

LOEX 2011 Conference Report: Fiesta de Excelencia
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Melanie Hawks, Learning and Development Coordinator at the University of Utah's J. Willard Marriott Library, set the tone for LOEX 2011 in her keynote address "**Instruct, Engage, Influence: How Educators Can Become Agents of Organizational Change.**" She encouraged those of us with no formal authority to implement change to work with and through those who do have authority in order to move our ideas forward. Her suggestions included:

1. Think of the people with power as customers. How would you deal with them as a customer?
2. Concentrate on the people you have the best chance of influencing.
3. Learn where the people with power spend their time and how they work and adapt your approach accordingly. Be present where they are. Is the dean a schmoozer? Then you need to be a schmoozer also.

Her suggestions for influencing students to learn include making your objectives clear:

1. WIIFM? What's in it for me? Make the payoff to the student clear from the outset. (save time, get better grade, etc.)
2. Vital Behavior – You can't teach them everything in 50 minutes; pick the most important behavior(s) you want them to leave with and limit yourself to that.
3. Use images, data, stories and hands-on experience to reach your audience.

By far the best breakout session I attended was "**Lose the Lists: Elevating your LibGuides to a New Level.**" The speakers advocate reducing lists of resources and replacing them with active instructional components. Throughout their remarks they related all their ideas to addressing various learning styles. That said, they also cited a study that indicated participants, regardless of learning style, preferred online "how to" videos over any other form of presentation. Their instructional toolkit for creating these components includes:

1. Twitter feeds
2. Custom search boxes
3. Xtranormal for animated movies
4. Poll Everywhere – an audience response system using mobile phones, twitter, or web browser
5. Feed43 – convert any web page to an RSS feed
6. Rollyo – create custom search engines restricted to selected websites
7. Docstoc as an alternative to Adobe for viewing documents
8. Jing – screen capture software
9. Prezi – a zooming presentation editor

Saturday's Plenary Panel, "**The Role of Library Leadership in Advocating for Information Literacy,**" was presented by three academic library directors who discussed how they navigate the bureaucracy of higher education to gain support for information literacy initiatives. They all agreed that the key is to go armed with statistics, including assessment statistics, to convince administrators of their needs. Statistics can be made more personal by adding real-life stories from students we have touched. Another suggestion was to use alternative terminology such as "lifelong learning" or "command of information," which might be better understood than "information literacy." The Assistant Dean of Scholarly Resources and Research Services at SMU illustrated her success by relating the fact that information literacy is now an institutionalized part of the curriculum at SMU. All students must take two classes that fulfill the information literacy requirement in order to graduate.

This was a great conference. I appreciate LIBRAS' support of my attendance.