

# WAIT, WHERE'S THE LECTURE? THE IMPACT OF SWITCHING THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

By: Tracie N. Babb, Ph.D.  
Scholarship of Excellence in Teaching  
January 2019

# BACKGROUND

“To be a true learning community, *all* members must exchange information, ideas, and opinions. If you do not take steps to ensure all students participate, only a few students will speak up while the majority remain quiet, perhaps listening attentively but just as probably off in their own worlds daydreaming.” - *Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty*, Elizabeth F. Barkley

# MY PLAN IMPLEMENTED IN HUMAN COMMUNICATION (COMM 108)


- ◉ I flipped the sequence of the typical classroom experience.
- ◉ Initially planned to implement in three lectures - what communication is; culture and communication; and relationships and communication.
- ◉ Instead, I started almost ALL class meetings with a meaningful discussion, question, challenge or activity before I lectured so that students' minds will be primed for the instruction.

# EXAMPLES

1. What is the purpose of communication in your life?
2. Share your culture with your group. What things do you consider an important part of your culture (music, language, traditions, clothing, etc.)?

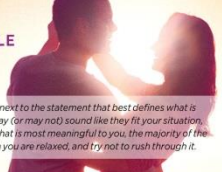
# EXAMPLES

## 3. Love Language Test



**LOVE LANGUAGES PERSONAL PROFILE FOR COUPLES**

*Below you will see 30 paired statements. Please circle the letter next to the statement that best defines what is most meaningful to you in your relationship. Both statements may (or may not) sound like they fit your situation, but please choose the statement that captures the essence of what is most meaningful to you, the majority of the time. Allow 10 to 15 minutes to complete the profile. Take it when you are relaxed, and try not to rush through it.*



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>A I receive a loving note/text/email for no special reason from my loved one.<br/>E my partner and I hug.</p> <p>2 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>B I can spend alone time with my partner - just the two of us.<br/>D my partner does something practical to help me out.</p> <p>3 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>C my partner gives me a little gift as a token of our love for each other.<br/>B I get to spend uninterrupted leisure time with my partner.</p> <p>4 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>D my partner unexpectedly does something for me like filling my car or doing the laundry.<br/>E my partner and I touch.</p> <p>5 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>E my partner puts his/her arm around me when we're in public.<br/>C my partner surprises me with a gift.</p> <p>6 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>B I'm around my partner, even if we're not really doing anything.<br/>E I hold hands with my partner.</p> <p>7 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>C my partner gives me a gift.<br/>A I hear "I love you" from my partner.</p> <p>8 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>E I sit close to my partner.<br/>A I am complimented by my loved one for no apparent reason.</p> | <p>9 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>B I get the chance to just "hang out" with my partner.<br/>C I unexpectedly get small gifts from my partner.</p> <p>10 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>A I hear my partner tell me, "I'm proud of you."<br/>D my partner helps me with a task.</p> <p>11 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>B I get to do things with my partner.<br/>A I hear supportive words from my partner.</p> <p>12 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>D my partner does things for me instead of just talking about doing nice things.<br/>E I feel connected to my partner through a hug.</p> <p>13 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>A I hear praise from my partner.<br/>C my partner gives me something that shows he/she was really thinking about me.</p> <p>14 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>B I'm able to just be around my partner.<br/>E I get a back rub or massage from my partner.</p> <p>15 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>A my partner reacts positively to something I've accomplished.<br/>D my partner does something for me that I know they don't particularly enjoy.</p> <p>16 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>E my partner and I kiss frequently.<br/>B I sense my partner is showing interest in the things I care about.</p> |
|---|--|

**LOVE LANGUAGES PERSONAL PROFILE FOR COUPLES**



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>7 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>D my partner works on special projects with me that I have to complete.<br/>C my partner gives me an exciting gift.</p> <p>8 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>A I'm complimented by my partner on my appearance.<br/>B my partner takes the time to listen to me and really understand my feelings.</p> <p>9 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>E my partner and I share non-sexual touch in public.<br/>D my partner offers to run errands for me.</p> <p>10 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>D my partner does a bit more than his/her normal share of the responsibilities we share (around the house, work-related, etc).<br/>C I get a gift that I know my partner put thought into choosing.</p> <p>11 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>B my partner doesn't check his/her phone while we're talking.<br/>D my partner goes out of their way to do something that relieves pressure on me.</p> <p>12 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>C I can look forward to a holiday because of a gift I anticipate receiving.<br/>A I hear the words, "I appreciate you" from my partner.</p> <p>13 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>C my partner brings me a little gift after he/she has been traveling without me.<br/>D my partner takes care of something I'm responsible to do but I feel too stressed to do at the time.</p> | <p>24 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>B my partner doesn't interrupt me while I'm talking.<br/>C gift giving is an important part of our relationship.</p> <p>25 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>D my partner helps me out when he/she knows I'm already tired.<br/>B I get to go somewhere while spending time with my partner.</p> <p>26 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>E my partner and I are physically intimate.<br/>C my partner gives me a little gift that he/she picked up in the course of their normal day.</p> <p>27 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>A my partner says something encouraging to me.<br/>B I get to spend time in a shared activity or hobby with my partner.</p> <p>28 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>C my partner surprises me with a small token of their appreciation.<br/>E my partner and I touch a lot during the normal course of the day.</p> <p>29 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>D my partner helps me out - especially if I know they're already busy.<br/>A I hear my partner specifically tell me, "I appreciate you."</p> <p>30 <i>It's more meaningful to me when...</i><br/>E my partner and I embrace after we've been apart for a while.<br/>A I hear my partner say how much I mean to him/her.</p> |
|--|---|

Go back and count the number of times you circled each individual and write that number in the appropriate blank below.

