



ADHIGAM

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Strategies in Experiential Learning

Prof. Dr. Manju Phadke, SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Sion (W)

"For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them. Men become builders by building." - Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics

Experiential learning, as the word suggests, is the process of learning by experience and does not refer to the mundane rote learning that has become a way of life in educational institutions today. It is related to other forms of active learning such as adventure learning, cooperative learning, action learning etc. Developed by Kolbe, after an initial contribution by John Dewey, Jean Piaget and Kurt Lewin, it based on application of knowledge and conceptual understanding of the fundamentals using live projects/problems/situations. When students are given opportunities to learn in real life situations, the learning becomes more powerful.

Experiential learning teaches the students the competencies they need to develop to face real life situations. Thus educationists have argued that real learning should be able to bridge the industry academia gap and empower the students to go beyond the text books and apply the knowledge in real life situations.

Educationists also argue that experiential learning motivates the students to learn better and attracts them back to the classrooms, which otherwise may become redundant with the influx of information available at the click of a button through the internet. Students are also motivated when they are provided with opportunities and feedback.

Experiential learning triggers off a lifelong learning process. When students come across some problem areas and unfamiliar situations, they have to apply their knowledge, rethink all the various possibilities of overcoming the problems and arrive at workable solutions.

Kolb's cycle of experiential learning outlines four basic steps of the teaching learning process.

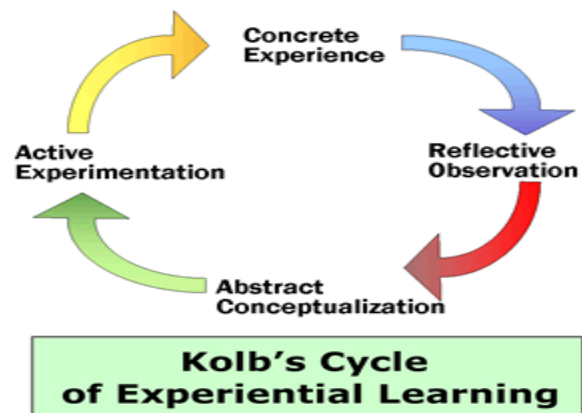


image by Karin Kir

Experience should be such that it deepens the knowledge provided by text books. It should be based on learning, problem solving, investigating, experimenting and should be aimed at sharpening the decision making ability.

Based on the experiences, the students should be able to make valid observations, reflect upon them, assimilate, analyze the outcome, watch out for any deviations and analyze the deviations.

Based on the experience and observations, the students should be able to conceptualize the expected outcome and its impact on the given study.

A culmination of all the previous three steps should lead to active experimentation.

The facilitator/ mentor/ teacher should be able to identify the experiences that the students should be exposed to based on the level of their maturity and knowledge of the subject.

The facilitator should give them problems, analyze the workability of the problems, assess the safety factors and facilitate the learning process by helping the students establish connections between theory and field studies.

Some forms of experiential learning as per a study carried out in Indiana University include: Internships, Service Learning, Cooperative education, Community based research, Field work etc.

SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce adopted an experiential learning approach in the various departments in an innovative form by establishing student based ventures.

- **Haath Mein Sehat:** *An innovative venture run by the Department of Microbiology aims at assessing the potability of drinking water and educating the masses about the safe and hygienic practices of water purification in the village. Students also spread the message of maintaining good personal hygiene via street plays and posters which they displayed. This programme was conducted at the tribal village “ Kawathewadi” adopted by SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce.*

This programme enabled the students of Second Year Microbiology to get a clear understanding on the concepts of Water Microbiology.

