BUZZ GROUP

METHODOLOGY: SETTING THE HIVE IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Jason Headrick
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Agricultural Leadership, Education, & Science Communications (ALEC)
What is Buzz Group Methodology?

- Small, intense discussions responding to a specific question or addressing certain content
- Buzz groups, aptly named, mimic the activity of a beehive as the classroom is filled with murmurs of discussion
- Buzz groups have shown to be an effective form of cooperative learning (Jackson & Prosser, 1989)
- A good precursor for a larger class discussion (Barkley, et al, 2014)
- Fosters peer learning (Petonito, 1991)
- Helps with the development of problem solving in participants (Moss & McMillen, 1980)
- Can be an effective use of time and bring a renewed focus to listening and note taking (Atkins, et al., 2002)
- Enhances peer learning and discussion of the linkage to other content
- Changes work in groups
- Establishes trust within the classroom
- Evaluate your learning objectives
- Focus on the content that you want students to truly master
- Will want to pair with lecture, simulation, “one-minute writing”, etc.
- Have students divide into groups of 3-4
- Give each group a topic or subject to discuss/breakdown and give parameters of time, goal, and space (and practicality)
- Share with the class in various formats/combine with other instructional methods

Application of Buzz Group Methodology
Lesson: Levels of Communication (in an Interpersonal Skills for Leadership Course)

- Best used for content with multiple parts
- Combined with Simulation & Jigsaw Methods
THE CLASSROOM
THE BUZZ GROUP CLASSROOM
- “Makes me more confident in the material…”
- “…Class is like a community”
- “…Breaks the routine that happens in class”
- “Liked being the expert and made me want to dig deeper…”
- “Good to hear from classmates who don’t always speak up…”
- “Makes participating easy… I’m not as stressed out to speak in front of others”
- Enhances content effectiveness
- Effective classroom management
- Planning/utilizing buzz group methodology
- Classroom motivation/ enhanced environment
- Examine how we continue to build trust

An instructor can reflect on the idea that opportunities and experiences shape cognition, development, and leadership motivation (Allen & Wergin, 2008)
QUESTIONS?

JASON.HEADRICK@UNL.EDU
@HEADRICKJAY/ @LEADERSTANCE