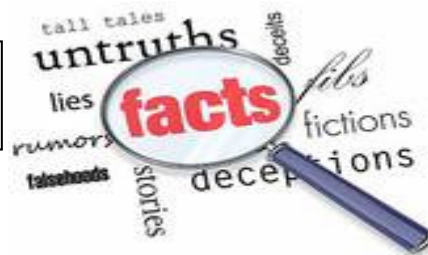


CAN GURUS FAIL?

College Teachers Competencies



'India to host global meet on teachers training' news appeared in The Hindu on 02-05-12 brings certain positive hopes on our "Quantitative & Qualitative Strategies to educational sector in our country. Although the focus in the meet would be school education it would be equally (contextually) imminent to improve the quality and quality of college teachers.

Although our country has been regarded as a sort of 'Intellectual Suzerainty' many centuries ago, we have failed to retain the glory. More so, today, this reputation has dwindled to the lowest level. In the erstwhile system, exams were considered as superfluous and not part of the requirements to complete one's studies. The process of teaching was critical and thorough- unless one unit was mastered completely, the student was not allowed to proceed to the next. No convocations were held upon completion, and no written "degrees" were awarded, since it was believed that knowledge was its own reward. Using knowledge for earning a living or for any selfish motive was considered sacrilegious.

I am in no mood to suggest that we need to follow the above tradition today. Contemporary demands need not be denied. Change in culture, economy, technology and demand for suitable manpower are to be understood in its spirit and meaningful framework. Trend of mushrooming professional colleges need not be condemned or scorned off. What is worth to note is---- **Education should not be understood only as a business to make money.** It has to offer more, culturally, socially and economically with more relevance to all stake holders. In fact we need smart & ethical businessmen in educational sectors.

We have been voicing again and again that people are our most important resources. Much said than done! We look at people as "bits and pieces" of mere machines from which management can push buttons to get things done. This is a wrong belief. We are witnessing a social chasm of wisdom and knowledge which are confused as information. Pursuing strategies which are not grounded in the right belief is no wisdom rather stupidity.

It was painfully interesting to listen to a professor of an Engineering college, who had travelled with me recently. He was on his vacation going to his native place. During our dialogue he shared the following, 'for the past 10 months I did not know what I was doing! Not interested in the job; bad students who have no attitude to study; admissions hunting management sans quality brings pressure on us - for students to get marks and placement'. I was very emphatic and concerned.

He gazed at the book I was carrying and asked me, 'do you read books regularly?' "Yes, may be three to four books in a month". I responded. He was silent and reflectively said, 'I do not read books and I do not have patience' "what about subject books?' I probed. He said, 'subject... not much ... I know everything" I was considerate with him and also perplexed about his attitude. What will happen to his students?. This experience was not new to me as there were numerous similar experiences we have encountered with our teaching community. Our (BODHI) experiences with college teachers through our Faculty Development Initiatives have brought certain bare facts. **Teachers who are not ready to teach are teaching and making students Industry ready.** A paradox though!

Will it be right to blame on the system and colleges only for its non sensitiveness towards education? (read learning & development) Can teachers do nothing about it?