- **Microexplore:** *Another programme conducted by the department of Microbiology, where the students are taught to isolate micro organisms from routine habitats, identify them and find out novel applications for the organisms isolated. This helps in inculcating an interest in the core subject of Microbiology and also trains the young minds to think creatively and train them into research.*

- **Development of Biofertiliser** was done by the department of Biotechnology and the fertilizer developed was given to the villagers at "Kawathewadi ", the adopted village; after assessing the soil conditions.
This study gave the students hands on experience of field trials in agriculture and an opportunity to understand the soil chemistry and the study the microflora of the soil.
- **Chemistry of Soil:** A programme conducted by Department of Chemistry at Kawathewadi, analyzed the nature of the soil with respect to its physical and chemical properties and the students prepared a report on the basis of which the villagers were counseled by the Department of Botany regarding the variety of plants and crops that could be planted in and around the village. Thus creating amateur horticulturists among the students.
- **Basket farming:** A novel concept was explained by the department of Botany to the villagers on economical methods of farming. This taught the students to think beyond text books and put into practice the innovative ideas of farming.
- **Mock Parliament:** Department of Politics runs this programme annually to educate the students of Politics about the functioning of the Parliament. Constitution Day is also observed by the Department, thus empowering the students with the knowledge of the constitution and its various instruments, as well as familiarizing the students with the functioning of the parliament house.
- **Entrepreneurship Development Cell:** This is a programme conducted by the Department of Management studies, where the students are taught to carry out a market survey , manufacture products at a small scale , price them after calculating the profit margin and market them. This popular programme has helped in shaping entrepreneurs among the students, besides honing their management and marketing skills
- **Green Campus:** This has been one of the hall mark initiatives in experiential learning. The Canteen waste is converted into compost by the process of vermicomposting. The NSS students of the college are actively involved in this venture. This venture has introduced the students to the concept of zero waste, composting and the idea of organic farming.

- **Herbal Garden:** *Developed by the Department of Botany, this gives hands on experience to the students about the various medicinal plants, their cultivation, maintenance and also empowers them with the concept of creating a city garden.*
- **Communication Skills:** *A programme on communication skills was conducted by the students of English Department at "Kawathewadi", our adopted village, where the village children were taught basic conversation in English. This helped the students tremendously as in order to teach communication in English, they needed to first perfect their diction and grammar.*

Experiential learning is therefore an aid which complements the lecture system, but at the same time it cannot act as a replacement of classroom teaching. Lectures also seem to be the only feasible way for scholars to share information with the students. However, Experiential learning is more than just getting students to do something, experiences outside the classroom have to be integrated with classroom theory and teaching.

Besides being tools in Experiential learning, these programs have also helped in building self confidence among the students. All these ventures have made the students more proactive and have taught them to go beyond text books and apply their knowledge in a more practical manner. Besides, experiential learning has also developed in them a sense of responsibility towards the environment and society at large and has helped in their holistic development as socially, emotionally and morally responsible citizens.

"Tell me and I will forget, Teach me and I will remember, Involve me and I will learn"- Benjamin Franklin

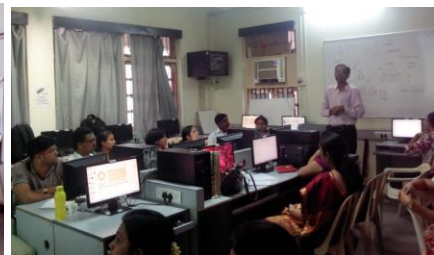
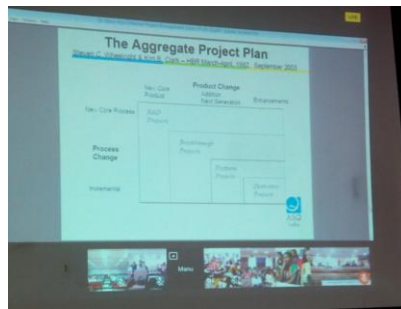
Snap Shot of III Quarter –Central Training Department

Central Training Department is pleased to moving forward by publishing the third issue of 'ADHIGAM'. The continuous support and positive response from all the members across SIES group of institutions has created significance to the newsletter.

