

Canada

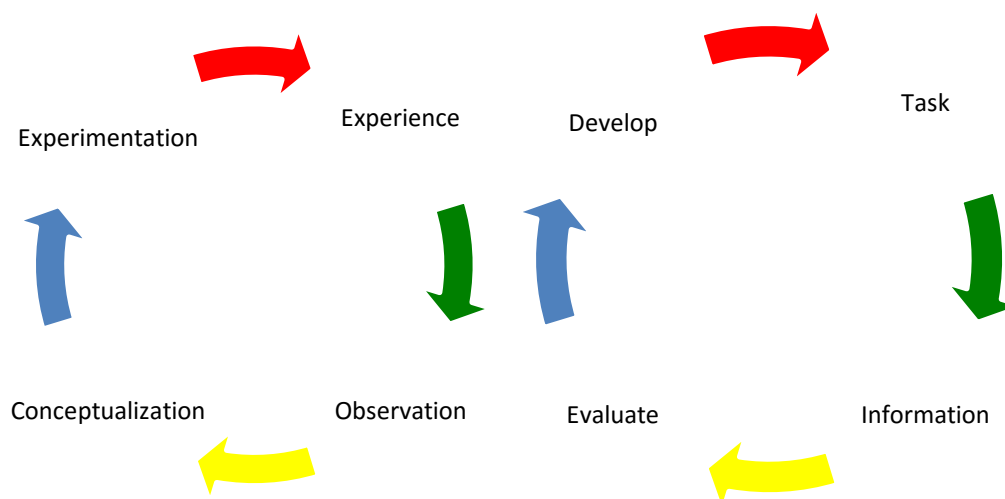
Canada's message was focussed strongly on their approach to teaching and set out what was a new direction for them as an organisation. Having come through a trial period they are on the brink of going live to the membership and including this material in all their resources. They delivered three small lectures entitled.

- Experiential Education
- The Learning Brain
- Decision Making

(PowerPoint presentations attached)

Each lecture can be linked to areas of BASI's own teaching philosophy.

Experiential Education is taken directly from work done by educational theorist David Kolb, which is the work that underpins our TIED model. As you can see below the two models are almost identical.



Experiential Education

TIED

Whereas BASI changed the words in order to make the academic model more accessible to practitioners the Canadians have stayed closer to Kolb's original terms. Decision Making is linked to goal setting and the necessity for a negotiated learning contract at the start of a session. There was a strong emphasis on placing the learner at the centre of the experience with learner led goals and objectives. Finally, The Learning Brain discussed how we need to attend to three different considerations when learning. Knowledge, motor learning and performance. It was explained how important it is to train and learn in a way that matches the area of learning that is the objective and to manage whether the

focus of attention is internal or external. This was an interesting and well-focussed message and aligned strongly with how we use the three phases of learning – cognitive (knowledge), associative (motor learning) and autonomous (performance) within BASI. Despite Fitts and Posner's work dating back to 1967 this model of skill acquisition is as applicable now as it ever was. It is hugely encouraging to see such an influential nation as Canada using the fundamental messages of this model. Having repackaged Kolb's work it is perhaps time to adapt and modernise (without losing any accuracy) our interpretation of Fitts and Posner's work to bring this indispensable work to a wider audience.

In the demos and around the mountain the Canadians skied to a very high standard and delivered an enjoyable relaxed on snow workshop that focussed on Experiential Education in action. We were encouraged to work round their model and feel how each stage contributes to learning.

Further to the lectures and workshops I interviewed Warren Jobbitt, the National Manager for Education from CSIA. In discussing how they select and educate their trainers or as they call them – course conductors, there were more similarities with BASI. Course conductors are selected on a training and selection course and are then mentored over the course of a week to deliver courses. The mentors are selected from a group of highly experienced course conductors (Canadian L4) who are put through a mentoring course that is run by Warren. All course conductors are graded to be able to deliver certain levels of course just like in the BASI training body and are subject to a multi-layered mentoring system where higher level conductors mentor their less experienced colleagues.

This process has gone one step further than where we are currently at in so much as they have a course to prepare conductors for mentoring. This is a course run by Warren that is the culmination of many years of experience, trial and error, research and consultancy. Warren initially studied motivational theory and saw this as fundamental to what mentoring is all about. He also employed the services of a business consultant who delivers mentoring programmes to major corporations to review his work and to co-deliver the initial mentor training. He found this gave a professional credibility to the process.

Trainers (conductors) are encouraged to aspire to deliver higher-level courses through the mentoring process. Once in a position to deliver L4s (L4 course conductor) after a number of years these conductors are recycled back to L1 and to act as mentors for new trainers allowing younger/newer conductors to rise up the ranks to L4. This recycling was not always the case and at one stage the number of L4 conductors became very small. Now Warren actively goes looking for people in their mid twenties to train up. Most L4 conductors are in their thirties

The re-evaluation process is also interesting with conductors audited by Warren and his mentors. Skiing and delivery levels are looked at and if people are below the expected standard they are moved down a level or ultimately asked to leave.

There system is currently undergoing an external academic review with a higher education establishment (much like us with Edinburgh) and two biomechanists are reviewing the language and instructing/training methods employed by CSIA.