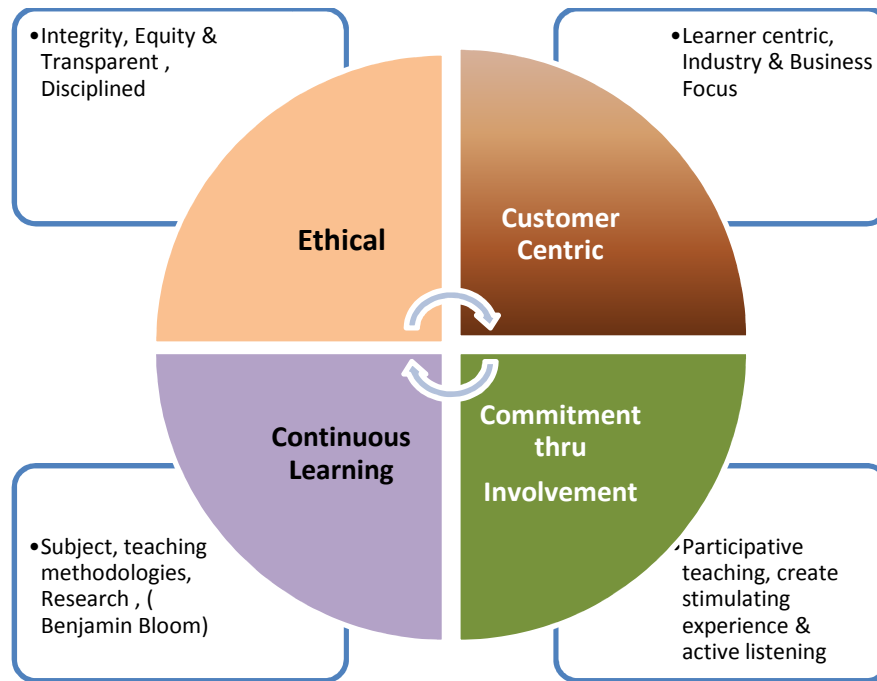
Supply and demand of trained teachers (Skill, Knowledge & Attitude) are imbalanced is a known fact. Will this not be a triggering point for the existing teachers to ponder and reflect as to how they can mitigate educational woes by imbibing certain basic educational values and learning / teaching strategies to develop students?

This article aims to share few thoughts on that. Hope this will add value to the teaching community.

BODHI's Faculty's Professional Devt. Program for the teachers who are currently teaching in colleges are based on 3 basic foundations of:

1. Guiding Values
2. Teaching Competencies
3. Teaching Process

I have given the framework of Guiding Values which can integrate a teacher to the Teaching & Taught.



BODHI's Teachers Value Framework

Can teachers afford to fail?

The ideal answer is 'NO'. But then it remains as ideal. My caveat is not all the teachers fail in teaching. There are many more exceptions and we recognize their selfless services. But the opposite also is true. Our experience with students, Industries, teachers and Institutions generally paint the picture differently-one dropped in to an ocean who knows not swimming. **Uni-disciplinary approach of teaching to get 'placement' is an illusion and it will lead none safely to shore.**

In 2011, CBSE conducted Central Teachers Eligibility Test (CTET) for teachers who are teaching up to 8th standard. The result was dismal and pathetic. Teachers qualified were only 9%. I am sure, most of you will agree that a similar exercise of 'quality check' among teachers in colleges would be not much different.

I call upon teachers who have taken teaching as profession either by choice or chance to enhance their quality for cause of self and national interest. It is true to accept the teachers are the product of our own system. They do have their own limitations. More so with women who are sufficiently more in numbers and aspire so. Today's teachers' strategy would be better if they adhere to the following **multi disciplinary approach**.

This multi disciplinary approach accentuates integrating theory with practice drawing from:

- Human psychology
- Perspectives of teacher, teaching & taught
- Multiple intelligence

- Students and customer centric
- Institutional EXCELLENCE
- Family work balance and
- Educational Leadership basics

Fail Spots:

1. Teaching is a stop gap engagement

We strongly advocate right person for the right job. Our psychometric assessments assess an individual and make him / her right fit for the job. But the reality is different. There are many teachers who have no passion or caliber but enter in to this field to 'park' them for shorter duration. Precisely speaking work till he/she gets another suitable job.

2. Unbarred Entry

Supply and demand mapping will reveal that we have no adequate teaching faculty with us nor we will be able to make up soon. It is going to be a herculean task. Take for example, in Tamil Nadu alone with 525 engineering colleges, where do we have the qualified staff to meet these requirements. But we are managing with less staff / unqualified staff. Ironically research will reveal that numbers of staff in colleges are the erstwhile students of the same college who were not 'campus recruited'. Alas! Students who could not get selected in campus will usurp the role of training students and make them industry ready.

3. Undemanding students

As the Zen adage goes- **teachers do not teach; students learn**. What a profound **statement!!** I have personally learnt from this insight which changed my way of training / facilitating the participants in my training workshops. But there seems to be another meaning too. That is teachers may not teach but students have to learn. As they have to.

4. Misplaced priorities of Institutions

Most of new institutions are created - uni-focused-making money. Investments are made in infrastructure but not similarly in Quality education. It does not postulate that shun quality education. In order to get their ROI quickly they misplace their priorities.