*During the quarter the focus has been on doing things differently in creating learning environment for the staff. Many eminent speakers were engaged in conducting round table discussions-**Best practices on Library Department**, organizing workshops in different venues providing majority of the staff to get benefit. Institute specific workshops like **Effective Customer Service** for non-teaching staff, interactive session on **Shelf Life Analysis-Food** for teaching and testing staff were conducted.*

*The knowledge sharing process on **Leadership Excellence – 3 topics** through **Google Hangouts** were also conducted in IIIrd Quarter for students and staff successfully .*

Glimpses of Central Training Programs



Summary of Programs Conducted from November 2015 to January 2016

PROGRAM TITLE	DATE	TARGET AUDIENCE
Workshop on Effective Communication & Customer Centric Approach	19/11/2015	Non-Teaching Staff
Effective Project Management	20/11/2015	Staff & Students
Workshop on Better Customer Service	3/12/2015 & 10/3/2015	Staff of SIESCOMS
Round Table discussion on Best Practices Library	9/12/2015	Library Staff
Effective Risk Management	22/12/2015	Staff & Students
Workshop on Handling Data and Its Analysis through SPSS	16/01/2016	Teaching Staff
Workshop on Working in Team	20/01/2016	Teaching Staff
Effective Talent Management	22/01/2016	Staff & Students
Interactive Session on Shelf Life Analysis-Food	28/01/2016	Staff of SOP

The Healing Touching

Retd. Prof. Dr. Jayashree Giri, SIES College of Commerce & Economics, Sion (E)

The Health of the society is reflected in the health of its youth. Today's youth stands alienated not only from others but also from himself. The innumerable uncertainties of modern times bring forth many problems among the youth. The increasing competition in the educational field, growing unemployment, failure to live up to the parent's expectations, peer pressure, declining social norms, materialistic culture, breakdown in community living due to violent ethnic and communal riots have all led to increasing mental health problems among the youth.

Though the modern youth has a store of intellectual information, emotionally he seems to be drained unable to effectively adjust to the rapid changes taking place around him. With no ideal leader to follow, resenting the parental authority as he seeks individual identity it is the teacher who can play a vital role in leading him a helping hand to effectively adjust to the various changes in his environment and develop a healthy personality.

