

Capturing Wisdoms One at a Time¹

Learn to collaboratively record inspiring stories of local people in four sessions.

Session 1. DEVELOPMENTAL INTERVIEWING

a technique taught in class, based on the instructor's book:

Teachers, Learners, Modes of Practice: Theory and Methodology for Identifying Knowledge Development. New York: Routledge (2017). Available in Fuquay-Varina Community Library on the reference shelf.

- Connect your experiences with an interviewees' positive experiences
- Use multidimensional developmental questions to discover what others know. Familiarize yourself with the *Five Principles for Identifying Wisdoms*.
- Example of writing wisdom captured in developmental rubrics.
- Learn how to be a writing collaborator using *The Seven Standards of Codevelopmental Writing*

Session 2. INTERVIEW EXPERIENCES: Highlights participant interviews done after Session 1.

Session 3. WRITING TECHNIQUES: Discussion with the instructor and Shirley Dannon Simmons, co-author of *A History of Fuquay-Varina* and Volunteer Director of the Fuquay-Varina History Museums.

Session 4. STORY REFINEMENT: Collaborative discussion of participant stories in preparation for inclusion in binders at the Centennial Museum and the new Library.

Participants who complete the course will have the opportunity to join the Capturing Wisdoms Writing Group (meeting TBA using Google Meets or at the Fuquay-Varina History Museum).

- Adults primarily, but also open to youth ages 16 and up who are members of a high school writing or history club.
- David Kirk Dirlam, Ph.D.
- Resident: \$45.00. Non-resident: \$56.25.
- Enrollment limit: 10

¹ © 2020 David K. Dirlam, Ph.D.

Suburban Living Writer, <http://www.suburbanlivingmag.com/>

Author of *Teachers, Learners, Modes of Practice:*

Theory and Methodology for Identifying Knowledge Development

Routledge Explorations in Developmental Psychology, 2017.

Developmental Interviewing

Collaboration

The greatness of the human species rests on our ability to collaborate with each other. There is no collaboration between two people until both know what the other can do that they cannot. Systematic methods for discovering and describing what others know are not widely known. We create field guides to biological communities, but not to our cultural communities. A community that helps its members become better at sharing their skills will improve its capabilities to adapt to changing circumstances.

Wisdom

Wisdom refers to the insights that come from experts in any human activity that becomes widespread enough to have its own specialty.

Developmental Interviewing

Developmental interviewing is a technique for capturing and organizing the wisdom of others. It relies on five principles that organize wisdom in an efficient and powerful way. Those who know the five principles can more quickly and accurately discover and report on the contributions of community members. The principles are described in detail in the section following the table.

Development

The table below illustrates the principles for the skill of developmental interviewing. People who have developed that skill can use it to capture the wisdom of others skilled in any discipline. The titles of each of the ten rows describe what the interviewer does. The four levels are progressively more complex ways of doing it. For any particular interview, any dimension can be ignored, so that there are five levels. We call each level in each dimension a Mode of Practice or (MoP) for that dimension.

For any interview, any MoP in one dimension can be used with any level of another, resulting in ten million patterns of interviews (5^{10}). Since we can identify so many millions of patterns with just 51 terms this is a “powerful” organization. It is also extremely “efficient”, since we need to look at only one MoP at a time, we can find the unique pattern used with only 50 looks.

Experts

Over 300 developmental interviews in over 100 disciplines have shown that every expert can organize their expertise using multiple dimensions of MoPs. After an interview, many experts remark that they found the resulting diagrams very useful ways to organize their knowledge. Some even go on to use the diagrams to evaluate learner progress, create syllabi and lesson plans, inspire individual learners, or write articles describing what they learned.

Getting Started

People who are just learning to conduct developmental interviews should focus on the dimensions without worrying about what level they are using. Following an interview, they can use the table to reflect on what they did and decide on trying more complex approaches.

