

After you've helped your students **PREPARE** to learn, move up to the second rung in the *TFS* teaching and learning ladder, **INPUT**, represented by the **I** in the formula, **PIE-R3**.

Multisensory Input is a crucial component of good instruction. A fundamental precept of learning is this: The more senses that are involved in the learning the more rapid and memorable will be the outcome.

Think about a student who completes several of the recommended **Preparation** steps. The student is now more relaxed, focused and ready to learn.

But, now what? Sure, it might be easiest from your point of view to present a lecture for the entire class period, but how many senses will be engaged during your lecture?

Instructor INPUT stage POV

To achieve multisensory input, a good instructional design should:

- Connect the subject to the learner in terms of the students' prior experience, current academic skills and learning goals.
- Pose tough questions, point up debates, dilemmas and dichotomies inherent within your subject area.
- Provide applications, applications, applications—overcome the "I'll-never-use-that" syndrome—make learning concrete, practical, useful.
- Picture the problem or concept; challenge students to portray the idea visually—use metaphors—ask, "If this concept was a famous painting, which one would it be and why?"
- Convert the concept or problem you are studying to one of the other senses: ask students, "What would this feel, taste or sound like?"



◆ *There are a thousand and one ways to experience any subject beyond just sitting and listening to someone talk about it. It just takes imagination and thought directed at getting students involved and active. This is true multisensory learning.*

- Take a kinesthetic learning break—ask an A,B,C,D, etc. multiple-choice survey question—one that you know students will have a range of opinions; then ask students to quickly get up from their seats and stand in a line by the choice they prefer; a human chart results.
- Websites and commercial media outlets provide a wealth of audio and video material, plus today you can burn your own audio CD-ROM and even produce excellent amateur video presentations—Apple's iDVD program makes producing videos an enjoyable task.

Student INPUT stage POV

Students need structure, variety, challenge, application and activity.

There are five common ways to structure knowledge for students:

- Complexity—simple to intricate.
- Age—forward or reverse chronological order.
- Distance—near to far.
- Solidity—concrete to abstract.
- View—big picture to details.

Use one or more of these structures to make multisensory input follow a meaningful pattern. Too many instructors use a shotgun approach that results in their students complaining about the lack of organization in their course or in a particular class meeting.

To help all your students learn more quickly and retain more course content, shape your teaching so that students have the opportunity to see, hear and use the core facts, principles and concepts central to your course.

Meaningful assignments and activities

It's crucial for success in teaching to build an option pool of multisensory learning activities designed to put the course content to work. Students are challenged and motivated when given the opportunity to produce real, useful products (informational as well as physical) with the knowledge they gain.

Chunking

Chunking is an important concept in designing effective learning input. For example, if you limit lectures to 15 to 20 minutes, you will create more class time to involve students in physical, auditory and visual learning experiences.