GROOMING EXAM-SAVVY LEARNERS

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Tutors in OUM could be role models for their learners. Tutors are highly visible and are the frontliners in open and distance learning. When tutors enter a tutorial class, learners expect them to come with strong commitment and high motivation. More importantly, learners expect them to come with expertise and preparedness for the tutorial. It is crucial for tutors to fulfil these expectations as their goal should be to help learners to become independent and effective learners.

The job of tutors does not end with tutoring alone. They also need to help prepare their learners for examinations. Here are some tips which could help tutors with this task:

Give an overview of the entire course in the first tutorial. Explanation on the course assessment is very important from the beginning of the semester. Consult the faculty on any information regarding the course or check for updates in the myLMS Course "Announcement" section. During the first tutorial, inform the learners about the tutorial session planning from the first to the fifth tutorial.

If possible, suggest additional textbooks to complement the module. Some textbooks specialise in providing practical illustrations and detailed explanations. In addition, encourage learners to explore OUM's Digital Library for e-books and e-journals that could assist them in doing their assignments.

Take the initiative to find out what additional learning materials could be useful to the learners and share these with them via the myLMS forum or tutorials. Provide some real-world applications to help learners in understanding the theories. Guide learners in understanding the subject matter and not merely memorising facts and formulas.

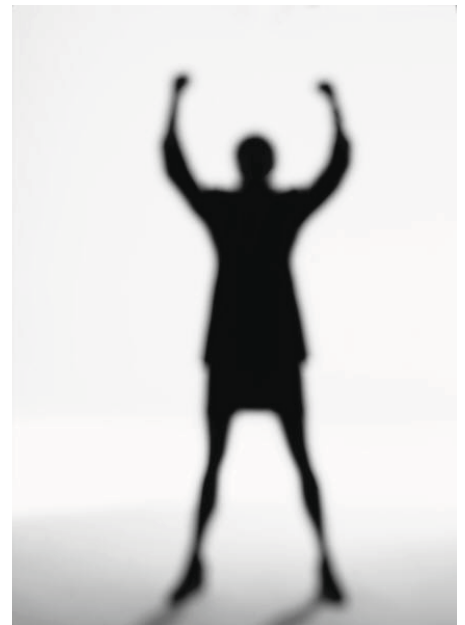Hold discussions in which learners are asked to give more examples on how to use the relevant formulas. Usually, learners will understand a lesson better by looking at diagrams, sketches or graphs instead of reading long paragraphs.

It is important to motivate and encourage learners to ask many questions in the tutorial session. This will clear their minds of any ambiguity on the subject matter.

In engineering or other technical courses, encourage learners to try solving questions on their own. Advise them to prepare the problem formulation by applying tools such as free body diagrams, flow charts, equation derivations, etc and discuss these in the forum or tutorials.

For quantitative-based courses, the following could be done to help the learners:

- Teach difficult concepts rather than just processes or procedures in the tutorials. If learners understand the concepts, they could remember the procedures easily.

- Check on learners' understanding of key concepts. Ask them to explain and apply the procedures in solving real-world problems.

- Reinforce correct procedures by providing hints and letting learners do the thinking in solving problems. Let the learners come up with the solutions instead of giving the answers beforehand.

Discuss past-year examination questions in tutorials or the myLMS forum. The discussions could be confined to small groups in the tutorials or forum. Each group could seek solutions for selected questions and then share them with other groups.

Lastly, guide learners on how to answer questions based on the marks and time given. Tips on reducing exam anxiety and choosing the right questions to answer could also be provided during the last tutorial. TCX