

Creating and Maintaining Effective, Relevant, and Interactive Discussion Boards to Enhance Engagement of Students and Instructors



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Agenda

Background for the research

Forum setup best practices

Group assignment

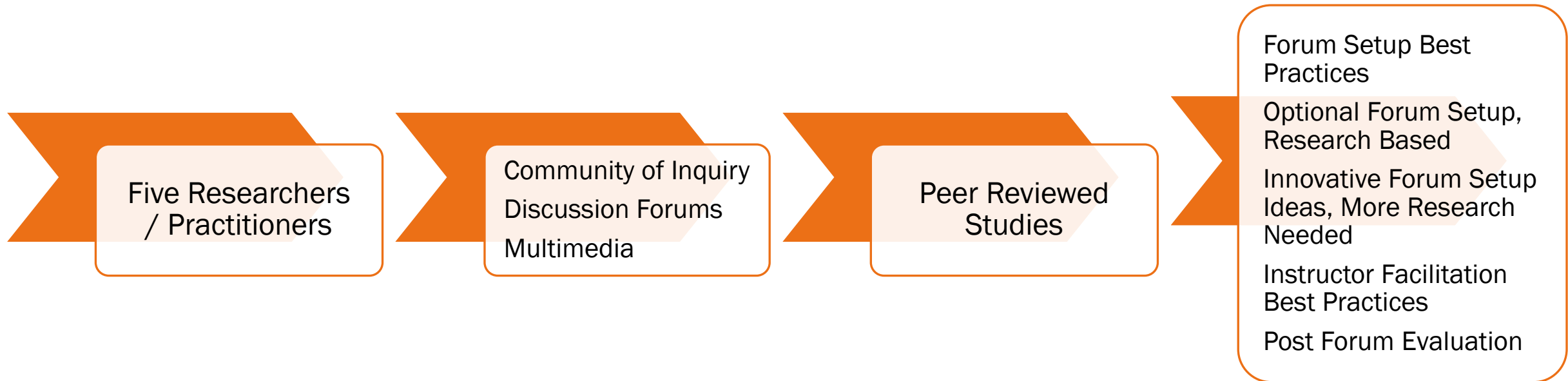
More forum setup best practices

Innovative forum practices

Instructor facilitation best practices

Examples: Putting it all together

Extensive Literature Review



Community of Inquiry (CoI)

