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In This Issue

Personality Development of Students at Universities

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Intellectual brilliance, physical strength and common sense are the three highly sought after abilities in all employees in any organization. Employees need to have these abilities that will make them a valuable addition to an organization. As we know, *Ability* is an individual's capacity to master numerous tasks in a job. Organizations need to identify key abilities of employees that will lead to success. Intellectual and physical abilities are two key types of traits that organizations look for employees to have, depending on job requirements. *Intellectual* ability refers to the skills required to think critically, see connections between disciplines and problem solving in new or changing situations while strength, stamina, coordination, psychometric and sensory skills are the main elements needed for physical work. Organizations view intellectual ability as one of the most valuable attributes in employees especially in managerial and administrative cadres. This ability deals with mental capabilities such as excellent memory, verbal comprehension, reasoning, analyzing and problem solving, etc., which are all important elements of managerial or administrative jobs in government or business.

The recruitment process for managerial and administrative positions generally includes a written test followed by an interview. While the subject content is tested in the written test, personality traits are generally tested in the interview. Most of the candidates satisfactorily clear their written tests, but fail in the interview because the higher educational institutions they attended have provided academic inputs and related skills in the subject matter while grooming of intellectual abilities was generally neglected. There are, however, few exceptional universities which provide training on personality development consisting of soft skills such as communication skills, logical reasoning, critical thinking and problem solving skills, but they do not go generally beyond these skills.

Though the civil service aspirants keenly follow the Preliminary and Mains exam syllabus, the requirement of UPSC regarding 'interview test' is missed even by serious aspirants. The objective of the interview questions is to judge the *mental caliber of the candidate*. In broad terms, the interview is really an assessment of not only his/her *intellectual qualities* but also *social traits* and *interest in current affairs*

The technique of the interview is not that of a strict cross-examination but of a natural thought directed and purposive conversation which is intended to reveal the mental qualities of the candidate. The interview is not intended to be a test of the specialized or general knowledge of the candidate which has been already tested through their written papers, candidates are expected to have taken an intelligent interest not only in their special subjects of academic study but also in the events which are

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Suggestopedia: A Pathway to Super Learning

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Education is the most powerful weapon to make drastic change in this world. Human use this weapon to educate their children. As education has progressed, educators continue to search for new techniques to attain higher and higher rate of learning and retention of learning material. In this search to develop new techniques, Suggestopedia came into exist. Dr. George Lozanov, a Bulgarian Medical Doctor, Parapsychologist, Language Theorist and a Psychiatrist credited for the pioneering work for suggestopedia. In 1966, he published his doctoral thesis, 'Suggestology,' which is designated as the pioneering of the suggestopedia methodology in which he combined suggestion and relaxation. He carried out experimental research in teaching foreign languages at the University of Sofia. His initial research offers hope for a step forward for a solution of common problem of teachers.

Suggestopedia: Its Origin

In the early 1960's, when Lozanov began extensive experimental research in the area of the laws of suggestion. He applied Suggestopedia to medical field first, then to education. As a result, he noted the similarity of hypnosis and suggestion. He concluded that there was a difference between a state of hypnosis and the process of suggestion which occurs in all of the state of affairs of human existence. The name of Suggestopedia is the combination of the words 'suggestion' + 'pedagogy.' Lozanov experimented with Suggestopedia in foreign language classes because of the ease of measuring progress by counting gained words per session as an index to learning achievement. Lozanov describes it as "a science … concerned with systematic study of the nonrational and/or non-conscience influences" that human beings are constantly responding to. He argued that by using this method one can teach languages approximately three to five times as quickly as conventional methods.

What is Suggestopedia?

