could have offered consulting services from the second semester because only a handful of people responded to the initial publicity flyers. She didn’t really have any
substantial number of consulting clients until she introduced the IDEA evaluation on her campus; then, she developed her first serious cohort of clients.

Address the programming needs of your institution. When choosing programming, focus on the issues that need special attention on your campus (Diamond, 1984, p. 51). Consider conducting a formal or informal needs assessment of the faculty. Ask the Provost and other key people to identify important issues. For example, if your Office of the Provost wants to improve student retention, choose programming targeted at retention. If the Business College wants to use more case studies, offer to lead a workshop on case studies. It is partly by responding to the needs of others that you will get buy-in to your center (Ambrose, 1995, p. 82).

At Teresa’s university the Provost asked her to focus on measuring learning outcomes and on assessment in general. She responded by hiring two experts on assessment to give workshops and by arranging a handful of local workshops. Currently, her College of Engineering is writing a grant on engineering, communication, and technology, so she will help to design workshops to help engineering professors to teach communication using technology.

On Sandra’s campus a group of faculty, frustrated with the high incidence of plagiarism, lobbied for the adoption of a software service to monitor the use of sources in student writing. Sandra used this as an opportunity to create a broader discussion about source use in student writing. A workshop was designed to demonstrate the software service and to discuss a variety of strategies for helping students to use sources properly. Offered on multiple occasions, these workshops were the most well received of those
offered in the first semester of Sandra’s center. In the second year of the center, the new faculty learning communities were organized around topics of interest to the campus community, such as “Undergraduate Research” and “Engaging First Year Students in Learning”.

*Address the full range of needs of the teacher (XXXXX, 2007).* Many teaching centers focus solely on teaching, but it can be helpful to offer at least an occasional workshop to address the full range of faculty concerns: time management, publishing, grant writing, promotion and tenure, and so forth.

Put the teacher first, even if you are billed as an instructional design center. If the best teachers do not survive in the system, it will negatively impact instructional design. So start with the teacher, and address their full range of needs, including “deal-breaker” issues like time management, publishing, writing grants, and negotiating the promotion and tenure process. (XXXXX, 2007, p. 182)

By doing a workshop on one of these topics every year, you show a concern for the teacher as a person. You may attract a broader audience for this kind of workshop, which may increase the audiences for other events. Faculty and graduate students will thank you for it (XXXXX, 2007, p. 182).

Teresa has hosted a series of workshops on publishing and she has helped to host an annual workshop on promotion and tenure. Although Sandra’s mission is more narrowly focused on teaching, Sandra has also expanded the center’s reach by forming partnerships with other units on campus. She has co-hosted a workshop on publishing with the Office of Research Administration and has partnered with the Office of the Provost to offer sessions on promotion and tenure.

*Schedule a (light) first semester of programming.* Schedule some programming, but don’t overdo it (Ambrose, 1995, p. 85; Sorcinelli, 2002, p. 19). Beginning with a few
workshops provides visibility for your center. Workshops work well because they are community-oriented, they require a limited commitment from faculty, and they plant ideas, getting participants to think about their teaching and excited about the possibilities. If you have a budget to hire external speakers, you might hire one or two and mix those programs with one or two workshops presented by your own faculty.

The costs of internal and external workshops will be very different, of course. You may or may not decide to (or be allowed to) pay internal speakers an honorarium. If you don’t pay internal speakers, they will consider it service; if you do, the honorarium should be at least $100 in order not to be insultingly small. Hiring an external speaker will usually cost about $1,500-$3,000 for the honorarium, plus another $800 or so for travel expenses. Budget for publicity and snacks, if possible. If the event is an all-day workshop, you may want to provide lunch because it turns your event into a better networking event.

In the first semester Teresa was able to schedule fairly extensive programming because she was moving into an established center with a staff of five. She hosted three outside facilitators and three open forums to establish the mission, goals, logo, and motto for her center; she also directed a semester-long faculty development program and presented a workshop. Other staff members hosted eight locally run workshops.

Beginning in the second year of programming, annual involvement at Teresa’s center, which is very focused on workshops and training (XXXXX, 2007) is approximately 7,000-8,000 hours of training offered, with 700-800 faculty, staff, and graduate students served. In the first year, Sandra’s center hosted workshops from four outside facilitators,
a few follow-up sessions, and a handful of locally run workshops. A total of 278 faculty and instructors participated in center events

*Host a very special Grand Opening.* A grand opening provides you with an opportunity to build community and to acquaint the campus with your programs and services. Invite a speaker to give a short address and host a reception. Depending on your budget, the speaker could be from outside the university or could be a well-respected faculty member or administrator. Strive to have the “best party” on campus, which means that you will have the biggest community building event (XXXXX, p. 181).

At the grand opening of her center Teresa featured as the keynoter Charles Glassick of the Carnegie foundation, co-author (with Ernest Boyer) of *Scholarship Assessed* and *Scholarship Reconsidered.* The keynote address was followed by a progressive dinner so people had to go to three rooms to get their full dinner. Musicians from the music department played in each room (brass in one room, cello in another, marimba in the third). Flowers were provided by the floral design students from the Department of Agronomy.

