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## Best Practice: Identifying Exemplary Technology Teachers

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assignments. A Palm (PDA) based system of portable grade collection is employed for on the spot feedback to students.

Student progress should be assessed using a variety of tools and measures. Assessment should be non-linear. Opportunities for student achievement and success must match the diverse nature of our students. A broad array of measures, combined with one-on-one teacher feedback, provides opportunities for every student to be their very best.

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**Best Practice:** *Identifying Exemplary Technology Teachers*

**Best Practice Nominator:** Philip A. Reed

**Description of Best Practice:** There are several significant studies that highlight what an effective teacher does in the classroom. For example, Flanders’ interaction analysis categories (1970, *Analyzing Teaching Behavior*) show how effective teachers interact with students. More recently, five key behaviors and five helping behaviors explain what teachers can do to have a significant impact on student learning (see Borich, 1999, *Effective Teaching Methods*). In the technology education classroom, however, the learning environment is complex and exemplary activities extend outside the school. There are ‘great’ technology teachers but what makes them great? Obviously, some of the characteristics would include participation in local, state, and national/provincial associations, active involvement in student associations (e.g. Technology Student Association), curriculum development, and presenting at professional functions. A model for technology education teachers would be helpful for teacher education programs and for providing strategies to in-service teachers. The first step is to identify teachers that are recognized for being exemplary. Many such teachers are identified in this book. The second step would be to ask them how they do it and to get them to put their ideas into a form that could be shared (i.e. video, publication, and workshop). One teacher who frequently shares her successes through presentations and state association involvement is Andrea Adams.

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**Best Practice:** *Technology Days*

**Best Practice Nominator:** Bill Paige

**Description of Best Practice:** Technology Days is an activity that is designed to help the people who live in a community become more technologically literate, better understand what technology education is and is not, and encourage students to consider teaching technology education as a career path. Students teach technology education lessons covering topics in communications, transportation, and manufacturing. Participants are solicited by an advertisement in the local newspaper. Technology Days allows classroom teachers to showcase their technology education program and it is a wonderful public relations tool. It also provides students an opportunity to “show their stuff” to adults in the community.

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**Best Practice:** *Team 384*

**Best Practice Nominator:** Sharon A. Brusic

**Description of Best Practice:** Since 1989, school teams from around the United States and the world have competed in FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics tournaments. These events “team professionals and young people to solve an engineering design problem in an intense and competitive way. The program is a life-changing, career-molding experience” (FIRST, 2005, <http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/>). Team 384, creators of Sparky 6.0 (the robot), would assuredly agree with this statement. Students (about 40 of them) at John Randolph Tucker