

**ACTIVITY-BASED INSTRUCTION:
A WORKSHOP ON PROVEN PRACTICES FOR GENERATING HIGH INVOLVEMENT
LEARNING AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL**

*Maryann Hight, University Library, California State University, Stanislaus, One University Circle,
Turlock, CA 95382, 209-664-6553, mhight@csustan.edu*

*Randall Brown, College of Business Administration, California State University, Stanislaus,
One University Circle, Turlock, CA 95382, 209-667-3064, rbrown@csustan.edu*

ABSTRACT

If you have ever been frustrated with the challenge of holding students' attention, then this workshop on high-involvement, experiential learning presents an excellent opportunity to update your skills. Two essential skills will be emphasized in the session: (1) engaging students on a practical level, and (2) orchestrating the process in an effective, orderly manner. Workshop activities are designed to be stimulating for participants and easily adapted for classroom use.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

An ongoing challenge faced by many college-level instructors is the preparation of students for dealing real-world issues and problems. Graduates of business programs are well versed in theory and terminology but often lacking in practical, interactive problem-solving skills and practices [1]. The challenge for educators is to develop experiential learning techniques that allow students to interact in ways that utilize different techniques and practices associated with managing people. Experiential learning, according to Hoover [3, p.116] exists when a personally responsible participant cognitively, effectively, and behaviorally processes knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes in a learning situation characterized by a high level of active involvement. Marcic [4, p.3] states that, "the unique feature of experiential learning is that it requires the student to become involved effectively and behaviorally with the material."

Current-generation students have been raised in a highly interactive cultural context and are more readily engaged when classroom instruction is interactive and activity based [6,7]. These students don't read as much as previous generations do, and prefer video, audio, and interactive media [2]. They also tend to react favorably to team-based and interactive learning [5].

WORKSHOP PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the workshop is to provide participants with an opportunity to acquire or improve basic instructional techniques that promote student participation in experiential learning. The primary objective for workshop participants is to become more skilled and comfortable applying new techniques in a classroom setting, as well as more philosophically committed to the idea that they can help students become well prepared to deal with real world challenges. Some basic practices of experiential learning, to be included in the workshop, are: Techniques for building two-way communication and broadening student involvement in discussion; Problem-centered learning techniques aimed at increasing individual and small-group participation; Activity-based practices designed to increase participation at both a team

and inter-team level. Participants of the workshop will gain knowledge and experience of these three components both through discussion, handouts, and active participation in selected model activities.

Workshop Schedule

Introduction (10 minutes): Outline of the workshop objectives. Warm-up activity
Techniques and Practices for increasing student engagement and participation in classroom learning:
three model activities (60 minutes).

Focus on Individual Involvement and Two-way Communication

Focus on Small Group or Team Involvement

Focus on Small Team and Integrated Team Involvement

Wrap-up and Conclusions: (20 minutes)

REFERENCES

- [1] Bowen, D. B., Lewicki, R. J., Hall, F. S. and Hall, D.T. (1996) "Experiences in Management and Organizational Behavior" John Wiley & Sons: New York
- [2] Carlson, Scott (2005) Chronicle of Higher Education. Volume 52, Issue 7, Page A34
- [3] Hoover, D. J. (1977) "Experiential Learning: Conceptualization and Definition". In R.E.Horn (ed) The Guide to Simulations/Games for Education and Training. 3rd edition, vol. 2). Didactic Systems Inc: Cranford, NJ.
- [4] Marcic, D. (2000) "Organizational Behavior: Experience and Cases". Thomas South-Western: Mason, OH
- [5] McGlynn, Angela P., (2008) "Millennials in College: How Do We Motivate Them?" Education Digest: Essential readings for Quick Review v73 n6 p19-22 Feb '08.
- [6] Taylor, Mark, (2005) "Postmodern pedagogy: Teaching and learning with Generation NeXt", Teaching MCLI Forum Teaching, Learning, and Technology in the Maricopa Community Colleges. Volume 9, Spring '05
- [7] Taylor, Mark, (2006) "Generation NeXt Comes to College: 2006 Updates and Emerging Issues", A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement, 2006, Volume 2, Chapter 2 .
[http://www.taylorprograms.org/images/Gen_NeXt_article_HLC_06.pdf]