

Creating Effective Lectures by Applying Gagne’s Nine Steps of Instruction

Gagne’s “Nine Steps of Instruction” (or “Nine Events of Instruction”) is an instructional design model that aims to help develop and deliver a class lecture (Gagne’, 1992). Gagne’ believed there are “conditions of learning.” In order to create and stimulate such a “condition of learning,” he developed nine general steps of instruction in teaching (Killpatrick, 2001). By following these nine steps, students will have a higher chance of mastering the knowledge or concepts.

The following is a brief list of examples of how Gagne’s Nine Events of Instruction model can be applied in everyday classes.

Step 1: Arouse students’ attention

Students won’t be ready for learning if instructors don’t have their attention. This step is to obtain their attention so that they will be curious and want to know what’s next. Use of pictures, videos, case studies, news, storytelling, polls, or other ice breaking activities will quickly get students to focus their attention on the content.

Step 2: Inform students of course goals and objectives

Students want to know what they are going to learn, what they will be able to perform at the end of the semester, and how they will be able to use the knowledge or skills in the future. Telling students what the course goals and objectives also help them grab the most important things and have them focus their efforts on your course.

Step 3: Relate prior knowledge to the current learning materials

Students learn best if new knowledge is placed into a context that they are already familiar with. This step allows students to learn new information by retrieving their prior knowledge. To help students recall prior knowledge, ask students about the subjects or activities from previous classes, or have them share their own content related experiences, or have students discuss the connections between acquired knowledge and the current topics.

Step 4: Present the content

Make sure to “chunk” the course content into many small manageable pieces so to avoid overwhelming students.

Keep it interactive. It’s suggested that instructors use a variety of teaching approaches to interact with your students, such as short lectures, group discussions, case studies, or role-playing.

Step 5: Guide students to perform

Unlike the previous step (presenting the content), this step includes helping students understand presented knowledge as well as later applying the learned knowledge or skill. To effectively guide students, instructors can give examples, model the process, give hints and prompts, use hands-on activities, or provide criteria/rubrics.

Step 6: Let students practice newly presented knowledge/concepts

Students learn best by doing things. This step allows students to practice the new knowledge or skills. At this point, students are expected to apply newly learned knowledge by themselves with a little guidance. This might include having students work on real-life cases in groups, having hands-on lab practices, or asking students to elaborate their own understandings of the learning content.

Step 7: Provide feedback to students

Provide timely and detailed feedback to students on their performance. It’s not enough for only telling them “Good job” or “You are not right.” Instead, tell them why they are right, why they are wrong and what must be improved. Use of rubrics helps students understand feedback better, if needed.

Step 8: Assess learning outcome

This step allows instructors to see whether or not their students achieve the learning objective as well as allow students to see what content areas they have not mastered. Instructors can give students online or paper-based quizzes, have them do presentations, give them individual/group projects, or have them demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a lab exercise.

Step 9: Enhance retention and transfer of learning

This step assists students in retaining newly learned knowledge and applying it in a new context. Highlighting and reviewing important knowledge or concepts in real-life scenarios will help students transfer acquired knowledge. To help students retain and transfer the knowledge, have students discuss the potential applications in the workplaces or give enough opportunities for students to practice the knowledge during or after class.

References:

Gagné, R. M., Briggs, L. J., & Wager, W. W. (1992). *Principles of instructional design (4th Ed.)*. Forth Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.

Killpatrick, L. (2001). *Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction*. In B. Hoffman (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of*