

PL Summit 2019

Atlanta GA

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While attending the 2019 PL Summit I was able to take a tour of the Bark Company and here is what the company is all about:

Bark is an internet safety solution that parents trust and children like. Bark is an easy-to-use, smart tool that parents can use to help protect their children online. Bark alerts parents when it detects potential threats or signs of danger, such as:

- Cyberbullying
- Internet Predators
- Depression
- Suicidal Thoughts
- Sexting

Bark is a common-sense tool that can augment a parent's efforts to protect their children online. Parents trust Bark because it uses advanced technologies to alert them to potential online dangers without them reading through all of their child's online activities, preserving their valuable time (and sanity). Children like Bark because they are free to continue their daily digital lives without their parents constantly peering over their shoulders. A school version of Bark is free to schools. When I asked what they are looking for in employees, they stated that they are looking for "nice people who can work together in a team and that are proactive."

I attended sessions that I felt were going to assist me in leading our school to the next level of Personalized Learning. In one of the sessions we discussed how we might restructure our school to look more like the future and less like the past. This was a very interesting session and I was able to sit with a group of teachers, coaches, and administrators from all over the U.S. While we had a very good a rich discussion, the outcome was somewhat disappointing. We were able to talk about what a school might look like with no restrictions. But the end result is there are restrictions whether it is legal or financial.

I also attended a session that was about busting the status quo or business as usual. The speaker talked about thinking wrong. Our brain and culture are conspiring against us. The way we solve problems is broken—we're trapped by techniques and assumptions of a prior era. Today challenges emerge at an ever-accelerating rate, and we struggle to find the imaginative answers we crave. When we do, biology and culture conspire to obstruct our progress. *Think Wrong: How to Conquer the Status Quo and Do Work That Matters* teaches you how to use Solve Next's radical problem-solving system to reliably produce surprising, ingenious, and seemingly magical answers to your most wicked questions. All of us find ourselves on the predictable path of how things have been, how things are, and how they will be. This status quo is forged by the synaptic connections in our brains and our culture. But, if you dare to look beyond the status quo, to imagine different outcomes than the one the predictable path leads to, You forge a bold path.

Another session I attended was focused on the question, do you make those around you smarter? We have all had experience with two dramatically different types of leaders. The first type drains intelligence, energy, and capability from the people around them and always needs to be the smartest ones in the room. These are the idea killers, the energy sappers, the “diminishers” of talent and commitment. On the other side of the spectrum are leaders who use their intelligence to amplify the smarts and capabilities of the people around them. When these leaders walk into a room, light bulbs go off over people’s heads; ideas flow and problems get solved. These are the leaders who inspire employees to stretch themselves to deliver results that surpass expectations. These are the multipliers, and the world needs more of them, especially now, when leaders are expected to do more with less.

Overall, I appreciated being able to go and attend the conference. I believe it will assist me in becoming a better administrator and leader for the school district.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sean Dwyer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

5/31/19