

Sometimes in life, we begin a journey with clear goals. We know exactly where we are headed and what it is that we want to accomplish once we have completed that journey. Often times however, once we have completed our journey and achieved our goal we realize that the initial goal and the journey that accompanied it may have morphed into something that we didn't expect. For me, that awkward crazy journey has become the story of my life. As a student in the Master's in Educational Technology Program (MAET), that journey is an interesting one.

When I first began my Master's Degree I knew one thing, I had to get out of the classroom. I had tons of things I wanted to accomplish, but the largest and most salient goal was getting away from the place I had spent five years preparing for. I was a second year teacher, who had joined Michigan's newly created public school district and I was quickly heading towards a fiery end. The MAET program, was a place where I thought I might be able to save myself. Originally I wanted to transition from my position as an English teacher to an instructional coach within my current district. I loved infusing technology into my lessons, but that was all I really knew. I knew that in order to reach my goal, I had to do something more. I wanted and needed to become a coach, so I had to hit the ground running.

Being flexible is inherent as an educator. We spend all of our time planning, trying out and planning yet again. Now, I am no longer where I used to be. My goal no longer consists of just being an instructional coach. That is something I cannot do, I have to be an instructional leader. This may not sound like much, but there is a difference between a coach and a leader. A coach is someone who trains and instructs, while a leader is one who leads and commands. I want to be the person who leads classroom education into a technological shift.

I began this race in an effort to simply change my current job title, however as I complete my final lap this journey will end nothing like it originally began. When I began I knew that I loved technology and wanted to use it, but I never saw it as a tool that would mold me into a leader. Now, I know that the MAET program is just more than a place that catapults someone towards upward movement. I now have a leadership presence that I previously lacked. I am no longer just the coach, I am the leader who can and will challenge the status quo.