



Kaleidoscope: Emerging Patterns in Media¹

Ted Ward and Joe Levine

Teachers are more likely to adopt and adapt new techniques learned in workshops if the workshop is designed to provide them with some direct experience using the technique.

Some attempts to teach instructional techniques to teachers have been less than successful because of failure to employ the right techniques to *teach* the new ones. Typically lectures are given to teach teachers on the efficacy of discussion groups; discussion groups are employed to teach the uses of tape recording. Tape recordings are used to teach about the use of films; films are used to show examples of teaching. In effect, we sometimes use an irrelevant and outmoded technique to "teach about" some other medium, and wonder why we have a difficult time convincing teachers of the value of the new technique. If the medium is the message, as Marshall McLuhan suggests, we are contradicting ourselves when we use an irrelevant medium to teach educational technology. Whenever we are trying to impress people with the potential of a given instructional procedure, it is preferable to use that medium to demonstrate itself. In such a case there is reinforcement between the medium and the message.

The question of consistency of medium and message is not always a matter of identical medium and message. The real issue is what we do want to have people *do* with the new information. If we want them only to *know about* something we can often provide this information through a more passive medium such as the lecture. If on the other hand we feel that adoption would be enhanced by opportunities to experience more directly the use of the particular technology, we must provide opportunities for people to experience the technology in their own learning environment.

¹Ted Ward and Joe Levine. Kaleidoscope: Emerging Patterns in Media. Excerpt from a presentation. The Council on Exceptional Children, Arlington, Virginia 1971