It is like a home built by bricks but not by emotion & bonding. For their own wealth creation, owners of the educational Institutions have to invest in high

quality teachers and their teaching. Many correspondents of Educational Institutions negated 'Teachers Skill Up gradation' and their professional devt. saying their investment will become waste as the teachers may not stay for a longer time. Though it is a reality yet there is a catch- Catch 22. They need to work on long term strategies than short term results. These knee-jerk reactions cannot help Institutions to grow. Absence of robust vision, objectives and goal will create an illusionary business plan and lead them to dead end. Hence for their own sake owners have to invest in teacher's professional development

5. Lack of interest in Learning

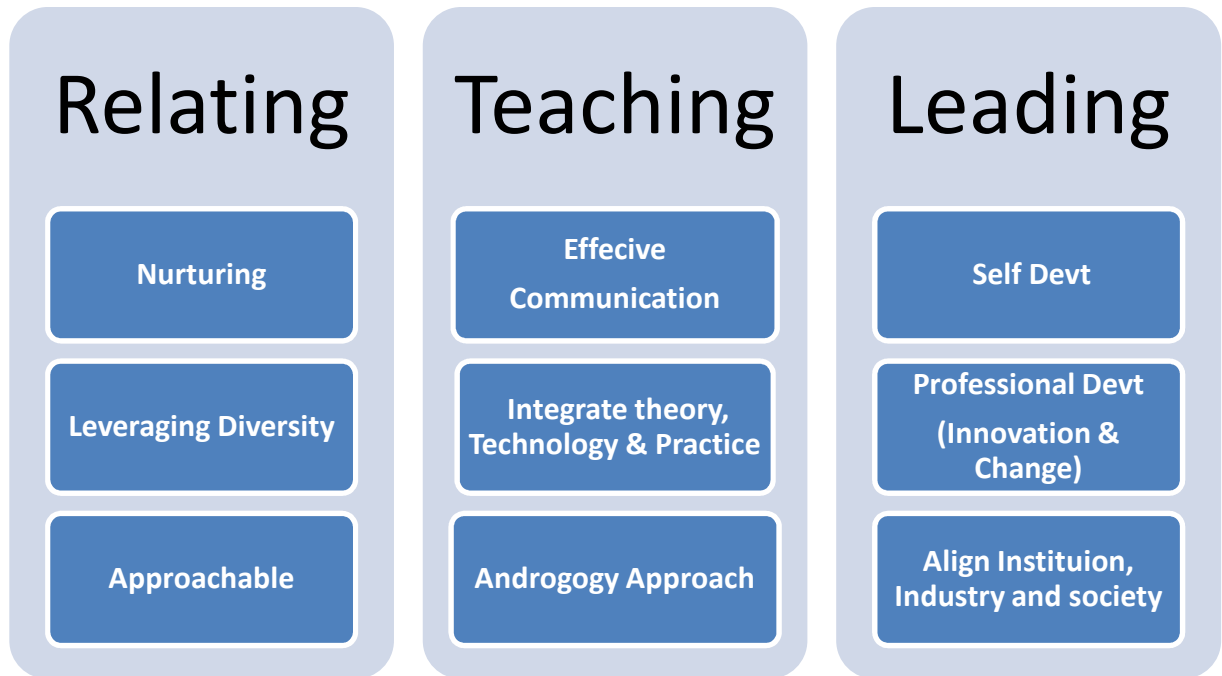
Knowledge scarcity and lack of interest in learning is a common phenomenon among college teachers. Recently I was invited to an engineering college as chief guest to deliver a talk on 'How to make students employable'. While I was delivering my speech I have asked few questions to the students who were sitting in the first row. None have given correct answers or it would be apt to say that none had opened their mouth to speak. At the end I was told that they were teachers not students. Getting a job is not the end of learning. Not definitely in this profession. Lack of interest in learning could be a cause or / and results for teachers' poor performance.

6. Too scared to ask help

We have been living in a myth or past glory of 'Guru Shisya' parambara. Brand equity can be sustained and leveraged should we have stuff. Those times Gurus were respected for what they taught, how they taught and for their stature. They earned their respect. I still find that a few teachers believe in "Guru Shisya' Syndrome and believe things will happen the way it happened in those times. This is a misplaced belief and all gurus need not know everything. Teachers must seek learning not only in their subject but also in other areas like androgogy.

