Tutor Training Manual:
An Interactive Module
2007-2008 Edition

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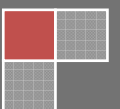
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Forward Message to New and Returning Tutors

If you are looking to **make a difference**, welcome to tutoring. Passion, innovation, commitment to consistency, and fresh energy are exactly the ingredients that make up a successful tutor and a successful tutoring program. But please understand that for many students, above making a difference, **you will be the difference** between victory and malfunction. But beware; even the best of all educators never realizes the ending product of their worthy efforts. The ambiguity of tutoring is the worst part. Sadly, and all too often, tutors rarely experience or share in the inner joy of the positive outcomes that directly result from their sessions.

However, there are some positive data that conclude tutoring is not merely effective, but show that students who prescribe to a consistent regimen of it at the community college level simply earn better grades, are more likely to earn their associates degree, and most importantly, are more likely to transfer and pursue their undergraduate studies (National On-Campus Report, 2005). Much like a stunt double on a blockbuster action movie, a tutor is indeed the invisible, unsung hero.

Greetings and Welcome to every fellow, invisible educator. Your efforts, your hard work, your ability to meander through frustrating moments, your willingness to perform a difficult task, and your love for educating make the fantastic difference!

Tim

Interactive Module 1: Tutoring Primer

Tutoring is vital practice in the world of education. A tutor, at the very basis of the term, is an educator who gives individual or often small group instruction, facilitates learning workshops, covets all students and their academic needs, collaborates with faculty, works as a part of a team on educational projects, and innovates within their own didactic genre. However, one must vastly expand this definition to thoroughly explain the importance, the value, and the extent of the job of an academic tutor. A tutor teaches and encourages and insists on accountable performance from her tutees. A tutor connects and allows a student to become better than they imagined. A tutor unites the student with the institution in an unusual and tremendously worthy manner. The purpose of tutoring is to help students help themselves, or to assist or guide students to the point at which they become an independent learner, and thus no longer need tutoring services. Imagine that, a tutor's job is to put themselves out of work.

The concept behind tutoring is clearly to add confidence, install self-reliance, fill in the missing academic pieces, and create a connection to the institution for each student served. Additionally, tutoring is modeling good, useable, and worthwhile academic skills by exhibiting, practicing, and showcasing high-quality academic behaviors. A good tutor wishes not to simply make any individual paper better, but to make each tutee a better writer, slowly, deliberately, over time.

One's overall schemata will be of great assistance. What a tutor knows, understands, and has experienced regarding English, writing, reading, comprehension, composing, structuring, outlining, grammar, and poetry, and all else, will be of great service while tutoring. Content knowledge is an essential ingredient for a tutor. However, to be truly effective, a tutor

must combine content knowledge with empathy, honesty, hard work, humor, be willing to

model good academic habits, understand the need for consistency in tutoring, and want to truly

make a difference.

The Successful Tutor's Attributes:

- ☐ Empathy

- ☐ Honesty

- ☐ Work Ethic/ Team Ethic

- ☐ Humor

- ☐ Be a Role Model

- ☐ Be Consistent

- ☐ Possess Passion for Learning and Teaching

Tutoring deeply benefits the greater institution:

- ☐ Tutoring creates a strong connection to the college, enhancing retention.

- ☐ Enhances collaboration, thus increasing academic partnership

Module 1 Assignment: **Directions**: Please respond in an email to the following questions and write a brief reaction/reply to each. Please email your written response with **Mod 1 your last name** in the subject box to: writingtutors@qcc.mass.edu

1. Which tutoring attribute from above is easiest for you to implement? Which is toughest? Why?
2. If you were asked to invent or develop a new attribute for tutors, what would it be? Explain your response.

The writing tutor group will individually respond and discuss your thoughts and words.

Interactive Module 2: The Quad-A Tutoring Methodology

Introduction

      The Quad-A tutoring method simplifies and mandates a consistent, unswerving process that helps to ease students' tutoring anxiety by offering a dependable and reliable product, specify and segregate areas needing development by means of uniform assessment, and ultimately create a self-sufficient, independent learner by installing self-government in the learning process.

