Chapter 6
For Instructors:
Changing Teaching Styles to Accommodate All Learners

ABSTRACT

By now, you're hopefully up to your head in theory and have a good handle of where we've been. Now, the authors take you on a different kind of journey, to a place of the future. All bluster aside, there is merit behind grounding yourself in theory (as you no doubt know). In this chapter, they present the major takeaways for instructors. Before they get into these strategies to better assist your learners, they would strongly recommend that you have at least a basic understanding of Backwards Design and Fink's Integrated Teaching Approach. Both of these strategies will help you to design a class that is truly intentional and create a solid foundation for all of the tips and strategies they present. With each tip they provide a small piece of the puzzle that will ultimately help you to engage your learners in a way that provides more learner satisfaction, soft skill development, and helps your evaluations.

INTRODUCTION

By now, your head is filled with theory, and you have a healthy understanding of where we've been. In this chapter, we'd like to take you on a different kind of journey, to a place of the future. All bluster aside, and, as you no doubt know, there is merit behind grounding yourself in theory. This chapter presents the major strategies instructors should consider to enhance their own and their post-traditional learners' experiences.

Before we examine these strategies, we strongly recommend that you have at least a basic understanding of Backwards Design (1949) and Fink's Integrated Teaching Approach (2003). Both of these strategies will help you to design a class that is truly intentional and create a solid foundation for the tips and strategies we present. Consider each tip a small piece of the puzzle that will ultimately help you to engage your learners in a way that provides more learner satisfaction, soft skill development, and help boost learner evaluations.

Gleaning Facts from Theory

In the former chapters that highlighted theory, we provided several ideas or tips useful for engaging post-traditional learners. Here's a quick review of these helpful tips.

Letting Learners choose their own Paths

By allowing learners to decide their own path, whether through flexibility in learning activities or engaging in discourse regarding the syllabus, empowering your learners to be a part of the learning experience changes learner experiences and teaching practices for the better.

Through Knowles (1980), we know our learners need to be generally self-directing. As an instructor, the easiest way to engage learners in choosing their own path is curriculum flexibility, realistic learning activities, teaching method variability, and empowering the learners.

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