Experiential Education Concepts and Tools for Sailors

As you arrive, please take a post it note and do the following:

*Pre-program activity*

1. **Draw a line** to separate the note into two parts
2. On the **top part draw** a picture of yourself or something that represents you
3. On **bottom part write** 3 facts about yourself, suggestions:
   1. Where you grew up?
   2. Your first ship or sailing/boating experience?
   3. A fun fact about yourself or a favorite of yours (movie, show, music, game etc.)

“*What is below your waterline, what is hidden from others view?*”
Experiential Education Concepts and Tools for Sailors

Captain Christopher Cusson
US Brig Niagara, Erie PA

Dr. T. Grant Lewis
West Virginia University Institute of Tech
Association of Experiential Education (AEE)
Voyage together for next 75 min

• Be present and **participate**, move around, **engage**, ask questions.
• **Choice**, If you are not participating don’t disrupt others, join in when you’re ready
• **Be respectful** of others and their opinions
• If this workshop isn’t what you thought it would be, need to use the rest room or just want to leave, no problem, **do what is best for you**.
• Have Fun, enjoy the workshop.
Why this workshop?

• Stems from experience at AEE Conference and workshop given by Dr. Lewis.

• Recognizing that many professional mariners are do not have formal training in program facilitation.

• Introducing concepts and tools for assisting with programing may be beneficial for some professional mariners.

• Discussing the “Why?” are we doing this helps with the how should we be doing this and ultimately the help with the outcomes we hope to achieve.

• Stretch my own comfort zone and incorporate these ideas into my program facilitation tools.
Reflect and Share

• Throughout workshop we will ask you to take a min to reflect upon your own experiences.
• Express and reflect in your way
• Share with a neighbor
Goals of workshop (SMART)

• Create an open environment where participants feel comfortable and willing to participate.

• Connect on some level with 3 people.

• Introduce some tools to assist with programming, and have you leave with 1 idea that you can incorporate into your programs.

• Have Fun!
Student arrives and is overwhelmed by the ship and people.

How do we help that trainee?

“This has been fun, Hank, but let’s not forget that the bus back to the city leaves in fifteen minutes.”
Intro Activities/Ice Breakers

Start with FUN

Intro Activities
Help Set the Tone
Allow students to interact and get comfortable

Let’s Start!
Ice Breakers and Group Activities

Foster an Environment where students feel invited to participate

• Often a program will begin in a **big circle** asking people to **introduce** themselves.
  • In this setting and at this point people are **uncomfortable** and rarely remember anyone’s name or anything about them.
• **Arrival activities** that help students acclimate and start the process of **meeting other trainees and crew** can be more **effective** and help **set the tone** of the program.
• This step will help with the foundation of team formation necessary for program success and growing comfort zones.
Making Connections at Start of Program

• Early activities should help participants make connections and start the building of relationships.

• Students will be more likely to be successful early on in a program if they learn a few names and make a connection with at least one person.

• If you can demonstrate to that student who is close to their panic zone that the ship is a safe welcoming place.
Arrival activities and sequencing

• You never know what others have gone through, create a safe environment for all, be inclusive.

• How to help and support students who are arriving to the ship in their stretch or panic zone to persevere and grow their comfort zone to include the ship and people.

• Show students the ship is a safe and fun place to challenge themselves.

• Create connections with other students and crew.
Sequencing

- Sequencing is the process of **planning and introducing activities** in an **order** that is **appropriate** for participants to be successful.

- At the start of a program if participants are asked to go beyond what they have been prepared for, they are likely to fail or respond negatively. **Sequencing helps prepare trainees for future challenges.**

- The **icebreakers** used at the beginning of the workshop were selected to support your level of comfort in this workshop and engagement with others.

- **Activities** should be **sequenced** to build up to the next one.
Pre-Arrival: Before the Program – Being Intentional

Planning

• **Pre-arrival** – Program goals and needs analysis introduced.
  • Beyond what program goals you want to deliver. What type of community do you want to create and how do you want your students to feel when they leave the ship?
Pre-arrival – Understanding needs, goals and asking the right questions

- **Logistics** of the program – When, Who, What, Where, How
- **Goals of the program** – Specific goals that are achievable, relevant and trackable.
- **What impact** are you going to make in order to affect your trainees? What do you want trainees to leave knowing and/or feeling?
Logistics of the program – When, Who, What, Where, How

• **When** – Program details, ship schedule etc?
• **Who** – How many students, age group, demographics, experience?
• **What** – What activities are a part of your program?
• **Where** – Where will you do activities, training, discussions on the ship or ashore?
• **How** – What format will training be presented in? Group discussion, formal class, reflective, journal, blended learning.
Program Goals
Specific goals that are achievable, relevant and trackable. INTENTIONALITY

SMART Goals

• **S**  **Specific**  — Clear and concise

• **M**  **Measurable**  — in time, people, recall

• **A**  **Achievable**  — realistic, but will challenge

• **R**  **Relevant**  — has direct significance and connection

• **T**  **Trackable**  — monitor progress, know if successful
What IMPACT do you want to have?