Developmental Interviewing Dimensions and Modes of Practice

Dimensions	Begin (Try)	Explore (Learn)	Sustain (Get Proficient)	Inspire (Contribute)
Essential Dimensions				
Identify Participants	Protected Interview friends or family	Volunteers Interview interested and willing experts encountered in daily life	Career Interview workplace experts needing to identify developmental patterns	Marketplace Interview ever expanding varieties of expert groups
Collaborate	Introduce Introduce themselves to interviewees. Explain why they were invited to participate. Expect interviewees to take care of themselves or do not think about protecting them.	Disclose Talk about selves, explaining why they are interested in conducting the interview. Explain that the interviews will not be confidential. Explain how they will help the interviewer.	Take Interest Explain how the interview will help both participants. Learn major settings of the participants' experience. Create opportunities to make formerly unarticulated voices audible to a small, known group of users. Build rapport by showing interest in interviewees' responses, being sympathetic, affirming.	Authenticate Explain how the interview will help people that the interviewee cares about. Authenticate the interviewee's expertise by making constructive use of it for broad audiences. Use developmental principles and interviewee knowledge to create more than either could create alone.
Describe Modes of Practice	Levels Mention only the 4 names of the Modes of Practice (levels). Ask interviewees to apply it themselves.	Decision & Time Focus on the decision and practice time (Ignore the graph and needs). Interviewees apply it to a few individuals they know well.	Dialogue Dialogue about the tool with quick and flexible recall of all details. Use it to generate questions. Interviewees apply the tool broadly.	Enrichment Add or modify the table or preface to facilitate interviewee comprehension or incorporate his/her ideas. Interviewees enrich the tool with new concepts.
Define Dimensions	Brainstorm Ask interviewee to brainstorm the things people need to learn to become expert in their field.	First Emotional Ask interviewees to remember frustrating things advanced learners do. Then ask about the development of the first thing they mention.	Multiple Emotional Ask interviewees to remember frustrating things advanced learners do, list dimensions as they talk, and work on the list one dimension at a time after they are ready.	Insightful Ask interviewees to remember frustrating things advanced learners do, separate out dimensions as they talk, and pick unique insights from other dimensions to expand later.
Discover the Interviewee's Modes of Practice	Avoidance Allow the interviewees to avoid details by asking questions or telling what they did or felt.	Impressionistic Record interviewee's impressions of what learners feel, think or have "talent" in.	Behavioral Help interviewees focus on what people do. Ask for examples and then ask them to generalize.	Activity Help interviewees recall the typical settings and interactions of experts.
Discover Commitment Strengths	Grades Be satisfied with grading analogies that use qualitative adjectives.	Practice Times Accept descriptors based on the amount of practice time it takes to achieve each level.	Commitments Record notes after discerning how the answer relates to one of the four commitments (try, learn, become proficient, or contribute).	Innovations See commitments unique to the expertise being discussed which have the potential to change the expertise.

Developmental Interviewing Dimensions and Modes of Practice

Dimensions	Begin (Try)	Explore (Learn)	Sustain (Get Proficient)	Inspire (Contribute)
Helpful Additions				
Listen and Use Notes	Recorded Record the interview	Sequenced Record or take notes. Follow persistently the developmental order of questions even when the interviewee goes in a different direction. Ask more than one question at once.	Interpreted Use notes to pick up on potentially useful leads. Help interviewees interpret experiences that can be useful to others. Let them speak for themselves, unless they want help finding a word or idea.	Constructed Allow interviewees to process at their own pace and participate in constructing the meaning of the interview. Use notes to work together to create a way to express complex ideas, making sure the interviewees contribute more to constructing the narrative than the interviewer.
Improvise	Closed Ask questions that can be answered by a single word or phrase.	Formulaic Ask for elaborations, using formulaic questions like, “What do you mean by that?” “Can you tell me more about that?” Be satisfied with abstractions or adjectives.	Development Focused Help interviewees focus on developmentally relevant information, especially, ask interviewees to describe what people actually do.	Yes, and... Help interviewees frame their narrative by affirming their thoughts and feelings, encouraging them to expound, and connecting their ideas with development by affirming interviewee contributions and added something to them.
Produce Flow	Pushing Keep the talking going even if they have to do it themselves.	Pulling Put words in interviewees’ mouths even if it means interrupting them.	Patient Wait patiently, realizing that people take time to come up with ideas.	Open Provide an atmosphere conducive to open and undistorted communication by being receptive to being changed and describing the change when it happens.
Use Results from Others	Personal Talk about family, friends, etc.	Leaders Talk about researchers or disciplinary leaders.	Other Interviews Talk about other interviewees but give the interview back to the interviewee to modify.	Community Building Talk about ideas from other interviewees to help guide the interviewee as examples (but avoid implying that the “right answer” is known or providing so many ideas that it overwhelms them). Let the interviewees know that a “collective collage” of the interviews will be returned to the community for editing.
Clarify	Imitative Record whatever the interviewee says	Stock Use paradigm questions such as “What does that mean?” or “Can you give examples?”	Lexical Get definitions of disciplinary jargon and enough examples for non-experts to get an idea of disciplinary concepts.	Expansive Use analogies from their developmental expertise to help users connect with both the interviewees and the interviewers discipline

