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The Enrichment of Teaching Techniques in a Professional Career

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Abstract:

Professional development is an ongoing endeavour for the faculty members, who are teaching to professional students. It is never too late to learn or improve oneself. What is taught? How is it taught? are inextricably linked and very much dependent on each other. The faculty should know the teaching techniques to deliver their content and meet the requirements of the targeted students. Content matter should be updated, stands as an example of practical application, change according to the emerging technologies. Faculty development can be two ways, one is quality improvement and the other one is to enhance the teaching techniques. One way is to import the quality teaching and the other way is to improve the self to meet the emerging trends. The information technology places a vital role in the classroom atmosphere will bring the different explanations of different expertise from the same discipline. The Standardization of material is necessary to avoid the differences of conveying message between senior and junior faculty. To enhance the teaching techniques, by introducing a mentor; Hence, the professional teacher will get the benefit. The essence of faculty development programmes, workshops, seminars, retreats and other training opportunities, increased with the assumption that the teaching methodology will change, which in turn will help the students to learn more. Presenting papers in the academic conferences, seminars or participating in workshops will provide an opportunity to the teachers and also get a chance to exchange knowledge and ideas. It will provide an opportunity to young faculty members to spend a short period in the seminars for a better academic exposure. The faculty members are exposed to the perspectives of colleagues from the other departments can also create a healthy environment to explore personal and group trends to grow up. Therefore, Faculty have to enhance their teaching techniques to meet the updates and the new facets of technology.

'It is never too late to learn or improve oneself'

Professional development is an earnest and conscientious activity for the faculty members, who are teaching to professional students, because emerging trends, upcoming developments and future inventions are major causes for self improvement and personal up-gradation. The growth of an instructor has profound impact on the students. The enrichment and enhancement show a path to improve the personal abilities and traits. This improvement is essential and plays a vital role in the profession of teaching.

There are always opportunities to improve on one's own, to learn new teaching techniques, master over the new technologies and experience the emerging developments in the fields of science and technology. The most important way to improve their teaching skills is to develop their content knowledge. Though they have plenty of experience and immense knowledge but they should know to meet the requirements of the professional students and reach their level of understanding. Availability of adequate and qualified faculty is a pre-requisite for quality education but they have to simplify the instructional methods and teaching techniques to convey their study material and information. Delivery and executing content material is more important than the process of preparation. To take an example for comfortable and smooth journey a good conditioned car as well as smooth road is essential, in the same way what is taught? How is it taught? are inextricably linked and very much dependent on each other.

The professional teachers are aware of their prepared material and how best these materials are useful for the students but they should also know the technique to deliver their content and meet the requirements of the targeted students. The faculty have their own way of teaching style and techniques; but the preparation of content matter should change according to the emerging technologies, upcoming changes and developments. They have to acquire knowledge about current technological developments in the relevant fields, the old way of teaching should be waved off and content should be equipped with updates and should stand as an example of practical application. The essence of workshops, seminars, retreats and other training opportunities, increased with the assumption that the teaching methodology will change, which in turn will help the students to learn more. They have to impart professional practices relevant to technical education. Presenting papers in academic conferences, seminars or participating in workshops will provide an opportunity to the teachers and also get a chance to exchange their knowledge and ideas. The young faculty members will get an

opportunity to spend a short period in the seminars for a better academic exposure. Conduction of faculty development programmes will also help in enhancing the skills and awareness about new techniques in professional teaching.

Faculty development can be two ways, one is quality improvement and the other one is to enhancement of teaching techniques. One way is to import the quality teaching and the other way is to improve the self to meet the emerging trends. As a part of content development, teachers should come out of the old teaching techniques and try to explore the new dimensions and facets of teaching methodology. It is time to move from the old teaching style to research oriented debate, where in students will have a practical application, is a different part of technique to teach effectively. An integrating research, in the form of instructions in the classroom will help the students. The best example for the research process, to impart research skills in the form of teaching, is inquiry based approach and problem-based learning.

Today information technology places a vital role in the classroom atmosphere because of the electronic devices like cell phones, laptops and browsing net will bring the different explanations of different expertise from the same discipline, of the content, way of different delivery styles, at the door steps of students, there is a decline in the levels of preparedness of students, so the teachers should not bemoan the changes, they should see these changes as opportunities for growth and understand the emotional needs of the students. Exposing to new technologies such as internet, E-mail etc, are affecting the student and the teacher. There is a lot of impact on the teaching methodologies such as video conferencing, delivery over the internet, Skype etc. A virtual learning environment will reflect on the pedagogy and raise awareness to use learning technologies in the classroom. The content delivery of the curriculum is assisting the spread of the evolution across the world.

