A Discussion About Discussions

Increasing Student Interaction in Discussion Boards

Dr. Mark Gale  |  Dr. Kim Roberts  |  Mrs. Lynn Frank
Presenters

Quick Introductions:

- Dr. Mark Gale
  Assistant Professor of Instructional Design
  College of Education at Athens State University

- Mrs. Lynn Frank
  Instructional Designer
  Instructional Design Services at Athens State University

- Dr. Kim Roberts
  Associate Professor of Operations Management
  College of Business at Athens State University
Overview of Presentation

Topics Covered:

- Importance of Student Engagement
- Current Problems with Most Discussion Boards
- Steps of the CREST+ Technique
- Implementation of CREST+ in Courses
- Additional Best Practices with Discussions
- Questions and Answers
QM Engagement Standards

QM Standards Focused On:

- Standard 1.9
  - Introductions to the class.
- Standard 5.2
  - Activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.
- Standard 6.2
  - Course tools promote learner engagement and active learning.
CURRENT DISCUSSION BOARDS

Problems with Discussion Boards:

- Boring to Students
- Minimal Interaction Between Students
- Timing Problems with Posts and Replies
Overview of CREST+ Technique

Steps of the CREST+ Technique:

1. Determine Purpose of Discussion
2. Provide Context of Discussion
3. Implement Experiential Elements
4. Determine Type of Question
5. Construct the Actual Discussion Question

CREST+ Article: http://jolt.merlot.org/vol3no2/akin.htm
CREST+: Define Purpose

**Purpose of a Discussion:**

- Discussions are NOT for Summarizing
- Create Interaction Between Students
- Types of Discussions with Interaction:
  - Reflection
  - Debate
  - Synthesize
  - Etc.
CREST+: Provide Context

Setting Up the Background Info:

- Textbook or Lecture
  - Readily Available, Easy to Create
  - Less Engaging

- Multiple Sources
  - Middle Ground

- Non-Literary Sources
  - Harder to Moderate and Create
  - More Engaging
CREST+: Experiential Element

Allowing for Personal Experience:

- Opinion Based Discussion
- Scenarios Based on Prior Experience
- Makes Discussion Relevant and Interesting
- Important for Adult Learners
Types of Discussion Questions:

- Metacognitive
- Practical Relevance
- Reflective Analysis
- More Evidence
- Cause and Effect
- Case Study
- Synthesis of Information
CREST+: CONSTRUCT THE QUESTION

Building the Question:

- Purpose and Background
- State the Actual Question
- Give an Example of a Response
- Provide Any Additional Examples
- Include Due Dates
First Implementation

Student Created Scenarios:

- MG 390: Operations Management
- Question Description
- Increase in Number of Responses
- Increase in Quality of Responses
- Grading Was Unique and Enjoyable
First Implementation

Checking out at the local retail store can be a hassle. 25 people on their way to work and there is only one line to check out at. This building has 20 registers and they have put their busiest person at the checkout and not another employee around to help the person out. A few customers panic and run down and lose. The sales per hour will be greatly diminished, as well as the overall sales for the day, from the customers that end up not purchasing anything.

Matthew Fling
RE: Discussion #2

A way to mitigate this problem would be to maybe pick up your morning routine of have a coffee or grab the evening before so it doesn’t distract or just one check out lane open. Also, they could have automated machines open at night to not disturb anyone that needs them. The store to work is a popular store that is open at night. It would also work out much better if the local retail store you shopped at had customer service present to make the shoppers experience their top priority in losing customers satisfied. Which would you more, if you have 20 checkout lines and only 1 serving for 20 customers. Open additional lanes to eliminate the bottleneck, and more customers through the checkout until theirs arrives anymore.

Christine Sutherland
RE: Discussion #2

Like your discussion, Walmart screams out in my head: I believe that if they took the average amount of customers they have per hour and make sure that they had the appropriate staff of cashiers to accommodate the flow of customers it would greatly improve sales and customer relations.

Ryland Pendleton
RE: Discussion #2

Christopher, I agree. I have noted this bottleneck on many occasions. The faster sales will stop. Places like Walmart, Auto or any big food place should look at their sales analyst and determine what time is the peak hours of operation. From there they can see the flow and adjust staffing to move people and have more registers open.
FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION

Expanding to More Courses:

- Expanded Technique to Multiple Courses
- Gathered Anecdotal Feedback
- Responses:
  - Think More In Depth
  - Read Multiple Posts
  - Inventive and Engaging
- Intend to Follow Up with Additional Research
Future Implementation

One of the key roles of Colleagues is that of a planner and facilitator. Each week, improvements are made up to 10 to 25 new members, depending on the progress of the project. The team members are empowered by the project sponsor to develop new improvement initiatives or to develop and enhance existing ones. The process is not only a tool for improving processes but also a way to identify potential areas for improvement, both within the organization and across the state system. The goal is to create a culture of continuous improvement, where everyone is encouraged to think creatively about ways to enhance the organization's performance. It is important to communicate these changes to all stakeholders, including project sponsors, who are usually key decision-makers or leaders, and to update the college president on the status of the project progress weekly or as needed and must have a uniform way of measuring the project status and relying on that information.

https://www.kennesaw.edu/resources/how-to-meet-people-effectively-communication-practice
Across Curriculum

Implemented Model in the Following:

- Various Business Courses
- Various Education Courses
- Various Arts and Sciences Courses
- Various Technology Courses
- Various Delivery Modes (Online, Hybrid, F2F)
More Best Practices in Discussions

Tips for Stronger Discussions:

- Number of Discussions
- Role of the Instructor
- Students to Take Them Seriously
  - Grading
  - Crest+ Technique
  - Student Created Topics
SUMMARY
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- Additional Best Practices with Discussions
Image Sources

- **Slide 3, 18: Drawing on Whiteboard**
  - Photo by Kaleidico on Unsplash

- **Slide 4: Fingers Typing on Keyboard**
  - Photo by Glenn Carstens-Peters on Unsplash

- **Slide 5: Sleeping Person**
  - Photo by Pocky Lee on Unsplash

- **Slide 6, 16: Talking in Front of Computer**
  - Photo by Headway on Unsplash

- **Slide 7: Group of People Talking**
  - Photo by Alexis Brown on Unsplash
Image Sources – Pt. 2

- **Slide 8**: Person Reading Newspaper
  - Photo by Roman Kraft on Unsplash

- **Slide 9**: People Outdoors
  - Photo by Priscilla Du Preez on Unsplash

- **Slide 10**: Student Raising a Hand
  - Photo by Nicole Honeywill on Unsplash

- **Slide 11**: Person Typing on a Keyboard
  - Photo by Kaitlyn Baker on Unsplash

- **Slide 17**: Group of Men Talking
  - Photo by Austin Distel on Unsplash
Questions