Five Principles for Identifying Wisdoms

Wisdom refers to the insights that come from experts in any human activity that become widespread enough to have their own specialty. For any specialty, there are several major dimensions that succeed each other like paths to the mountain of wisdom which contain only a few segments each. First there are the trailheads, next, gently sloping trails, then, long steep parts, and finally, the peak provides panoramic views. The paths crisscross along the way and people even backtrack along one path when they focus on making progress along another.

1. Multiple Dimensions Exist for Every Expertise

When our context moves from mountains to human development, we replace the path metaphor with the deeper term “dimension,” the first concept needed to understand the development expertise. A writer or musician does not develop all aspects of their activity at once. Grammar, word choice, organization, audience, revision, point of view, or choice of heroes are all separate dimensions of writing development. A musician’s dimensions may include instrument care, sound production, listening, rehearsal, ensemble, or connecting with audiences. Every cultural activity has an equally rich set of dimensions.

2. Modes of Practice within Every Dimension Compete with Each Other

Each dimension has a few levels. We call these a *Modes of Practice* (MoPs). There are five Modes of Practice of any dimension. In order from simple to complex, they are ignoring, beginning, exploring, sustaining, and inspiring. Using developmental interviewing as an example, we choose friends or family (beginning), volunteers (exploring), career associates (sustaining), and or experts from any marketplace sector (inspiring). Interviewers methods for clarifying answers for future readers develop first, by merely recording what was said (beginning), next, interviewers use stock questions (exploring), later they learn how to get clear definitions of disciplinary jargon (sustaining), and ultimately, the most experienced interviewers create analogies to convey new ideas (inspiring).

Each MoP in a dimension is done at a different time from the others in that dimension. The person we interview can either be close to us or not. The method for clarifying can either be prosaic or imaginative, but not both. We know that interviewee choices and clarifying methods are different dimensions, because any clarifying method can be used with any source of interviewees. We know that two aspects of an activity fit in different dimensions if all levels of one can go with any level of the other. This basic characteristic of dimension is what makes it a deeper term than path.

Every dimension has unique MoPs, but the terms describe both their level of complexity and what happens to them over time as people use them.

Ignoring. The first level of any dimension is simply to ignore it altogether. None of us has time to try every activity or field of expertise. The value in looking for the MoPs that we ignore is that we cannot collaborate until we become aware of knowledge others have that we do not. Of course, we also need to be able to show to potential collaborators what we know that they do not.

Beginning. To get beyond ignoring a dimension, learners need to start doing something related to the activity and it does not matter which dimension they choose. An aspiring writer could put a word on paper, imagine a superhero, decide to write a diary, or start with some other dimension. An aspiring musician could make a noise with an instrument, listen to someone play, or choose some friends to learn with. These are all beginning modes of practice. Everybody starts there, so they are very common. But other people accept them much like they accept scribbles and stick people drawings. They are signs of immature use that rarely engender praise. So they don't grow in usage and any new approach takes their place.

