

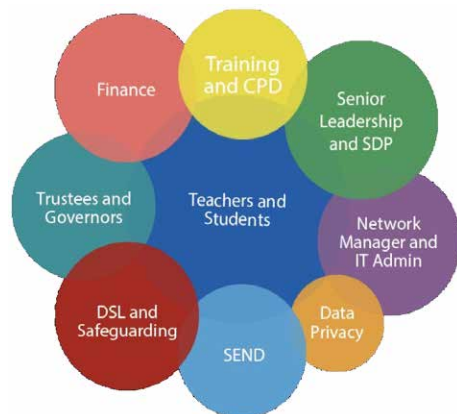
Review of Al Kingsley's Digital Strategy presentation at ISTE

Author: Mark Anderson, ICT Evangelist

In the world of edtech, few events are higher on the bucket list for teachers and leaders than ISTE. Formally known as the International Society for Technology in Education, it holds a conference every year where thought leaders, practising educators and all-round awesome people from the world of educational technology come together to share and disseminate the latest research, advice, ideas and strategies.

The NetSupport team was really pleased to support ISTE21 in lots of ways this year. Part of that saw us presenting multiple times; sometimes about our own products but also in other areas, offering advice on topics that we know will help others.

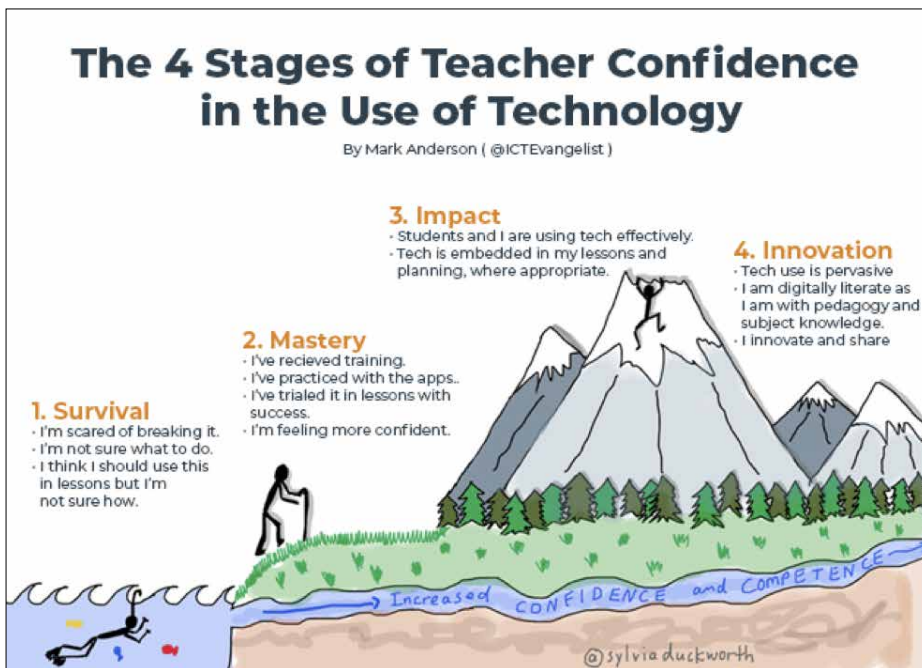
To that end, Al Kingsley, NetSupport's CEO, shared a virtual presentation on a topic he is certainly knowledgeable and passionate about: 'Digital Strategy'. Titled "[Shaping your School Digital Strategy – Hints and Tips](#)", Kingsley's presentation shared the finer points from the 'Guide to Creating a Digital Strategy in Education' that he and I co-authored.



Key strands to consider in your digital strategy, shared by Al Kingsley in his presentation

In his presentation, he invited the audience to think carefully about the strands you need to consider to successfully deploy and embed effective and impactful uses of technology in your educational setting.

From the outset, he explained that your starting point shouldn't be how much money you have available to spend. Instead, he recommended carrying out



a thorough review of the technology you already have, looking carefully at what is being used, what could be used better – and highlighting the bright spots amongst your staff in terms of their existing edtech use and the effective strategies they use.

Sure, there may be the need to invest – and he went on to talk about that – but the key point is that whilst finances can be a constraint on what you can do, it shouldn't guide the things that you do. He added that you should hold teachers and students at the heart of your strategy, taking on board the key points from all of your stakeholders in your organisation.

Asking the audience to consider their priorities over conveniences, Kingsley stressed the importance of working with teachers to improve both their competence and confidence, referencing Mandinach & Cline's work on the topic and the '4 stages of teacher confidence'. "After all", he said, "Edtech is not the solution; it's about shaping your vision of a school for a digital world."

"The shocker" he went on to say, is that all of this isn't even about edtech; it should be just one of the many things in your setting which help you achieve your overall goals and vision. Sure, just as you would want a return

on your investment from your human resource, so you should expect the same from your technology. The goal is that technology should just be a part of your day-to-day fabric and isn't a conversation that's required each and every time: it should be embedded and doing the job it is exactly intended to do, such as improving your communication, enhancing your teaching, developing your capacity from time saved and making learning more accessible.

Kingsley shared that your strategy should ideally fall under six distinct pillars, namely:

- Innovation of learning
- Students' digital skills
- Educators' skills
- Technology and infrastructure
- Effective communication
- Everyone's wellbeing.

If you like the sound of all of this, then if you're an ISTE member, you can [watch his presentation back here](#). However, if you're not, why not have a read of the popular (and free!) '[Guide to Creating A Digital Strategy in Education](#)' [here](#).