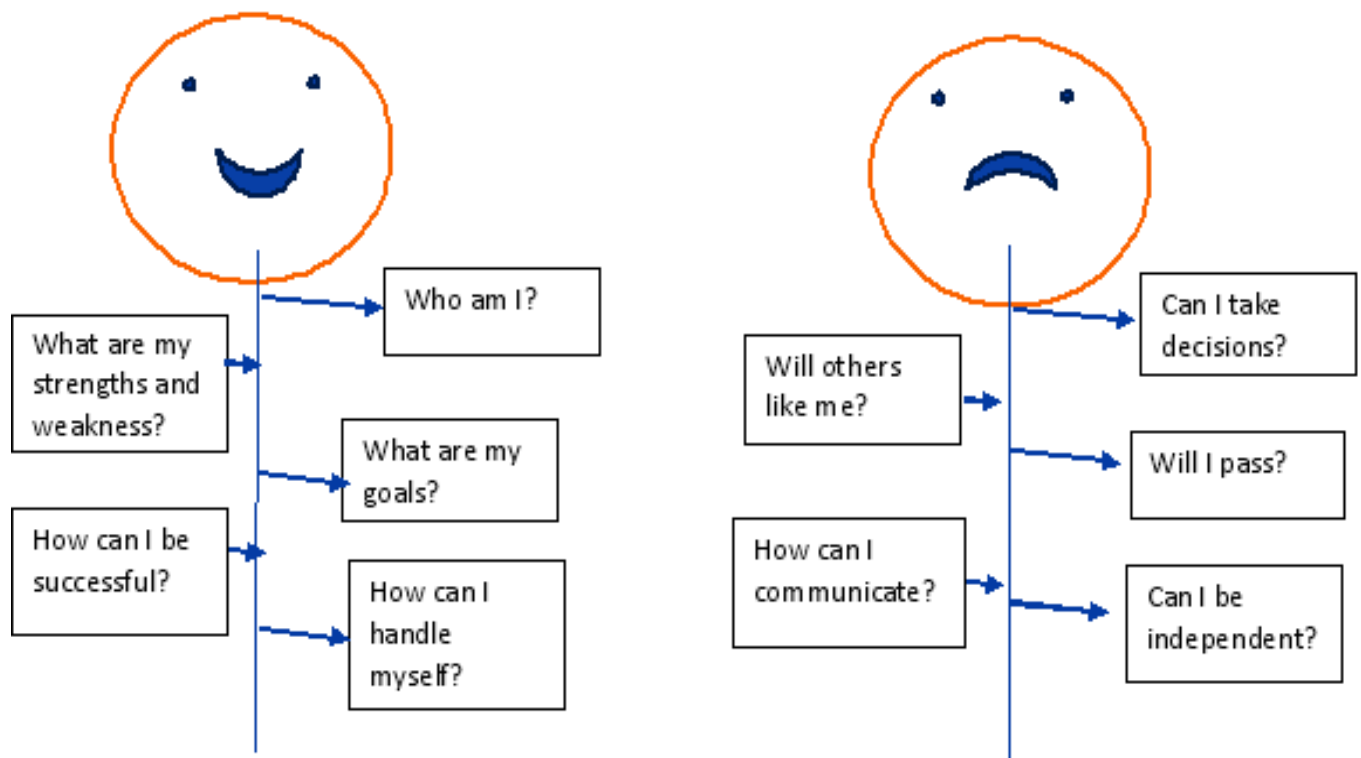
Perhaps Helen Keller could not have become Helen Keller if there wasn't this teacher in her life. Anne Sullivan wasn't just a teacher she was a life moving force to Keller. To quote in her words." I remember perfectly when my dear teacher came then I was like the little blind children who are waiting to enter the Kinder Garden, there was no light in my soul. The wonderful world with all its sunlight and beauty was hidden from me and I had never dreamed of its loveliness. But teacher came to me and taught my little finger to use the beautiful key that has unlocked the door of my dark prison and set my spirit free".

Traditionally teachers have been respected and worshiped throughout human history because of their noble mission. In today's world though the teachers do not command the same respect never the less their ability to bring the humanness lying dormant in their student cannot be denied. When the teacher develops closeness with the student the bondage last forever. It is a two way relationship where the teachers consider the students as their assets while the students have implicit faith in what their teachers convey to them. Students in fact will be more willing to obey their teachers than their parents.

There is a growing skepticism among teachers that with increasing burden of completing the syllabus on time, handling a large number of students most of whom pay scant attention to teaching and respect the teachers, whether they can have impact on their student's personal life. But is the situation so hopeless that nothing can be done. Are teachers merely paid servants for the students? Close look at the existing constraints in a positive way can still provide excellent opportunities for both the teacher and taught to grow.

Being in a teaching field for more than two decades has taught me a simple truth "Where there is love there is a way". Love is one creative force which can break any barrier and bless both the giver and the receiver. It can bring forth joy in both teaching and learning and in unfolding ones personality.

Students may enter college well attired with a confident look. But he still may be plagued with many questions to be answered.



A student appears to be a bundle of contradictions. At one extreme he is capable of demanding aggressively what he wants from his parents but seems to be literally helpless in controlling his emotions. Intellectually rich, emotionally weak he seems to buckle under even small pressure. Result oriented, he seeks quick gratification unable to wait long for results.

Win him with love and make him see reason he is ever yours obediently. Flexible he is to change himself if a way is shown clearly to him.

What can a teacher do?