Exploring. The second level is the easy, exploratory approach. There are so many simple things to try that learners eagerly spend time at them. They increase in usage so rapidly that it does not take long before people tire of them. When people reach their teens, new opportunities for exploration abound. Writers choose friends to write to or imagine a real-life hero. Musicians learn a song, listen to many radio stations, or talk about music. Young learners often explore with little regard for long-term consequences. Sometimes their explorations lead to whole rewarding careers. At other times, teenagers explore drugs, gambling and other dead-end activities. Remembering the dangers of adolescence helps to reveal that some of new, simple modes of practice that learners explore can also be dangerous. Exploratory modes of practice need to be replaced with more complex approaches to be sustainable.

Sustaining. It takes work to get past exploration, but such work brings more lasting rewards. Writing for publication and doing music for audiences brings monetary and social benefits. The rewards make it possible to sustain an activity. As well as such careers, lifelong hobbies and volunteer activities often show sustained modes of practice. Once sustaining approaches have become established, they leave less time for exploration.

Inspiring. Even pay and social recognition can become wearing. Eventually boredom and frustration with the way things are done may lead to abandoning an activity and starting something new. Alternatively, people begin creating innovations and discoveries within their established activity. The possibilities are endless. The results inspire others, becoming meaningful when people begin quoting or copying one's activities. The possibilities and excitement lead to further innovations and discoveries. Sometimes, when experts work on new discoveries or innovations in one dimension, they pay so little attention to others that they use less complex MoPs in them.

3. Iterative Learning Produces Increasingly Quick, Accurate, and Frequent Performance

Once people commit to a new MoP their continued use of it leads to improved performance. Iterative learning is simply the repetition of a MoP. Simply repeating its performance results in steady improvements, no matter how long a person has been doing it. There is no limit to the effects of repetitive performance on speed and accuracy. Take notice when someone performs a MoP in an unusually short period of time with hardly any mistakes. If you are a casual observer, noting such a performance often brings a smile.

4. Transformative Learning Replaces Less with More Complex MoPs in a Dimension

Repeated performance leads only to faster and more accurate performance of MoPs. If you are an instructor or mentor and a learner's performance is fast and accurate but less than inspiring, it is often a good time to suggest that they consider transformative learning.

Transformative learning occurs when MoPs lose their acceptance. For all but inspiring MoPs, users can no longer capitalize on them, whether personally, socially, or economically. When a MoP is no longer rewarding, we need this new type of learning to find a more complex MoP that promises more success.

Transformative learning occurs in a sequence of commitments.

Dilemma: learners must become aware of a dilemma relating to a less developed MoP.

Examination: they examine it through self-assessment and sharing with others to reveal a more complex successor.

Enabling: they have to enable a new MoP through planning, rehearsal, and mentoring.

Performance: they perform their new MoP acceptably in a social context.

5. Each Mode of Practice Has Unique Performance Parameters

When scientists study an ecosystem, they count changes in the species over time, observe predator-prey interactions, and note the resources that each species requires. Armed with accurate descriptions, MoPs can be studied in the same way. In fact, such observations can help to identify them. Beginning MoPs are so common that they don't increase in usage, are soon replaced by exploratory MoPs, and are not accepted much by others. Exploratory MoPs grow very fast in usage but with little commitment, they are eventually replaced by sustaining MoPs. Those grow more slowly with more commitment, but eventually give way to inspiring MoPs, which are almost non-existent at early levels of experience, grow in usage at a moderate rate, and show the highest amount of commitment.

Endemicity: how common the MoP is among all potential users

Performance rate: how rapidly the MoP grows in frequency of performance

Commitment: how often the MoP is used instead of others.

Using the Five Principles

The principles and their components amount to just 18 concepts. That is just a little more than the number of organ systems in the body, so is easily memorized. But like the organ systems, there is an infinite number of ways that they can be combined, measured and observed. Moreover they apply to activities ranging from conversations that take only minutes, to personal development taking whole lifespans, and even to civilization formation that takes centuries.

The principles are summarized in the figure below and the outline following it. Notice, in the figure that at any point in time, users may alternate between two or more MoPs.

