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Teaching Philosophy

I have experience teaching both adults and children. During my Bachelor studies, I had formal training in secondary education for second language learning as well as developing curriculum for self-learners; in graduate school, I had formal training in designing and facilitating community based literacy programs for minority language communities. My teaching experience has included English literacy, German, and Economics for grade schoolers, linguistics and technology for adults, and outdoor sports activities (swimming and rock climbing) for kindergarten and grade school age children.

Knowledge learning is a social construct. Reading literature alone is not sufficient. Ideas need to be discussed and tested to form belief and confidence. The process of communicating competencies and skills is complicated and requires attention to detail. Teachers are facilitators in a discovery process. They tailor the communicative event for relevance to the individual learner's communication and learning styles. In this statement, I include perspectives from mentoring, a process most often associated with one-on-one engagements, and training which is often associated with instruction outside of formal classrooms. I seek opportunities to transmit skills and competencies which opportune [my strengths](#): *Learner, Input, Individualization, Ideation, and Focus*. Smaller group sizes afford me the opportunity to leverage these strengths to effectively influence learners rather than simply present material to groups. I look to accommodate communicative competencies that the learners have demonstrated building bridges from existing schematic understandings to the new concepts being acquired. I seek to situate hands-on learning opportunities within the strengths of learners.

Assessment is an important part of the learning process. I find it an excellent tool to benefit both the learner and the instructor. I prefer training scenarios which offer pre-instructional assessment, instruction, and post-instruction assessment. In my experience, the pre- and post-assessment allow for reflection and generate awareness of potential knowledge gaps. In formal learning environments, I prefer instructional curriculum design which presents learners with clear and objective rubrics for evaluation on a 100 point basis, without bell curves or averages. I seek to encourage learners to expand their current belief about their own capabilities while navigating the learning environment in a manner which avoids emotional blocks to learning often caused by frustration and confusion. I find that, where possible, learners respond best when they can engage in self-directed, collaborative, project based learning.

I use multiple teaching theories such as Schema Theory and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory to inform my approach, selecting the most appropriate theories when they seem to fit the training environment and learning goals. Peer-learning is often better received and more efficient than instructor-directed learning, but some cultural contexts may mitigate benefits. In my courses, I seek to transmit competencies with the greatest ease. However, ease must be balanced with a variety of factors such as authority-culture and distance learning requirements.

I seek to listen to and encourage learners as they question and re-articulate their newly discovered concepts. I see my role as one of providing tools and skills to learners so that they may break down complicated problems and discover new approaches to increase their confidence as they perform their new competencies. In this way true learning forms a socially confirmed basis of belief. Learners continue to learn and share when they are proud of results.