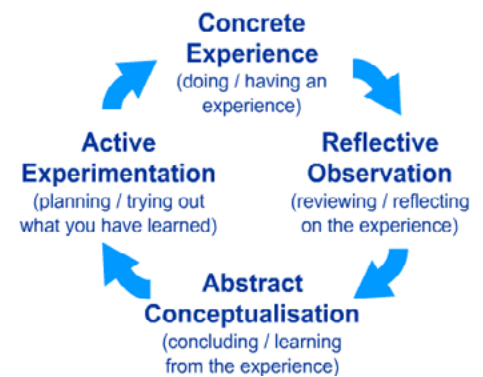


The practice of medicine requires lifelong learning, & incorporating opportunities for students to seek out & evaluate information helps students develop the habits of mind that promote this. The medical education wiki has lists of medical websites that can assist you & your students in this process. Look at this site <http://www-distance.syr.edu/sdltools.html> for techniques, tools, & resources for the self-directed learner.

Experiential education (or “learning by doing”) is the process of actively engaging students in an authentic experience that will have benefits & consequences. Students make discoveries & experiment with knowledge themselves instead of hearing or reading about the experiences of others. Students also reflect on their experiences, thus developing new skills, new attitudes, & new theories or ways of thinking. Students participate in a real activity with real consequences for the purpose of meeting learning objectives. It is particularly effective due to its holistic approach of addressing cognitive, emotional & the physical aspect of the learner. For example, beginning with a particular experience such as a patient encounter or paper case, students first plan a response to the situation & then carry out their plans. The cycle moves on to an observation or data collection stage, & finally to reflection & the creation of general rules & principles. This simple cycle (plan, act, observe, reflect) is a process that will help students approach & learn from experiences they encounter.



**Do it, do it, do it.** Active learning is generally better than passive. Choose cases & examples that are stimulating & challenging. Engage students in solving a relevant problem.

**Start small & build big.** Prior learning is one of the chief determinants of future learning. It is important, therefore, to find out what students already know & do not know & to build on that base. It is counterproductive to try to foist huge amounts of information on students if they do not have a solid foundation. Students should be given the time to master one idea or principle before going on to something new, so don't rush.