Albeit an awkward name, the **Quad-A** stands for **A**ssess, **A**ssist, **A**llow autonomy, **A**pproach again. The tutoring system offers an uncomplicated cookie-cutter consistency that allows a deep human style and attitude while directing the student towards good study skills and the security and ability to self assist.

The process and implementation of the Quad-A authorizes each tutor to understand the learning process in a fundamental, primary scheme.

      Many community college students lack study skills, a firm understanding of academic responsibilities, and time management techniques leading to dependence and reliance on others to succeed. Often, these at-risk qualities lead to failure and/or dropout.

Rationale:

- *Identifying need*
- *Short and long-term assessments*
- *A means to insert self-sufficiency*

"…there are a number of things that can be done during the first year to prevent second year drop out." connectivity to the college is imperative (Schreiner, 2005).

Purpose

      The underlying principle threaded throughout the development of the Quad-A tutoring methodology is to devise a process of identifying the needs of community college tutees, create an arrangement of short and long-term assessments, and develop a means to insert self-sufficiency within their academic routine. The goal is to serve this group in such a way that success and accomplishment replace uncertainty and academic anxiety.

      The growing population of at-risk learners is at the center of a significant issue. Almost half of all community college students nationally may be considered part of the at-risk population, and those who are in need of and can most benefit from intensive tutoring (National On-Campus Report, 2005). Community college learners are a growing cohort across the nation. With the rising cost of education and the necessities of training local work forces, the importance of community college graduates and their mark on future generations has never been greater. A recent survey

published in January, 2006, found a correlation between at-risk student **campus engagement**, including one on one tutoring, and potential academic success (Bradley, 2006).

The Quad-A Tutoring methodology is one **built to add a concrete base of absolute consistency** during each tutoring session, for every learner. This system of tutoring combines consistency, responsibility, and efficiency.

Quad-A Tutoring Method: tactic narrative shown in qualitative stages

Stage 1
Assess

- *Successful assessment takes place through deep understanding*

- *Unfold the student's schema*

- *Encourage the student to talk*

Stage 2
Assist

- *Clarify the assignment*

- *Put the pen in the student's hand*

- *Point out something good*

Ask the student about the assignment, what it was about, and what he or she wrote about.

Discuss the paper and pose specific questions to see if the student has developed a strong knowledge of the topic. Unfold the student's schema. Think of this as the "Tell Me What You Know" technique of assessment. Students write better about topics they know well. Listen and learn; successful assessment takes place through deep understanding. Encouraging the student to talk creates an active learning, productive atmosphere.

Clarify the assignment by repeating it back to the learner. Begin reading the student's paper. Put the pen in the student's hand. Refrain from pointing out every error. Instead, get an idea of where the student needs the most work. (Which area of grammar needs the most work? Does the organization need work? Is the thesis or topic sentence developed? etc.)

Point out something good. Compliment their style, use of words, neat penmanship, interesting topic…

Begin with the most commonly made mistake. Point out an example of the mistake in the student's paper. Explain why the mistake is wrong, and then **show how** to make the corrections. Follow up by having the student practice a few sentences or a paragraph including the correction.

Stage 3
Allow autonomous learning

- □ *Autonomy allows the learner to build personal confidence and become self sufficient*

- □ *Autonomous education during an online tutoring session might be thought of as the time between sessions*

Stage 4
Approach again

- □ *Rather than merely encouraging the student to come back for another tutorial, tell them that there is more work to do. Reach out and create a future scheduled meeting time.*

Each student needs self-regulating, independent time to practice and carry out the methods and the writing processes discussed. This autonomy, when inserted in a regulated environment, allows the learner to build personal confidence and become self sufficient. As educators, it is imperative to encourage, promote, and model autonomous learning. In person, this method comes natural. It is easy to coach a student to a point where she can maneuver alone, for a short time. Online, this element is more difficult. The level of autonomy is often overwhelming to some new online learners. Therefore, autonomous education during an online tutoring session might be thought of as the time between sessions; the hours or the days connecting each session.