• What community and culture do you want to foster?

• What impact are you going to have with your program?

• How do you want your trainees to be impacted by your programs? Short term and long term impact.

Creating space to afford personal growth.
Reflect and Share
Personal or Organizational Goals for Programming

• Think about your personal or organizational programming goals, mission, or philosophy and write down 3-6 words you would use to describe it (2 min)
  • For example: ambassador, history, challenge, fun

• Take turns and share with your neighbor (2 min)

• Volunteers willing to share (2 min)
Experience and Development Zones: Comfort, Stretch/Growth, and Panic Zones

- People prefer to be in their **Comfort zone**. This is a place where they feel safe, but no learning or personal development takes place there.

- When people are challenged but have the tools to meet that challenge, they enter the **Stretch/Growth Zone**. This is where learning happens.

- The Panic Zone is where people can shut down and are not able to continue participating or learning. When trainees arrive, they are already in their stretch or **Panic zones**.

- The goal of **arrival activities** and **sequencing** is to help **broaden** trainee **comfort zones** to include the **ship** and **people** so that they can come together as a team to achieve objectives and overcome challenges. In this way the crew becomes more **effective and efficient**.
Comfort Zone

Feel Safe

Familiar

Know place, people, schedule

Bored, No growth
Stretch/Growth Zone – Learning Zone

• Learning happens
• Push limits
• Challenged
• Expand Horizons
• Most students start in this place or in Panic Zone when arriving to ship
Panic Zone

- Panic, stressed, afraid
- Want to leave
- Not learning
- Not having fun
- Checked out, disrupting others
Reflect and Share

• Think of experience where you **were pushed** into your stretch or panic zone. (2 min)
• Share this experience with a neighbor. (2min)
• Volunteers to share experience. (2min)
Ship Community Agreement/Contract: (15 min)

• Tool that can be used to create a cooperative and successful community onboard about group norms of interaction and behavior.
• Give participants a role in setting guidelines and group rules.
• May prevent confusion about conduct on ship and assist with conflict resolution.
• It affords member of crew to hold each other accountable.
• Can have agreements within larger contracts. (Watch agreements) Must not violate overall crew agreement.
Ship Community Agreement Activity

• Think about the values, norms and conduct you believe would be important to have in a supportive and effective ship community. (1-2 min)

• Participants divided into groups (watches) to produce agreement ideas. (5 minutes)

• Groups will then share what they have produced to form a full Group Agreement/Contract. (2 min)

• Have students sign the agreement and use it as a guide.

“A team meeting in 20 minutes seems appropriate.”
Do, Reflect, Interpret, Apply.

The experiential learning cycle is used to transfer what is learned during an activity to a trainee’s life after the program is completed.

**Do** - Shipboard activity or training is introduced and performed.

**Reflect** - The activity or training is debriefed, what happened or what observations can be made?

**Interpret** - Interpret the experience, generalize and find patterns about the activity.

**Apply** - Apply the observations to the next activity and if possible, what relates to trainees’ real lives after the program.
Activity / Experience

• Do - Shipboard activity or training is introduced and performed.
Reflect

• Reflect- The activity or training is debriefed, what happened or what observations can be made?

  • Debrief in large group.
  • Divide into pairs or small groups.
  • Have students journal/draw/doodle about their experience.
So What?

• Interpret the experience, generalize and find patterns related the activity.
• Discuss why things happened that way.
Now What?

• **Apply** the **observations** to the **next activity** and if possible, what relates to trainees’ real lives after the program.

• **Use challenges** as learning opportunities.

• **Transfer** the **learning** to other aspects of an individual’s **life**.
Debrief: Power of Story
Reflection and Sharing

• Story telling is a **powerful tool** for program participants to **reflect** and **share** about their **experiences**.

• With this **reflection** they are better able to **process** the experience and then **communicate** it with **others**.

• Story telling is also a powerful tool for **introducing** concepts.

• Our stories become a part of our memories and become a **part of us**.
Tell your story – Challenging or difficult experience you have overcome

• Participants will be invited to participate in an activity to introduce story as part of programming.
  • Take some time to reflect about a challenge you have experienced. (5 min)
  • Share that story with a neighbor (2-3 min)
  • Volunteers to share their experience. (5 min)
Volunteers to Share a Story

• Any volunteers willing to share their experience.
Thank you for your participation!

Captain Christopher Cusson - captincusson@flagshipniagra.org

Dr. T. Grant Lewis - t.lewis4@mail.wvu.edu

Please fill out a conference survey for this workshop

References and Inspiration

• AEE Website and Conference
• Book Serious Fun by Mark Collard

If you are interested in learning more, we would be happy to chat about it.