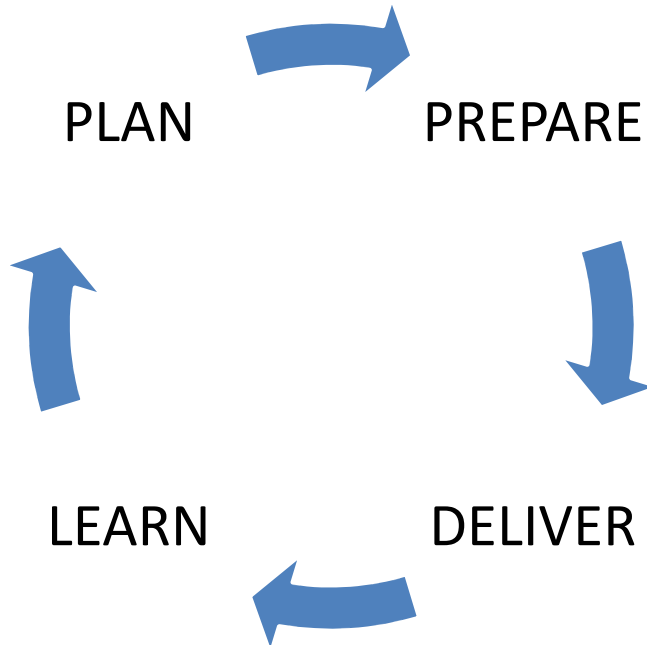
Develop core competencies:

While there are number of competencies a teacher need to posses I strongly advise three core competencies (BODHI'S Competency frame work)



BODHI'S Teachers competency model

Competencies can be acquired if one works towards those. One need not and cannot run away from problems of learning ever. It is high time to take the bull by its horns. You can tame it. A teacher can learn and develop the above competencies and follow the simple principles mentioned below in a cyclic manner he / she will add value to self and the nation as a whole.



India with all its rich tradition of culture, spiritual and knowledge is also rapidly becoming, among other things as a land of promise. Teaching profession have been undergoing constant changes and Gurus need to redefine their role to develop and deliver global leaders. Change in this profession is very dynamic and worth rewarding. Even if you look at this profession merely as an 'economic perspective' it is worth investing. There is a huge opportunity as India opens its promise.

Sometime back in a commentary in the *Los Angeles Times*, jonathan Power observed, 'In Aesop's fable of the tortoise and the hare, we read one of life's repeating stories: plodding wins the race. It will be India, and not China, that will be on its way to becoming the giant of Asia. Before losing too much time join in crafting the future of India. (Hare also learns from its mistake! Beware..become steady and speedy.)

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POSITIVE PARENTING

Perspective:

Today's complex living process more so with nuclear families, thrust enormous pressures on children and parents alike – both mentally and physically.

Home, a place for joy and togetherness is increasingly becoming a war-zone and burden. While we strive hard to increase the 'House Space' we neglect in enhancing our 'Home Space'. This is further being aggravated by our attitude of not engaging meaningful dialogue with other family members. This results in emotional upheaval paving way to communication breakdown and relationship retardation.

The silver line in family is most of us own our children and willing to do anything for them! What we need to have is more understanding on the following 3Cs.

- Commitment
- Contextual Learning
- Communication

The above understanding with parenting will make one to become a positive parent. Positive parenting is everything for a child to become an effective - adult, parent, career leader and human being who knows not only to become successful but also meaningful in LIFE!

Seminar Contents:

- Basic psychology of 'growth process'
- Knowing children is different from understanding children
- Disciplining style
- What is your parenting style?
- Adolescent Zone and its magic
- How to help their children in their Career Building

Objective of this seminar:

- To offer 'guidance' to the parents on positive parenting
- To generate participants for our Parenting Workshop
- Promote CST

Facilities required:

- **Collar Mike / Cordless mike**
- **2 mikes for participants**
- **LCD projector and a screen**

What BODHI / Everonn can offer:

Dr.N.Raj Mohan, Ph.D will conduct the seminar and all promotional & logistics will be handled by Everonn. Since your products are also for students of college and schools, attracting parents will be a logical one. This will also build bonding with us and our services.