It is important to verbally tell each student that you will return to check on them at a specific time

Re-assess the student. Look for signs of enlightenment. Evaluate the student's understanding of the work now as compared to stage 1. Show the student evidence of growth. Re-explain areas in question. Likely, the entire paper will not be corrected. Rather than merely encouraging the student to come back for another tutorial, tell them that there is more work to do; reach out and create a future scheduled meeting time.

Tutor Experiences
In the words of the users: *Christine and Bridget have become top-performing, highly sought English tutors at QCC, and are veterans of the Quad-A Tutoring Methodology.*

Christine Burlingame,
English Tutor, QCC

"The goal of every tutoring session is to always allow autonomy. To step back and see as a tutor how the student has gained both knowledge and confidence. When the student is ready to learn independently I know that the tutoring session worked!"

"During the assisting stage I provide the students with information and examples (whether it is from books, handouts or online sites) and create short term, realistic goals for the student. The Quad-A is set up in such a way that I know when to use listening skills and when to assist. The idea of breaking down the tutoring session into specific tasks makes engagement easier."

Bridget Lever,
English Tutor, QCC

"This system is successful! I have worked with students using this method since I started tutoring and have seen scores of students show a greater confidence in their ability to learn and write."

"I had a student online a couple of times within a week. She had been struggling with developing a thesis statement. Using the Quad-A system, I worked her through the problem. The assessment was quick, but the assisting took some time. We chatted and exchanged ideas, as I showed her the steps to developing a thesis statement. Then I asked her to try it out on her own. The next time I saw her online (which was 1 week later) I asked how her thesis statements were coming along. She told me that she had "totally gotten it" and that since she began writing in college she hadn't been able to grasp it, but working with me and the way I explained and allowed her time to work it through, helped her see the light."

The Quad-A Tutoring Flow Chart

Quad A Tutoring Flow Chart

Assess, **A**ssist, **A**utonomy, **A**pproach again

Assess:
- Vary the means to understand ability and need
- Listen

Assist:
- Create a set of short, achievable goals
- Introduce topics and resources
- Offer authentic examples, illustrations, and models
- Observe comprehension and awareness
- Offer on-going, feedback and praise
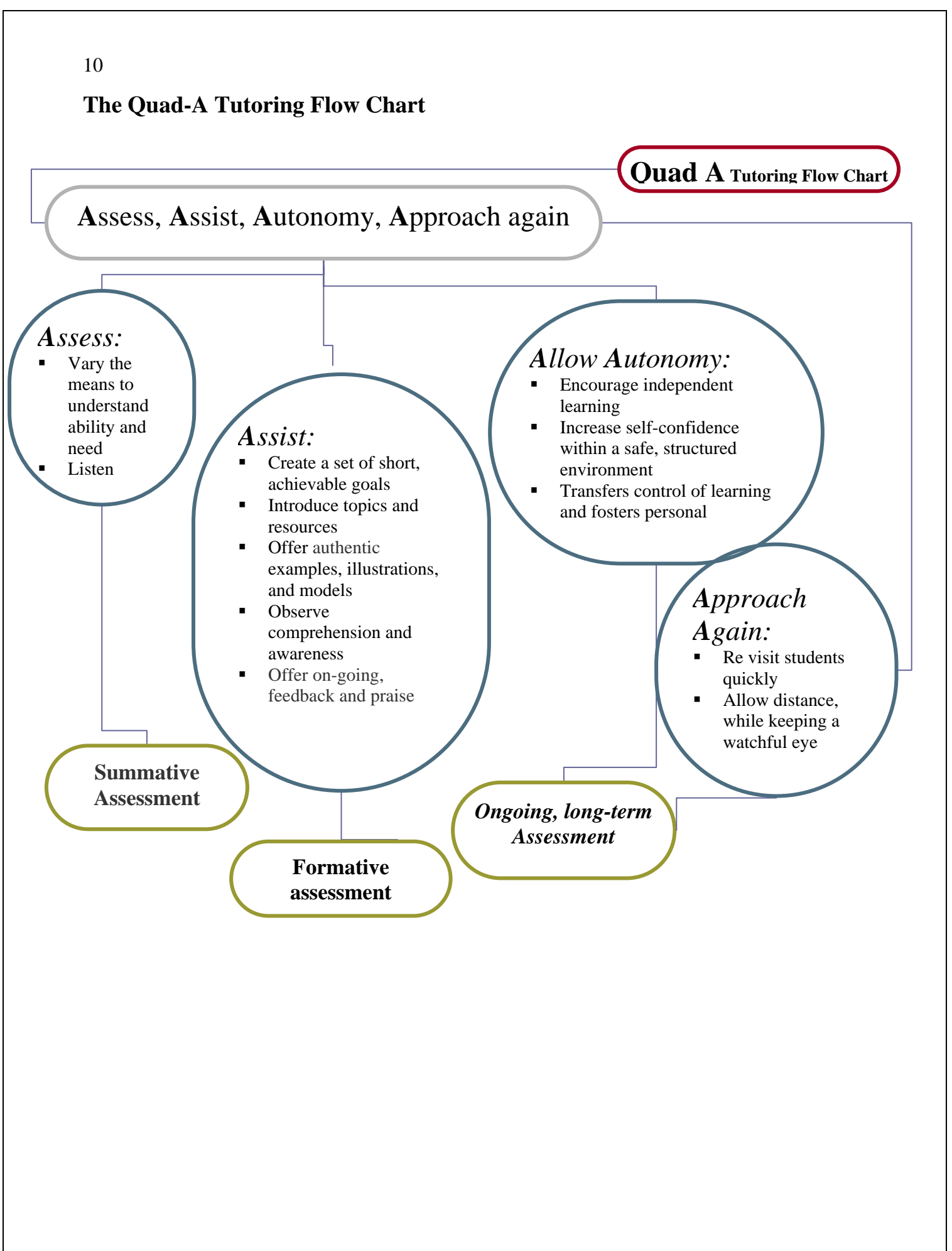
Allow Autonomy:
- Encourage independent learning
- Increase self-confidence within a safe, structured environment
- Transfers control of learning and fosters personal

