

Reflection Paper on Making Good Change Happen

Donna Lesser

EDC 668

Overview of Project

The purpose of this project involves a paradigm shift from emphasizing behaviorism to constructivism learning theory in the Riverside Community College Dental Hygiene Program.

Key Actions

My project has provided me the opportunity to tackle an important component of my action research project that includes leadership skills, faculty education and motivation. The most important actions for me to take included recognizing the need for the change, assessing faculty members feelings to determine who could be early adaptors of my proposed paradigm shift in learning theory, and finding resources to assist the faculty members in learning about constructivism and providing implementation examples.

Key Themes to Change Management

The key themes that I learned through this project, readings and process include:

1. Prior to initiating change, a thorough and complete assessment must be done that includes communication, implementation, and sustainability strategies.
2. Get input and feedback from the individuals involved in the change. Allow everyone's voice to be heard.
3. Focus on the process of change and allow the faculty members to determine the best way for them to implement it in each of his/her classrooms. Don't micromanage and allow the process to present even better outcomes than I

imagined.

4. Communication throughout is a key element to success.

Personal Vision for Change Management

My personal vision of change management is very simple – change is a necessity in education and it's my job to motivate and facilitate change. I have grown as a facilitator of change through this process just by getting a better sense of the components and key elements needed for an implementation of successful change. My role as a change agent needs to become stronger and I need to expand my role beyond that of the dental hygiene program.

Appendices

Summary of Stage 1: Identifying Opportunity for Change

The focus for this project was chosen to support a component of my action research project that I knew I wouldn't be able to address during the summer semester. This addition was very timely and has provided concrete information to the faculty to assist in our transition into more effective learning and teaching methodologies.

Summary of Stage 2: Summary of Opportunity for Change

Writing out the summary was critical for me to think through the process. It allowed me to ask myself questions and to step back and look at the big picture. I also took the opportunity to discuss my thoughts with faculty and alumni from our program during this step. Connecting and getting feedback prior to starting to design the project allowed me to understand that the faculty members were leaning towards a stronger "behavior modification" versus "constructivism" approach to learning.

Summary of Stage 3: Evaluate Learning Context of Change

This stage was pivotal in my ability to conceptualize what would need to occur in order for the proposed change to happen. Writing down the "who and when" allowed me to plan out the steps that needed to be taken and who would be the key members in the change. Additionally this step forced me to truly look at the

faculty in regards to their strengths and weaknesses and then to capitalize on their strengths. Traditionally, I try to place faculty members with roles that would allow them to work on their weaknesses has worked well as I provide an environment to allow faculty members to grow as individuals. I now understand that when trying to motivate and facilitate a paradigm shift utilizing strengths would be more effective.

Summary of Stage 4: Resource List for Change

The outcome of this step allowed me to reflect and determine what knowledge would faculty members need to start looking at learning differently? This step also allowed me to condense by original list of references to a number that would not overwhelm the faculty.

Summary of Stage 5: Timeline and Project Plan for Change

The timeline was crucial for me, as I would have postponed the implementation of this project until August. This would not have allowed faculty members time to process and discuss this proposal of change, read and learning about constructivism and then make changes in their fall courses.

Summary of Stage 6: Podcast Agent of Change

The work resulting from this has no barring on my project. It allowed me to reconfirm that collaboration is always a process that is needed regardless of the assignment. This process was amazingly difficult for me. I recorded my podcast on three different programs and was unsuccessful in getting any one of them

uploaded on the wiki. I was determined that I could and would do this with no assistance. I wanted to show myself that I had learned enough about technology from being around Cadre XI that I could do this. But, sadly, I had to reach out for assistance. After guidance and another three hours of hard work, I finally figured it out.

Summary of Stage 7: Managing Change

I will say that this is a step that I have never entertained before – the sustainability of a change. It seems so simple yet brilliant. This step forced me to read as much as I could on managing change. I have a few thoughts on how to accomplish this but I'm now very aware that the sustainability is orchestrated as well and not a natural evolution that occurs with change.