

# Observations and Outcomes

## Cycle One

- The students enjoyed the wiki and felt it was an effective learning tool.
- Faculty members were not consistent on expectations of students and what deeper understanding of Periodontology is.

## Cycle Two

- Students felt that the wiki, discussion board and peer lead discussions did provided assistance in acquiring a deeper understanding of periodontal concepts.
- Faculty felt strong students demonstrate a deeper understanding but weaker students did not.
- Faculty members were not consistent on expectations and what a deeper understanding of Periodontology is.

## Cycle Three

- Beginning of the calibration process on what a deeper understanding is.

# Self Reflections

## What I learned about my workplace:

- There are forces working against change that I hadn't acknowledged.
- Both the students and faculty must be aligned in order to determine when deep understanding is occurring.
- Constructivism is not a learning theory that all faculty members understand.
- The designs of the courses in the curriculum have a dramatic impact on the students' ability to transfer knowledge to a deeper understanding.

## What I learned about myself:

- I have a true passion of this action research project.
- I need to continue to develop my leadership skills.
- My priorities as an educator are not in alignment with my goals and passion.
- Mentoring opportunities are being overlooked.
- I need to develop an increase in my patient level for faculty members.

# The Perfect Storm: Transferring Knowledge to a Deeper Understanding

## Action Research Project

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## Introduction

This action research project has a target population of adult learners that are in a two-year dental hygiene program. The two-year curriculum includes didactic courses and a strong clinical component where students provide preventive services to the public in the Dental Hygiene Clinic.

## Action Research Project Problem

Dental hygiene students' inability to transfer knowledge from didactic courses to a deep understanding during the provision of patient care.



## Actions Taken

### *All Centered Around Constructivism Learning Theory*

#### Cycle One

**Research question:** "If students utilize a wiki to build, discuss and reflect on periodontal concepts presented in DEH-33 Periodontology, will it result in a deeper understanding of concepts addressed in this class?"

#### Actions taken:

- Implementation of a wiki (<http://dlessor.wikispaces.com/>).
- Observations of usage of wiki.
- Survey of students and faculty members.

#### Cycle Two

**Research question:** "Can the use of a wiki as an 'information gathering tool' in conjunction with peer and faculty led discussions in class and on the discussion board facilitate a deeper understanding of periodontal concepts?"

#### Actions taken:

- Continuation of wiki as a collaborative learning tool

(<http://DEH43.wikispaces.com/>).

- Implementation of the use of the discussion board.
- Incorporation of peer led discussions both in class and on the discussion board.
- Redesigned course utilizing the Understanding by Design concept.

#### Cycle Three

**Research question:** "If I can provide the opportunity for faculty members to discuss components of the periodontal assessment tool, expectations of students, and then design a new evaluation mechanism, will it increase the consistency in which students are evaluated and therefore allow for a reliable assessment of the students' ability to demonstrate a deep understanding of Periodontology concepts?"

#### Actions taken:

- Biweekly faculty meetings.
- Faculty identifying the key components to a periodontal assessment.