Faculty should be aware of workshops on the different technologies to know the updates well in advance and implement them in the class rooms. They have to call for departmental meetings to identify and articulate the discipline specific integrations and developments. Sometimes the faculty has to articulate discipline specific integrations and developments. They should also advocate the students to know their needs and demands and should communicate what they exactly expect from the teachers to improve their skills. The present generation is very fast and not interested in old technique of mugging up the information. They lost interest with the old rules and regulations, very much interested with new dimensions of prescribed content. They feel more comfortable with practical applications and try to match these applications in a trial and error method to invent new ideas.

As a part of learning standardization of material is necessary to avoid the differences of conveying message between senior and junior faculty, who does not have earlier experience and as par excellent as a senior student. Improvement of access should be along with equity and excellence. Equity to all eligible persons; and particular to the vulnerable sections, a continuous and comprehensive evaluation is required for the better results. Douglas L. Robertson, in his book 'A Guide to Faculty Development' writes:

The demands placed upon faculty members and the complexity of their roles and responsibilities continue to evolve at an astonishing pace.... These changes in perspective will continue to evolve to reflect new conceptualization.

The faculty should also increase the presence of technology in their teaching techniques. Hence the area of study is expanding, the important concepts and methodologies are changing, the boundaries of knowledge are expanding, in view of this; they have to focus on the study of these changes continuously. The faculty also need to develop and learn how to use appropriate instructional technologies and research methodologies. More over the boundaries of disciplines are changing over time. In the global phenomena, the cultural diversity and age distribution of students demand for increased emphasis on enhancing the learning skills. To assist the students to reach their full intellectual potential, the faculty has to maintain intellectual competitiveness and the most modern expertise among themselves in the face of shrinking resources and shifting enrolment patterns.

To enhance the teaching techniques, by introducing a mentor, the professional teacher will get benefit with an instructional mentor; continuous mentoring and changing the teaching style will benefit a lot. The mentor will help the teachers in syllabus construction, course design and observes how best they are contributing to the learning and understanding the strategies. The mentor will also help in exam pattern and design, in such a way that the course material is not just a mean to grade students but how to master over it and use it for future application. These mentors can also help the teachers in giving accurate feed back to students about their performance and classroom management.

An important feature of this plan is to help the faculty members to identify their top priorities and goals. Mentors can serve as consultants in the process of creating a faculty development plan. Chairs review these plans with the new faculty and provide feedback. The final document should reflect an appropriate mix of the chair's expectations and the new faculty member's aspirations. It is assumed that faculty members will continue to plan with their department chairs throughout their careers, requesting guidance and clarifying expectations about department, college, and university needs and goals.

Most of the faculty members are in their mid-career, feel that they are experts in their discipline and there is little to enrich when compared to the most recently hired colleagues. Age, experience, their years of exposure and expertise may not necessarily make them the best; to achieve competitive teaching and learning environment, channelize development with respect to academic qualification and personal matters. In addition, teaching becomes more complex than earlier and students are expecting more from the professors than the past generation students. The new generation students will take a quantum leap over its previous generation in terms of knowledge.

John L. Romano, professor of educational psychology and one of the early developers of the MCTP (Mid-career Teaching Programme), who has introduced pedagogical strategies to faculty to improve student learning process, says

“Faculty at this level don’t generally come together to talk about teaching. In the universities and colleges, faculty may come together to talk about the administration, procedures and policies in the department, curriculum, research or research grants, but it’s relatively rare that faculty come together to talk about teaching in the classroom.”

As a part of quality improvement, faculty members are exposed to the perspectives of colleagues from the other departments can also create a healthy environment to explore personal and group trends to grow up. The teachers are facing a difficult situation dealing with the rapid paced change and finding themselves short on skills and high on demand from the parents, students, organization and the system itself. So faculty have to feel that their work is important to their students, to their institutions and indirectly to the society; this sense of doing work will be a best motivator for the teaching faculty. Once they understand the essence of it, they will continue the learning process through the usual route of individual professional initiative. This value added process contributes to the enhanced definition of institutional goals for the future; this process will also help to establish an exemplary model to deal with the challenges; Hence Faculty have to enhance their teaching techniques to meet the updates and the new facets of technology.

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