

My Educational Philosophy

By Wade Younger, CSP

I believe there is nothing more noble than to help other human beings help themselves. It has been said that information is power, and that true empowerment comes from knowing how to access critical information in a timely manner. Teaching content is good, and very necessary; however, the real key is instilling a zeal for the process of learning. As the Chinese proverb says ... give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

It is my philosophy that education should be the process of helping someone learn how to improve the quality of their life through the development of their own abilities, to the full achievement of their potential.

Everyone has the right to choose their own path in this life, and career choices today are boundless. Today's changing workplace, however, is requiring more and more education and training. In order to be competitive, individuals need technical skills, practical experience, and a clear understanding of the "soft" skills needed to compete in the workplace.

Educational systems today have a responsibility to understand their role in providing the opportunity for everyone to seek the technical, academic, and social knowledge needed to succeed in the fields of their choosing. Such an understanding requires continual self-assessment and accountability at both the individual and organizational levels. An educational institution must strive to develop an organizational culture, which provides the kind of supportive environment in which its students can meet all their individual developmental needs.

Indeed, the needs of a specific community should be the reason why there is a college. The institution's very existence depends upon the guidance and generosity of the community, and it must remain vigilant in its efforts to be responsive to the ever-changing needs of that community. Educational institutions must learn to find new and innovative ways to partner with business and industry to find ways to build the capacity to be flexible and responsive. No longer can colleges merely attempt to predict the future and then posture themselves to be prepared for that future. The real key is to develop the internal and external capacity to become a learning organization, and to be responsive to the uncertainties of the ever-changing future. Only by providing a means for the pursuit of life-long learning by its citizens, can a college give something truly meaningful back to the community as a whole.