

Enhancing Communication and Collaboration using Web-based Technologies

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STATEMENT OF NEED

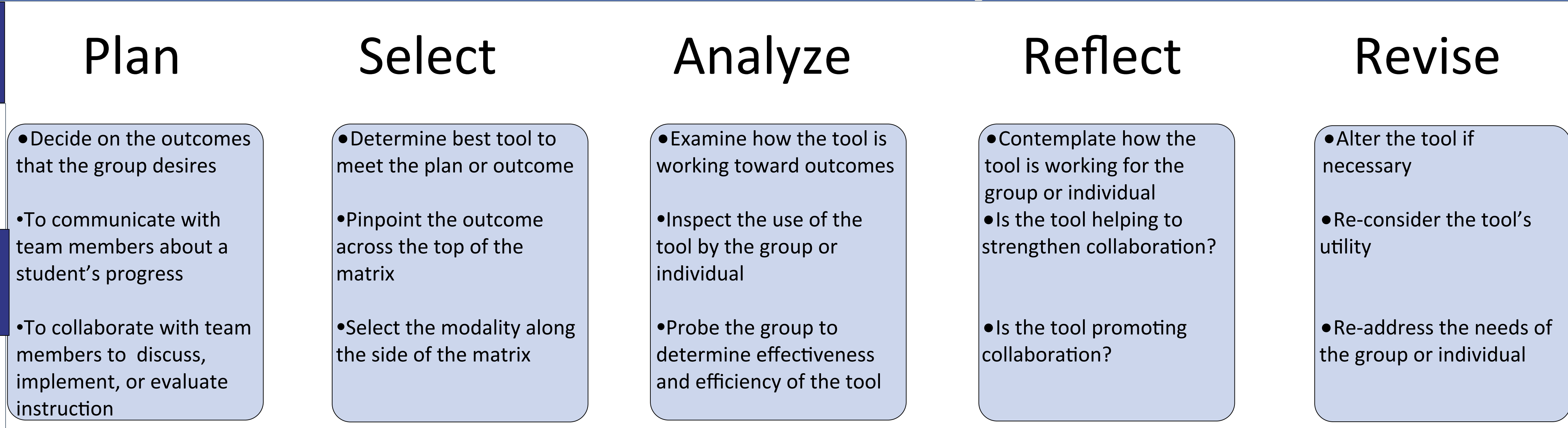
In 2011, technology tools are abundant. Such an abundance of tools may leave teachers/practitioners overwhelmed and unable to decide which tool to use.

BACKGROUND

Practitioners do not have to understand how the technology works--only how to make it work for them. Nearly every American has access to at least one high-speed computer with an Internet connection (Thompson, Bull, & Bell, 2005). Practitioners can easily and inexpensively engage in different modalities of communication using multiple media and popular web-based technologies.

CONSIDERATIONS

Collaboration and communication can reach far beyond the walls of a classroom to include practitioners across distance, settings, and level of experience. In-experienced practitioners can engage web-based technology with relative ease as a primary means of communicating and collaborating with colleagues and parents. With applications that operate completely on the web, the technical knowledge required of users is minimal technology.



METHOD

Engaging in a 5-step decision making model provides the framework for teachers and practitioners to make purposeful choices.

LIMITATIONS

Use of web-based technologies does not guarantee a seamless means of communication and collaboration. Different speeds or types of internet connections, a variety of software and hardware may impact the use of technology tools. Such challenges must be considered and prepared for advance.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Collaboration and communication can reach far beyond the walls of a classroom to include practitioners across distance, settings, and level of experience. Key questions for future research are-Which technology functions better in what type of environment? What factors influence the use or non-use of a technology?

Matrix of Outcomes and Technology

PURPOSE	TECHNOLOGY							
	Online Journals & Discussions	Course/Learning Management Systems	Podcasts and Screencasts	Collaborative Spaces & Video-conferencing	Virtual Worlds	Online Video Sharing	Wikis	Social Networking
Group Brainstorming/Planning								
Feedback and Clarification								
Collaborative Construction								
Demonstration								
Formative assessment								
Guided Practice								
Interaction With Experts								
Multiple Means of Representation								
Group Announcements								
Networking								
Self-reflection								
Sharing/Organizing Text								
Share content								