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Conferences and Lectures are a part of education and learning â€“ not just as a student, if you are in a fast passed business like digital, frequently a financial business or many other types of intellect focused business, they frequently canâ€™t be avoided. However, as many know â€“ it is easy to zone out and lose focus past a certain point in a lecture. Due to their continuity, if you lose focus for a few minutes, itâ€™s difficult to pick it up again at all. This is one of the reasons that many of the big conferences now integrate interactive equipment into their events. This can come in the form of ipadâ€™s, laptops, response keypads and mobileâ€™s â€“ any digital tool that allows an audience respon be made.

To raise engagement levels significantly, especially amongst students (many of whom have disregarded lectures as being boring for many years), a good place to start investing in this sort of technology would be the basic interactive voting systems. By using these interactive voting systems, the lecturer has more room to â€˜playâ€™ with the content of their information to be relayed by creating a question and answer style lecture â€“ thus potentially further engaging the students brain in the content being taught, than that of a normal lecture. Purchasing other tools for lecturing to increase audience response is also a good idea â€“ a tablet device from which questions can be asked can ease the awkwardness some students have of raising their hand. Additionally, having the tablet able to use towards the close of the lecture can encourage mental engagement from participants and pupils throughout.

How do we know this works? Other than the staggering success and increased integration within conferences, there have been some tests done within lectures on students. Prior to beginning the interactive lectures, one quarter of students completely disagreed with the statement that it was â€˜easy to ask questions during lecturesâ€™ â€“ yet after the lecture, none of the students disagreed with statement. Additionally, more than 80% of the students tested and surveyed felt that the interactive voting systems improved their learning. Only 23% of students felt that they got new insights in lectures before the testing and this increased to over 60% after integrating the technology. These quite literally grade-changing results are reflect well on both students and teachers with both saying that instead of merely criticising lectures, efforts should be made to improve them and attention needs to be paid to the reasons that they are being criticised. Having done this â€“ the University in question reaped many benefits.

Whilst this evidence is not conclusive of better learning, it is conclusive of higher interest within lectures. Using Interactive voting systems, iPadâ€™s, laptops and response keypads arguably can keep an audience interested and engaged for a longer length of time. Additionally, the scope to teach in different ways that these audience response systems offer could change the way that a universities educations system works â€“ and put a stopper in a lot of long, purely information based lectures.

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