Approach Again:
- Re visit students quickly
- Allow distance, while keeping a watchful eye

Summative Assessment

Formative assessment

Ongoing, long-term Assessment

The History of the Quad-A Tutoring Methodology

☐ *There was an underlying need for consistency within the tutoring genre.*

☐ *The addition of autonomous learning along with a consist approach shaped a four tier system that is useable and understandable by both professional and peer tutors.*

The initial analysis prior to the development of the Quad-A Tutoring Method in 2006 derived from the
article, *Remedial Education and* Student *Attrition* from a 2002 Community College Review. This was the entry point to identifying a collective problem throughout community colleges regarding student connectivity. This article offered background information regarding research done on student retention.

The Quad-A Methodology was conceived under the name "Tell Me What You Know". This was the initial effort that coupled assessment with tutoring. The addition of autonomous learning along with the consistency value fashioned a four tier system that is useable and understandable by both professional and peer tutors.

Module 2 Assignment: **Directions**: Please respond in an email to the following questions by writing a brief reaction/reply to each. Please email your written response with **Mod 2 your last name** in the subject box to: writingtutors@qcc.mass.edu

1. What is the reason behind adding an autonomous learning experience in every tutoring session?

2. In the big picture, what might the perils be if consistency and uniformity are not followed for every student?

The writing tutor group will individually respond and discuss your thoughts and words.

Interactive Module 3:

Serving the Student Effectively: The Customer of Education

As President, Truman kept two signs on his desk. One quoted Mark Twain: Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest." The other read, "The buck stops here." (Fadiman & Bernard ed., 2000 p. 542)

Historically, many of us have heard stories from our parents and grandparents about good service; the milkman approach to service, door to door, with a smile. It left us, seemingly in the wake of greater technology and a faster life style. Service without a smile appeared the norm to many customers throughout countless diverse industries, including education. The collapse of good service, some say, is correlated directly to generational issues, such as: the habits of under-trained and unworthy employees who may be members of the thirteenth generation aka Generation X, the greed of the Boomers as the catalyst of service dysfunction, or the millennialism me-me-me attitude mixed with impulsive and instant gratification. The method in which our culture treats customers is not necessarily a generational issue, but one that is larger, one that is extremely concerning.