This profile is an excerpt from *The 5 Love Languages* (©2015, Northfield Publishing). Reproduction and distribution for use, personal and/or professional coaching, organizations, churches, nonprofits, small groups, etc., is permitted provided the profiles are distributed free of charge. You may not under any circumstances amend, share, transmit, or distribute this file digitally.

- RESULTS**
- WORDS OF AFFIRMATION  
— QUALITY TIME  
— RECEIVING GIFTS  
D: — ACTS OF SERVICE  
E: — PHYSICAL TOUCH

**Which love language received the highest score?**  
This is your primary love language. If point totals for two love languages are equal, you are "bilingual" and have two primary love languages. And, if you have a secondary love language, or one that is close in score to your primary love language, this means that both expressions of love are important to you. The highest possible score for any single love language is 12.



Knowing the love languages is powerful, but knowing how they work in your relationships—that's the game changer.

## MY WHY

- ◉ Felt like I was just “getting the job done.”
- ◉ Students weren’t as vested in the material as they should be.
- ◉ I hope to pave the way for my students to not only become excited about the material, but to connect it to the various aspects of their lives.

# HOW MY STRATEGY WILL FOSTER STUDENT SUCCESS

- ◉ Students may hear a few dozen lectures any given semester; How can we expect them to be excited about the learning process?
- ◉ If they're initially met with a question that invites them to share their experiences and world views, or engage with their classmates instead of the definition of a concept or a theory they must memorize, I'll catch them off guard - in a totally unexpected and positive way.
- ◉ Hopefully, this approach will peak their interest and encourage them to participate.

# QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT #1

COMM 108 SPRING 2018 - MW 2:00 PM	ASSIGNMENTS	AVERAGES	COMM 108 FALL 2018 - MW 2:00 PM	ASSIGNMENTS	AVERAGES
	Exam #1	37.5/50		Exam #1	40.1/50
	Informative Speech	115.4/150		Informative Speech	122.4/150
	Persuasive Speech	120.4/150		Persuasive Speech	120.7/150

COMM 108 SPRING 2018 - TR 2:00 PM	ASSIGNMENTS	AVERAGES	COMM 108 FALL 2018 - TR 2:00 PM	ASSIGNMENTS	AVERAGES
	Exam #1	43.6/50		Exam #1	42.1/50
	Informative Speech	118.2/150		Informative Speech	134.6/150
	Persuasive Speech	127.6/150		Persuasive Speech	138.6/150



# QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT #2

	QUESTIONS	COMM 108 FALL 2018 - MW 2:00 PM	COMM 108 FALL 2018 - TR 2:00 PM
#1	Did you feel more comfortable expressing yourself and/or asking questions in front of your classmates in this course earlier in the semester as compared to other courses?	56% Yes 44% No	77% Yes 23% No
#2	Did your participation in problem solving activities, thought questions or discussions with me and with your classmates prior to the class lecture positively influence your comfort level when you presented your informative and persuasive speeches?	49% Yes 51% No	68% Yes 32% No
#3	Did your participation in problem solving activities, thought questions or discussions with me and with your classmates prior to the class lecture positively influence your understanding of the course material covered?	72% Yes 28% No	89% Yes 11% No

# QUALITATIVE OBSERVATIONS

- ◉ I loosely measured the time it took for the class to become comfortable disclosing their thoughts, questions and experiences; in general, it seemed to take less time than previous semesters
- ◉ I observed that students engaged with me and each other more quickly than they do during a typical semester
- ◉ I had informal one-on-one conversations with several students who remarked that they felt more comfortable presenting their speeches than they initially thought they would; many of them attributed it to the culture of the classroom which they described as one where they're "free to speak up"
- ◉ Not only did discussion before lecture increase students' comfort speaking up, but engagement with the material increased as well. In general, students appeared much more interested in the discussions. I gauged this by how much longer some of the class discussions lasted
- ◉ BUT...I will admit that I strongly believe that my use of name tents this semester (for the first time) also positively influenced students' comfort levels when it came to expressing themselves and being engaged; I learned their names and they learned each others' names much faster than in past semesters. Studies show that there is power in calling a person by name.

# FINAL THOUGHTS

- ◉ It appears that active student participation is on the decline in university courses
- ◉ I, as instructor, must continue to create an environment where it is encouraged
- ◉ Moving forward, I plan to set aside time throughout the semester to assess student participation in my courses and to develop strategies for improvement
- ◉ I plan to continue administering mid-term student evaluations to help gauge where students stand regarding their comfort level and engagement
- ◉ I will also take notes during and after future semesters so that I have a record of what went well and what I would like to change the next time I teach the course in order to increase student participation