Case Based Learning in Microbiology

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Abstract: .
Whenever we try to introduce any new method, we need to put in lot of efforts. The experience may not be smooth selling every time, and one needs to be prepared for the same. But few things I learned, most of the teacher colleagues cooperate so concentrate on them and not on those who show resistance. Any new method will not be accepted initially but if it proved to be good and useful will be accepted after initial resistance.

A panel discussion was organized in our institution regarding students' absenteeism. Panelists were student, intern representative, faculty members and administrative representative. I still remember one of the student panelists saying that we don't want textbook telecast from teachers, instead we want them to share and correlate their experiences with the topics in syllabus. She further said that we have ample of material to read and understand what we look for is application or practical use of the topics in syllabus. This was the starting point of my project Case Based Learning in Microbiology.

The first thought was, will the teachers agree? Will the students cooperate? I then took up the task of demonstrating the technique of CBL to teachers and taking their perceptions about it. To my relief 80% of teachers gave positive reply to this. After getting a big yes from faculty members my confidence increased. The next issue was how can I fit this new TL method in the existing time-table? Again idea struck me that I can utilize the remaining time in some short duration practical classes for these sessions. With this I approached my HOD for his approval. To my pleasant surprise he welcomed the idea of this new intervention.

I then started preparing the case scenario for the CBL session. I took help of staff members and interns also. Once prepared the case scenarios were reviewed by staff of Microbiology and Medicine department. As there were inadequate staff members in my own department I had to help of staff from other department. For them I wrote detailed description of case, expected questions with their answers. A faculty training program was successfully conducted and now I had

Everything ready for the session i.e. Case scenarios, reading material for faculty, and a team of enthusiastic staff members looking forward to the sessions.

We all together fixed dates in two consecutive weeks. Then I started my search for rooms with Black/White board. I had to approach the department next to ours for rooms, finally fixed the rooms, shifted the boards on temporary basis and everything was set. I made the groups of students, allotted the faculty and room for each group. On the day of the session one of the faculties could not come due to some urgent personal work, I frantically searched for replacement but could not get, then I had to redo the groups, which increased the anxiety and stress. But finally the session was conducted smoothly.

I was quite confident now and was looking forward to the next contact session. On the day of next session due to some student cultural activity attendance declined to less than 50%. After doing all preparations I had no option but to postpone it to the next week. I was little disheartened but had to overcome my emotions and fix the next date. Finally both the contact sessions were completed and gave a sigh of relief. The students and teachers feedback about the TL method was encouraging.

Whenever we try to introduce any new method, we need to put in lot of efforts. The experience may not be smooth selling every time, and one needs to be prepared for the same. But few things I learned, most of the teacher colleagues cooperate so concentrate on them and not on those who show resistance. Any new method will not be accepted initially but if it proved to be good and useful will be accepted after initial resistance. Sooooo…. Keep trying at least sometimes you will be successful; it is better than not trying at all!