

Twelve Tips for Doing Effective Team-Based Learning™ (TBL)



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1.

Start with good course design

*Creating Significant Learning Experiences:
An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses*
Dee Fink. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

2.

Use “Backwards Design” when developing TBL courses and modules

- Goals & Objectives – ‘to be able to do’
- Application Exercise –
- RAP –
- Advanced Prep –
- ALL MUST BE LINKED

3.

Organize the module activities so students can reach your learning goals and you (and they) will know that they have done it.

- At the end of the Group Application Exercise (GAE), pull up the module objective and ask if they can now ‘do this’

4.

Have application exercises that promote both deep thinking and engaged, content-focused discussion

- Significant Problem
- Same Problem
- Specific Choice
- Simultaneous Report

Example from Muscle Physiology:

The two finalists in the world arm-wrestling championships at Petaluma, California, are well-matched. Upper body muscle mass, insensitivity to pain, motivation, and experience are identical between the two. Vito, a Las Vegas bookie, slips you the results of each competitor's physical exam and 'asks' you to predict the winner. What is most likely to determine the eventual winner?

1. Maximum cardiac output
2. Mitochondrial content of the exercising muscles
3. Muscle glycogen content
4. Oxygen carrying capacity of the blood
5. Phosphocreatine levels in the muscles

Effective Team Assignments

$$\text{Individual Work} \times \text{Within Teams} \times \text{Between Teams} = \text{Impact on Learning}$$

Maximum learning occurs when assignments at each stage are characterized by "4 S's":

- **Significant Problem.** Problem involves issues that are significant to *students*.
- **Same Problem.** Individuals/groups are working on the same problem, case or question.
- **Specific Choice.** Individuals/groups are required to use course concepts to make a specific choice.
- **Simultaneous Report.** Individuals/groups report their choices simultaneously.

5.

Do not underestimate the importance of the RAP & its link to the GAE

- Readiness Assurance Process Ensures:
 - Effective and efficient content coverage.
 - Development of real teams and team interaction skills.
 - An *experience-based* insight about the value of diverse input.
 - Development of students' self-study & life-long learning skills.
 - Class time to develop students' application/critical thinking skills.

6.

Orient the class to why you are using TBL and how it is different from previous experiences they may have had with learning groups

7.

Highlight accountability as the cornerstone of TBL

8.
Providing a fair appeals process will inspire further learning

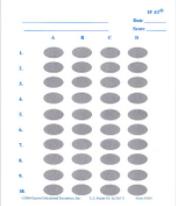
9.
Peer evaluation is a challenge to get going, but it can enhance the accountability of the process

- TBLC Website
<http://teambasedlearning.apsc.ubc.ca/tblc/>
- Text reference

10.
Be clear and focused with the advanced preparation

11.
Create the teams thoughtfully

12.
Several low-budget “props” facilitate the implementation of a good module



- IFAT Scratch-off form
- Flags with stands and diving cards