

Best Practice 1

1. Title of the Practice

Morning assembly and meditation.

2. Objectives of the Practice

The morning assembly was practiced right from the beginning of institution in 2002. Initially its intention was to begin each day, invoking the blessings of the almighty God. After the prayer, a message will be delivered by one of the faculty members. Later, students were given the opportunity to deliver the message. This helped them to read and prepare a message. While doing this, they imbibed the message better. Besides, students pay better attention to what their companions speak. This also gives an opportunity for all students to come up and speak a few words, thus improving their communication skills. For the past one year, the college also introduced five minutes of yoga breathing. This helps everyone to reap the benefits of yoga meditation.

3. The Context

The college has staff and students from various faiths and religious backgrounds. Gathering all of them, for a prayer session was difficult because of the diversity of faiths. This issue was addressed by formulating a prayer that is religion-neutral. Another challenge was to convince the staff and students about the power of this practice. The initial resistance of some students disappeared in no time, as they understood the value of this practice. Time investment required for this was another fear. However, we noticed that it takes only 5 minutes to come together, have the prayer and message and disperse. In addition, this practice ensured that all reach the campus on time. Later we also introduced the college anthem and yoga breathing. Currently the entire morning assembly takes about 10 minutes. But since these practices helps everyone to be better concentrated, all are cooperative.

4. The Practice

The practice of all staff and students coming together, starting the day with a prayer, message by the students, singing the college anthem and also practicing few minutes of yoga breathing is unique. Probably, Don Bosco College is one of the few colleges across India, to have such a practice. Hence it is indeed unique.

This practice helps the institution to achieve its vision of making its students spiritually mature. Everyone realizes the benefits of starting the day with a spiritual note. Singing of the college anthem by all makes them imbibe the values

for which their college stands. It also reminds everyone about the vision of the college, as the anthem contains the vision of the college.

The message is given by the students. It helps them in multiple ways. In the first place, it gives them an opportunity to read up and prepare a message that contains a human value. In their eagerness to impress everyone, they read up several messages and prepare one. This is a great learning. Then they present their message before everyone. This gives them an opportunity to speak in public and get rid of stage fear. It is also to be noted that all students pay better attention to message talks, when it is given by their own companions than teachers.

The practice of yoga breathing (anulomaviloma) is a tradition of India. Staff and students are aware of its benefits. They have received training by qualified experts. Daily practice of the same helps everyone to be better concentrated in their academic activities.

The college has only post graduate students. It is easy to make them appreciate the value of these practices. Hence we found no difficulties to put these ideas into practice.

5. Evidence of Success

The practice of all coming together for morning assembly, reciting a prayer, giving a message for the day, singing the college anthem and practicing yoga breathing has been found very successful. The aim of this practice was to inculcate a sense of the divine among the staff and students. We have noticed that the entire college community is eager to continue this practice.

There is a serene atmosphere in the campus, partly due to this practice. Staff and students are able to see life realistically. Everyone adjusts to the demands of the time and behaves in a mature way. The ambience of mutual respect is a result of the best practice that has been going on for several years.

The college community also demonstrates much compassion to their fellow beings. All of us are on our feet, when there is a demand for social involvement. It was particularly seen during the flood relief activities and whenever natural calamities strike the area. We also go to the villages to help the poor people in constructing houses, or helping the orphanages with manual labour etc. We have also created a corpus fund to help the poor school children of the locality. We attribute this social sensitivity to the best practice that inculcates a sense of divine in all of us.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

This best practice was started in 2002. Since it was started right at the beginning of the college, there wasn't any resistance to the introduction of his practice.

However, the management needed to prepare a prayer that will be appealing to staff and students of all faith.

Another problem was to encourage the students to prepare a message and present it before all. Initially, they found it difficult, due to poor language skills. It must be noted that almost all students are from village background. This problem was overcome by providing intensive coaching in English at the beginning of the program. We required dedicated service of the staff to impart good communication skills to the students.

7. Notes (Optional)

The practice of inculcating a sense of spirituality coupled with social sensitization improves the caliber of the students. They become useful to the society on completing their program. Hence we recommend such practices to all centres of higher education.

Best Practice 2

2. Title of the Practice

Remedial coaching practices.

3. Objectives of the Practice

Don Bosco College was set up to cater to the higher education needs of the local youth. Most of them have completed their graduation with low marks. Lack of foundation in mathematics and computational sciences have resulted in poor results in MCA program. Hence there was a need to identify the slow learners and provide them remedial courses. This practice was introduced to raise the academic performance of the slow learners.

4. The Context

A sizable number of MCA students were failing in the examinations. The reasons were identified as lack of basic knowledge, and lack of motivation. Since many of them did not have enough basic knowledge, they were not able to grasp the lessons. Such students were identified and given additional classes, using various means. They also needed to be motivated to achieve higher goals.

5. The Practice

The practice of remedial coaching has been going on in the campus, in various forms, for several years. It consists of identifying the slow learners and helping them with additional classes. Identification of slow learners was done by several methods like asking simple questions in the class, checking the class notes of the students, checking their assignments, observing their attitude in the class etc.

Once some students are identified as slow learners, the course facilitator arranges remedial classes. He/she suggests to these slow learners to attend the same. In some cases, the mentors put forward the idea of attending the remedial program to their mentees. A few additional classes are given to these students. They are also given some simple assignments to ensure that they understand the basic concepts.

In some cases, the college has encouraged peer tutoring. In peer tutoring, students teach their companions. This method is found more useful for some. Such peer tutoring takes place both in the college and also in the hostels. There are a few students who have benefitted from peer tutoring.

The major difficulty in implementing remedial coaching to the full was time constraint. Since the college is located in a rural setting, with limited

transportation facilities, both the staff and students need to leave early. This limits the time available for remedial coaching.

6. Evidence of Success

The practice of remedial coaching is found to be very successful. Many students who score poorly in the internal examinations pass in the University examination. For example, the last result published by the University is the 1st semester result of 2018 admissions. All of them have passed with first class. Some of them have passed their degree in the second attempt, many of them had poor results in the weekly tests conducted in the beginning of the semester etc. The results of other MCA colleges in the University are not so good. All this prove that the practice of remedial coaching our college is successful.

7. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

The main issue in implementing this practice was the identification of weak learners. Students may score poorly in the first tests for various reasons, including the stress they face as they enter a new institute. However, we introduced weekly test to identify the weaker ones.

Another issue was not to make some students feel that they are weak in studies. This was overcome by introducing the remedial program without naming it as remedial. Besides, all students had some sort of additional coaching. So all felt that the additional coaching was part of the practices of the college.

Another serious issue was finding time for managing these additional classes. This issue still remains to some extent. However, available additional time like evening hours etc. are well utilized by the faculty members.

8. Notes (Optional)

Students are eager to do their studies well. Good will from the side of the faculty to help the weak learners is always rewarding.