Sandra held an afternoon reception in conjunction with the grand opening of the building in which her center is housed. In addition to a number of short speeches, her staff helped to give tours of the unique spaces in the building, including the center’s new space.

*Publicize well* (XXXXX, 2007, p. 183). Think carefully about how to reach faculty on your campus. To what kinds of communication are they most likely to pay attention? What frequency of communication is useful, but not annoying? For workshops, consider publicizing each event multiple times (XXXXX, 2007, p. 183).
Experiment with various combinations of e-mails and flyers. Teresa publicizes each event with an “overview” flyer that lists all events for the semester, as well as a flyer and an e-mail featuring each individual event, and a reminder to those who have registered. She sends the overview flyer before the semester starts so that faculty can make arrangements to attend the workshops in which they are most interested. Teresa sends the individual flyer about a month in advance. She sends a second announcement by e-mail about a week in advance. She sends an e-mail reminder to registrants about a day in advance.

Sandra sends out a flyer each month describing events happening at the center. Programs like the faculty learning communities are publicized in a separate brochure. Faculty are reminded of some events or programs via an e-mail message from the Provost. Faculty who register for events receive a reminder e-mail.

Strive to have the best-looking flyers on campus (Holton, 2002). Consider using a template. It makes flyers easier to generate and helps to brand your flyers. Then you can work from that template to “plug in” the details for each specific event. Teresa has a graphic artist on staff, as mentioned earlier, who creates her flyers from a template. Sandra sends flyers that are created by her administrative assistant. Both had logos created professionally for use on the flyers.

Assess your work from the beginning. Start with good record keeping and expand the ways in which you assess your work as your center grows. (Neal & Peed-Neal, 2008) The most basic form of assessment requires keeping records of who participates in your programs, how much they participate, and how satisfied they were with the programs. To find out how satisfied participants were, evaluate each event by asking questions with a Likert-type response scale, such as, “The time I invested in this workshop was well-
spent,” “I would recommend this workshop to a colleague,” and “I will apply the information I learned in this workshop.” After a few years you may want to perform an impact study. An impact study asks faculty how much they think the center impacted teaching and learning. This kind of survey can provide data to demonstrate that your center is successful.

Teresa kept records of participation since the re-opening of her center using a relational database. This provides a record of who participates in what events and how often each person participates. It allows a director to know how many training hours total the center is providing and to send data to deans and department heads about how much their faculty and graduate students are participating. Finally, it enables the director to send each participant’s records to that person at the end of the year (instead of giving individual certificates after each event). Sandra’s Academic Technologies unit already had a database registration system for workshops. The database was modified to track participation statistics and generate various reports. In the long run, the resources required to maintain a database may well pay for themselves.

Both Teresa and Sandra conduct Likert-scale evaluations after every workshop. After 3 years of service, Teresa conducted an online survey (using the online tool Survey Monkey™) of 415 past or present XXX Center members (members have attended at least 10 hours of events in 1 year). By keeping the survey very short and by having a drawing for an iPod, Teresa attained a very high response rate (62%, n = 259) on her impact survey. Eighty-nine percent of respondents agreed with the statement, “Based on my experiences with the XXX Center, I have made positive changes in my teaching.” Eighty percent agreed with the statement, “Based on my experiences with the XXX Center, I
have observed positive changes in my students’ learning.” The survey also elicited a wealth of comments about the value of the teaching center.

Create a workshop of your own. Create a bang-up workshop of your own that you can give as needed, because you will be invited to speak many, many times and this workshop will form an important part of the reputation of your center. For example, you may want to create a general workshop that contains your very best ideas for becoming a stronger teacher. Make this workshop truly excellent; work on it until you receive participant evaluations of 6.5 on a 7.0 scale for questions that evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop.

Teresa developed her signature teaching workshop containing 12 ideas for improving teaching, which she easily modified for both short and long workshops. An advantage of having a numbered list of ideas in your workshop is that, when you have less time, you can offer fewer ideas (five ideas, or even three). Sandra’s first workshop was on course design, offered at the request of a small program on campus to a small group of faculty. This allowed her to first “test run” the workshop and then offer it to the campus as a whole. Rather than start from scratch, she utilized suggestions from Dee Fink’s *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*.

Conclusion

The portraits of practice described here are designed for those faced with launching or revitalizing a teaching center. While it is not necessary that one do everything on our “to do” list in order to be successful, these ideas provide a place to begin. Applying these ideas will create visible activity for your center and generate a “buzz” about what the center is doing. It will also cause you to provide substantive
offerings for instructors to engage in improvement, enhancement, or innovation. Further, the response to these offerings can provide a new director with important feedback about what resonates on his or her campus. Whether your center evolves to focus on consultation, workshops, or faculty learning communities, it will do so based on the local needs, challenges and opportunities on your campus. These practices provide keys to success that will help pave the way to a robust center.
References