One of the most spectacular cultural events currently diffusing is a national focus on customer service and the re-birth of superior educative service. A new revolution of good service is swiftly replacing the bad. It is sweeping all corners of all industries due to one, and only one reason: **necessity**. The successful faculty and staff are those who communicate and become in touch with each student. It is not merely a passive thank you that gains a student's loyalty; it is the rich discussions, the personal involvement, and the genuine (authentic) words we trade. Without effective communication skills our customers will indeed leave us, no matter what we sell. The education world certainly is a unique industry full of customer service opportunity.

Understand the role of tutor

Know your responsibilities and duties in regards to:

- ☐ Students
- ☐ Your Teammates
- ☐ Faculty

The tutoring roll serves three general functions

1. The tutor serves students
2. The tutor serves the team (other tutors)
3. The tutor serves faculty

Figure 2 Tutor Christine Burlingame (right) *Assisting and getting to know a student's needs. 2006.*

Preparing for each day, each shift, each tutor session

"*Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance*", states Bill Belichick in early 2001, just prior to winning his first of three Super Bowls in four years (Halberstam, 2005). The way a tutor, a teacher, or any educator prepares directly affects the outcome of the learning experience for the student. As a tutor, there are several ways to prepare and both short and long term that will make you more effective.

Influence the tutoring environment: Assist, volunteer, and continually support the learning environment in which you work and teach. This may be a simple as supporting and adding physical changes such as: offering to post motivational signs or displaying creative works of art or prose for students to see and question.

Prepare yourself for students: sustaining a consistent approach, a positive attitude, and a team focus is intoxicating and very apparent by all. These virtuous attributes spread and extend from one person to the next.

STEP THREE: Meeting Student Needs

The better you meet your student needs during a session, the better the session.
Get to know your student's:

Academic needs
Resource needs

All that is good: The attributes of a good tutor

- ☐ Greet all students and give them your attention
- ☐ Be approachable
- ☐ Have empathy with your student's problems
- ☐ Never let multitasking get in the way of serving a student's needs
- ☐ Be honest
- ☐ Laugh freely
- ☐ Allow students to talk
- ☐ Know when to stop a session and always insert autonomous learning
- ☐ Give constant feedback and encouragement
- ☐ End the session positively, asking the student to return

Ending the Tutoring Session

More than a good bye

- ☐ Positively assess the work that was done during the session.
- ☐ Restate what elements are still needed
- ☐ Give assignments if appropriate
- ☐ Let the student know specifically what is still needed to be done;
 encourage her to come back soon.

Module 3 Assignment: **Directions**: Please respond in an email to the following questions by writing a brief reaction/reply to each. Please email your written response with **Mod 3 your last name** in the subject box to: writingtutors@qcc.mass.edu

1. In your opinion, what social element, and what economic element has made superior customer service in education a mandate rather than a luxury.

2. Which attribute of a good tutor best fits your personality? Is there a missing attribute you would like to see added?

The writing tutor group will individually respond and discuss your thoughts and words.

Interactive Module 4:
Techniques and Models that Work

"**A**ssess-**A**ssist-allow **A**utonomy, **A**pproach again…and repeat as needed"
The Quad-A Cycle, 2006
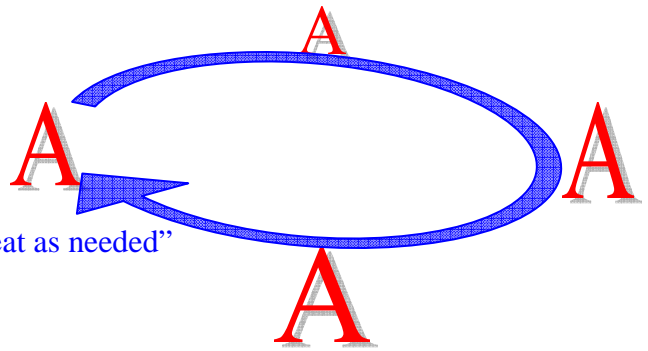
I**N**tegrating **T**echnology for in**Q**uiry (NTeQ)

As a computer-based educational center, technology has a front and center seat. That is to say, most tutoring sessions will mandate, to some extent, the integration of technology. Beginning with the complete understanding of learning and outcome objectives, filling tutoring sessions with meaningful projects, group work, technology, as well as discharging challenging, non-conventional assignments, merged with constant, on-going assessment marks the vast differences in educative language, methodology, and implementation between traditional classrooms and those utilizing the NTeQ philosophy (Henning, et al, 2004).

