

# Instructional Real World Community Engagement

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## INTRODUCTION

The imperative needs towards the integration of real world community engagement throughout the instructional process is inherent within the instructional design shifts that are occurring. The Digital Age has introduced the ability to more fully engage the larger community realm within the instructional process, engaging real world professionals, personal relationship engagements and subject matter experts towards supporting the learner's conceptual understandings of the information, cognitive load and self-regulatory concerns of the learner, as well as a recognition that there is a real world connection between learned information and real world implementation of information.

Instructional efforts are important towards developing a knowledge base of subject matter understanding, as well as working with the information in new and different ways so as to further develop a level of knowledge prowess and engage with the information. Yet towards reaching higher order thinking skills (Aini, Nor & Razak, 2015; Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Bloom, 1956, 1984; Bloom, Englhart, Furst, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956; Bloom & Krathwohl, 1956; Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964; Mishra & Kotecha, 2012, 2016; Ong, Hart & Chen, 2016; Zohar & Barzilai, 2015), it is necessary and appropriate to implement the information in project-focused endeavors. Although traditionally these have been class-based projects or controlled projects for a distinct clientele, the engagement of the learner's understanding within a larger real world community engagement impacts

the learner's levels of personal and professional motivation, enhanced sense of self-efficacy, as well as self-regulatory efforts that reflect not only course-based efforts but also posing within real world community engagement that may include familial, personal and professional communities of engagement. The impact of real world community engagement upon the instructional environment reflects strongly upon learner motivation, external-to-course knowledge checks and analytical feedback, as well as enhancing the positive self-efficacy of the learner internal to and external to the course environment, with the ultimate impact of the instructional experience extending far beyond the requisite course session designations.

## BACKGROUND

Discussions surrounding the important elements that impact the instructional environment are worthy of consideration, as the knowledge base within which this real world community engagement occurs is vitally important. The importance and impact of the real world community engagement within the instructional realm is supported by an understanding of cognitive taxonomies, conceptual frameworks of understanding, social discourse, active instructional engagement and implicit cognitive vulnerability that undergirds the holistic understanding of the distinctive importance associated with instructional real world community engagement.

## Cognitive Taxonomies

Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain (Aini, Nor & Razak, 2015; Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Bloom, 1956, 1984; Bloom, Englhart, Furst, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956; Bloom & Krathwohl, 1956; Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964; Mishra & Kotecha, 2012, 2016; Ong, Hart & Chen, 2016; Zohar & Barzilai, 2015) engages in a thought process wherein the instructional process must begin at the knowledge level of learner engagement with the subject matter and then slowly progress through each subsequent level of knowledge engagement and informational understanding (i.e., beginning at the knowledge level, progressing through comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation) until the learner has the opportunity to achieve the highest level of the higher order thinking skill capability, specified as the evaluation level of informational engagement. Of interest is Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) redesigned Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain for the Digital Age, focusing upon the learner's engagement with the understanding as designated by the lowest level of knowledge engagement (i.e., remember) and then progressing towards the highest level of learner's cognitive engagement with the information (i.e., from remember, and progressing through understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create as the highest level of informational engagement and thought process).

The importance of Bloom's Taxonomy, including Anderson and Krathwohl's revised taxonomy, considers the viable considerations revolving around exactly how the learner has the opportunity to work with and to more fully understand the subject matter information through progressively more engaged and analytical aspects of engagement. Towards considering the learner's engagement with this information, it is important to consider the real world implications and intimations, not only how this information may be successfully implemented within the real world environment but also how this new subject matter information begins to fit and frame within a

learner's prior subject matter understandings that also include a learner's conceptual framework of understanding.

## Conceptual Frameworks of Understanding

Vygotsky's theoretical delineation of a learner's conceptual framework of understanding (Barwell, 2015; Esteban-Guitart, 2015; Metraux, 2015; Montealegre, 2016; Vygotsky, 1933/1966, 1935, 1981; Wang, 2015) critically frames and supports the understanding that the learner brings forward prior knowledge and understanding of information into any new learning experience. The importance of the learning effort is not only towards understanding the subject matter, but also towards appropriately integrating the new information within prior knowledge and concepts, also referred to as conceptual frameworks of understanding. By integrating the social discourse and knowledge checking efforts, inclusive of real world community engagement, the conceptual frameworks of understanding are more strongly engaged within the learner's informational attainment.

## Social Discourse

The importance of social discourse was embraced by Wittgenstein (1961) due to his research that reflected a focused interest upon the importance of social engagement and word choice to describe and reflect the learner's understanding of the subject matter (Burr, 2015; Gorski, 2016; Gupta, 2016; Inwood, 2015; Shotter, 2015). Although subject-specific terminology is vital towards understanding the subject matter and respective field of informational engagement, the social aspects as regards communicating about the subject matter and word choices that more holistically reflect the learner's attainment of subject matter information within a bounded engagement level reflects a learned understanding and effort. With consideration towards real world community engagement, social discourse with individuals within

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