PERSONAL LEARNING ENVIROMENT

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My personal learning environment begins with a cup of coffee. Why? Because everything productive in my life generally begins with coffee or caffeine. From the coffee base, I created three different areas within the steam: virtual learning, traditional learning and informal learning.

My virtual learning environment includes the majority of the web 2.0 applications that I utilize on a daily basis. Youtube is one of the tools that I use the most for learning. If there is something I am curious about or something that I need to know more about, I check youtube for a video. I learned how to change my car’s headlights through youtube videos. Before moving to Oregon, I used youtube videos to learn about nonprofit organizations I was interested in and to learn about the city and culture of Eugene. Additionally, I use youtube to watch Ted Talk videos. Ted Talks help me learn and grow as an individual; they also inspire me and motivate me. Netflix or Pandora is usually on in the background while I do homework. I included Google since Google is generally the starting point for all learning and I utilize Google Docs for a lot of collaborative projects. Google docs gives me the opportunity to work on projects in many different locations: home, school and work. I included Facebook on my PLE, unfortunately Facebook Is more of a distraction from academic learning but it assists me in social learning. I also use Facebook to look up organizations and influential people that I enjoy following and learning about. Wikipedia I use when I need to look up a fact.

The middle stream of steam is my traditional learning environment. I put all three of my schools on there: University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, Minnesota State University-Mankato and the University of Oregon. I see these as places where people expect you to learn. I also included professional development workshops with traditional learning environments. I enjoy taking advantage of workshops and conferences and have attended many in the past.

The third stream of learning is my informal learning environments. These are places outside of the traditional learning atmosphere. This stream of learning is set up as a branch rather than coffee steam because I learn a lot through nature. I enjoy my studying and reading outside. I also enjoy traveling and learning through experience, such as hiking and exploring nature. Traveling is exposed me to new situations, cultures and circumstances that I wouldn’t normally be exposed to.

The first feature on this branch is a money sign. I consider work a learning environment where I get the opportunity to be paid while I learn. Customer service has raised my emotional intelligence and taught me a lot about people interaction. Before moving to Oregon, I managed a hotel. I had never done management before, the job gave me an opportunity to take risk, learn by trial and error and to build skills that are not learned in the classroom. The next item I have is a laptop. I rely a lot on my laptop to get information and to complete homework. My laptop is my lifeline. This term, I went the first 2 weeks without a laptop and I felt so lost and disconnected from my department and studies. The next symbol I have is the Pro-Bone-O (PBO) logo. PBO is a nonprofit that I volunteer with. PBO provides free veterinary care for homeless individual’s companion animals. PBO has given me the opportunity to gain hands on nonprofit experience as I volunteer at clinics, write grants and serve as an active board member.

The next item is “volunteering.” I have learned a lot as a volunteer and traveled as far as Albuquerque and Boston to serve as a volunteer. Volunteering gives me a chance to do hands on learning. The next item is a book because I love reading and learn a lot through reading. I love having physical books to read versus virtual ones. Lastly, is a paintbrush because the arts have given me an opportunity to experiment and learn in an environment where there is no wrong answers.