

The Practical Professor

No. 5

Quick and easy tips, questions, and suggestions for improving teaching and learning.

Confidence Levels

Student Feedback Technique Series #2

Targeting what we teach to the people we are teaching and taking into account what they tell us they understand is one key to effective diagnostic-based teaching. A quick and easy diagnostic tool useful at any time assesses students' "Confidence Levels." Pick 4 or 5 topics that you believe are difficult for students to grasp and use the following Student Feedback Technique (SFT) to check their confidence levels with what they are learning. After reviewing their feedback, design instructional tasks and allocate class time to target the topics that students feel the least confident with.

Attached (or below) you will find the "Confidence Levels" SFT. For this SFT, choose your topics ahead of time. This SFT can be used at the beginning or end of any class period, administered every three weeks, or used intermittently.

When using an SFT, tell students you need their input to adjust the course to **their** needs, strengths and weaknesses. Reassure them that **these are not evaluation tools**, that you need their honest answers, and that you will share with them what you learn and how you will use the information to help them. Tell them there is no need to put their names on the forms (you will get better answers if they are anonymous).

Allow 10 minutes for students to complete the SFT.

In the next *The Practical Professor*: Tip Series #2.

Confidence Levels

I need feedback from you concerning some key topics. ***This is not a quiz, and I am not going to use your answers to develop a quiz or test.*** Your responses will help me develop some instructional activities to help you better understand topics that you tell me you do not understand well. Here is the scale to use.

1 = I cannot explain this to someone else

2 = I do not think I can explain this clearly to someone else

3 = I can explain this, but not well

4 = I am pretty sure I can explain this so someone else will understand it

5 = I can explain this clearly to someone else

I will give you five topics. For each one, use the “Confidence Levels” scale above and write the number that best represents your feelings. Remember, there are no “right” or “wrong” answers. **This is only feedback to me.** Be honest!

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

If there is some other topic, or theory, or concept that you would like me to explain more please list it right here.

Thanks for your help!

Also available!

Teaching

A series of practical and innovative teaching tips for college faculty

Back Issues

The Top 10...

- No. 1 – The All-Important First Day of Class
- No. 2 – Ways to Make Your Teaching Life Easier
- No. 3 – The Crucial Second and Third Classes
- No. 4 – Ways to Show Students that You Respect Them
- No. 5 – Promote Effective Student Study Skills
- No. 6 – Components of a Well-Planned Class
- No. 7 – Observe Your Teaching Tendencies
- No. 8 – Ways to Keep Your Students Learning
- No. 9 – Ways to Get Feedback on Teaching from Students
- No. 10 – Using Short Writing to Assess Learning
- No. 11 – Getting More (and Better) Student Questions
- No. 12 – Mixing Things up Mid-Semester
- No. 13 – Engaging Different Input Preferences
- No. 14 – Helping Students Stay the Journey
- No. 15 – Ways to End Your Course
- No. 16 – Resources for Learning and Teaching
- No. 17 – Create a Memorable AND Functional Syllabus
- No. 18 – Ways to Build Your Students' Self-Efficacy
- No. 19 – Practical Study Tips to Share with Your Students
- No. 20 – Laddering Thinking Skills
- No. 21 – Learning Based Ways to End Lessons
- No. 22 – Ways and Reasons to Be Vulnerable While Teaching
- No. 23 – Using Student Groups
- No. 24 – Components of a Complete Learning Experience
- No. 25 – Ways to Use Visuals for Learning
- No. 26 – Students' Locus of Control
- No. 27 – Help Students with Rigorous Writing Assignments
- No. 28 – Ways to Shake Up Your Teaching
- No. 29 – Teaching to Inspire
- No. 30 – Paths to Mindfulness

Contact your campus Teaching and Learning Consultant (TLC) or e-mail us at:

JFinckel@asnuntuck.edu or WSearle@asnuntuck.edu

© 2015 Joseph Finckel and Bill Searle

THE CENTER FOR TEACHING · ASNUNTUCK COMMUNITY COLLEGE