

Stacy N. Harrison  
Application for Master's Degree in Educational Technology

I have worked sixteen years as an educator. I taught mathematics for the first eight years of my career. The last half was in the capacity of media specialist. Each district, school, and position was a unique experience. In fact, each location had its own way of doing things, different types of technology, diverse programs, etc. I learned a great deal from those things, as well as from the people that I networked with along the way. As a result, I used those experiences to reflect on what I had done and looked for ways in which I could enhance the delivery of my lessons, trainings, etc. In other words, I always looked for ways in which I could improve as an educator.

As a teacher, media specialist, and technology wizard I helped others troubleshoot issues pertaining to computers, printers, SMART Boards, etc. I worked with both teachers and students and enjoyed making teaching and learning more fun for them. As I learned new things I looked forward to sharing those ideas and skills with others. I embraced innovative techniques, ideas, and programs that benefited both teachers and students in a number of ways. In fact, the teachers kept their students attention, addressed various learning styles, and reached students that they would not reach under different circumstances. Helping others with their technology issues was also a good experience for me because it required me to think logically and rely on past knowledge to solve problems.

My love of technology and being compelled to help others led to my initial interest in the Educational Technology program. I had a desire to learn more about the use of technology and took advantage of every opportunity I had to learn more in that area. As a result, I wanted to better myself professionally for personal reasons, as well as so that I could better assist others.

In fact, over the years, I had conversations with instructors in the field that piqued my interest in even more. I learned a wealth of information about this field through them, as well as what I read online. In the process, I discovered that I could be successful in the delivery of technology-based instruction and training. In addition, I realized that my next career path would be one that involved the integration of technology into the school curriculum. Therefore, I came to the conclusion that I needed to further my education. The Master's in Educational Technology Program at the University of South Carolina would help prepare me for what I want to accomplish in the future.

I am a diligent, dependable, patient, and optimistic person who gets along well with others. Likewise, I am dedicated and fully commit myself to everything I do both personally and professionally. I am the type of person who always puts forth my best efforts. I have worked in the role of both a leader and a follower and believe that you should have the best interests of everyone involved. These qualities and beliefs combined set me apart from others, as do my personal experiences. For example, I did not attend kindergarten and started my first grade year late. I did not let that or the fact that neither of my parents graduated from high school discourage me. I worked hard so that I could “catch up” with my classmates. That hard work paid off for me. In fact, when I completed elementary school I was above grade level in reading, made the Honor Roll, and was awarded for being the top student in my class for sixth grade.

The above award motivated me to continue to do well academically. In seventh grade I was placed in a “general” English class while my friends were in an “advanced” class. My teacher knew I did not belong in that class, but could not do anything since placement was based on test scores. I thought back to sixth grade and how I did not finish that portion of the standardized test. At an early age I learned a lesson about the importance of time management

and pacing yourself on timed tests. Likewise, I realized that because my friends were in a higher-level English class their grade point averages and class ranks were higher than mine. I studied harder and paced myself when it was time to take the standardized tests again. My efforts were not in vain. In fact, the next school year I was in “gifted and talented” English. Similarly, I continued my work ethic in high school and became salutatorian of my senior class.

Over the years, I have learned that you should never lose sight of your goals or what you are trying to accomplish. The same concept has held true in terms of me improving as a professional. As a result, I look forward to earning my Master’s Degree in Educational Technology from the University of South Carolina. With it I can accomplish my professional goals and be able to embrace new opportunities as they are presented to me.