An In-Depth Look at the Moves of Fast Fish Learners for Workforce Development Practitioners: Overview of Workshop Materials

The materials accompanying this slideshow are archived from the first workshop of a series of three designed to introduce "Fast Fish Learning" to workforce practitioners and to take a deeper dive into the concepts. They begin with a brief overview. Participants engaged in working groups to consider the following documents/concepts below. There were two working sessions of ~45 minutes. Each was preceded by a brief introduction. The materials can also be used independently or as part of a small working group.

1. Reflecting upon the five components necessary for Fast Fish Learning (FFL) and considering in what ways you support FFL as Workforce Development Practitioners.

   Using the document entitled, "Essential Features of Learning Designs for Supporting Fast Fish Learners/Workers: Considerations for Workforce Development Practitioners" as a guide, reflect upon the ways that you create learning designs that support Fast Fish Learning.

2. Analyzing the attitudes and moves that Fast Fish Learners engage in by applying them to two case studies.

   Begin with the document entitled, "Attitudes and Moves for Fast Fish Learners/Workers." Review it to understand the moves of Fast Fish Learners. Then use the information to analyze the case studies of Malek and Latisha from the documents, "Case Study #1: Malek's Career Shift" and "Case Study #2: Latisha Studies to Become a Childcare Worker." Finally, consider the document, "Ten Research Points for Developing Fast Fish Learners in the Workforce and Workforce Development."

NEXT LEVEL LAB

HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

accenture

What Does it Take to Help People to Think, Learn, and Perform Better in the Workplace?

Next Level Learning: Three Core Pedagogical Concepts

Cognitive Neuroscience Rationale Revealed: A Research Based Users' Manual to the Mind: *When learners understand the rationale behind learning and thinking moves, they are more likely to use the strategies and apply them flexibly as needed.*
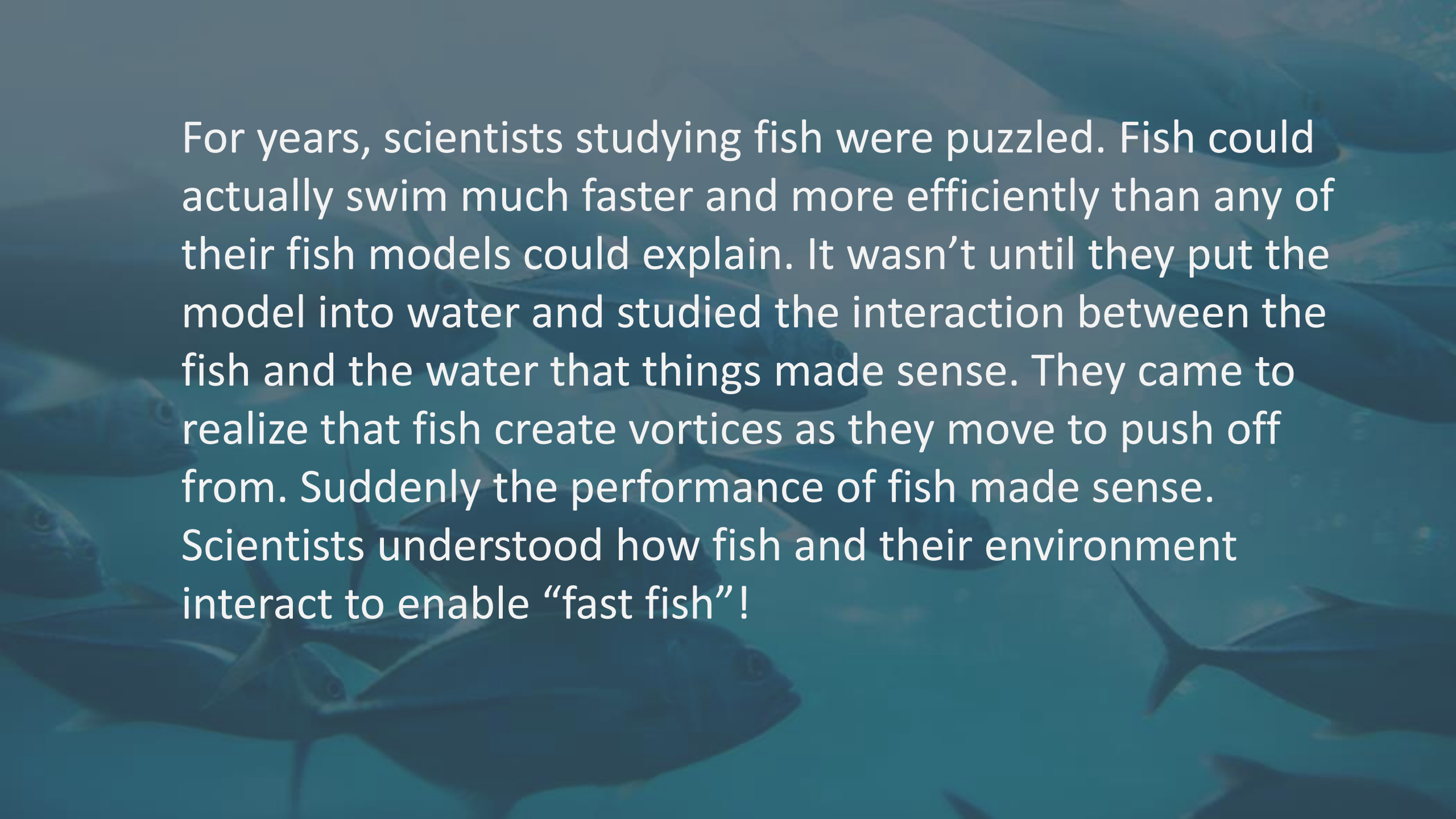
Generative Moves: Transfer to One's Own Situation: *Instead of teaching one approach that loses nuance and applicability as problem levels change, learners are invited into a process of generating specific, contextualized strategies as apply to their own circumstances.*

