NPDL LEADABLES

Efficiency is for Robots

Artificial intelligence. On-line banking. Driverless cars. Tele-surgery. Robo accountants, lawyers, pilots. It's incredible how those cheap little microchips that are preoccupied by algorithms can accomplish so much without ever taking a bathroom break! Robots are the paragon of efficiency!

All this efficiency can make us feel a little vulnerable. Every technological revolution has left scores of unemployed victims in its wake. Will the Artificial Intelligence revolution replace educators too?

Not likely - as Kevin Kelly, author of The Inevitable explains, "Humans shouldn't have been doing those jobs anyway… let efficiency go to the robots and let experiences and emotions come to us."

Kelly says we will need people to do what AI can't do. And those jobs aren't tied to the clock. We need scientists who can analyse failed experiments. We need inventors who can imagine solutions for complex problems. We need social and health care practitioners who can empathize with our tangled emotions. We need innovators who ask questions and think outside the algorithm. We need creatives who can reach our souls. And, importantly, we need educators who can create conditions for young people to prepare to thrive in those creative, critical, collaborative, and compassionate futures.

So, AI doesn't likely mean job loss for educators, but it does mean job redefinition. We need educators who think in the future tense. They build trusting relationships with students and peers and help students find and build on their interests and aspirations. They provide timely, high quality feedback and encouragement. They pro-actively develop and redesign strategies to activate wonder, character and creativity. They are voracious learners who are open to being taught by their peers, students and community. They challenge their students to think for themselves and to contribute beyond themselves.

In what ways are we preparing our students for a world that no longer exists? If we are willing to leave efficiency to the robots and begin to embrace our roles as activators of learning, what would we need to change?

Questions for Discussion:

- What can we stop doing?

- What can we start doing?

- What should we continue to do?

- Take a look at the Teacher Self-Assessment tool in the NPDL Suite of Tools. What would you personally like to work on and why?

New Pedagogies for Deep Learning™
A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

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