A successful teacher is one who is able to help the students

- 1. Discover self*
- 2. Rekindle his core values for smooth adjustments.*
- 3. Learn to express self*
- 4. Effectively communicate with other*
- 5. Share the intellectual skills*
- 6. Learn to learn with joy and interest*
- 7. Assess personal strength and weaknesses*
- 8. Solve problems effectively*
- 9. Take better decisions*
- 10. Resolve conflicts*

The teacher can help a student discover himself without diluting the importance of existing academic system or increasing the work load which many teachers dread. Building up rapport with students is an important step in making them feel wanted and loved. Most often it is perceived that a teacher's communication is restricted to the front benches.

Planning ahead the classroom session's with scope of interesting games often makes the subject more interesting. Such games facilitate active listening skills. Leadership qualities can also be developed by picking up students who are enthusiastic and making them team leaders. Asking students to prepare certain topics by giving those necessary help and asking them to do the presentation helps in communication skills. Students also overcome fear of facing students when they are encouraged.

Sustaining interest of the students require that teachers use effective but simple language. Students can be effectively involved through verbal and non-verbal techniques of class presentation as mentioned earlier. Effective use of lucid examples aid in students grasping the subjects.

Man making process of the students is a two-fold process. Apart from excelling in once chosen field of knowledge what is more important is to make him a responsible social being through human values. Here the teacher can play a proactive role. Love is a prime value which unites one with the rest of the world. Love can express as compassion, selflessness, sacrifice, patience, humility. If this is well assimilated by teachers in the right spirit then learning becomes a joyous experience for students whose minds are set free.

Training & Mentoring: Managing Generation Y

Prof. Seema Khan, SIES Graduate School of Technology, Nerul

Training is the conscious and planned process of transferring knowledge, skills and attitudes to others.

Learning is the processing and assimilation of what we hear, see or experience that alters or improves our knowledge, skills and attitudes.

The combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes is behaviour. If someone trains us, or we learn something new or different, it is our behaviour that is affected.

Training is active - it is conscious and planned change and it does not just happen.

(Derek Stockley: Two Definitions- Training & Learning, discussing the key differences and the implications for managers and team leaders)

*With the **Two Definitions** by Derek Stockley, we explore further, as academicians, the importance of training & learning for the development of our students as future managers and team leaders. There is a need to identify and address various challenges while training the students in order to guide them efficiently.*

Each organization has its own culture and requires people who not only accept it, but are also acceptable to it. So a well-planned training programme for the trainers is a must for developing the creative faculties of the trainees and orienting them to the practical aspect of administration.

It is, therefore, imperative for us to train the students to develop skills and abilities relevant to the professional roles. As academicians, we need to identify and introduce methods for the effective transfer of information, to understand and apply the appropriate forms of communication for the learners. We realize that the students, as professionals, would act as the public face for organizations, reflecting their policies and achievements. The real challenge is not just to teach but prepare the students for their professional commitments. Identifying the means and employing effective ways to transfer knowledge, skills and attitude can go a long way to shape the future of the organization and the society, at large. Affecting changes to shape the behaviour of the future leaders and guide them through planned & structured training is what we need to do.

A well planned training should identify the key issues to be addressed. Training is fairly straight forward as long as a trainer acknowledges the generational differences. The need for technology in training is not the only change that this new generation of learners brings. The learning style of this generation is quite different. They are generally thought to have short attention spans. They are used to the feeling of instant gratification. Being the children of the Internet, they are accustomed to receiving information quickly. If they do not get those instant results chances are they are not going to bother looking anymore. They want what they want when they want it. Many people bemoan their lack of patience and attention span but this can be an asset when it comes to efficiency, as we get things done swiftly without waiting around.

The present generation has a great ability to sort through and digest information quickly. They prefer quick studies, mostly due to the continuously changing technology in our world, they had to learn quickly or risk being left behind. The ability to sort through information can be a downfall though because if they don't think information is going to apply to their job then you are going to lose their attention. In order to avoid this problem, customizing training role and job specific is exceedingly important.

