

The Difference between Facilitating and Teaching

Getting Ahead and Investigations

Philip DeVol

Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World, which came out in 2004, is used in community settings. *Investigations into Economic Class in America*, which came out in 2010, is used in colleges. The books share the same philosophy and process but the content of *Investigations* is expanded to qualify for college credit.

There are some features of *Getting Ahead* and *Investigations* that separate them from most books and workbooks that are designed for people in poverty. One unique feature is the role of the facilitator. This paper uses a shorthand format to highlight the difference between a facilitating role and teaching role. It also draws a distinction between the role of an investigator and a student.

Teachers tend to...	Facilitators tend to...
Talk to students who listen	Act as host, the investigators do the talking
Teach to students who learn	Set up investigations; investigators do the work of learning
Stand up at the front of the room while students sit in their seats	Sit at a table with the investigators; occasionally people get up to speak or work on mental models
Pose questions which students try to answer correctly	Pose questions and let the investigators explore the topic, discover and learn to support their own point of view, learn from others. Investigators become "question makers" in the community.
Hold the marker and write on the flip chart or board	Share the markers and writing/drawing tasks
Provide answers, short cuts, and give directions	Never do or decide for adult learners what they can do or decide for themselves
Have the task of teaching mastery of a particular subject or skill (example: fiscal literacy)	Have the task of guiding a learning process that doesn't require a "correct" answer
Confront students and hold them accountable for being on time, performance, and completing work	Set up an accountability system where everyone is accountable to the group and for themselves (mutual accountability)
Know the topic and impart the knowledge to others	Learn from the process and the group
Have a one way learning environment; right/wrong	Establish a safe environment and process; a challenging dialogical learning environment
Give tests and grades	Recognize the competency of the investigator when the investigator applies the learning
Focus on individual achievement	Rely on group learning with opportunities to personalize the information
Drive the class agenda	Establish a climate of equality, listening, respect, affirmation; allow no comments to go unrecognized
Prescribe topics	Encourage investigators to pursue interesting and relevant topics
Present power, superiority (status, education, class)	Shift power to the investigators who become powerful by taking over the work of learning
Maintain strict professional boundaries	Offer themselves as bridging social capital

The Difference between Students and Investigators

Students tend to...	Investigators tend to...
Learn the subject matter.	Be the subjects of their own learning; learn the content of the course.
Learn the material in order to master the subject and get a grade.	Learn the material to apply it to their own lives; immediacy of learning.
Allow teachers/instructors to make arguments for change, connect the dots	Make his or her own arguments for change.
Become compliant students, clients, and workers.	Take charge of their lives; become motivated, self-directed, self-aware, and connected.
Fit into the culture and its systems as it is.	Work to create a community and world that fits their world view.