

*As a learning theory Constructivism has provided more answers for me on why I've experienced different responses from trainees over the years than any other learning theory. Watching the video of Eric Mazur I remembered asking myself the same questions as he did. Why weren't his students learning? - He was telling them what they needed to know! It came to the stage with him that he blamed the test that the students were taking for the results that they received and in my situation we came to the conclusion that our recruitment process was failing in selecting the right candidates for the job. After all some students in the class understood the concepts of what I was try to tell them why didn't all of them understand?*

*During my time on induction for the company's new support centre there was always one module that seemed to cause an issue. According to Carlisle as a teacher "you may not see a problem in a topic from a student's perspective" From my perspective as a trainer it was a simple set of rules that needed to be applied based on information provided by the customer . The module was scheduled for twenty minutes. The first time it was taught the module lasted for 2 hours and at the end of it there was no understanding of what was involved. Rather than changing my plan I felt that I would approach the topic the same way with the next set of students but it was still the same reaction. Every time the module was mentioned confusion was the order of the day.*

*According to the work of Piaget, Dewey, Bruner and others, engaging confusion (i.e. disequilibrium) is the mainspring of learning. However the confusion that I had managed to create while teaching that module did not provide any learning opportunities for the students at the time, although it could be argued that the confusion has provided a recent learning experience for the trainer. Through reflection I now realise that my job was to manage, question and direct the confusion in order for it to be a valuable source of learning. I taught that module on a number of occasions and there were always students that grasped the basics. A social Constructivist approach to the problem would suggest the use of peer tutoring to facilitate meaning for the other students. Peer tutoring would have allowed me to view the confusion from the student's perspective and review my training methods for future training. In my opinion peer tutoring would also have promoted confidence and self belief within the group and promoted the transfer of learning from the training room to the work place.*

*Constructivism seems to answer a lot of my questions about past learning interventions. It's a theory that I hope to apply to future training but in my enthusiasm for all things constructivist it should be applied with balance and thought towards other learning theories.*