My Philosophy on Learning

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Abstract:
In my personal experience, I have found Kolb's theory of experiential learning to be the most effective method for teaching and learning. I believe the process of learning is more important than numerical outcomes, and that technology should be used not to make education more efficient, but instead as a way to connect with students.
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The most memorable experiences in my personal education have been the ones where I was an active participant in an activity which I would later reflect on. Because these activities made such an impact on me as a student, I have come to embrace Kolb’s theory of experiential learning as my current world view of the most effective way to teach and learn.

Experiential learning has four stages: concrete experience (such as a team challenge), reflective observation (writing a diary entry, for example), abstract conceptualism (making sense of what has happened), and active experimentation (putting the lesson into practice). Instead of focusing on outcomes such as test scores and rote memorization, experiential learning is centered around the idea that “concepts are derived from, and continuously modified by, experience.” (Kolb, 1984, pp. 26). Great teachers are those who provide memorable experiences for their students and help them explore the application to everyday life.

In my opinion, great teachers also make an effort to adopt new learning technologies into their curriculum in order to engage students. Technology has become prevalent in almost every area of our lives, from work to play. Staying abreast of technology means creating and nurturing a connection with students who have grown up constantly adapting to new gadgets. However, the curriculum should be considered the hub of all learning activities.

I must agree with Clark’s (1994) notion that instructional designers are more concerned with media and design than learning theory. Each new technology should be adopted with the same basis of research in mind, but instead, “we reinvent the wheel
constantly but inadequately” (1994, pp. 8). Instead of focusing on the process of learning, we feel as though we need new research to discern the effectiveness of the latest and greatest technologies.

My desire is to remove the pressure to make education super-efficient and super-effective through technology integration. Instead, we should use instructional technology to relate to students and keep our eyes on the prize: the process of learning rather than the outcomes.
References


