One Minute Tip: Motivation vs. Determination

def·ter·mi·na·tion/ diˌtərməˈnāSHən/
noun
  1. firmness of purpose; resoluteness.
  2. the process of establishing something exactly, typically by calculation or research.
  3. the controlling or deciding of something’s nature or outcome.

One challenge with students is how to move them; or rather, get them to move themselves from emotionally driven motivation to determination? We speak so freely about motivating our students, which is needed, however, the degree to which motivation may drive success depends on whether it comes from within (intrinsic) or has external roots (extrinsic). If a student is influenced only by an emotional high, they will not be sustained once hard work and disillusionment become realities.

Put another way, how do you get students to appreciate the value of being active participants rather than passive “tourists” in their professional development because they “buy in” to the value of what is being conveyed? Once the student characterizes the self-directed approach, they will not only put forth the sustained effort to apply and synthesize knowledge in a much more complex manner, but they will also understand that what they are working for is worth the hardships that are made all the more valuable because of adversity.

Determination comes from many sources and it is up to the educator to tap the student’s well of values, life experiences, and motivators to determine the driving factors for each one. They come to us with a wide mix of fears, hopes, beliefs, and expectations. Once hopeful expectations have broken against the wall of hard work and difficult challenges, it is up to the educator to coach them to excellence by showing them the importance, benefit, and value of perseverance to bolster their determination to succeed.

If we do not cut the apron strings of passive instructor co-dependence and force the students to fly on the wings of their own determination, they will be crippled when faced with the dilemmas that inevitably will come.

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