

**Job Satisfaction and FourSight Preferences Among
Public School Teachers and Administrators
An Executive Summary of LaMattina's Master's Thesis**

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Introduction

In a profession where nearly half of its employees quit after the first five years it is a wonder what keeps the other half there. Job satisfaction is key to any career, but especially needs to be addressed when it comes to the teaching profession. Many teachers experience burnout and frustration in the first few years and give up. Why is that? What makes some teachers stick it out and others lose it in the first few years? This study was designed to examine just that. It set out to find what it is that teachers enjoy the most and least about their job. It also attempted to see if there was a correlation between these responses and teachers' *FourSight* preferences.

Pertinent Background Information

In 2003 Mann conducted a study that examined the *FourSight* preferences of 200 urban school teachers and administrators. In his study he found that nearly half of the participants had a style preference of a Clarifier. Across the eleven departments nine of them also had high Clarifier preferences. The other two departments, Art/Music and Elementary Education had high Implementer and Ideator preferences. Therefore, it is safe to assume that most teachers are Clarifiers.

Now it is time to go a step further and examine what teachers enjoy the most and least about their job. At the end of the *FourSight* measure two open-ended questions were added. These questions asked the participants to answer what it was that they *enjoyed the most* and *the least* about their job. From these answers we can hope to gain

more insight into the driving force of teachers and whether or not their style preferences can help determine what they do and do not enjoy about their job.

Description of Population and Method

From the original 200 participants in Mann's study, 72 were selected based on their *FourSight* scores. The participants needed to have a high preference for one or two of the four preferences. A breakdown of the preferences is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: *FourSight* Preferences and Number of Participants

FourSight Preference	Number of Participants	Number of Participant With dual Preferences	Total Number of Participants	Percentage of Total Sample
Clarifier	20	3	23	30%
Ideator	17	3	20	26%
Developer	14	2	16	21%
Implementer	16	2	18	23%

(LaMattina, 2005, p. 22)

Once the participants were selected then the open-ended questions were evaluated. Each participants' answers were coded according to preference and given a letter and number to denote the department from which he/she was from. Then the answers were sorted to determine if there were any themes. Once the themes were identified they were labeled and evaluated further based on the number of responses, department, and *FourSight* preference.

Findings

A total of 233 responses to the questions *What aspects of your job do you enjoy the most and least* were analyzed. One-hundred and eighteen of the responses were for

what the participants enjoyed the most. From the responses, eight themes emerged. Overall the most enjoyable job aspects were *Working with Students* (30 responses, 25%), *Student Reactions* (23 responses, 19%), and *Planning* (21 responses, 18%). The other themes that emerged in this category were *Teaching*, *Collaboration*, *Making a Difference*, *Problem Solving*, and *Other* (responses that did not fall into the other themes).

When evaluating the 115 responses for the question *What aspects of your job do you enjoy the least* eight themes also emerged. The top themes in this area were *Paperwork* (34 responses, 30%), *Other* (22 responses, 19%), *Discipline* (17 responses, 15%) and *Student Behavior* (15 responses, 13%). The remaining themes were *Staff Issues*, *Administration*, *Politics*, and *Time Constraints*.

Within the departments the data analysis indicated that some departments had certain preferences for enjoyable and non-enjoyable job aspects. The Social Studies department represented half (50%) of the responses for *Collaboration*, 45% of the responses for *Teaching*, and 23% of the responses for *Working with Students* when answering what they enjoyed the most about their job. The Art/Music department responded with *Planning* and *Student Reactions* more than the other departments. The Special Education had the most responses for *Working with Students*. The rest of the departments did not have any high volume of responses in one area; they were more evenly spread out. Many departments did not have any responses for some of the themes. This could be due in part to the size of the population for each department.

Paperwork was clearly a least enjoyable job aspect for many of the departments, especially the Special Education department with 26% of the responses. Each of the

eleven departments mentioned *Paperwork* at least once, except for the Physical Education department who did not mention it at all. Another theme that stood out for a department was *Time Constraints*. While this was a concern for only three of the departments, the Art/Music department had 60% of the responses. Of the remaining six themes, the distribution of responses was relatively even with some departments not mentioning some at all.

The last aspect of the study was to examine whether or not *FourSight* preferences developed certain themes among the most and least enjoyable job aspects. From the responses given for the question regarding the most enjoyable job aspects it is clear the Clarifiers enjoy *Working with Students* more than any other theme, however, they do not prefer it substantially more over the other preferences. The same is true of the Implementer preference. Developers responded more to *Student Reactions* than the other preferences and to any other theme, but only slightly more. Therefore, the data collected does not indicate clearly that *FourSight* preference and most enjoyable job aspects are related. A complete breakdown of the *FourSight* preference and most enjoyable job aspects is shown below in Table 2.

Table 2: *FourSight* Preference and Most Enjoyable Job Aspect Themes

	Clarifier n=26	Ideator n=30	Developer n=27	Implementer n=24	Dual n=11
Working with Students	9 (34%)	6 (20%)	5 (18.51%)	8 (33.3%)	2 (18.2%)
Teaching	2 (8%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (7.4%)	2 (8.3%)	1 (9.1%)
Planning	2 (8%)	7 (23%)	5 (18.51%)	7 (29.2%)	0 (0%)
Student Reactions	6 (23%)	4 (13.3%)	8 (29.62%)	3 (12.5%)	2 (18.2%)

Problem-Solving	2 (8%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.2%)	0 (0%)
Collaboration	1 (4%)	2 (7%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0%)	3 (27.2%)
Making a Difference	1 (4%)	1 (3%)	2 (7.4%)	2 (8.3%)	1 (9.1%)
Other	3 (11%)	4 (13.3%)	3 (11.11%)	1 (4.2%)	2 (18.2%)

n= Total number of responses for this category *FourSight* group (LaMattina, 2005, p. 44)

When evaluating the responses for the least enjoyable job aspect themes and *FourSight* preferences *Paperwork* was a strong response for all. However, when looked at within each individual preference, Ideators and Clarifiers expressed this theme as a least enjoyable aspect more than any other theme. As for the other preferences any one area does not significantly stand out over another. A complete breakdown of the responses for each theme and preference is in Table 3 below.

Table 3: *FourSight* Preference and Least Enjoyable Job Aspect Themes

	Clarifier N=32	Ideator n=33	Developer n=23	Implementer n=18	Dual n=9
Admin. / Downtown	5 (16%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	1 (11.11%)
Discipline	2 (6%)	5 (15.2%)	7 (30.4%)	1 (5.5%)	2 (22.22%)
Other	5 (16%)	8 (24.3%)	4 (17.4%)	2 (11%)	3 (33.33%)
Paperwork	9 (28%)	10 (30.3%)	6 (26.1%)	7 (39%)	2 (22.22%)
Politics	3 (9%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (11%)	0 (0%)
Student Behavior	5 (16%)	3 (9.1%)	3 (13%)	3 (17%)	1 (11.11%)
Staff Issues	3 (9%)	3 (9.1%)	1 (4.3%)	2 (11%)	0 (0%)
Time Constraints	0 (0%)	3 (9%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (5.5%)	0 (0%)

n= Total number of responses for this category *FourSight* group (LaMattina, 2005, p. 46)

While the study provided insight into the minds of teachers it was not able to determine whether or not *FourSight* preference could indicate most and least enjoyable job aspects. It does, however, give promise to future research using a larger population sample both overall and with the disciplines.

References

LaMattina, V. A. (2005). *Identifying job satisfaction themes and FourSight preferences among teachers and administrators*. Unpublished master's thesis, State University of New York College at Buffalo, Buffalo, New York.

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