Suggestopedia is a teaching method which is based on the understanding of how the human brain works and how we learn most effectively. Suggestopedia is the study of these suggestive factors in a learning situation. Suggestology is the study of the power of suggestion which can be verbal, non-verbal, conscious or unconscious. We are constantly, surrounded by suggestive influences. If we study them and become aware of them, then we are in a better position to "choose" which ones we want to influence us. Lozanov maintains that a suggestopedic teacher spends most of the time de-suggesting the students, i.e., freeing them from any non-facilitating influences from their past. From birth onwards, we are influenced by parents, friends, teachers, society, the media, the weather, the food we eat and the political environment in which we live. Suggestion is the direct road to the set-up. It creates and utilises such types of set-ups which would free and activate the reserve capacities of the human being as stated by Lozanov in the article 'The Key Principles of Suggestopedia' published in the Journal SALT in 1976.

There are two basic kinds of suggestions: direct and indirect. Direct suggestions are directed to conscious processes, i.e., what we says that can and will occur in the learning experience, suggestions which can be made as written announcements, orally by the teacher, and/or by text materials. Direct suggestion is used easily, for it is most vulnerable to resistance from the set-up. Indirect suggestion is mainly unconsciously perceived and is much higher in scope than direct suggestion. It is always present in any communication. Lozanov speaks of it as the second plane of communication and considers it to encompass all those non-verbal communication factors outside our conscious awareness, such as voice tone, facial expression, body posture and movement, speech tempo, rhythms, accent, etc. In other words, everything in the learning environment is a stimulus at some level, being processed at some level of mental activity. The more we can do to arrange purposefully the unconscious as well as the conscious factors in this environment, the greater the possibility to be free from or "de-suggest" the conditioned, automatic patterns of our inner set-up and open the access to the great potential of our mental capabilities.

Key Features of Suggestopedia

The main features of suggestopedia are:

i. Music, Yoga and Exercise

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ii. Physical Infrastructure and Atmosphere

iii. Teacher Centeredness

Music, Yoga and Exercise

The music is used to relax students. It is the relaxing medium. Lozanov researched a wide variety of means for presenting material to be learned which would facilitate the mentally relaxed, receptive state of mind he had found to be optimal for learning. Yoga exercises, breathing techniques are used. Music can become a powerful catalyst of holistic full-brain learning. It helps in creating a mentally relaxed state and a vehicle for carrying the material to be learned into the open, receptive mind. He believes that, learners only use 5 to 10 percent of their mental capabilities, and Suggestopedia can tap into this mental reserve through classical music, to lower the affective filter to aid learners to obtain maximum intake. Lozanov concluded that music of the Classical and Early Romantic periods was most effective for the first presentation of material to be learned. The music of Hayden, Mozart and Beethoven is suggested. For the second concert presentation of material Lozanov found that Baroque music was especially suited.

Physical Infrastructure and Atmosphere

The arrangements and the physical atmosphere in the classroom are of great importance for making sure that the students feel comfortable and confident. The furniture, decoration and the arrangement of the classroom appeals the students.

Teacher Centeredness

The teacher in a suggestopedic course not only radiates effective suggestive stimuli, but also coordinates environmental suggestive stimuli in a positive way for students to learn. One of Suggestopedia's unique goals is to release learners' minds from the existing framework of the (Lozanov, 1978. p. 252)" The teacher plays a central role and he/she is the source of all information. That's why it's required that the teacher must be well-trained and certified. To some extent, the teacher is not only a teacher but also a psychologist. He must display fastidious conduct in manners and dress. Teacher will maintain a sober attitude towards the session. He will administer tests and respond tactfully to poor responses of the students. Humble enthusiasm should be maintained by him. He Organizes properly and strictly observe the initial stages of the teaching process-this includes choice and play of music as well as punctuality.

The use of various techniques including art and music, are used by the trained teachers. At the start of each unit the teacher introduces himself and provides learners with new identities, this is to relieve them from any outside the classroom experiences to learning.

Some Basic Principles of Suggestopedia

The six main principles of suggestopedia are dual (double) planeness, intonation, rhythm, pseudopassivity, infantilization, and authority. Following are the basic principles to attain the de-suggestion stage.

Authority

Here learners are greatly influenced through a positive authority figure.