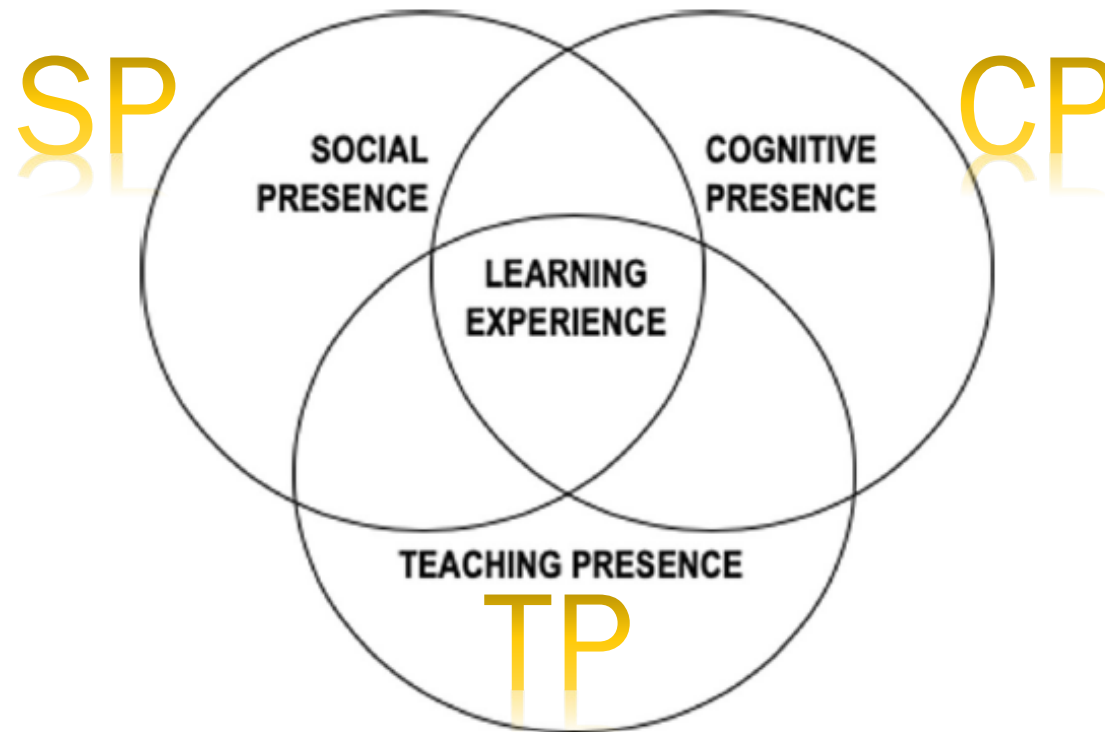


Fig. 1 CoI Framework (adapted from Garrison et al. 2000). Used with permission

Text-Based Discussion Forums

- Content-related dialogue
- Advantages
 - Understanding
 - Experience
 - Application
- Disadvantages
 - Miscommunication
 - Information overload
 - Time management

ChatGPT



Boelens, Ruth & De Wever, Bram & Voet, Michiel. (2017). Four key challenges to the design of blended learning: A systematic literature review. Educational Research Review. 22. 1-18. 10.1016/j.edurev.2017.06.001.

Lima, Dhanielly & Gerosa, Marco Aurelio & Conte, Tayana & Magalhaes Netto, Jose. (2019). What to expect, and how to improve online discussion forums: the instructors' perspective. Journal of Internet Services and Applications. 10. 22. 10.1186/s13174-019-0120-0.

Multimedia as Another Option



- Media richness
- Improving on the traditional forum
- Alignment with the “selfie generation”

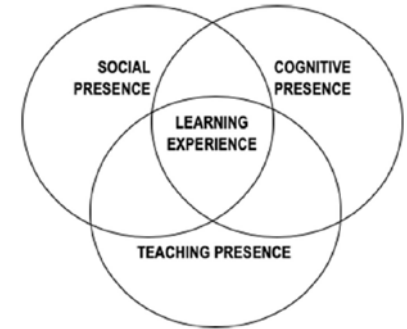
Forum Setup Best Practices

Instructor is present at the beginning **TP**

Opportunity to cognitively engage **CP**

Opportunity to create a social presence **SP**

Opportunity to share personal experience



Forum Setup Best Practices

Media aligns with skills that the student is expected to develop
(Oral, media, and or written communication)

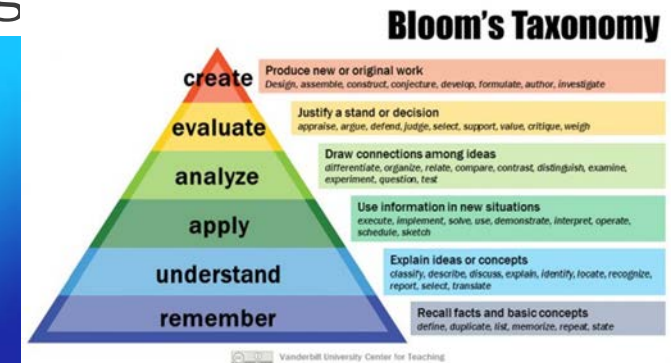
Clearly communicated directions and the purpose

Prompt is designed to include critical reflection

Prompt is aligned with the intended level of learning



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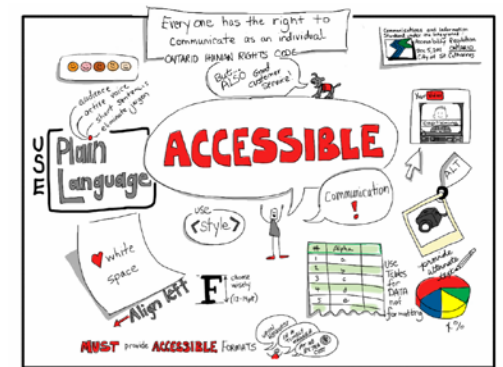
Forum Setup Best Practices

