

# Engagement Strategies

Adapted from the Derek Bok Center – Harvard University

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Consider the following strategies: Which strategies look like they might work for your teaching? What determines if a strategy will be effective or not?

- Start with first session
  - Norms and expectations are established
  - If not, explain change in norms when you do
- Begin session with a 'bridge' and a 'hook'
  - Two-minute summary of last session
  - Pose a question, problem, case, story, issue or challenge
  - Solicit variety of tentative responses to above
  - Ask learners to list their questions related to topic
  - Use these as you introduce new material or new ways of thinking
- Keep an engaging and safe atmosphere
  - Avoid implied criticism of questions or comments
  - Use 'warm' rather than 'cold' questions
  - Invite challenges to ideas (yours and others)
- Punctuate sessions with questions
  - Pause after making a major point
  - Pose a question related to the point
  - Ask for a vote on possible interpretations
  - Insert a multiple-choice question
  - Invite someone else to explain (for a couple of minutes)
- When using slides, tables, graphs, handouts
  - Ask what they see before explaining it to them
  - Ask what questions they would ask of the data
  - Ask if they see any trends or patterns in the data
  - Ask them to predict next data points
  - Let them be colleagues, co-investigators or problem solvers with the material
- Vary the format
  - Use debates, role-plays, panels, guests
  - Divide into small groups, each taking a position
  - Have them write for 2 minutes on a question related to your presentation
  - Follow-up with group discussions of their summaries
  - Have learners go to board to present small group consensus
- Closing the session
  - Allow time for questions, points of clarification
  - Come early or stay after to talk with people
  - End with provocative question or statement that 'bridges' to next session
  - Give a single-question 'quiz' based on lecture
  - Allow time to let them discuss the question – don't give the answer, till next session
  - Use a one-minute paper to have them digest or apply material, for example:
    - Three main points you think are important
    - One question you still have arising from this session
    - Something that surprised or enthused you
    - Something that confused you
    - Something you want to know more about