

AFT Educational Research & Dissemination

A research-based professional development program

ER&D courses present a synthesis of solid, validated research that has been developed and tested over an extended period of time. These research findings are derived from studies using observational and experimental methods, including rigorous analysis of data, and the findings have been replicated across multiple studies and multiple settings. Only after a substantial part of the research community accepts and supports the research is it included in an ER&D course.

In addition to working directly with leading researchers in the field, ER&D has also collaborated with major institutions and organizations in the development of courses. Among them are:

- Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
- Center for Human Development (CHD)
- Educational Research Institute (ERI)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- National Science Foundation (NSF)
- National Center on Learning Disabilities (NCLD)
- National Center To Improve the Tools of Education (NCITE)
- The Chesapeake Institute

ER&D materials are developed through a series of processes that synthesize and “translate” educational research for practitioner use. Through the translation process, classroom educators, researchers and AFT staff work collaboratively to interpret research findings for their meaning and potential application, and they summarize them in a language that practitioners can readily understand. The writing team then supplements the text with specific classroom and workplace examples that illustrate the research concepts. In addition, they develop activities to help practitioners apply the strategies and transfer their learning into their classrooms and schools.

All ER&D course materials are reviewed periodically by revision teams of ER&D national trainers and course coordinators, and new research findings and application activities are added when appropriate. In 2002, independent researchers in each field reviewed ER&D course manuals for validity and relevance; all courses were determined to be current, applicable and of high quality.