Prompt is aligned with higher levels of learning

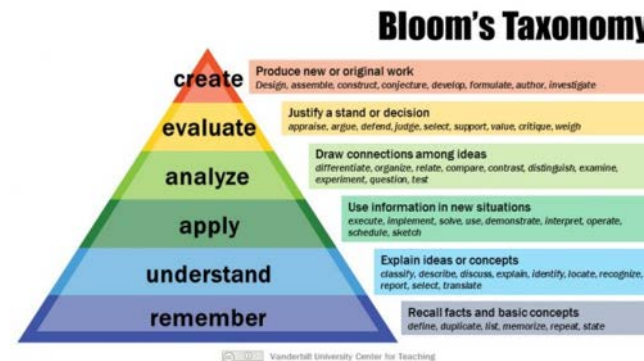
Content does not overload the student

No language, cultural, or accessibility barriers

Opportunity to summarize their understanding



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Value Proposition



Today's Lesson
Setting up A Discussion Forum

Value Proposition



+



Value Proposition



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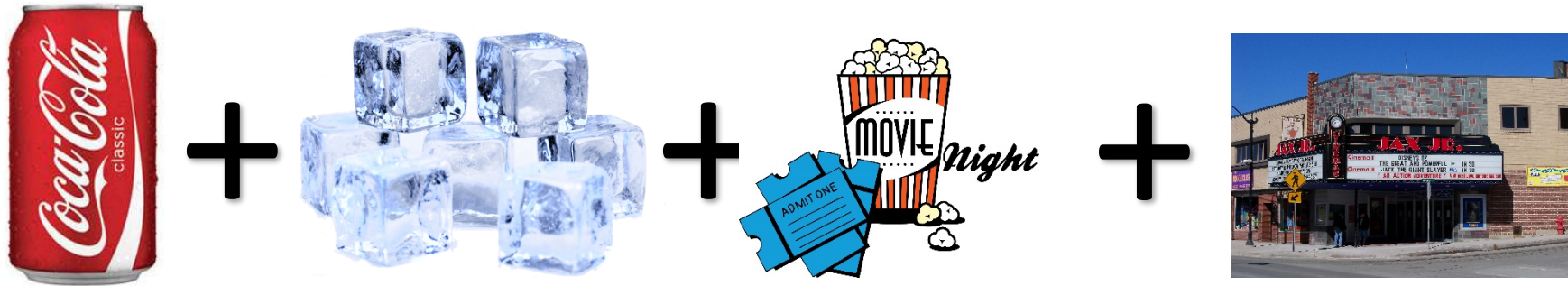
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Maximizing the Value Proposition



Break up into small groups



Create a discussion prompt

Design it using the concepts

Go back through setup

More Forum Setup Best Practices

Builds on prior
content (Scaffolding)

Scaffolding + Media
= Critical Reflection

Relevancy to student
clearly explained

Do not have too
many scaffolds

Scaffolded but not
duplicative

Direction/Purpose
clearly communicated

More Forum Setup Best Practices

Related to other
content

10 or less students

Rubric: content,
process, & mechanics

Rubric: Initial and
follow-up posts

Sufficient time before
appearing in course

Aligned with
curriculum/objectives

Rubric: good writing, oral, or
technical practices

Optional Forum Setup Best Practices

Assign roles:

- Starter-wrapper
- Skeptic
- Devil's advocate
- Moderator
- Searcher

Socratic Prompts:

- Engage the learner
- Reasoning
- Logic
- Critical thinking
- Investigates learner mind

- Higher level learning
- Critical thinking

Socratic Questions

Questions about
questions

Assumption probing

Viewpoints and
perspectives

Clarifying

Reason and
evidence probing

Implication and
consequence

Optional Forum Setup Best Practices

Forum posts hidden
before first post

Ungraded space

Modern Technology

Fewer, higher quality
forums

Multiple methods of
response

Rich content prompts
(video, word clouds)

Optional Forum Setup Best Practices

Various Question Types:

- Playground
- Shotgun style
- Critical incident
- Start your own thread

Combination of Techniques:

