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# MATERIALES DE ENSEÑANZA EN EXTENSION

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EE/30-63

CLASIFICACION  
Nº 15

## TEACHING Vs. LEARNING

By

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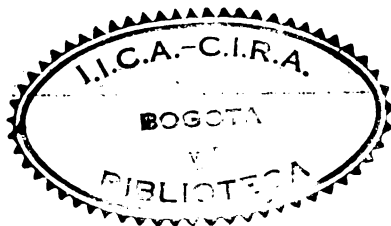
(Published in English and Spanish)

DEPARTAMENTO DE ECONOMIA Y EXTENSION  
INSTITUTO INTERAMERICANO DE CIENCIAS AGRICOLAS  
DE LA OEA • Turrialba, Costa Rica.

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This publication was prepared under the provisions of the Contract between the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences of the Organization of American States (O.A.S.) and the Institute of Inter-American Affairs of the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) of the United States Government.

Turrialba, Costa Rica  
September, 1963



## TEACHING Vs. LEARNING

- Joseph Di Franco -

All of us involved in teaching have accepted a responsibility that tampers with other people's lives. There are laws in every land that are supposed to protect people from interference from others. There are fines and punishments imposed whenever people are guilty of this kind of interference. Yet teachers are permitted to go on not only tampering with adult lives but with the lives of children. Of course, it is assumed that teachers interfere with lives with beneficial intent. Naturally we have accepted this role of the teacher as a useful role or there would be regulations against it.

But do we as teachers really understand our role as: (1) interfering, (2) as beneficial, (3) as a responsibility. In my case I must admit that I did not think this deeply although I have accepted the plaudits given the teaching profession. In most cases, I think teachers have considered teaching as a job which required a certain amount of effort necessary to justify the salary. The effort entailed: being on time, being in a certain place, carrying out the administrative details, making required reports and attending a minimum of social functions necessary to the position in the organization and community. Oh yes, there are also routine classes, assignments and activities necessary for completing the annual teaching program.

But where was the "learning" process in all this. Did we "learn" people, as some old timers used to say or did we judge learning by the number of meetings we held, number of lectures we gave, number of chapters in a book or books we covered, number of



days work completed, etc. Did we bring about change or did we assume change took place because we completed a program or project?

I think it becomes very necessary that we start at the beginning and develop an awareness of our job as teachers to bring about beneficial change in people or as we put it "help people learn".

### The learning process

The process of learning has been stated in many ways but in each case it is implicit that the process taken place in the recipient or learner.

Before a person learns he must:

1. Notice something.
2. Want something.
3. Do something.
4. Get something.

Expressed in other words we can say the steps in the learning process involve:

1. Awareness
2. Need
3. Action
4. Satisfaction.





Good teachers take these steps into account. The formula is not a precise one, however, nor is every teaching situation exactly alike. But regardless of the time, place or people involved, learning does not take place unless the "learner" experiences these phases.

Extension agents or teachers working with adults have the same problems. They must work harder at the job of teaching because they operate under a process of education that is not compulsory but involves voluntary students or participants. In Extension the objective is to bring about change in an individual meaning in most cases that before the new skill, practice or idea is accepted an old one must be discarded. Thus the emphasis on motivation of the individual to act must be more convincing. But once the individual is convinced he will act. It is at this stage that many agents claim success. We must admit that this is what Extension is striving for. Unfortunately too many stop at this stage. Unless the individual receives satisfaction as a result of his actions, success cannot be claimed. The individual will reject the new and regress to the old idea, skill or practice.

In other words teaching may have taken place but learning has not. Successful teaching depends upon the individual making a "permanent" change. The teacher cannot rest upon the fact that he has presented knowledge, he must prepare the "learners" so that they notice, want, act and are satisfied.

There are two definite roles for the teacher:

1. To prepare the "learner", and
2. Present knowledge.



Too often teachers fail to do one or the other well enough. Failure in teaching can always be traced to the failure of the teachers to take the "student" into account or they failed to be sure of their facts (knowledge).

Extension agents have a greater responsibility in the teaching process because they must live with their "students". The agents future is dependent upon the success of the people who have learned, not in how well the agents may feel they have taught.

Extension educators need to study and become skilled in the art of teaching. The art of preparing people so they can learn and the art of presenting knowledge that people can learn. They must not, however, become so concerned in the art of teaching that they lose sight of the ultimate objective which is: that people make desirable changes -"learn" something.



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