

How to Present Brain-Based Learning to Others

Presenter - Eric Jensen

At the end of a “full on” conference packed with American enthusiasm for life, learning and jollity I was sorely tempted and almost lured by the shops and bustle of San Francisco! However, I was sufficiently intrigued by Jensen’s title and conscious that I sometimes, often, even frequently (if I’m honest), subject my staff to an hour and a half of what could be described as bottom/brain numbing boredom (staff meeting) at the end of their busy day that I decided turn up to the post conference session.

This was most definitely a good move which has already had a positive affect on my leadership skills (not to mention my bank balance, having missed the shops)! Jensen made the whole experience so memorable and enjoyable that the time flew by and everyone left on a high of energy, inspiration and satisfaction.

Jensen taught and enabled us to commit to memory (“Memories are Malleable”) a “Smart Lesson Design” using Brain-Based Principles interspersed with co-operative learning structures and engaging strategies.

This is the “Blue Print” to teaching and training, applicable to adults and children alike.

This is the plan on which to hang all training opportunities and challenges.

This will transform staff meetings and INSET days into vibrant, exciting learning experiences.

Jensen described the ten components of the Smart Lesson Design and not only demonstrated but proved that we could commit them to memory there and then!

The following is merely an outline:

1 Transition – time to forget what’s gone before and get into the mood for what’s to come – de-stress

2 Vesting – what is to come – why are we here?

3 Credibility – let them know you are passionate about what you do

4 Content – new content - don’t be too ambitious pick one/two main points and flesh out

5 Elaboration – go deeper, fill the gaps, organise, memorise

6 Verification - correct errors – make sure everyone has got it!

7 Connection – connect with something they know, in classroom, personal life – these are key

8 Reflection – making sense of what has gone before, settling time

9 Encoding – use repetition, make it physical

10 Commitment – how can you use this? If the reason is strong enough you will do it!

Jensen built in guidelines or “rules” for how the brain typically works and by doing so engaged all of his audience all of the time.

I am convinced that people “bought into” the ideas and would be more than likely to use them. Because Jensen, in his delivery, employed brain-friendly strategies he not only gained credibility but proved that his “peg list” for memorising does work, that keeping everyone moving and energised maintains focus and engagement, and that playing excerpts of music helps to embed new concepts.

Everyone left having learnt the Smart Lesson Design and had the capacity to recall it in the future.

A presentation with a clear message/ learning opportunity capable of life-changing status!!!

Jenny Thorpe
Dean Valley Head
1/2/08