

Teaching For Success Faculty Success Center

Success Insights

The Success Conversation

A recent *New York Times* article reporting on a study published in *Science* told of a comparison of four study methods and a resulting 5- percent increase in retention using one of the methods over the other three.

It was found that college students, "who read a passage, then took a test asking them to recall what they had read, retained about 50 percent more of the information a week later than students who used two other methods." Wow! That's an enormous improvement. It should be big news. According to the article, even Howard Gardner at Harvard took notice of this study.

The educational implications of this study notwithstanding, I want to highlight this *NY Times* article, "To Really Learn, Quit Studying and Take a Test" as an example of the type of news that should be part of what I call, "The Success Conversation" — an ongoing discussion among faculty concerning what works. I'm talking about a friendly, positive buzz in an institution revolving around how teaching and learning can be continuously improved and optimized, particularly at the individual class level.

I'm suggesting the fostering of positive, how-can-we-do-better conversation that crackles with energy, innovation and trial and error. It can be face-to-face or more likely today, post-to-post or tweet-to-tweet. After 30 years in teaching and faculty development, I'm still learning a bevy of practical success principles, ideas, strategies and recommendations from passionate novices and professionals alike.

Enjoin your faculty to begin or continue a success conversation. It's beneficial to meaningful career and personal development at any point in one's career. TFS sponsors an ongoing success conversation on its LinkedIn group page at: <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=1793797>. The group is open for anyone to join with no moderator approval required. Please join us there.

This focused-style discussion is energizing and supportive of learning and development. Those who participate are success-oriented and choose to operate the conversation from the point of view that until proven worthless, the idea under discussion could work and work well. The success conversation is collaborative and centered on "how can it be done," not "why it can't be done."

A scintillating success conversation, whether one you have started at your campus or the ongoing TFS LinkedIn discussion group, will provide the needed energy for your faculty to focus on improvement and success.

*~John H. (Jack) Shrawder, Exec. Director,
TFS Faculty Success Center*