All the preparation, all the trial and error, all the learning and reading and thinking and creativity begins to flower during the tutoring session. Traditional tutoring settings might show students watching their papers be 'edited' by a tutor. In this setting, there is little interaction, and maximum control by the tutor.

Active learning methods including the Quad-A Methodology involve NTeQ which prove to be vastly different, vastly special, and more effective learning schemes than traditional methods. This hands-on process creates an active environment where students are listening and doing and discovering using a potpourri of means, all within a structured, consistent setting. The integration of technology merges the twenty first century students to twenty first century machines. Learning styles cam be matched and coveted. An implied importance of research and critical thinking follows the care of individual learning experiences and relationship building.

The active tutoring center, when well managed, becomes a unique, reverent place where students learn more effectively.

Team Building/Goal Setting

As a team merges from infancy, certain attributes replace others. Training is replaced by knowledge and direction. Team objectives, while perhaps not seen as specific goals, are replaced by more targeted ambitions. Jon Katzenbach reveals in the Harvard Business review that, "Specific objectives have a leveling effect conducive to *team* behavior" (Katzenbach & Smith, 2005, *The Discipline of Teams,* p 162). Simply put, an arrangement of common goals tends to unify a group when the goals meet universally accepted needs. Hence, good habits beget good habits, and a meaningful, achievable set of goals result in a more positive team performance.

It is easy to say and think that simply setting a goal will convey achievement. Goals need to be common, and attainable. Moreover, each goal must fit the need of the team and each member of the unit must first agree that this goal will, indeed, assist in the advancement of the cause.

Any goal is unfeasible if it is left without specificity. One can only imagine success without a distinct charter from which to measure one's self. Simply stated, goals need to clearly call out the vision of the desired result. According to Outward Bound and other popular team-building programs, "clear performance *goals* help a *team* keep track of progress" (Katzenbach & Smith, 2005 p 163). In a word, accountability is essential to seeing a group achieve success. If, indeed, a group is accountable for achieving one single goal, or many specific goals, the role of the group facilitator then changes. The leader must be able to focus on the prize while ensuring her team is as well.

Critical to the success and achievement of goals is building thriving, working relationships. Simple items all too often delay and inhibit this significantly essential action from taking place; straightforward, in the terms of effort, yet not effortless regarding execution. Miscommunication, un-clear explanation of goal setting, and misrepresentations of expectations are some examples of relationship building blunders.

Achieving common team goals and building working, thriving relationships: each as important as the other, yet neither may stand on their own. These attributes lean upon and rely on the success of the other. Perhaps the most important goal a group can achieve is building a praiseworthy team.

Module 4 Assignment: **Directions**: Please respond in an email to the following questions by writing a brief reaction/reply to each. Please email your written response with **Mod 4 your last name** in the subject box to: writingtutors@qcc.mass.edu

1. What are three ways you can personally enhance team building within the tutoring center?

2. How might you give advise to a brand new tutor regarding integrating technology and utilizing the NTeQ method?

3. In what manner do you feel NTeQ relates with the Quad-A?

The writing tutor group will individually respond and discuss your thoughts and words.

When Benjamin Franklin was dining out in Paris in 1774, one of the other diners posed the question: "What condition of man most deserves pity?" Each guest proposed a pitiable condition. When Franklin's turn came, he offered: "A lonesome man on a rainy day who does not know how to read."(Fadiman & Bernard ed., 2000 p. 217)

Interactive Module 5:

Communicating and engaging through cultural differences

Things, ideas, and behavior patterns make up all of one's culture. Those three elements weigh

heavily on us as we act, react, think, accept, respect, love, laugh, and everything else in between.

