

Title: The Thriller effect: Creating faculties' enthusiasm for innovations

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What problem was addressed: Common challenges to educational innovations include faculties' resistance or indifference. As part of the strategy to start a Tenured Department of Medical education (DME) in a Medical School in a developing economy where previous attempts at educational scholarships failed, the challenge was to transfer to a targeted group back home and in one hour, a transformational and mind changing three weeks educational experience at FAIMER institute Philadelphia and thereby create sustained high enthusiasm for educational innovations amongst home faculties and administrators.

What was done: Peak and highly impressive moments during the three weeks residential training at FAIMER institute were identified from personal reflections and unstructured discussions with fourteen other attendees. Peak moments were then ranked from low to high according to the number of attendees that identified them as peaks. Using power point presentation with high media content and activities, peak moments were recreated, and the audience experienced them in sequences of increasing peak-rank. Both faculties and administrators were invited by routine college protocols and privately in person. The School's meeting calendar was reviewed and time and day with lowest meeting schedules was selected for the workshop. A pre-posttest (using validated 8-item questionnaire with 4-item Likert scale to induce forced choices) was conducted immediately amongst all attendees and repeated 6 months later amongst randomly selected attendees. The approach was also used in a presentation, by a surrogate, to the National association of Provosts/Deans of Medical Schools with similar effect sequel to which four medical schools have started a pathway to establishing a DME.

What was learned: Thirty-three faculties and one administrator attended. The workshop was well received, and a pre-post-test revealed that all attendants (unanimously) strongly recommended that a Department of Medical Education is desirable in our medical school (3% versus 100% Pre-versus posttest) and 95% of attendants felt that the workshop has tremendously and favorably changed their attitude to Medical Education. Furthermore, 83% of attendee had either none or very poor knowledge of concepts like "Flipped classroom, Blended classroom" before the workshop. Departmental Chairs specifically requested for more workshops and fast-action on establishing a DME. Six months later, all respondents still strongly favored establishing DME. Furthermore, 89.5% had used concepts learned in their classes. The DME project became a faculty's Project owned by Departmental chairs and was approved in one Board sitting. We learned that the previous resistance was partly due to insufficient information about DME's utility and lack of insight into such lack of information. Film thrillers often create a 'must-watch' effect and sometimes over sale films. We learned that the thriller principle can easily be adapted to create and sustain enthusiasm for innovative projects by creating a platform by which innovators' enthusiasm (and reasons for them) can be transferred. We further learned that ensuring faculties (Chairs) and administrators attend such thriller meetings can greatly enhance innovative projects. It appears that the effect is present even when conducted through a surrogate.

Reference

Nisbet, R. I., & Collins, J. M. (1978). Barriers and Resistance to Innovation. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 3(1).