Getting The Most Out Of Your Students

Instructor

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Course Description

Ken Beam defines learning as when a student "thinks, acts or feels" differently. That is an abstract and lofty goal and one we can all strive to achieve in our classrooms. To make this goal less abstract we will explore a framework for creating classrooms where the students can get the most out of your course.

Jonathan Haidt discusses how every person has two parts, the elephant (their emotional side that is powerful but does not always have a clear direction) and the rider (their rationality that can provide direction but has much less power). The problem is that the rider can only encourage the elephant to move in a productive direction. Lastly there is the "path" that the elephant and rider are traversing (the environment). Maximum learning occurs when the elephant, rider and path all agreeing on the direction.

In creating a learning environment we as instructors can consider how we might appeal to our students' inner elephants and riders and how we create a path for them to follow. In this series of workshops we will explore six words that can be used to design a course. The two words Tone and Empathy will appeal to the elephant. The two words Clarity and Reflection will appeal to the rider. The two words Challenge and Onion will establish a directed path. Along the way, we will learn from one another by sharing both war stories and classroom successes.

Workshop Structure

The six workshops below may be taken individual, but the maximum benefit will be gained by taking all six. At the beginning of the first workshop, each participant will pick a course or theme that they wish to develop and then stick with that theme as they move through each interactive workshop.

<u>Session 1 (3 hours)</u> <u>General Framework</u> <u>Monday 2/10, 9-12</u> The first workshop will introduce the general framework and show how a number of pedagogical innovations (e.g. Problem Based Learning, Product Archeology) map to the framework. Groups will be formed around common themes and classroom success stories will be shared to gain collective insight into what makes a good classroom work.

<u>Session 2 (3 hours)</u> The elephant: Tone and Empathy Monday 2/10, 14-17 The two words Tone and Empathy will be covered as they appeal to students' elephants (emotions). Examples will be given but participants will be encouraged to create their own during the workshop. <u>Session 3 (3 hours)</u> The rider: Clarity and Reflection <u>Tuesday 2/11, 9-12</u> The two words Clarity and Reflection will be covered as they appeal to students' riders (rationality). Formal learning objectives will be discussed and a tool known as the reflection ladder will be explored.

<u>Session 4 (3 hours)</u> The path: Challenge and Onion Tuesday 2/11, 14-17 The two words Challenge and Onion will be covered as they create a path (environment) for the class to follow. Participants will be given a chance to design their own classroom challenges as well as consider how they may make connections between the course material and other topics outside of the course content.

Session 5 (3 hours)War StoriesWednesday 2/12, 9-12The fifth session will explore how the framework can be used to assess the success of the
students and the environment. The framework will also be used to explore faculty self-
assessment as well as continuous improvement of a course. Participants will be
encourage to share War Stories of problems they have encountered in the classroom and
how they overcame (or perhaps didn't overcome) them.

Session 6 (3 hours) Next steps Wednesday 2/12, 14-17 The last session will be an open workshop where participants can create a larger strategy to try in their class. As part of that strategy they will also create some simple next steps that will lead in the right direction. This larger strategy, with next steps, will be shared informally with a small group to gain constructive feedback.