Infantilization

In suggestopedia, infantilization must be understood roughly as memories of the pure and basic state of a child to whom someone is reading or who is reading on his own. He is absorbing the wonderful world of the fairytales. This world brings him a vast amount of information and the child grabs it easily and permanently. Through infantilization, self-confidence is built when the teacher acts as a child-parent relation.

Prestige

In suggestopedia, the environment offers a comfortable setting as well as peripheral learning through colourful pictures. The learning environment is given equal importance as the learning method. This means that in the best possible setting and furnished with high-quality equipment, comfortable seating, a good sound system and completely up-to-date learning and teaching tools.

Professionalism

Well experienced teachers to project confidence and charm, also reading the text together with the classical music to keep up with the intonation and rhythm for an effective suggestopedic lesson (Walter, 2014).

Intonation

Intonation is strongly connected with the rest of the suggestive elements. The intonation in music and speech is one of the basic expressive medium with formidable form-creating influence and potential in many psycho-physiological directions. "Learning is state of mind dependent". When varying your voice you "reach" different "states of mind".

Layout of a Suggestopedic Lesson

The layout of a suggestopedic lesson is described here.

Presentation

It is a basic stage in which students are helped to relax. They are motivated to be the part of learning experience which is going to be simple and fun. While the teacher lets the music play for about five minutes, the learners slowly engage themselves into the soft classical music, then the instructor reads the texts following the intonation and rhythm of the music. After the completion of the readings the learners return back to their attentive state of consciousness. The types of activities that are more original to suggestopedia are the listening activities, which concern the content and vocabulary of each unit. These activities are typically part of the "pre -session phase", which takes place on the first day of a new unit.

Active Concert

This involves the presentation of the material to be learnt. For example, in a second language class there might be the dramatic reading of a content, accompanied by classical music. This activation takes the form of quick progression of activities and interactive games that are fast moving, fun, varied, stimulating and gratifying, where the importance is on communication instead of the language. Songs, anecdotes, and jokes are additional to those perpetual changes in pace that inexplicably make time seem to go by quickly (Murcia, 1991).

Passive Concert

At this phase, the students are now invited to relax and listen to some Baroque music, with the text being read very quietly in the background. The music is specially selected to bring the students into the best possible mental state for the easy acquisition of the material.

Practice

The students spontaneously speak and interact in the target language without interruption or correction. The use of a range of games, puzzles, etc. to review and consolidate the learning is desired at this stage. In this phase, the learners freely interact in the target language.

Suggestopedia and Classroom

Suggestopedia ensures successful classroom atmosphere. The method focuses on diminishing any previous negative learning experiences through eliminating the psychological barriers that learners might have such as: anxiety, fear, boredom, and so on. For a successful classroom atmosphere, Lozanov maintains these three elements should be present:

Psychological Element

A nurturing, supportive atmosphere in which the student feels free to try out the new information, be inventive with it, make mistakes without being put down. In short students must enjoy the learning experience.

Educational Element

The teaching content should be presented in a structured fashion, combining the big picture, analysis and synthesis. Every moment should be a informative experience even when the learning process is not that apparent.

Artistic Element

The classroom should not be a store room with many posters and needless objects, otherwise students don't see them. Appropriate pictures should be displayed and changed within every few days. Music can be played as the students enter the room, and during the breaks. Plants and flowers add to appeal aesthetic sense. U-shape arrangements of the chairs are desired for better communication between the teacher and students and among the students themselves.

Suggestopedia and Learners' Roles

The students' feelings have a special consideration on suggestopedia. They need to feel confident and relaxed and their psychological barriers must be de-suggested. The learners as well are should have positive attitude and faith in the system. They must accept that they are in a childlike situation where they follow the teacher / parent". The students should not be critical, but absorb what is being presented to them. To develop learners' full potential intellectually and emotionally with the ability to think critically, learners need to be exposed to positive and constructive suggestions in a non-threatening setting.