- Scaffolding and rubric
- Socratic and rubric

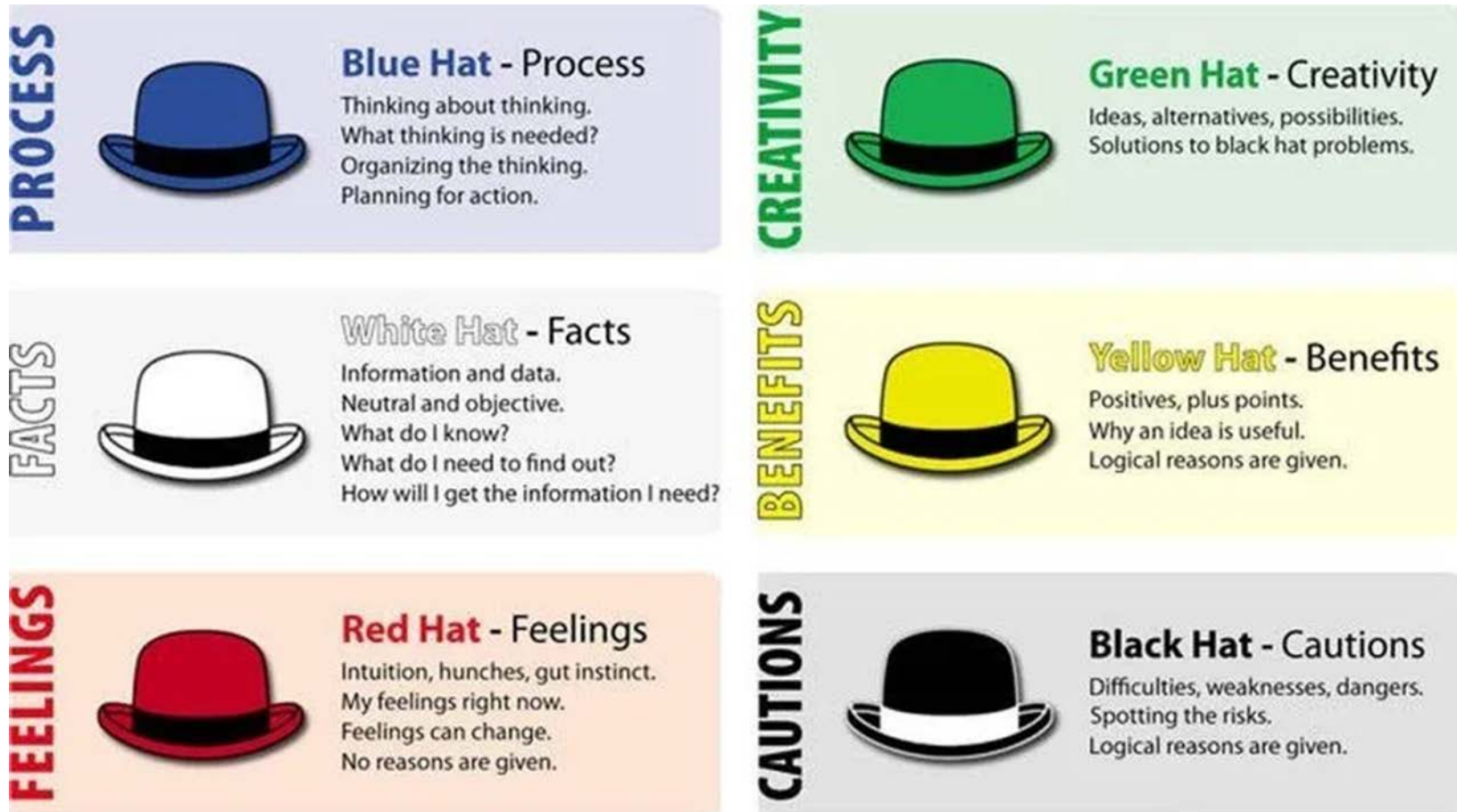
Rubric reliability and
validity

Due dates to
encourage
engagement

Rubric Norming Process

- 1) Document preparation;
- 2) Rubric review;
- 3) Initial reading and scoring of one learning outcome;
- 4) Initial sharing/recording of results;
- 5) Initial consensus development and adjusting of results;
- 6) Initial reading and scoring of remaining learning outcomes;
- 7) Reading and scoring of remaining transcripts;
- 8) Sharing/recording results;
- 9) Development of consensus and adjusting of results (p. 6).

Innovative Forum Setup Ideas



Innovative Forum Setup Ideas

Brainstorming

WebQuests

Socratic seminar

Nominal group
technique

Anyone here an
expert?

Invited expert

Innovative Forum Setup Ideas

Build a textbook

Engagement
measurement tools

Use peer review

Statistical tools in
rubric

Instructor Facilitation Best Practices

Clear role in
introducing the forum

Encourages
collaboration,
discovery and dialogue

Does not
participate with
information

Weaves forum with
other course
elements

Instructor Facilitation Best Practices

Addressed content
late in forum

Positive and
negative feedback

Evaluate depth of post

Highlights key &
incorrect posts

Highly available /
frequent login

Timely and significant
feedback

Post Forum Evaluation

Deeply engaged

Integral part of the
course

Critical Reflection

Not a
participation
checkpoint

Not descriptive or dialogic

Introductory Forum Example

“That’s cool.
You certainly
can use my
video”

