



Using Cost/Reward Assessment to Engage Students and Increase Student Success

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Social Penetration Theory (SPT)

Altman & Taylor

Communication Theory

- Orientation stage
- Exploratory affective stage
- Affective stage
- Stable stage
- Depenetration stage



Self Disclosure – Costs & Rewards

- Depth & breadth
- Costs/ Rewards
- Challenges to self disclosure
- Online – anonymity/direct attention



Application to Classes

Use Costs/Rewards to:

- Elicit engagement in online classes
- Understand some differences between new students and experienced students
- Increase student success

SPT & Costs/Rewards

- **Orientation Stage:** small talk and first impressions
- **Exploratory Affective Stage:** not yet deeply personal; casual friendships
- **Affective Stage:** starting to disclose personal information; comfortable enough to critique or argue
- **Stable Stage:** deep connections, comfortable and open from longer-term relationships
- **Depenetration:** withdraws from disclosure; the relationship is too risky or not beneficial

Costs/Rewards & New Students

- Typically at **Orientation & Exploratory Affective** stages
- Benefits of moving to the **Affective Stage**
- Foundation for **Stable Stage**
- How do we support movement to the **Affective Stage**?



Costs/Rewards & Experienced Students

- Clear and consistent expectations and grading
- Require course material to support points, not just to describe concepts – “How do you apply the text concepts to your example?”
- Direct questions to deepen analysis

Costs/Rewards & Experienced Students

- Higher expectations
- Ask specific questions instead of the general “What do you think” – need to ask “What steps would you take/ strategies would you use?”
- Do not jump in as the expert
- Questions about cause/effect and evaluating outcomes

Wrap Up

- Costs/Rewards from self disclosure and SPT has many positives
- Focus on students/ application/ skills for the workplace
- Shift from traditional teacher-centered to student-centered
- Faculty can explain benefits to students in order to get buy-in
- Faculty focus on building and maintaining presence and engagement for classroom success
- Increases student success by building motivation, participation, and self confidence

References

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