Suggestopedia: As a Catalyst to Human Brain and Sight

Suggestopedia is based on a recent understanding of how the human brain works and how students learn most effectively. Lozanov believed that the more the

brain is used, the more it develops. If this is a well-known fact in relation to muscles, the same applies for the brain, and especially, our memory interface. It is proved that as the human brain matures; it organizes itself and "assigns" certain functions and capabilities to the left hemisphere or right hemisphere of the brain. The left hemisphere is associated with logical and analytical functions, while the right hemisphere is the emotional center of the brain. The suggestopedia method insists that the human brain is capable of great achievements. Lozanov (1982) claims that teaching methods often hinder the brain from reaching these capabilities. Specifically, the brain is responsible not only for learning and storing information but also controls emotive responses and motivation. When learning occurs, activity in the brain is not only storing information, but having an emotional response to it. However, our traditional teaching methods often only address the facts and figures. They ignore the emotional and motivational aspects of learning, and ignore to address all parts of the brain.

Another interesting fact is that, the text is presented with the native language on the left side of the page layout, and the target language on the right side. This is the result of research studies that the human eye focuses more on the right side, except for countries where they read from right to left.

Experts' Opinions and Researches on Suggestopedia

Students who attended the classes at the University of Sofia were tested a year after the course ended and the results showed they had retained the words, phrases, and grammar they had learned in the course. Lozanov (1971) claimed the capacity of the brain to learn vast amounts of new material seemed endless, once the barriers were lowered and unconscious mental activity was in effect. Suggestopedia is an attempt to reach the unused power of the mind and to prove learning is pleasant and retainable. Lozanov claimed learning was increased 5 to 50 times the normal rate by releasing the unused reserve power of the mind, by developing the "intuitional perceptive potential," and by increasing concentration while reducing stress and anxiety. Astor (1974) stated that the learning environment should maintain a low anxiety level with a supportive atmosphere to produce positive emotional states which influence learning efficiency. Suggestopedia utilizes the person's ability to learn more effectively through distracted mental activity. Suggestopedia is largely

based on the Acquisition or Learning hypothesis. The learning hypothesis states that adults can progress their language proficiency for two reasons: using the language to communicate with others and understanding and integrating the language (Krashen & Terrel, 1983). Ostrander and Schroeder (1974) reported that in Bulgaria, Suggestopedia was used in the school curriculum of regular public schools as a teaching tool, when, in 1972, a group of elementary students were taught a year's course work in a foreign language in 2-1/2 months. Ostrander and Schroeder further reported that the Moscow Foreign Language Pedagogical Institute in the USSR and Eotvos Lorand University in Budapest, Hungary, and many other Soviet-bloc countries were using this method to teach foreign languages. Scarborough College in Toronto, Canada, has sent teachers to Sofia to be trained by Lozanov in this technique to be used at the college level (Bancroft, 1972). The method also draws from insights from yoga and the Soviet psychology. From yoga it draws the importance of relaxation of mind for maximum retention of material. From Soviet psychology Lozanov took the idea that "all sudents can be taught a given subject matter at the same level of skill." (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Suggestopedia has been connected to other language teaching methods such as superlearning and accelerated learning. Suggestopedia makes use of suggestion and desuggestion techniques, removing barriers to learning, and using these techniques to convey to the learner that learning is easy and natural.

All these opinions and results of the previous researches support the success of suggestopedia as a teaching method.

Suggestopedia – A Pathway to Super Learning

It is the method, based upon the idea that language learning should be largely interactive. Though the method is wonderful to be used by second language teachers but in India, we must pay our attention to some consideration such as: the curriculum, students' motivation, financial limitation, number of students, etc. If environmental limitation and big class size are there, teachers may have some hindrances in its application. But still it has many positive aspects that should be considered that make it a pathway to super learning. Let's consider the following points.

- Suggestopedia makes use of soothing, rhythmic music, a comfortable and relaxing environment and a relationship between the teacher and the student

similar to the parent-child relationship. Music and musical rhythm are the some of the most striking features of Suggestopedia.

