

MaxKnowledge Performance Blog

Faculty Development - The Incentive Side of the Equation

by Amir Moghadam, Ph.D. - October 15, 2009

Most career college instructors are highly motivated because they are passionate about their students. As career educators, they are driven by the goal of providing an excellent education to their students and helping them succeed in their life and career. These instructors are always looking for opportunities to enhance their teaching skills to better serve their students.

However, some instructors genuinely feel that they don't need to be taught how to teach. Some know their subject matter so well that they believe that makes them an expert instructor. Some have taught for years and believe that there is nothing more to learn about teaching a class. What I have learned is that instructors will not benefit from a faculty development program if they feel they are being forced to participate. So how do you engage these instructors in your faculty development program?

If you have a sound training program in place at your institution, it must include meaningful interactions among the participants. Let your resistant instructors know that the program provides opportunities for discussions and knowledge sharing. Empower them to participate in the program and help others. This will motivate them to get engaged in the program and once they get involved with the training they will start to appreciate the learning opportunity!

Also, regardless of their level of motivation, instructors are human beings and the "what's in it for me" factor plays an important role in their professional development plan. Your program should provide a certificate of completion and continuing education credits for completion of each training course. This provides recognition for instructors' learning achievements and is an important reward for many instructors. More importantly, make sure that your program prepares the instructors for national certification as a postsecondary instructor and let them know early on about the certification opportunity. This is a big incentive for educators.

As instructors progress through their professional development plan, provide them with ongoing recognition and make sure that their accomplished training activities are linked to your institution's incentive programs. This will help you achieve better results from your faculty development program.

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