Teaching Tip of the Month

March 2024

Experiential Learning is learning through experience or by doing. Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning presents four components: *Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization,* and *Active Experimentation*. Each Teaching Tips of the Month issue for spring 2024 will focus on one of these components.

Theme: Reflective Observation

The Reflective Observation stage of experiential learning involves the learners responding objectively to concrete experiences and using their senses. At this point, students consider what happened and respond with their thoughts and feelings (Main, 2022).

Tip 1: Written Reflections

- Have students post sticky notes around the room in response to reflective questions. For example: *What happened during the experience? How did it make you feel? How did the experience impact you? What did you find most challenging?*
- Assign students a pre-formatted outline or graphic organizer, such as See-Think-Wonder, to record their reflections from the concrete experience either afterwards or during the experience.
- If the concrete experience occurred virtually, have students post reflections in the chat or on a virtual whiteboard. These can be saved and reviewed later. For asynchronous courses, students can post reflections to the discussion board in the LMS (Learning Management System).

Tip: 2: Oral Reflections

- Ask students to complete a Think-Pair-Share. Remember to allow them to think before pairing with a peer to exchange ideas.
- Adopt a debriefing protocol to facilitate student reflection on the concrete experience. One example of a simple protocol is the *What? So What? Now What?* Protocol, which not only helps students engage in reflective observation but also supports the subsequent phases of experiential learning.
- Use the Four Corners technique for students to respond to a prompt related to the concrete experiences. To prepare, post signs to each corner of the room to represent a range of ratings (For example: agree, somewhat agree, disagree, not sure). Students move to the corner of the room that aligns with their response to the prompt. The students in each group discuss their experiences and report to the larger group. Repeat the process as often as needed to gather students' reactions to other questions about the experience.

References:

Main, P. (2022, September 9). Kolb's Learning Cycle. Structural Learning. Retrieved January 20, 2024, from https://www.structural-learning.com/post/kolbs-learning-cycle#:~:text=Concrete%20Experience%20%2D%20At%20this%20stage,approach%20to%20situations%20and%20problems

More Info on Teaching Tips

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