



Measuring good teaching

Context

What impact does my teaching have? This is the key question that all teachers need to consider. What impact should we have? Do we want to have? And how do we know when we have it?

When you are teaching matters of professional identity, the only true evaluation looks at the former students.

Tool

I can and have used focus groups, pre- and post-testing, and surveys to see what impact a particular teaching practice or task has had on student learning. I have had peers evaluate classes. We all use these tools. But they are only able to evaluate the immediate. What students have learnt or experienced at the time of the teaching, or soon thereafter. What we would really like to evaluate is the lasting effects on students of spending time in our classes. How has a student been changed? We hope for the better, but can we be certain?

In the end the only way is to connect with former students. What do they recall years after finishing my classes?

Results

Results can surprise one.

When a former student begins a conversation by saying, "You know Dr Skinner, a funny thing happened at work," I know that I will get a story about something which relates to material which we – students & I – previously discussed together in class. This is the impact of my teaching. Students learn and remember my interests and are motivated to share their own engagement with those ideas at a later time in their respective lives.

Impact

The potential impact of a teacher is enormous. I estimate that I have had over 7000 students through the course I convene on professional ethics. That means many, many engineers who affect directly the well-being of the public, not only in Australia but throughout SE Asia.

But further, what about the impact our former students have when they, in their turn, are teaching themselves, or simply setting a good or bad example for young professionals.

Recommendations



[Watch video](#)

[Flipping Student and Teacher Led Evaluations](#)



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[A discussion of transformation in teaching through reflection on feedback](#)

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