

Administrative News from Glen:

As promised in November News Briefs, I plan to write about my seven strategies for a successful 21st century Extension service in the next several issues.* But before I take on the first, Learner Driven Engagement, I thought I should rehash the main points of my In-Depth update to provide a backdrop for my thinking on these seven strategies.

- The challenges facing Extension services are the same as those challenging universities and higher education: learner access; technology and instructional technology; and generational preferences for learning and work.
- Clayton Christensen's work described in *The Innovator's Dilemma* shows that success in markets undergoing technological change is most often afforded to entering firms who provide a product for non-customers who then evolved to become the strength of the market.
- An important question is: Who are Extension's non-customers and does it make sense to try to serve them?
- I made the case that Millennials, Digital Natives, and the generation that follow may be Extension non-customers based on generational preferences for access to education and learning. These generations currently make up 48% of Wyoming's population. By 2025 Millennials and younger will comprise 58% of Wyoming's population. (Just FYI, I presented U.S. numbers at In-Depth. These are Wyoming's).
- I concluded with the idea that our future success requires that we understand our non-customers; who they are, how will they choose to learn, and what adjustments we need to make to successfully serve them. I further concluded that the digitally savvy and focused were one group of potential non-customers and that we needed to very quickly develop the capacity to serve them.
- Finally, I called for a faster pace to our innovation in digital media and education and expressed my hopes for some clear successes.

Given that backdrop, here is my thinking as to why Learner Driven Engagement belongs on the list of critical strategies for the successful 21st century Extension service:

Learner Driven Engagement –

In my attempt to be more descriptive I have made this phrase inherently redundant. Let's talk about engagement first. In the report, *Returning to Our Roots: The Engaged Institution*, the Kellogg Commission describes engagement in this way: "Engagement goes well beyond extension, conventional outreach and even most conceptions of public service. Inherited concepts describe a one-way process in which the university transfers its expertise to key constituents. Embedded in the engagement ideal is a commitment to sharing and reciprocity. By engagement the Commission envisions partnerships; two way streets defined by mutual respect among the partners for what each brings to the table." I have heard three more concise definitions for engagement that resonate with me: "outreach starts with an answer- engagement starts with a question"; or "engagement is co-learning - learning together and from each other, educator and client"; or "engagement is listening more than talking".

Regardless of the definition for engagement that speaks most clearly to you, engagement is learner driven, learning together to solve problems and meet needs. Extension has long history of being good at engagement. Our local connections/partnerships have encouraged co-learning as an organizational approach. That does not mean that all Extension efforts are truly engagement. Want to be an engaged Extension educator or specialist? Think leading with a question, listening and learning at least as much from the client as they learn from you.

Why do I think the Extension of the future will need to be better at Learner Driven Engagement? Online and other information sources that will be available to our clients will be steeped in the expert model, one answer fits all approach to education and information. The niche best fitting us and most available to us will be engaging with our clients in a co-learning relationship.

***Glen's Seven Strategies for the Successful 21st Century Extension Service are:**

- Learner Driven Engagement
- Impactful Learning Experiences
- Expand Open Source Learning
- Innovative – Willing to Take Risk
- Local
- Learner Driven Spectrum of Access
- Recognize the Lifetime Value of the Student

Kellogg Commission, 1999. Returning to our Roots: The Engaged Institution. Third Report February 1999, page 9. <http://www.aplu.org/NetCommunity/Document.Doc?id=183>

Safe Travels, Glen

Personnel News:

Campbell County, CDE – Position #0464, based in Gillette. This is an extended term track, Assistant UEE position. The search has been extended to January 2, 2015.

Carbon County, NFS – Position #1281, based in Rawlins; An extended term track, Assistant UEE position. Screening will begin January 12, 2015.

Carbon County, SMRR – Position #0177, based in Rawlins. An announcement will be made soon.

Teton County, 4-H/Youth Development Educator – Position #4440, based in Jackson. An announcement will be made soon.

Teton County, NFS – Position #1282, will be based in Jackson or Pinedale (Discretion of the new employee). An announcement will be made soon.

Park County, Ag & Horticulture Systems (formerly PSAS) – Position #2562, based in Powell and will be housed at the R&E Center. An announcement will be made soon.

Extension Specialist & Regional Extension Program Coordinator for the USDA Northern Plains Regional Climate Hub – Position #5044, based on campus in Laramie or USDA ARS Rangeland Resources Research Unit in Cheyenne. This is a non-extended term track, Assistant, Associate, or Senior UEE position. Screening is underway.

Johnson County, 4-H/Youth Development Educator – Position #4032, based in Buffalo. This is

Staff Development/Federal Relations News from Susan:

Professional Development News

In 2015, Extension will hold EPIC (Extension Professional Improvement Conference). This bi-annual training is not subject matter specific, but will include topics applicable to all, regardless of the discipline you provide education in. This conference rotates out in the state. In 2015 we will be looking for a host county in the Northwest area. Tentatively please hold the week of November 9 – 13, 2015.

County Coordinators: The Administrative Team (Associate Directors and UWE Director) will conduct training on budget development and management with a webinar Wednesday, January 21, 2015. Please reserve the afternoon. Specific times and details will be coming soon. The webinar will run approximately 1½ hours in length.

Civil Rights Tip

We will soon be appointing several new civil rights advisors. If you have an interest in serving in this state assignment, please contact Susan. The appointments are for three years and involve no more than two civil rights reviews; travel is paid by the state office.

Reporting Tip

UW Extension has been using the “new” on-line contact reporting system for a full year now. I wanted to provide a reminder of contacts that should be reported under indirect contacts.

