

Top 10 Ways to be a Successful Technology Coordinator

Doug Prouty
dprouty@cccoc.k12.ca.us

*Adapted from "FCMAT's Top 10 Technology Issues" by Andrew Prestage
and the ISTE Technology Support Index (<http://tsi.iste.org>)*

1) Be an Effective Leader

- Develop and deliver your vision for how technology will improve education.
- Develop and implement a strategic technology plan.
- Create and manage a technology committee with representation from all stakeholders.
- Regularly assess the needs of those you support.
- Define and communicate annual goals for staff and programs.
- Combine administrative and educational technology programs to maximize resources.
- Plan for and monitor critical system lifecycles.
- Be sure an Acceptable Use Policy is in place and signed by students and staff
- Practice annual and semi-annual evaluations of technology staff.

2) Be an Effective Communicator

- Hold regular staff meetings to receive status, issues and to distribute information
- Develop a inner-department and a site communications mechanism
- Visit and listen to teachers to gain an understanding of how your decisions affect the classroom
- Provide input at the cabinet level with your regular attendance or a spokesperson
- Analyze workflow systems to make them more effective. i.e. helpdesk work orders
- Explain why classroom affecting decisions are being implemented
- Provide and use an effective communication vehicle with the community
- Establish a documentation process for the staff that is responsible for troubleshooting and working on systems

3) Establish Priorities and Stick to Them

- Keep a priority check list of your To-Dos with the "Big Picture" in mind
- Acquire and deploy a project rollout strategy utilizing software such as Microsoft Project
- Define implementation timelines clearly without crowding or rushing processes
- Keep projects and implementations simple. Do projects in pieces so that each step is successful.

4) Increase Budget and Funding Sources

- Find ways to stretch your budget so that dollars are used for priority items
- Develop and foster partnerships with agencies and companies that can fiscally benefit your program
- Be aware of, and apply for all state and federal funding opportunities such as E-Rate, DAS, etc
- Recommend formula driven staffing using at tool like the Michigan Staffing Guidelines <<http://techguide.merit.edu/>>
- Consider Total Cost of Ownership <<http://classroomtco.cosn.org/>>

5) Provide and Organize Staff Development

- Collaborate with the curriculum specialist
- Arrange for continuing education of the technology staff
- Find and provide creative professional development opportunities for teachers, administration and classified staff
- Subscribe to an online training service that is made available to all employees
- Use a variety of resources to grow your own knowledge and understanding
- Incorporate ethics and piracy issues into student and staff training

6) Provide and Oversee Technical Support

- Focus on ways to become a quality service provider
- Manage technology support staff aware of “time wasters” and other roadblocks
- Deploy a web-based helpdesk that monitors, prioritizes and auto assigns calls to technicians
- Have a plan for dealing with lengthy and unresolved support requests
- Plan an equipment replacement strategy that connects with the Total Cost of Ownership
- Utilize a hard drive imaging software like Ghost or Imagecast for new and crashed systems.
- Have staff consult an online knowledgebase as a first line of technical help. Utilize vendor sites and support sites such as TechSETS <www.techsets.org>
- Have a donated equipment policy and a resource for recycling outdated equipment
- Maintain a current vendor/platform standard for new computers and peripherals
- Require a 3 year on-site warranty for all new computers
- Be sure the mission to educate students is always in the forefront of decisions and work

7) Unify Levels of Infrastructure, Hardware and Software

- Standardize infrastructure reducing disparity and incompatibility within the district
- Have an upgrade plan and path for hardware and software
- Standardize on a server and workstation operating system throughout the district
- Develop, maintain and provide a software application standard that will be supported

8) Distribute Access

- Provide access to timely personnel, payroll and budget data - reports for staff and administration
- Treat email and Web access as mission critical systems
- Provide an Intranet for access to important forms and information
- Make network access a priority

9) Maintain Network Reliability and Security

- Evaluate and modify your network to get it to its optimum level of performance by looking at router configurations and switch VLANs with segmentation
- Employ a backup procedure and disaster recovery plan that safeguards important data and systems
- Monitor and install current server and workstation software updates/patches
- Deploy virus detection software at the server and workstation level
- Utilize remote management software such as Timbukto and PC Anywhere
- Establish and communicate Internet filtering guidelines and processes
- Target a 24/7 uptime for the network

10) Attend to Politics

- Help to diffuse the Macintosh vs PC debate
- Come between administrative and instructional technology turf battles
- Buffer your technicians from disgruntled staff
- Be an advocate for technology and the IT department to the administration and community