The things, ideas, and behavior patterns a student was exposed to throughout life thoroughly

made them who they are today as they enter the tutoring center. So, too do our learned behaviors,

thoughts, and ideas affect our ability and passion to teach and react positively to diverse

situations. Culture is learned. It includes language, religion, customs, and a history of one's

people. Our community college population comes from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

The number of "limited English proficient" students is nearing 20% of the total student

population, and nearing 30% for the total adult learners in the United States (Reading Today,

July 2007 p.6). During the next 20 years the U.S. population will grow by 42 million. It has also

been predicted that Hispanics will account for 47% of the growth, African Americans 22%,

Asians 18%, and Causations 13% (US Census, 2000).

As a tutor, it is imperative to open the student's schema (see chapter 3, *Five Uncomplicated*

Steps for more about schema), and get to know the student's background as quickly and

authentically as possible. Some engaging questions might be:

> What class are you taking? Who is your professor?
>
> How often do you write? What do you like to write about?
>
> What do you hate about learning English?
>
> How long have you been speaking English?

Often, this brief conversation allows the tutor and tutee to make a connection that is vital to the learning process. At-risk students, first time/first generation college learners, and ESL students are 57% more likely to persist into the following semester when a deep, worthy connection to the college is made early on (Bradley, 2006).

When you begin tutoring an ESL student, be conscious of the phenomenon known as hand holding (Burlingame & Lever, 2007). The student might see you as a much needed new friend, or as a source of information about not only college interests, but social interests. Student dependence can become an obstacle to assisting students with their academic needs. Often, tutors find it difficult to pull themselves away, thinking this action is rude. It is not rude to insert autonomous behavior within a tutoring session (see chapter 2, *Quad-A*).

The following are tips for working with English as a Second Language (ESL) students:

- Speak clearly, naturally, and avoid using slang. Use repetition.
- Frequently ask the student if what you are saying makes sense.
- Ask students to explain the concept to you.
- Use restatement to clarify the student's response "I think you said…"
- If the student does not understand you, write down what you are saying.
- If you do not understand the student, ask them to write what they are saying.
- Encourage students to read and to use their dictionaries.

In December of 2005, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) posted its findings which broke the long thought of correlation between student engagement and success. This study found that at-risk students indeed tend to be more engaged within their

campus setting, specifically tutoring centers, than other, non-at risk students. CCSSE (2005) states the following:

> Among some high-risk students, "even the most engaging educational
>
> experience" might not be enough to offset the great financial, academic,
>
> workplace, or personal challenges they face. Community college
>
> students in general tend to feel the strain of competing priorities. More
>
> than a third have children living at home, and nearly 80 percent work.
>
> Add to this financial concerns (nearly half of the students said that a lack
>
> of finances would be a likely reason they would leave college), and it
>
> just might be too much at once for an at risk student to overcome. (p.3)

Therefore, although the significance of tutoring engagement is essential, it alone cannot disband all the negative attributes predetermined to at-risk students. That said, as a tutor all you can do is your best work. Certain elements of culture, community, and life events, occasionally, make our efforts fruitless. Know this, and fight to change it; but allow yourself to accept unfortunate reality, too.

Module 5 Assignment: **Directions**: Please choose one of the following questions and write a response. Please email your written response with **Mod 5 your last name** in the subject box to: writingtutors@qcc.mass.edu

The writing tutor group will individually respond and discuss your thoughts and words.

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1. What might be some methods of eliminating "hand holding" and inserting autonomous learning behaviors?

2. Explain how using engaging questions assist the tutor in understanding the student's schema.

Description of the Communication Skills Center

The Communication Skills Center is an English-based tutoring center that serves a vast and diverse, urban community college population. Over the past academic year, the Communication Skills Center served over 32,000 student visits, averaging approximately 12,500 student visits each fifteen week semester.

Housed in a modern, state-of-the-art, three story learning center, the CSC is the home of progressive technology, hosts thirty writing workshops each calendar year, and performs an intensive student focus outreach each semester. New to the center in 2007 is online tutoring, serving the needs of hundreds of distance learners each semester.

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