Contextualized Agency: Behaving Like Fast Fish: *Learning and performing effectively is accomplished by modifying our contexts to support our best work just as fish create vortices in water to push off from to swim their fastest.*

*I will use all of these in the design of our sessions.

For years, scientists studying fish were puzzled. Fish could actually swim much faster and more efficiently than any of their fish models could explain. It wasn't until they put the model into water and studied the interaction between the fish and the water that things made sense. They came to realize that fish create vortices as they move to push off from. Suddenly the performance of fish made sense. Scientists understood how fish and their environment interact to enable "fast fish"!
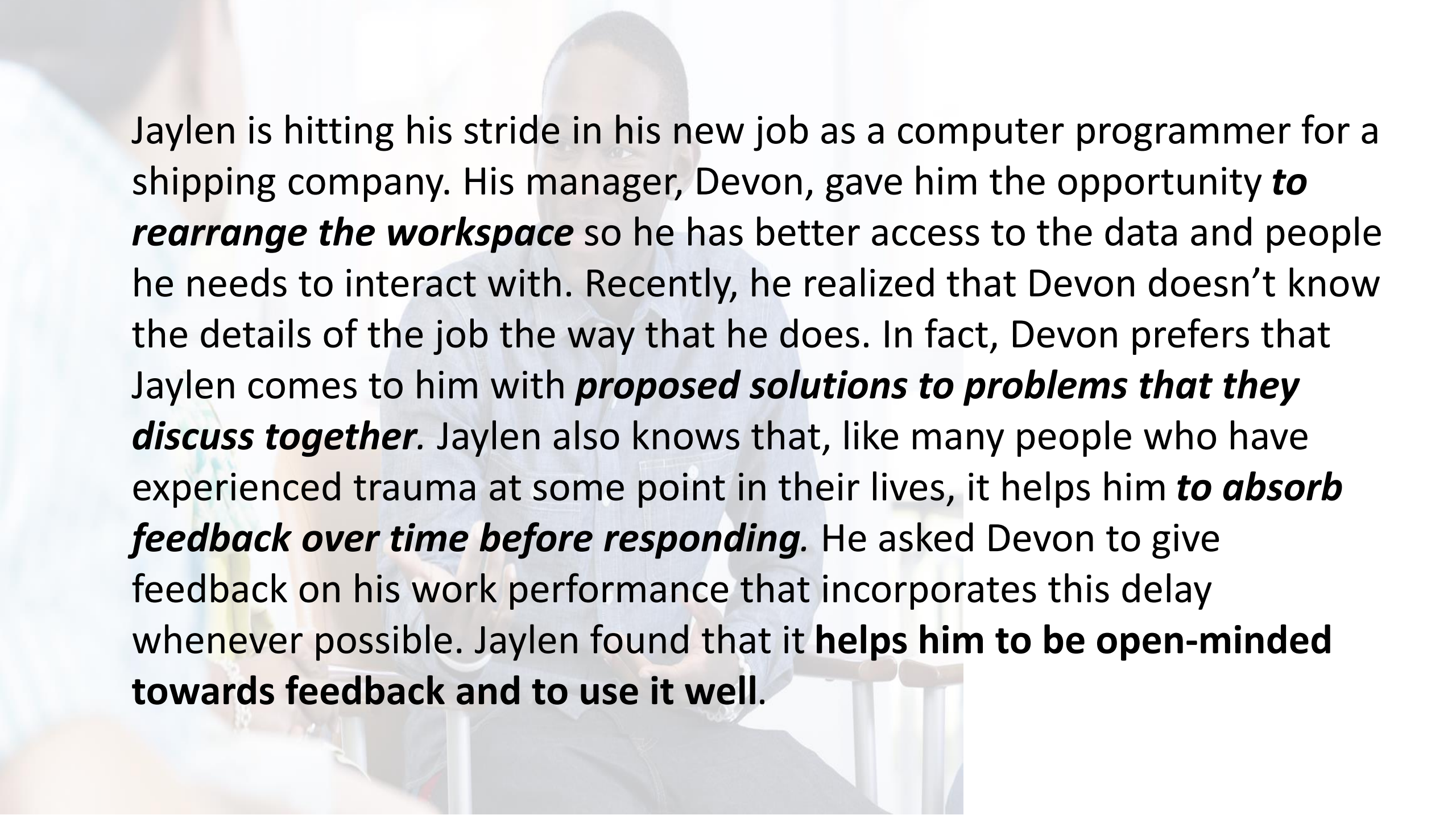
"Fast Fish-style" generative moves focus on modifications to the surrounding contexts that can improve thinking, learning, and performance.

Here's what "Fast Fish" moves might sound like:

"I realize that, like many people who have experienced trauma at some point in their lives, it works better for me to absorb feedback over time before responding. I asked my manager to give feedback on my work performance that incorporates this delay whenever possible. This helps me to be open-minded towards feedback and to use it well."

"I realized that moving my desk into a corner gave me control over when I needed to focus and when I was ready to be social. I had to navigate fewer sticky situations and got more work done."

Jaylen is hitting his stride in his new job as a computer programmer for a shipping company. His manager, Devon, gave him the opportunity *to rearrange the workspace* so he has better access to the data and people he needs to interact with. Recently, he realized that Devon doesn't know the details of the job the way that he does. In fact, Devon prefers that Jaylen comes to him with *proposed solutions to problems that they discuss together.* Jaylen also knows that, like many people who have experienced trauma at some point in their lives, it helps him *to absorb feedback over time before responding.* He asked Devon to give feedback on his work performance that incorporates this delay whenever possible. Jaylen found that it **helps him to be open-minded towards feedback and to use it well**.

