

Need for interactive gamified learning

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Today, we will look at what is this need for interactivity, gamification in learning. To understand this better, I just thought I would share a representative voice of teachers. I have done a lot of workshops, faculty development programs, as you call as FDPs. And typically, at the beginning of the workshop, I pose two questions, which I will be showing you. I am just going to show you screen snapshots from one sample workshop, but this again is representative of almost all the workshops done. This is spanning faculty, teachers across pretty much all the age groups.

I would say definitely middle school plus until the 12th and even a lot of UG and PG teachers. So, what is the first question? What are the key challenges that you face in classroom trainings? And this is a word cloud kind of a depiction from one of the sessions and the pattern as I said is pretty much similar. As you can see this one, the word interaction is a challenge. Interactivity, interaction is a big challenge and Sometimes what happens is, depending on the way the participants answer, this word, attention, sustained attention, supposing if everybody had written it as attention, that would have come as a bigger word.

If you can see this, one teacher had depicted it as student's attention, student attention, probably that's why it didn't combine. But essentially, you are able to see the pattern of the word attention. Here, there is attention here. So, there are at least five words, five responses, related to attention, and, interaction and attention seem to be the predominant things that are missing in classrooms as felt by teachers. And isn't that a very big cause of concern? Naturally it is, because a teacher feels that the message is passing or the lessons are being learned or the concepts are being transmitted, whatever you call it, right? I mean, the whole purpose of the teacher being in the class is so that they get a feeling that the audience is getting the message and they don't seem to be getting those signs in today's classrooms.

Now, let's see a few other reasons, I mean, which probably are not highlighted predominantly, but are nevertheless still important. Retaining the curiosity of the student and catering to everyone's tastes and learning abilities is a challenge. It is an important

challenge for a teacher. And, I mean, there are a few others also highlighted, but essentially I would say interactivity with the students and gaining their attention and retaining the curiosity. In a lot of ways, these are kind of correlated.

So, these seem to be the predominant challenges. And in some of the workshops, the word attention may come right in the middle. In some other workshops, I've seen engagement coming in the middle. And the other words too will be very, very closely stacked. So, this interactivity, engagement, attention in some different forms hover around the center, which essentially means that a lot of teachers are facing this in today's world.

Now, the next thing is From a teacher's perspective, what they feel are the key ingredients of an impactful training, teaching, facilitation. And it's very useful to study the responses. And here again, they have highlighted engagement. If the teacher is able to engage the class, right, That is the key to their success, the key to an effective classroom. And let us see the other answers too.

If the students listen, if they are able to make the students listen or if the students listen and give the feeling that there is a message transmission happening, that is really a very key technique or probably a key method by which the classroom is successful. And there are of course the other responses like curiosity buildup, audience-based content, if you are able to customize the content relevant to the audience, executable learnings, essentially learnings which they are able to execute and correlate with the real world, they are able to connect with the people, all those various different inputs. But the point is, again and again, we are coming to this point of making things interactive, engaging. Now, Adam Grant, one of the famous psychologist authors who has studied and continues to write about human psychology, he says, today, the scarcest resource in life is not time, it is attention. Succumbing to distractions is a decision to lower your cognitive, emotional and social intelligence.

So, we are unfortunately in a world full of distractions. How do we enable, how do we ensure that we do things that sustain our attention? And if you are able to do that and drive the concentration of the participants, then we are doing a great job in whatever we are doing. In the context of teaching learning, certainly it equally applies. Now, here is a snippet from a Harvard Business Publishing article, source credit of this picture is David Wood and Ignacio Gaffo. Well, traditionally we have been following the passive and absorptive methodology in teaching learning, which is mainly lectures, reading, etc.

I would say and probably a little bit differ, infographic definitely is a certainly one notch above and student presentation is also good. and a video is also good. But then again, we are talking on a relative scale. What we are trying to highlight is, all these are probably

monologues. I mean, probably if you just play a video and if the video is not engaging or if it just plays, it is still a one-way dialogue.

Infographic could be just a picture shown without audience participation. It could still be one way. So, student presentation likewise, if it is a student presentation where the fellow students question and add their comments and the teacher gives his or her perspective, then it is a completely different thing. It becomes active and immersive. But we are talking about just monologues or one-sided presentations.

Now, let us see what are the active and immersive ones. case discussion. The discussion is a key word here. Discussion means more than one person participating in the class beyond the teacher, at least one person, preferably a set of learners. Reflection, again, it is about making the student think critically, not just passive absorption and narration of facts and information but more about adding additional perspectives depending on what they have understood.

Word cloud is nothing but what we saw just two slides back. This is an example of a word cloud where we gather the opinion of the audience And the most common opinion or the just highlights in bold and towards the center. So, we get the view of all the learners and all learners get to see it in a setting. Then we have dynamic online tables or charts. Again, gaming comes here.

We will study about gaming in greater detail, but essentially we are driving towards games and what makes games interactive. A poll or an online quiz is a very, very effective tool because there you are actually interacting. A small dipstick into what the audience feels so that they are just not sitting passively, but they are able to respond. And as a part of the response, both the facilitator gets a view, so do the other learners in the classroom. Simulation, of course, you actually, it's a form of actually making people visualize And it kind of comes close to the really how things work.

Same is the case with experiential learning. These are forms of learning very, very close to the reality. The only thing is sometimes they are, in fact, a lot of times they are expensive to develop. and they take a lot of time. But otherwise, they are very, very powerful forms.

So, gaming and polling and interactivity come somewhere in between where it does not consume a lot of time. But certainly, I would say simulation and experiential learning are definitely higher in terms of the effectiveness of transmitting content. Role play where you actually involve the participants. Interactive drag and drop capability. So, you make the participants learn by making them take some action either using technology or even devoid of technology by making them speak or act.

All of these fall into those categories. We talk about role play. Role play need not involve any technology, but you make the students think through and enact or probably speak up. So, that is without using technologies, but here you use technologies and get the same output. Again, enabling small group discussions or learning teams within the classrooms facilitates an atmosphere where people talk to each other, if not in front of the large classroom, at least in small cohorts.

All of these make the teaching learning process very active and immersive. And that's the need of the hour. And if you go back to these slides, it really brings back the attention, brings back the interactivity that is much needed and spelt out by the teachers.