

Quality Dialogue Education: A Checklist

by Jane Vella

We had an inspiring dialogue about the usefulness of a tool to assure quality Dialogue Education designs and teaching. How do we know we are doing the best Dialogue Education with our students? Is there a checklist we can use to assure that we have thought of everything, done everything, executed as well as possible, documented wisely? Here's a first try at such a checklist. What would you add? How could you use this?

Getting to know you

- A clear contract for learning: who needs what as defined by whom?
- A short effective Learning Needs and Resources assessment completed by all, responses read and studied by you, analyzed and collated by you.
- A warm welcome either by e-mail or personal as students begin the course

The design bears the burden

- The eight design steps carefully worked through for the entire course/workshop/session - including draft indicators (Step #8) Who? Why? When? Where? What? What for? How? So What?
- This design reviewed by a peer CDET or GLP Partner or the person who hired you, or all of the above! Listen to their comments and act on them: you decide, they suggest.
- Take time at the beginning of the course (or before) to have the students review the entire design so they know what is going to happen and what is expected of them.
- Stay with the design until you are sure that it needs to be revised; then, revise it with alacrity. Show the new design - the changes you made - in your report to students at the end.

The play's the thing

- The stage is set: materials, environment, lighting, tech support, small group arrangements
- You know your lines: You set the learning tasks and sit down. The design bears the burden.
- The cues are read: You are the resource in the room - always available, never intrusive. You know the content and have a computer ready for the questions you can't

immediately respond to. Call a colleague, Ask a friend. don't stay stuck as the teacher, and they won't stay stuck as learners.

- You do what you are teaching: respect, listening, affirming, gentle reliance on the structure, avoiding “plops”.
- Timing, timing, timing: set end times for each task. “*We’ll share a sample at 2:00.*” The learning is in the doing and in the deciding and in the dialogue that sums it up.
- You begin as scheduled and end exactly on time.

Document - that’s a verb!

- The LNRA and responses
- The complete design and all changes made *en route*
- Names and information about all students
- Indicators (Step # 8) of learning and transfer

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