The MoPs in any dimension are so distinct that it takes only a little rehearsal to tell when others are using the simpler levels. People need no skill at all to overlook or begin using a dimension, so those MoPs are very common. Transient, impulsive use is a hallmark of exploration. Since exploratory modes grow very fast, exhaust others' acceptance, and collapse, modes that we call sins or make us angry are signs of their use. What people do in their jobs, lifelong hobbies, or volunteer work are all sustaining modes. Discoveries and innovations are usually identifiable only in activities that observers sustain. This means observers should look for them in activities of everyday life or in dimensions they have already developed sustained modes. Observers should be aware that they are likely to miss inspiring modes of practice in other dimensions.

Areas of insight that understanding of MoPs can facilitate include discovery, innovation, conflict resolution, education, and leadership. The contexts range from conversation, to lifespan development, workplaces, communities, and ultimately to history. In short, they apply to every context where wisdom contributes to human well-being. Discovering and reporting on these skills can help communities develop.

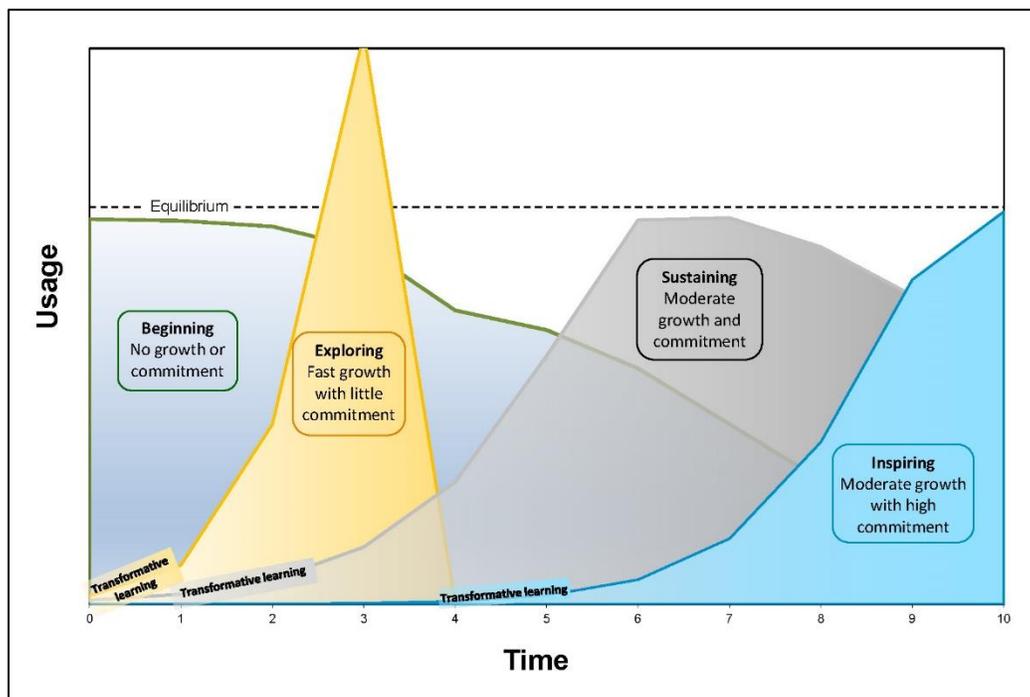


Figure 1. *Modes of Practice in One dimension*

- A. **Multiple Dimensions** exist for every expertise.
- B. **Modes of Practice** of increasing levels of complexity compete within each dimension are (a) unused, (b) beginning, (c) exploring, (d) sustaining, and (e) inspiring.
- C. **Iterative Learning** produces increasingly quick, accurate, and frequent MoP performance.
- D. **Transformative Learning** replaces less with more complex modes in four steps: (a) encountering a dilemma with a less developed mode (b) examining it through self-assessment and sharing with others to find a more complex successor, (c) enabling the successor through planning, rehearsal, and mentoring, and (d) performing it in a social context.
- E. **Performance Parameters** are how much people's use of each MoP is (a) common, (b) fast growing, (c) committed, and (d) equilibrium usage based on acceptance by others.

The Seven Standards of Codevelopmental Writing

Codevelopmental writing is a process for creating collaborative wisdom that includes a developmental interview and a report based on it. A developmental interview is a collaboration between a developmental writer and an expert in any field. The developmental writers provides the succession model of development and encourages the expert to describe activities that distinguish between the modes of practice found in the major dimensions of his or her field.

