



Symposium on Educational Excellence 2024

Re-finding our purpose as educators in the post-Covid world

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Keywords

Identity formation; Faculty development; Motivation; COVID-19

Abstract

COVID-19 disrupted education and created unprecedented strain on the healthcare system. Educators within healthcare education were doubly impacted. As we emerge from the pandemic, we find the healthcare system continues to be strained and a shift in how we teach and learners engage. In these moments, our sense of identity and purpose can be reinforced or questioned, sometimes both.

The goal of this session is to provide a space for educators to examine their purpose as educators. Purpose is one of the three essential components of intrinsic motivation (Pink, 2009), and connecting purpose to our work can reignite joy and satisfaction in what we do. This varies from most faculty development, which focuses on skill building rather than identity formation (O'Sullivan & Irby, 2021). Identity formation has contextual, emotional, and relational components and evolves through stories over time (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Therefore, we propose to use a structured workshop at the symposium. It not only provides a context that draws educators, but attendees also arrive with intentions to learn and connect with others.

In 2009, Simon Sinek gave his now famous talk about starting with why from an organizational perspective. Most recently, this concept has been turned toward the individual (Sinek, 2017). Using this framework, workshop attendees will create their own, renewed purpose statement. Attendees will share stories about when they felt most proud of their work and identify the contributions that they make. A partner will reflect back themes from which one can create their purpose statement.

Measurable learning objectives

- Apply a positive inquiry approach to understanding the impact we have.
- Connect with one's sense of purpose and meaning.
- Develop a purpose statement that captures an evolved sense of identity.

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