

Teaching Skills

Choosing a Delivery Strategy

All teachers face the question of "what is the best method to teach this objective?"

The usual choices are lecture, discussion or demonstration.

The emphasis here isn't so much on how to do it but, rather, "why" choose a particular approach. Demonstrations are especially good for teaching clinical skills, so this teaching tip will concentrate on those.

While demonstrations are generally teacher-centered, there are several techniques available, such as peer tutoring, actual practice, research papers, on-the-job training (in clinics or the surgical suite) and, of course, simulation labs. Keep in mind that if demonstrations are to be successful, preparation is needed. It isn't simply a matter of inserting the videotape or DVD and sitting back. Here are some questions you might ask when considering demonstration as a potential delivery strategy.¹

- Does the learner need to see the process?
- How many students need the content now?
- How much preparation time is available and how much is required?
- Can you tell and show the content?
- What "other" senses can be involved in this learning?
- Do you want the students to imitate you?
- Is there AV support available?
- How long will the demonstration last - more than 20 minutes?
- Can you ask questions during the demonstration?
- Can you stop and start the demonstration?
- Will there be practice time for the students?
- Can the student easily identify the steps in accomplishing the task being taught?
- Will you permit the students to ask questions?
- Is there only one right way?
- Will you support the demonstration with handouts?
- Have you ever listened to or watched one of your demonstrations?

Your response to these questions should tell you whether you should use the demonstration method and may alert you to some of the issues if you do choose it.

Demonstration is a great way to teach and learn, but it needs to be used wisely, not as a default to lecture or discussion.

Source

¹ Honolulu Community College. Faculty development teaching techniques: Selecting a delivery strategy. <http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm#techniques>