

Title of Session: Faculty Resistance to Online Learning

Moderator: Roger Goodson

Title of File: 20080925frol

Date: September 25, 2008

Room: Faculty Resistance to Online Learning Group

GeorgeK joined the room.

BJB2: here's the url again, George

BJB2: <http://www.c4lpt.co.uk/socialmedia/12stepplan.html>

RogerMG: Let's see . . .to go there I hold down control and click the url, right?

BJB2: right

BJB2: Jane does a weekly newsletter. This caught my attention: Much of what we read about generational differences between learners in the Web 2.0 world is a bit removed from reality. In this week's article author Jane Hart connects the dots between theory, reality, and practice by using Guild Research and interviews with practitioners

BJB2: When writing the article I referenced the work I had been doing in understanding the use of social media in the workplace, in particular the Model of Engagement with Social Media that I had developed, that showed that users interact with these tools at a number of different levels, i.e.

BJB2: Reader (or passive consumer)

BJB2: Participant (or active contributor)

BJB2: Creator (or proactive producer)

GeorgeK: what about partner

BJB2: My research on today's new breed of learner has shown that he/she is (amongst other things) someone who is highly engaged with social media at all 3 levels and on a very regular basis - irrespective of age! And interviews with learning professionals showed that those who were most successfully implementing (or moving towards implementing) E-Learning 2.0 in their organizations, were also highly engaged with social media and its ethos. It seems clear that having an excellent understanding and hands-on appreciation of these tools is vital to being able to advise on appropriate learning experiences and solutions for this new generation of learner. So in terms of social media, how can learning and development professionals who have yet to explore social media get started - or engaged?

BJB2: Over the years I've run a number of workshops on different tools and technologies and have got participants to set up blogs, wikis, etc themselves (i.e. become Creators), but I have now come to realise that whereas this approach works for some, for others it really is like being thrown in the deep end, when what is wanted and needed is an approach that builds confidence and competence with social media by gradually working up through the levels (of Reader and Contributor) to Creator.

GeorgeK: I use Blackboard in teaching

GeorgeK: Most of the semester my students do some stuff but really don't engage

GeorgeK: Near the end of the semester, when they have really digested the course, I set up a wiki

BJB2: I thought that Jane's comments were excellent for faculty

GeorgeK: Then I throw them a really hard issue or question

RogerMG: Interesting BJ. I was doing some research using The Cambridge Handbook of The Learning Sciences and found an article there on Technology Literacy that suggested similar categories.

GeorgeK: That is when they really engage...they have become capable, and they are interested, because I am interested in what they really think

GeorgeK: I agree on Jane's comments, just can't type fast enough

RogerMG: Good model George.

BJB2: Jane's page is <http://janeknight.typepad.com/pick/>

JeffC joined the room.

BJB2 waves hi to Jeff

JeffC: hmmm... another "justice" group

JeffC: who's here? just us

GeorgeK: There now is management literature on what is being called a "Brickolage" approach...

GeorgeK: i.e. puttering, or doing chores

RogerMG: I am still using feature length films and Moodle Discussion teams focused on

them. I post a lead intro, including various links, and then they have to post original posts and respond to the posts of a min. of 2 or 3 other learners. So, in showing Norma Rae, they have links to Scientific Mgmt., Mill Towns, Unskilled Labor, Unions, etc.

BJB2: we were discussing Jane's eLearning site, Jeff

GeorgeK: Roger, I am ashamed to say that too many students here would never watch the film

JeffC: ok

DavidW joined the room.

BJB2: is this a blended learning class, Roger?

DavidW waves to Roger

BJB2 hugs David

DavidW hugs BJ

RogerMG: No choice . . .I show it in class time:-) (takes two session.)

GeorgeK: isn't puttering what we do when we chat on social media?

RogerMG: Hi David LTNS.

DavidW smiles

BJB2 . o O (yep...blended learning is combo of f2f and online)

DavidW likes the idea of puttering

GeorgeK: The puttering is about not having a grand plan, just a general idea of what you want to accomplish

GeorgeK: I like it, but, Roger, how does that fit into the Ed literature?

DavidW has never seen "puttering in Ed. literature he's read

RogerMG: They have an article on Taylor and the Gilbreths to read. Some take it off into discussions of other theorists (Mary Parker Follett.)

RogerMG: I like the concept of puttering . . .(he said . . .puttering along . . .)