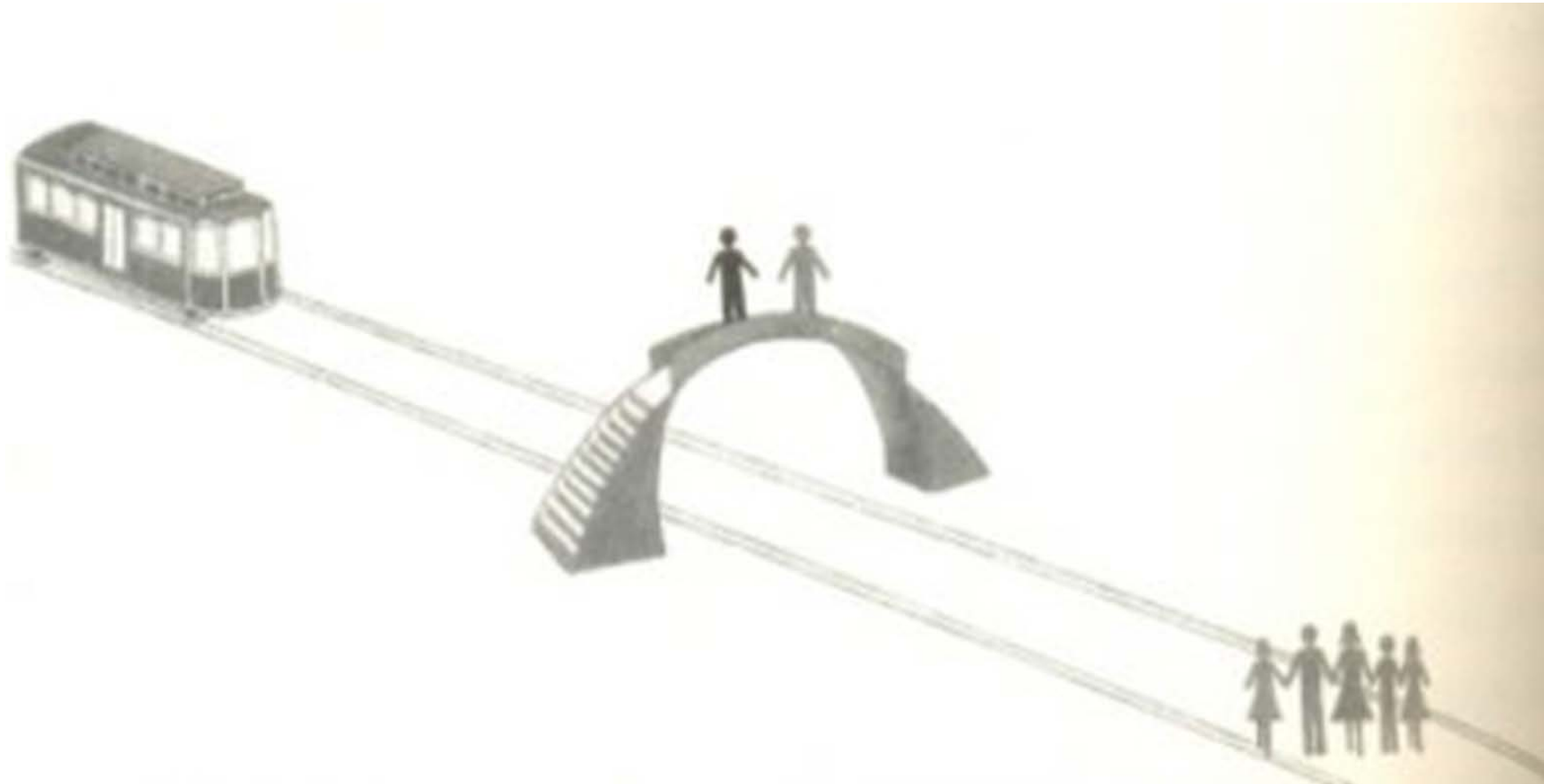


Finance Problem Example, Video Forum



There are multiple ways to calculate NPV investments such as using a formula, tables, spread sheet program, and/or a financial calculator. Information needed to calculate this is, required rate return (%), annual net cashflows, initial investment, and number of years of cash flows. NPV is important because Entrepreneurs use it so they can find their financial returns of their initial investment.

Scaffolding Use in a Forum



Build a Textbook Forum

- 1) Title
- 2) Subject
- 3) Summary/description of an important concept or an example or application of an important concept.
- 4) Multiple choice question (1) designed for a quiz.
- 5) Discussion question (1) designed for an in-person discussion or a discussion forum.
- 6) PowerPoint slide(s) that someone could use to teach the concept or example
- 7) For online students record a short presentation describing your topic using the PowerPoint slide(s). Using PowerPoint Show is an easy way to do this.
- 8) Provide a reference(s) list in APA format.

Questions?

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Reference list in our paper

Peer Reviews in Student Group Work

Small Business Employment Selection Assessment Tools

Business Plan Competitions (High School, Collegiate, and Community)

Business Success in Rural and Small Communities