

Engagement Strategies

Adapted from the Derek Bok Center – Harvard University

Consider the following strategies: Which strategies look like they might work for your teaching? What determines if a strategy will be effective or not?

- Start with first session
 - Norms and expectations are established
 - If not, explain change in norms when you do
- Begin session with a 'bridge' and a 'hook'
 - Two-minute summary of last session
 - Pose a question, problem, case, story, issue or challenge
 - Solicit variety of tentative responses to above
 - Ask learners to list their questions related to topic
 - Use these as you introduce new material or new ways of thinking
- Keep an engaging and safe atmosphere
 - Avoid implied criticism of questions or comments
 - Use 'warm' rather than 'cold' questions
 - Invite challenges to ideas (yours and others)
- Punctuate sessions with questions
 - Pause after making a major point
 - Pose a question related to the point
 - Ask for a vote on possible interpretations
 - Insert a multiple-choice question
 - Invite someone else to explain (for a couple of minutes)
- When using slides, tables, graphs, handouts
 - Ask what they see before explaining it to them
 - Ask what questions they would ask of the data
 - Ask if they see any trends or patterns in the data
 - Ask them to predict next data points
 - Let them be colleagues, co-investigators or problem solvers with the material
- Vary the format
 - Use debates, role-plays, panels, guests
 - Divide into small groups, each taking a position
 - Have them write for 2 minutes on a question related to your presentation
 - Follow-up with group discussions of their summaries
 - Have learners go to board to present small group consensus
- Closing the session
 - Allow time for questions, points of clarification
 - Come early or stay after to talk with people
 - End with provocative question or statement that 'bridges' to next session
 - Give a single-question 'quiz' based on lecture
 - Allow time to let them discuss the question – don't give the answer, till next session
 - Use a one-minute paper to have them digest or apply material, for example:
 - Three main points you think are important
 - One question you still have arising from this session
 - Something that surprised or enthused you
 - Something that confused you
 - Something you want to know more about