GeorgeK: In the management literature, puttering probably is an extension of

Mintzberg's ideas

RogerMG: Puttering fits with the learning model of many of today's UGs 'got the question . . get the answer now and then move on to whatever's happening next . . .actually not so different from what is happening in a lot of organizations today.)

GeorgeK: I read it into the Jane comments above, but I don't know if that is where she was going

RogerMG: My fingers are tired . . .please pardon the spelling errors. I really kan spel.

DavidW: Isn't this what typically goes on during an internship? Inexperienced people in a role, following others who are more experienced, observing behaviors, skills, attitudes?

BJB2 . o O (scaffolded learning)

DavidW: then beginning to take on those roles in a supervised setting

GeorgeK: Yes, but with many of these virtual tools, there is not a lot that is written in stone yet

RogerMG: True . . .George. Lots and lots of experimentation.

GeorgeK: Sometimes, as Roger and I learned, the younger, supposedly less experienced are more knowledgeable than the older

DavidW: certainly true when it comes to using technology

DavidW . o O (often)

BJB2: Vygotsky's zone of proximal development

DavidW . o O (wow!)

BJB2 winks at David

GeorgeK: true away from technology, too

GeorgeK: Roger, what is the biology term, a "morphic" system?

RogerMG: I'd like to think that these ICTs are far more open-ended than textbook education (which I rebelled against at an early age.) Knowledge and learning both are socially constructed phenomena . . .textbook learning did not really take us in that direction. Yet, so many of our students have been 'conditioned' to that model that they have initial problems when presented with a more open-ended model. So, how do you extinguish that conditioning and move them towards puttering, or whatever in an open

ended mode?

GeorgeK: Vygotsky and morphic systems...i.e. be with other people practicing / modeling the behavior

BJB2 nods

GeorgeK: like us :)

RogerMG: Back to scaffolding again?

BJB2 nods nods

GeorgeK: yes

RogerMG: My brightest learners pick up on it quickly . . .average learners take longer and more reinforcement, slowest learners . . .well . . .still trying to work that one out. Probably has to do with 'readiness' issues.

DavidW: that's typically the case in almost all learning situations, isn't it?

GeorgeK: Maybe our approach, too. We may need to know more about how to nurture the individual student / faculty member

BJB2: and to form teams that work collaboratively

GeorgeK: If we try to nurture all the same way, we will miss some

RogerMG: I hate to say this as it does not sound politically correct . . .but I have found having them work in ability teams is helpful.

GeorgeK: I like the team idea BJB

GeorgeK: and I agree with Roger

BJB2: maybe combine ability levels in the teams, Roger

GeorgeK: maybe affinity teams, too

BJB2: have each student responsible for some part of the whole

GeorgeK: My courses are mandatory for a host of majors outside of business (eg. aviation, HR, sports)

RogerMG: Well . . .I've tried that on some teams BJ, but the more advanced learners feel 'held back' and some have state they are 'not being challenged' enough.

GeorgeK: When I team them with others of like interest, they seem to do better

RogerMG: Agreed . . .So I have all the lacrosse players on a team :0(

DavidW: Is there something to be learned for the advanced learners to feel "held back" and deal with it positively?

GeorgeK: only if you like pain

BJB2 hopes that not too many people are into pain!

GeorgeK: Do you have to deal with Lacrosse players? Very "lively" bunch

RogerMG: I think there is something to be learned David . . .I am not sure if I want to do it though. If I put my top learners on a team, they thrive. When they are on the other teams they end up doing the work for social loafers and free riders and then complain that others are not doing their share. They become VERY upset in some cases.

BJB2: no worse than soccer players, right, David?

DavidW . o O (actually, lacrosse players might be worse)

DavidW grins

BJB2 understands Roger's point of view

GeorgeK: Actually, I like the lively ones...they just need more attention

BJB2 . o O (talk to Lynne Wolters about that some time, Roger)

RogerMG: At our university they have a reputation for 'drink'. In asking about lacrosse at other universities, I find it seems to be part of the 'culture' of that sport.

DavidW agrees

RogerMG: So . . .are we for or against ability grouping . . .or is it a contingency situation?

GeorgeK: I am for it as one possibility.

RogerMG: A vote for contingency there I think.

