

AAW Best Practices

Section: (new) **Teaching Woodturning**

Paper: **Learning styles/Teaching styles – Using Situational Leadership II©**

Learning styles

We all use a variety of learning styles to acquire knowledge and skills. As a teacher/coach we need to be aware of the styles that our students' best respond to and adjust our activities to transfer knowledge and skill more efficiently. It is *their* style that counts – not yours. Here is one way to consider learning styles:

- Visual (show me) – demonstrate techniques, processes, exercises, use models and drawings
- Aural (tell me) – explain what you are doing and why in language understandable to the non-wood turner
- Kinesthetic (let me try it) – allow practice with feedback and correction

Each individual uses all of these styles in various combinations; as a teacher we need to use all three ourselves recognizing that each student may have a preference of acquiring information and skill in one style over another.

Matching Teaching to Learning

As students progress it is important for us to match our teaching methods to their task specific needs. A student may be more skilled at some turning tasks and less in others; it is important that our teaching/coaching methods are matched to each task.

Situational Leadership

Drs. Ken Blanchard and Paul Hershey developed a model for teaching/learning which is highly regarded in the educational community. This model defines stages of learning and the necessary adaptations the teacher should make to be most effective.

Recognizing Student Developmental Levels

Matching our teaching behaviors to the student's needs starts by recognizing the student's development level for the *specific task at hand*. As the student learns their *task-relevant* skill and attitudes change and develop and we must recognize where they are and try to match our teaching styles to their learning needs. Here are definitions of these development levels:

D1: Low competence – High commitment (New student – “Tell me what to do”)

The beginner come in with high enthusiasm and little or no skill. They do not need our “support” only our knowledge.

D2: Some competence - Lowering commitment (Frustration sets in – “I just don't get it!”)

As learning progresses some frustration creeps in as the learner finds some tasks more difficult than expected. Now we need to provide some support and encouragement as well as more information.

D3: Improving competence – Variable commitment (“Remind me what to do next, I'm getting better but it is hard”)

At this point we become less directive allowing the learner to figure things out first and raise questions to which we then respond. The student begins to take charge of own learning we need to become less directive allowing them to figure it out first and coaching when necessary.

D4: High competence – high commitment (“Let me show you what I have made, tell me what you think of it.”)

Matching Teaching to Learning

As the student moves through these learning stages we need to adapt our teaching style in order to be most effective; for each stage there is a more appropriate teaching style.

D1 = S1 – Directing,

Teacher in charge, one way communication to the student
 At the beginning all we need to do is provide information and direction

D2 = S2 – Coaching,

Teacher in charge, a problem solving discussion between teacher and student
 The teacher is still directing the activities and the student is more involved: a dialog

D3 = S3 – Supporting,

The teacher provides input and direction when requested by the student
 The student is taking more control of their learning and may only need coaching to remember what come next
 Asking leading questions is a very effective tool at this point.

D4 = S4 – Delegating,

Let the student do it
 The student may show you their work and may ask for feedback or suggestions
 Feedback is best provided only when requested.

Situational Leadership® II **The Model**

