

A Practical Guide for Creating a PLN

Authored by Mike Truong (mtruong@ucmerced.edu or [@mtruong](https://twitter.com/mtruong))

Digital version: <http://crte.ucmerced.edu/fssworkshops>



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Personal/Professional learning network (PLN)

A PLN is a set of informal, social, and often virtual connections to knowledge sources, practitioners, and experts that contribute to one's personal and professional development and knowledge. Below is a table outlining practical steps to create and cultivate your very own PLN.

Identify learning goals	Employ appropriate tools	Develop learning habits	Tips, Tricks, & Tweaks
Learn a new topic/field.	Blogs (e.g., WordPress , Blogger , Tumblr etc.)	Read postings daily.	User Feedly or other RSS readers to aggregate blogs into one place.
Keep current on a topic/field.	Twitter	Tweet resources using appropriate #hashtags .	Use HootSuite or tweet aggregators to manage your Twitter account.
Collect resources related to a topic/field.	Social Bookmarking & Boards (e.g., browser bookmark, Diigo , Pinterest , etc.)	Bookmark or pin resources regularly.	Use tags and/or folders to organize bookmarks and boards.
Organize existing resources.	Learning Boards (e.g., Learnist , Scoopit , Mightybell , etc.)	Add new resources to learning boards.	Install bookmarklets or plugins for one-click posting.
Follow colleagues or experts in a field.	Listservs & Discussion Forums (e.g., POD , EDUCAUSE , etc.)	Post resources in listservs & discussion forums regularly.	Subscribe to professional organizations' listservs.
Share resources within a community.	Google Custom Search	Create custom searches of a topic to keep current on latest development.	In Chrome browser, right-click on address bar to edit search engines.
Contribute knowledge and expertise to a field.	Social networking (e.g., LinkedIn , Google+ , Facebook , etc.)	Comment, reply, and/or like posted resources within your network.	The 90-9-1 principle states that 1% create, 9% edit/modify, & 90% view only. Be the 10%
Collaborate with others around the world.	Collaboratories (e.g., DHCommons , Nanohub , Bamboo Dirt , etc.)	Find a collaboratory within your field and actively participate.	Most cutting-edge research are done collaboratively.

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Personal/Professional Learning Network Resources

Overview of PLN for Educators – YouTube video by Skip Via

- <http://goo.gl/DuwHf>

Sketchy Explanation: Starting a PLN – YouTube video by John Spencer

- <http://goo.gl/7OciY>

PLN: Continuous Professional Development – YouTube video by JC Elgin

- <http://goo.gl/mTvnS>

What is a Professional Learning Network (PLN)? – LiveBinders by Tim Willhelms

- <http://goo.gl/Omehh>

Power Up Your PLN – LiveBinders by Jennifer Carrier Dorman

- <http://goo.gl/jfQ4r>

PLN for Educators – Scoop.it by Daniel Gibson

- <http://goo.gl/JC7Yz>

Cultivating a PLN – Scoop.it by Jennifer Fenton

- <http://goo.gl/A9xCw>

Connected Educator / PLN – Learnist Board by Rosanna Claudia Luzarraga

- <http://goo.gl/grrxB>

Creating your PLN – Learnist Board by Anna Armstrong

- <http://goo.gl/Lkmvj>

Personal Learning Networks – Pinterest Board by Eric Sheninger

- <http://goo.gl/9y3ab>

Social Media and PLNs in Education – Pinterest Board by Tina Wahlert

- <http://goo.gl/AoALT>