HOW TO ENGAGE AND INVOLVE THE LEARNERS IN BASIC SCIENCE LECTURES
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The Lecture Method
“Tell me, and I forget.  Show me, and I remember.  Involve me, and I understand.”
(Chinese proverb)
Adult learning is enhanced by active participation of the learners.  Additionally, the attention span of most learners in the traditional basic science/medical lecture begins to wander shortly after the lecture begins, limiting the potential for information retention. Did you ever wonder why attendance at your (or a colleague’s) lectures was particularly low (or high)?  Try some of these student-centered methods in your next lecture and you may find that “the lecture method” can be a very effective method for conveying information.

OPENING SET
♦ State learner-centered objectives (E.g., “At the end of this hour, students will be able to (describe, debate, discuss, perform, etc)
♦ Use an Advanced Organizer to preview the activities (E.g., outline, showing timing, or use a pretest graphic organizer, etc)
♦ Be creative and imaginative to create a “need to know”.  Engage them- “Get them on the train”.
(E.g., relevant anecdote, audiovisual- film clip, challenging dilemma)
♦ Activate their prior knowledge, by linking to prior lectures, other life experiences, and other courses

CONTENT & ORGANIZATION
♦ Be organized, showing a synthesis of information from many sources
♦ Be accurate, and up-to-date
♦ Be connected to the course, independent study (readings), and other courses in the curriculum
♦ Vary the stimulus (E.g., lecture, questioning, role play, demonstration, film clip, etc)
♦ Make good transitions
♦ Remember the stated objectives!
DELIVERY
♦ Effective eye contact and body movements
♦ Good voice quality
♦ Involve the students (E.g., questioning, interactive handouts)
♦ Motivate the students to learn (E.g., by tone, enthusiasm, rewards, successes)
♦ Ask a colleague to watch you and provide feedback, and try to self-critique a videotape of your lecture

AUDIOVISUALS
♦ Effective slides (bullet points & graphic visuals- watch font sizes and colors)
♦ Select audiovisuals on the basis of their potential to implement your objectives
♦ Avoid the use of presentation software slides as lecture notes, reading them to the students!
♦ Use interactive handouts (fill in the blank, short answer questions, Venn diagrams, etc) and give reading material-type handouts at the end of class as “take-homes”

CLOSURE
♦ Summarize key points (meeting the objectives!)
♦ Involve the students- giving them an opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the objectives! (E.g., oral questioning, pair-off discussion, handout or index card with “post-test”, take-home assignment like a graphic organizer or short answer problem set, or game show format
♦ This “bookmarks it” for the learners, and provides instant feedback for the lecturer as to “what they got, and didn’t get”