Five Essential Components for Fast Fish Learning
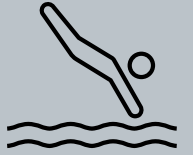
1 Reflective Learners/ Workers Who Have Agency
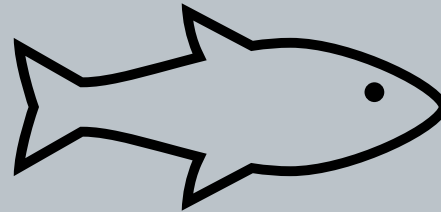
3 Modifiable Learning and Work Contexts
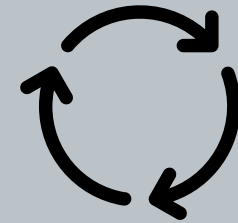
4 Multiple/ Repeated Opportunities for Engagement

2 Contextualized Authentic Learning and Work Performances

5 Meaningful Feedback and Feedforward
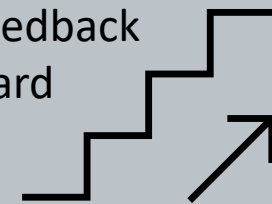
Working Session One: What Are The Components of Fast Fish Learning And In What Ways Are You Supporting it?

Using the document entitled "Essential Features of Learning Designs for Supporting Fast Fish Learners/Workers: Considerations for Workforce Development Practitioners" as a guide, reflect upon the ways that you create learning designs that support Fast Fish Learning.

Moves of Fast Fish Learners/Workers

Malek Shifts Careers as a Fast Fish Learner/Worker

As a learner and worker…

- I worked my way up to a night shift supervisor at a hotel.
- I can handle all kinds of problems but work best when I have one thing that I can really focus on and think about at a time. I know a lot about how things work.
- I dread feedback. It is often bad news. If I know feedback is coming, I am anxious and if it is bad, I just want to get away.
- Because of this, I know how to soften feedback for people who work for me—to help them take it in.
- I know how to make customers feel heard. I listen well.
- As a person of color, I often feel overlooked by supervisors.

What Fast Fish Moves is Malek making? What else can he do?

The new work context in food services…

- Has quiet moments and busy moments.
- Has a supervisor who works at a distance and comes to town periodically.
- Involves interacting with a diverse staff and supporting younger people coming into the business.
- Issues arise that often need someone to take initiative and approach thoughtfully; there is no immediate supervisor to guide what to do.
- Has tended to see a lot of turnover in the newest employees.
- Involves work with perishables so there has to be a responsible person who ultimately handles things.
- Involves learning the science of the various products and how to best maintain them.

Learning to be a Childcare Worker as a Fast Fish Learner/Worker: Latisha

As a learner and worker...

- I worked as a waitress in high school. I know how to work under pressure and keep my cool.
- As a waitperson, I juggled lots of needs at once.
- I thrive on social energy.
- I take initiative and seek input when I need it.
- I find it hard to work in very quiet spaces.
- If someone gives feedback in an abrupt way, I can be sensitive to it.
- I find it hard to engage in trainings that seem pointless or that don't connect to the tasks at hand.

What Fast Fish Moves is Latasha making?
What else can she do?

Studying to become a Childcare Worker...

- Involves learning a lot of rules and procedures.
- Being in the moment with the kids.
- Being able to juggle lots of needs at once.
- Learning from and with more experienced childcare workers.
- Dealing with different personalities and at least one person who is protective of the children's needs and thus hard on the staff.
- Trying to keep putting oneself out there for the kids even when one might feel triggered or not able to engage.

Working Session Two: What Are The Attitudes and Moves of Fast Fish Learners?

Begin with the document entitled ["Attitudes and Moves for Fast Fish Learners/Workers."](#) Review it to understand the moves of Fast Fish Learners. Then use the information to analyze the case studies of Malek and Latisha from the documents ["Case Study #1: Malek's Career Shift"](#) and ["Case Study #2: Latisha Studies to Become a Childcare Worker."](#) Finally, consider the document ["Ten Research Points for Developing Fast Fish Learners in the Workforce and Workforce Development."](#)