There are many occasions when we deliver educational information to clientele and we are not able to determine race or sex. Yet this is an important part of Extension work and should be documented and recognized. The new on-line reporting system does allow Extension workers to record the number of indirect contacts made. Remote contacts include:

- Television - live or taped segments (TV stations can provide circulation numbers)
- Radio - weekly or spot broadcasts, live or taped (stations can provide homes reached)
- Phone calls (unless you can determine gender and race)
- Website - educational information gleaned from personal or county websites
- E-mail - electronic response to clientele request
- Newspaper - regular columns or individual news release (newspapers have circulation numbers)
- Magazines - subscriptions

Customer Service Tip

Five Ways Gratitude Will Change Your Life

Saying “thank you” is something most of us learn at a young age. It’s something we teach to our children too. We all know that gratitude is important, which is why in many parts of the world, we have a day called Thanksgiving to remind us to be thankful.

It is unfortunate in many ways that we have such a day. Yes, it may remind us on that day to be thankful, grateful and appreciative – but the fact is that we will benefit greatly if we do it with much more regularity. Regularly, like daily or even hourly.

The behavior of being grateful goes beyond saying “thank you,” though that is one of the actions that should be included. More specifically what I mean is consciously and regularly looking for and acknowledging the things you are thankful for or appreciate. Some people choose to keep a gratitude journal; some make occasional lists and some make a mental note as they think about or become aware of such things.

Before I share these five ways with you, let me make one thing very clear: the reasons to be grateful are many, but do not include a quid pro quo of “If I’m grateful, I’ll get these benefits.” Rather choose to be grateful, do the things that heighten your appreciation of the world around you and your circumstances, and rest assured these benefits will flow to you.

What we think about expands. This is the foundational principle for the other four ways that follow. Would you like more of the things you are grateful for in your life? When you think on those things and are grateful for their presence, you are already taking the first step towards expanding them in your life!

Reduce your stress. We add much stress to our lives by the things we think about, wonder about and worry about. If you are thinking appreciative, grateful thoughts, there is less room for the rest. When you are grateful for what you have, you will reduce your stress.

Change your focus. Being grateful in these ways changes your focus by definition. Our minds are built to literally allow us to see the things we are looking for. When you approach life from the perspective of thankfulness, your mind will literally notice more examples of things to be thankful for, and even help you do a better job of seeing the positive in any situation.

Improve your relationships. Do this exercise with me. Think of a person that is a challenge in your life – a person that makes something difficult for you; someone that frustrates you or with whom you argue with frequently. Write that person’s name at the top of a piece of paper and write down five admirable things about that person – five skills, abilities or characteristics about that person that you can appreciate. Once you have done that, commit to thinking about those attributes or characteristics the next time you are around or working with that person. As you think of those things you appreciate (even when you are frustrated or in disagreement), you’re thinking about the person and your attitude will change. By taking this step of gratitude and appreciation you are taking a huge step towards improving your relationship.

Improve your self-image. The more you think about the good things in your life, and the more you notice and observe what is working well in your life, and the better you will feel about yourself! And the even better news is that as your self-image improves, your focus and your relationships will continue to improve and your stress will (everything else being equal) continue to drop.

The benefits of gratitude go far beyond doing something because it’s the “right thing” to do. When you begin to notice and take inventory of all of the things you are thankful for, you recognize that even though your life may have challenges and you might be facing obstacles, you can build your future success on the blessings around you right now.

Source: Kevin Eikenberry Nov. 24, 2014

Cent\$ible Nutrition Program News from Mindy Meuli:

I can’t think of anything for News Briefs, so I guess no news is good news....

I hope everyone has a safe, nutritious, and happy winter break and hope to have more news in the New Year.

eXtension News from Milt Geiger:

Getting more from eXtension.org

“This question is a waste of time...”

We all know that our teachers lied to us – there is such a thing as a stupid question! You may even get one through the eXtension.org Ask-an-Expert (AaE) system. If you are certain the question is spam or simply not a duty of UW Extension to address, you have several options.

In the screen shot below, you see two options targeted. You can “Reassign” it directly to a colleague, who may be able to offer a valuable response, or simply send it back to the question wrangler with a mere two clicks! The other option is to simply “Reject” the question. For example, the homework question below is not one for the expertise of UWE, so you can simply reject it.

Also, remember if you think it is a valid question but do not believe that UWE can provide a useful or timely answer, there is also a polite canned response option that is presented before you formally reject the question.

Question #221675 - No Public URL | [Revisions](#) | [Watch](#)

[Private](#) [Edit](#) | [Reassign](#) | [Close...](#) | [Reject...](#)

Asked to University of Wyoming Extension less than a minute ago by Milton Geiger who has submitted 3 questions.

This question needs handling. Please answer, reassign or close it.

0 responses

Homework Question

What is $2+2$?

[Wyoming](#) [edit](#)

Add Tags (Tags are viewable on public questions)

Type a word and select it...

Assigned to



Milton Geiger

[Reassign](#)

This question is assigned to you. Let others know you are working on it.

Unless you tell us you are working on it, another expert may step in to answer it.

[I'm working on this question](#)

Remember that AaE is a great way for UWE to engage potentially new clientele. It is also really easy to use...

As always if you have eXtension.org questions, feel free to contact Milt at mgeiger1@uwyo.edu or the new co-institutional leader (aka guru) David Keto at dketo@uwyo.edu



UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
EXTENSION

Holiday Closures

Christmas Holiday
Winter Closure
New Year's Holiday

December 24-25, 2014
December 26-30, 2014
December 31st, 2014 - January 1st, 2015