

Learning Solutions: Investigating Fundamental Tools, Resources & Strategies to Support Professionals Addressing Persistent Issues in STEM | 2011424

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Project Description

The *Learning Solutions* project was a pilot and feasibility project designed to support professionals working on important societal issues related to STEM. The project focused on developing tools, resources, and strategies to that would help STEM professionals overcome the myriad, typically unanticipated, day-to-day, non-STEM-related challenges that often prevent otherwise well-intentioned and competent people from achieving their goals. As our project documented, most change agents falter along the long and often convoluted pathway between idea and successful execution because they bump up against barriers they did not expect, were not trained for, and did not know how to overcome.

Key Achievements

The project identified dozens of day-to-day challenges which fell under four main categories: Personal Growth and Development, Improving Your Day-to-Day Work and Processes, Building Your Team, and Communicating and Sharing Information Across Formats.

Ultimately, though, we were unable to create a time- and resource-appropriate dissemination vehicle for our tools. We concluded that although there was clearly a need for tools and strategies to help STEM professionals solve these kinds of day-to-day challenges, the long-term need for the specific interface we tried to create through this project proved ineffective and ill-suited to solving the problems we identified.

Audience & Settings

Audience: STEM professionals, particularly ISE professionals

Disciplinary area: general STEM

Access and Inclusion:

We discovered that a majority of individuals we interviewed and surveyed appeared to lack access to appropriate social networks for at least some of the challenges they faced, but this problem was particularly acute for younger individuals, and those from low income or recent immigrant backgrounds; individuals who historically might be described as lacking *social* and/or *cultural capital*.

The project sought to find strategies and learning solutions specifically attuned to needs and realities of these groups.

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