BJB2: I vote for contingency because I'm not very good at creating a rubric that assigns an equal amount of work to each team member

GeorgeK: yes, they face social loafing in the work force, too, might as well get used to it.

BJB2: but I think that this gives the loafers even more of a free ride

GeorgeK: I give my groups the option of firing loafers. Some actually do it.

BJB2 cheers for George...excellent!

RogerMG: OK . . .so in contingency groupings, if we can call them that, we need to have some that allow top learners to thrive, and other that allow them to confront the reality of life . . .social loafing etc.

GeorgeK: Thanks, but not enough actually do the firing.

GeorgeK: Roger, can you sort group tasks so that everyone has something they are capable of doing, so that everyone can shine?

RogerMG: Actually, even in real life organizations it is often the case that the social loafers are at first encouraged, then ostracized by the group, then they either quit or get subtle messages to quit, and if they do not, are eventually fired (but, even then, first the manager will give them the option to quit.)

GeorgeK: True, and when they have job shifter enough, they get a bad rep.

RogerMG: George. Yes. I have done that. It is easier in small classes and far more difficult to set up and monitor in large ones.

GeorgeK: I agree.

DavidW: But to encourage to people to become a more valuable part of the team is a real talent to develop as well

DavidW . o O (and often difficult to do)

GeorgeK: Yes, David. In the corporate world I often found many employees badly matched with their jobs.

RogerMG: However . . .I must say, that I have set real standards on my TAs and they are doing a great job (probably better than I could) of scaffolding students and setting up mini abilities groups.

GeorgeK: I spent a lot of time fixing the match...it was always worth it for the organization and the individual.

DavidW: essentially you are tuning your team, right?

GeorgeK: yes

RogerMG: That is problem that is endemic in bureaucracies is it not George?

GeorgeK: or trading to a team where they are more needed

GeorgeK: yes, Roger

RogerMG: So . . . would we could expect to find fewer of those problems in start-ups, and early development high tech industries for instance?

GeorgeK: Can we apply this to FRTOL?

GeorgeK: Yes Roger

GeorgeK: Should we be cherry picking faculty to do on-line things?

RogerMG: OK . . . so if we apply this to FROL we find some faculty who are resistant to online learning are: . . .

GeorgeK: Is that not like stacking these student teams the right way?

DavidW: My guess is some people will feel more comfortable doing online things - some do it better - some teachers are better lecturers

RogerMG: or . . . put another way . . . we find faculty who adapt and adjust to online learning . . . :

GeorgeK: Take the old (I can't say that) English prof and have (probably) him teach Chaucer the old way to English majors. Assign the young (I can't say that), on-line capable, English Prof to teach Eng 101 to the mix of students you get in 101.

BJB2 knows lots of young people who are resistant to online learning

GeorgeK: yes, me too

BJB2: and then look at us old geezers!

GeorgeK: that's why I can't say old or young

BJB2 . o O (some of whom are older than others ;-)

RogerMG: The problems I have with lecturers are as follows: a few (very few) are great and interesting most of the time; more are great in giving several great lectures, but often think that all of the lectures are great; most lecture because they believe that it is critical that students get the knowledge they have, even if they have to pound it into their heads.

BJB2: that probably won't change until the paying customers revolt

RogerMG: The latter group fall into a category I call talking heads. I agree BJ.

RogerMG: Personally I am always in the thrall of the first group I mentioned above.

RogerMG: We have a couple of them at my University, but far more of the latter group.

GeorgeK: I am running out of steam

BJB2 nods. Look at what Randy Pausch accomplished

RogerMG: That's why I went into the sciences . . .yeah, we were lectured to, but we could also experiment and do lots of research . . .Me too George. Let's call it quits. gang. Thanks to all.

GeorgeK: I learned much, as always. Thank you all.

BJB2: thanks, Roger and George. Did we stay on topic, Roger?

RogerMG: I certainly hope so:-)

DavidW likes the topic but it is a challenging one

GeorgeK: Yes, David

BJB2 smiles. Yes, it is, David!

BJB2 waves goodnight

BJB2: once again, lots to think about

DavidW: Thanks, Roger. Good to catch up with you

DavidW thanks George as well

RogerMG: Bye BJ. I may be back in touch regarding our paper.

GeorgeK: Goodnight all

BJB2: great, Roger

BJB2: I joined the facebook group

RogerMG: G'nite (great, see you there BJ.)

