**Student WIIFM – Vasudevan Padmanabhan**

I deliver the course “Statistical Applications for Quality Assurance”. Excel knowledge is not a pre-requisite for taking this course. The course outline also makes no reference to use of Excel. Neither does the reference book. The delivery is based on use of scientific calculators for calculations and the use of statistical tables.

In real life statistical applications are done using Excel and other statistical software – At work no one uses calculators or statistical tables. Knowing this I have included basic Excel skills in this course. This has drawn a list of WIIFM from my students.

1. **WIIFM for learning Excel**

I can read “What’s in it for me” in students’ body language and responses. Some of these are:

* Why should I learn this extra material?
* Will there be questions in final exam?
* We joined as computer skills were not required
* I prefer using calculators
* I want to learn statistics not Computers
* My friend took this course- He did well without learning computers
* I am so busy – I just have time to learn what is in course outline

Some have even gone to the extent of formally raising their objection.

With empathy I acknowledge the above WIIFM – What’s in it for me. I make sure I have heard them – more importantly make them feel they have been heard before presenting my case.

1. **Learning Excel – WIIFM (What’s in it for me) justification**
2. **Strategy**

Convert each WIIFM into a motivator by linking them to the objectives/reason for joining this course

1. **Objectives for joining the course**

At the start of every semester, I introduce myself and encourage them to Introduce themselves. I also seek their motivation for joining the course. I also seek what they expect from me and encourage them to post their questions and expectations.

The general list of objectives/reasons for taking this course are:

* I want to further my career
* I want to change profession – move to Quality function
* I need to use these tools at work
* I need Canadian Qualifications
* Statistics fascinates me – want to learn how it can be applied to Quality
* My company or Boss wants me to do this course
* Want to be as good as my friend in root cause analysis
* I am just curious

1. **Justification/Benefits**

Using simple Industry example, I will convince them how Excel knowledge will:

* Improve their on-job performance
* Make it easy to apply Statistical tools
* Help them do more complex project
* Will also help them improve their grades – they can answer final exam problems faster and accurately
* Help with other activities which require data analysis
* Will reduce dependence on memory
* Manage their finances

I will convert each of their WIIFM listed in “Para b” into a motivator by linking them to the above reason (objectives) for joining this course

1. **My commitment and what they can expect from me**

I will communicate the following commitment and support:

1. Teach only the essential skills – Just enough to use Excel templates
2. Will make *self-learning easy* (Easy to learn tutorial – Hands on learning tools)
3. Respond in detail to all their questions- to emails/postings within 24 hours
4. If sought provide 1:1 support
5. Maintain an active discussion board
6. **Conclusion**

I have tested the above plan. It worked. Once students connect the dots and understand

how learning basic Excel will help them in their career, they get motivated and become eager learners. Many students continued their Excel learning journey using Lynda.com and Khan Academy resources to which I introduce them.