- Here the total effect is further increased by suggestion, especially using the concert session as a placebo. Research by Lozanov (1978) has shown that there is a positive effect when classical music is used during efforts to memorize, even without suggestion. Before the concert session, the student is told by an authoritative figure that after the session the material will be memorized. The students notice that their memorization has improved, so they accept the statement of the authority. The result is a high increase in memorization.

- The suggestopedic session which is based on the memorizing of a text is accomplished through ritualistic concert sessions: an active session and a passive one. During the active session the teacher reads the text to the addition of emotional classical music. The students follow along in their text, underlining, highlighting or making notes as they wish. Thus the students have a translation of the text. This translation is collected after the concert session and the students work without it.

- Suggestopedia stimulate the creativity of the learners by using almost all the categories of art such as music, visual arts, and performing art. The suggestopedic teachers use music as songs in the elaborations and as classical background music in the concert sessions. They hang coloured grammar posters among other art posters in the classroom and sometimes you give the group drawing tasks. They move like an improvise actors in the theatre, use puppets like a show person and read the textbook like poets at their recital.

- The teacher's positive attitude and behaviour in the classroom is one of the key elements that ensure the success of a suggestopedic session. Teacher has to establish good human relations in the class so that students would help and praise one another.

- The suggestopedic sessions can also be held on a computer.

- Students remember best and are most influenced by information coming from an authoritative source i.e. teachers.

- Double-planeness theory of suggestopedia refers to the learning from two aspects. They are the conscious aspect and the subconscious one.

Students can acquire the aim of teaching instruction from both direct instruction and environment in which the teaching takes place.

- Suggestopedia encourages the young learners to apply language more independently, takes more personal responsibility for their own learning and get more confidence.

- Still through suggestopedia, the learning environment is optimized in every possible way to facilitate a comfortable and pleasant learning experience that is relaxed and fun to experience. Besides a large classroom where activities can be held, dim lights, soft music, comfortable chairs and various posters relating to the target language are necessary.

- The idea is that people perceive much more from the environment than that to which they consciously attend. Students may absorb the foreign language with posters, pictures and decorations containing grammatical patterns, rather than learning vocabulary and grammar.

- The students are encouraged to follow the teacher's suggestions without doubts and assume new roles and names, called 'new identities.' This leads to students being more suggestible and open to the learning input. Furthermore, students are asked to close their eyes and to concentrate on their breathing for relaxation, while listening to Baroque string music while listening to the lessons. Direct suggestion might be used for the students' encouragement may consist of a simple affirmation that 'all learning is joyful and pleasurable.'

- Errors are tolerated while the focus remains on the content. The teacher does corrections subtly, by repeating the patterns in variations but he or she is not supposed to directly correct the student, for the simple reason that the latter procedure is counter-productive to high learning input. Thus grammar and vocabulary are only taught by implication, not directly.

- Various activities such as music, drama, role play or methods known from Gestalt therapy sessions may be integrated into the learning process as frequently as possible.

- Students are then enabled to take in tremendous quantities of study material due to an increase in alpha brain waves and a decrease in blood pressure and pulse rate.

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Suggestopedia could be considered as one of the most stimulating language learning method. It's difficult to understand which elements of Suggestopedia are more beneficial for the learners. However, it is a combination of; music, peripheral learning, interaction, and so on, that makes Suggestopedia a super learning teaching method. Super learning can be said to consist of both suggestion and desuggestion techniques. Suggestion is the core; the most important objective of the method is to activate the maximum of the learners' mental capacities. On the other hand, de-suggestion is used for unloading the memory storage or reserves of unwanted or blocking memories. Suggestion then means loading the memory banks with desired and facilitating memories. The combination of both suggestion and desuggestion intends to lower the 'affective sieve' and optimize the students' mental potential to learn, aiming at accelerating the process by which students learn to understand and use the target language for communication in a rather spontaneous manner.

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