

Does Your Training Rate 5 Stars?

Workshop Abstract

Title

Does Your Instruction Rate 5 Stars?

Presenter

M. David Merrill, Professor, Utah State University

Summary

When I travel I enjoy staying in a 5 star hotel. The hosts in such establishments have learned what is required to help a guest be comfortable and have some of the luxuries that make travel a pleasure instead of drudgery. Some students are able to learn from one-star instruction that is amazingly ineffective, but like staying in a one-star hotel, learning from such instruction is often pure drudgery.

Over the years the author has had the opportunity to evaluate hundreds of instructional products. An amazing number of these are surprisingly ineffective and some do not teach at all. Like a book, too much instruction is judged by its cover -- the glitz, glitter, or game-like interaction -- that too often is irrelevant to the effectiveness of the instruction. In this workshop we will look beneath the "production quality" of the instructional product to the instructional strategies involved, those aspects of the instruction that are hard to observe on the surface, but that determine whether or not the product will really teach. In this workshop you will learn to rate an instructional product on those characteristics that effect its ability to teach rather than those attributes that contribute only to its "market appeal".

In this workshop we will introduce, illustrate, and provide practice in using a rating system to determine the instructional effectiveness, efficiency, and appeal of an instructional product. We will describe and illustrate what is required for five star instruction.

Objective

Given an instructional product the participant will rate its potential learning effectiveness based on five components:

- (1) Does it involve a problem to solve?
- (2) Does it activate prior knowledge?
- (3) Does it demonstrate new knowledge and skill?
- (4) Does it provide opportunity for the learner to apply the new knowledge and skill?
- (5) Does it facilitate the learners integration of knowledge and skill into their day-to-day activities?