The process results in an efficient and powerful organization of expert knowledge as well as discoveries and innovations about the development of that knowledge. The writing disseminates these accomplishments in public reports that accurately reflect both participants and attend to the knowledge of readers and users.

1. Codevelopmental writing begins with a **developmental interviewer**

Collaboration wisdom can only be created when two or more experts understand what each other knows that they do not. It becomes Codevelopmental when one participant knows the five principles for identifying wisdom: Multiple Dimensions, Modes of Practice, Iterative Learning, Transformative Learning, and Performance Parameters. Interviewing for stories makes less explicit use of the succession model than other types of reports.

2. Codevelopmental writing relies on the **interviewee's expertise**

All experts can use the levels of complexity to organize experiences of themselves and others who have developed their expertise. Developmental writers facilitate their identification of dimensions and distinctions between levels. The result is a rich and innovative theory of the development of the expertise.

3. Codevelopmental writing serves as an **efficient and powerful organizer** of expert knowledge.

Developmental writers rely on the expert's identification of the dimensions. Early on interviews they often suggest dimensions based on the expert's prior statements and interviews with other experts. The developmental interviewers improve over time in their attention to the 5 principles, usually in the order given. They also improve in their ability to listen and take notes, improvise, produce flow, and clarify.

4. Codevelopmental writing creates **developmental discoveries and innovations**

The Codevelopmental writing method reveals that multiple experts provide increasingly accurate theories and innovations about the development of their expertise. Techniques for combining results from numerous collaborative interviews range from ad hoc sorting useful for a few interviewees to grouping by frequencies of keywords or keyword pairs when many interviews are involved.

5. Codevelopmental writing involves **public reporting**

Discoveries and innovations do not exist without someone reporting them. Developmental writers create reports in the form of stories, developmental rubrics, or academic papers. Stories are narratives that help readers to have a better understanding of the life-challenges, skills, and contributions of experts. Developmental rubrics are matrices with descriptions of each MoP that

are used to assess educational progress by both instructors and students. Instructors design curriculum, identify students current progress, inspire transformative learning, and respond to assessment demands while students use them to identify new learning opportunities. Academic papers help to preserve discoveries and innovations.

Codevelopmental writing involves sustaining or inspiring audiences, multiple or common perspectives, past, anytime, and future time frames, structured memory or inference-based continuity, chronological, deductive, or inductive sequences, closure, literal, multiple, or metaphorical word selection, and complex transformations.

DIMENSION	Beginning	Exploring	Sustaining	Inspiring
Audience	self	one-to-one or small familiar group	homogenous group	diverse
Perspective	unitary	multiple	common	universal
Time Frame	present	present and past	past & any-time	future & any time
Continuity	inconsistent	digress and return	structured memory	inference-based
Sequence	alogical or prelogical	chronological		deductive or inductive
Format	rambling prose	sketch	closure	argument or allegory
Word Selection	pre-literal	literal		multiple or metaphorical
Sentence Structure	kernel sentences	embedded phrases	embedded clauses	complex transformations

6. Codevelopmental writing strives for **accuracy and agreement**

While writing reports the developmental writers will check any facts, draft and revise the report, return it to the interviewee for comments, redraft and revise into both parties are comfortable, and share the results with others.

7. Codevelopmental writing attends to the **knowledge of readers and users of the report**

Codevelopmental writing is storytelling with a purpose. Stories and developmental rubrics help readers and users to remember important practices. The more time it takes to develop those practices, the less likely readers are to understand and appreciate them. The writing needs to capture enough detail so that readers can connect advanced practices to their own experience.

In short, codevelopmental writing:

1. begins with a **developmental interviewer**,
2. relies on the **interviewee's expertise**,
3. serves as an **efficient and powerful organizer of expert knowledge**,
4. creates **developmental discoveries and innovations**,
5. involves **public reporting**,
6. strives for **accuracy and agreement**, and
7. attends to the **knowledge of readers and users of the report**.