Keeping the attention is not the only important thing when it comes to training. You have to get their attention first. Grabbing their interest is not necessarily difficult but it needs to be addressed when creating content. Presenting the same content with a flashier presentation or a more interesting title is all it may take. As long as you keep the content relevant to the learner once you've grabbed their attention, they will stay with you.

Besides the conventional classroom teaching, what are the other methods to suit the requirement of the present generation? Should someone train the students beyond the classroom teaching or should we allow them to try and learn something new by themselves?

In recent years, self-directed learning has gained increased attention. It is generally felt that it is better for the students to 'discover' something rather than be taught. Informal Learning is very easy and is the most common learning activity across the globe. Google has been described as the largest learning management system in the world that has further stressed the need to encourage self-learning and the widespread use of technology in learning besides the conventional methods.

While we customize teaching methods to suit the present generation, we must consider the current organizational trend, where the employees undergo training at various levels. Learning is an ongoing process in the organization and the learning occurs as part of the job. A fellow employee will show you how to complete a certain task, for example, how to log on and use a computer program. You may wish to learn about a specific company policy, so you will look it up on the corporate intranet site (the internal website for viewing by company employees only). Many leading companies are providing just-in-time learning modules. These brief (two or three minute) e-learning (online) programs cover a specific issue. They are designed to be available 24/7, precisely at the time an employee needs to know something specific. The modules cover specific topics - how to fill in a form, company policy, 'what to do' scenarios, etc.

The above examples are sufficient to prove the effectiveness of self-learning as a major source of acquiring knowledge in the contemporary organizational culture. We must acquaint ourselves with the recent learning trends, prevalent in the organizations, and train the students to adapt to these methods.

Wherever possible, all of us should engage in both formal and informal learning, remembering that each make a contribution to our enjoyment of life and our ability to grow and adapt in our personal and business spheres. We should encourage students to learn and adapt for their personal and professional growth.

Self-Learning is essential but as mentors we should have a planned approach to the development of the student community that needs a systematic structure of learning while they prepare for more challenging roles as professional experts. Training can save time. For instance, in a computer software training session, which is best: asking the trainer a question or looking for the answer in the software 'help' feature? It is best to learn in a more structured manner rather than relying on the discovery learning process. It may not work all the time. A good trainer can use discovery learning methods in a structured way. Time is the critical element. Learning should be maximized in the time available. Planned training can be more efficient and time effective. Informal Learning may benefit an individual but, sometimes, having a facilitator speeds up the learning process.

When we talk of technology, choosing the right type of technology and using it in the most efficient way is extremely important to train. They need not only be an advanced platform but also interactive in order to get the most from their training. Keeping the learners engaged is the key to successful training. There are many options when it comes to learning technologies.

Both entertaining and interactive forums for training are used by trainers. There are "role playing" sessions that allow learners to explore real life scenarios and interact with others. It gives them the feel of a game while still learning and developing interpersonal skills.

If training needs are identified, they should be addressed in a timely manner. With a generation that is so mobile, facilitators / trainers have to keep up with the fast lifestyle. As the current generation learner want things done quickly and efficiently, the same goes for their learning. We must work towards training modules that are delivered concisely and interestingly. Planned training that relates to the current organizational direction can make a real difference.

Training this generation using a technologically advanced platform is vital as it catches their attention and makes learning easier and more enjoyable. Our students are the future of the workforce so adapting current training methods to cater to their specific learning needs will soon not just be beneficial but imperative.

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMS

- *Program on Important Provisions of UGC*
- *Leadership Challenges in the Changing Environment*
- *How to Write Research Paper*
- *Understanding Self*
- *Innovations in Pedagogy*
- *Finance for Non finance*
- *Voice of the Customer Management*
- *Operational Excellence*
- *Classroom Management*
- *Managing Health*
- *Effective Supply Chain Management*
- *Effective Team Management*



To make the newsletter interactive learning forum, share articles with us on Learning/ Teaching initiatives, experiences/ideas and also provide feedback.

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