



Learning Gains through

Badge Party - 29 August 2014

The rationale behind the Badge Party was to diffuse some of the anguish that some of the more technophobic teachers appeared to be experiencing. Being given the responsibility of an android tablet and having attended the initial workshop could have proved to be a great challenge for some of the teachers. To now be required to submit evidence of some of the acquired skills and of having used the tablet in class could have proved a bridge too far for some.

The Badge Party did the trick - it removed the angst. A few teachers were still somewhat nervous but were soon helped by their colleagues. Having your colleague demonstrate a technical skill does not seem so serious when they are wearing fancy dress.



Nokuthula Zondi



Hlengiwe Mfeka and Nonhlanhla Khambule

All participants arrived early and were quietly discussing items on their tablets in the training room while the facilitators were preparing the venue. The only absentees were

three principals who had been called to a district meeting and the one principal who has been promoted to a new school.

Hlengiwe Mfeka started the workshop with a riddle which was an excellent ice breaker. The questions were entertaining but the answers were closely related to the essence of professional behaviour as she pointed out.

While walking teachers through the process of uploading evidence to the website in order to be assessed and qualify for badges, Hlengiwe emphasised that it was far more important to apply what had been learnt in the previous workshop and take this whole process slowly – than it was to meet the deadline. It was crucial for example for the new vision for the school to become a living document that was owned by all stakeholders and implemented in the school. She explained that ticking the boxes and completing templates was only valuable if it resulted in action and implementation within the school.

Before any evidence could be uploaded to the Learning Gains website, it was necessary to ensure that all teachers had email addresses to identify their own space on the website. This process took quite some time but it went smoothly because the more proficiently tech-savvy teachers assisted the less experienced.



Peter de Lisle had created the functionality on the website to upload evidence for badge assessment and linked Credly to the site to award the badges. He then took teachers step by step through the process of submitting evidence for badges and everyone uploaded something. Homework was to upload more before next week's workshop.

Thembelihle school very generously allowed all teachers to use their wifi for the duration of the workshop. This worked well despite 36 people accessing the internet at the same time.



Submission of media and proof of having accomplished some skills soon became non threatening and sighs of relief were audible in the training room. The ice creams also helped.



Prizes of mini-speakers, a car charge and an SD card were awarded for the following categories:

1. The teacher who had provided the most support for colleagues – the winner was obvious to all – Ntokozo Mkhize from Nogqaza.
2. The first person to tweet – this was Sindy Mwelase from Qhamukile
3. The most active participant on WhatsApp – the winner was the ever - popular Nthabi.

The facilitators felt that the principal of Thembelihle Lesley Visser had gone the extra mile to ensure that the workshop was well organised and therefore she was presented with an SD card.

Schools had group photos taken:



Top left – Traindra and Thembelihle

Top right – Nogqaza

Left Qhamukile

August 30 2014