

Forum: Useless or Less than Effective Techniques

We often hear educators complain about “having to” teach techniques they, the educators, feel they would never use. Educators feel pressured because the techniques are in the text books, and they fear their students will be ill prepared for the certification exam if they don’t understand all that is in the textbooks. Colleagues associated with the Board of Certification claim since the material is in the text books, it is eligible for inclusion on the exam. Colleagues who write textbooks feel that since the material is potentially on the exam, it must be taught. So in a sense, we have a cat chasing its own tail.

To break out of this cycle, we must identify specific techniques that are less than effective and accumulate evidence to prove it to be so. It would be nice if folks would make a scholarly study of each, but this has not happened. Thus, the purpose of this forum.

Please submit techniques that have been published in reputable venues (i.e. text books, journal articles) that you feel should not be taught. Include the reference and a brief (or longer if you are so inclined) explanation of why you doubt the efficacy of the technique. We will print these and invite readers to respond in subsequent issues. Responses may add additional information against the technique, or support the technique by refuting your reasons for questioning the technique. Either way, we all grow.

In time we will amass enough information to either quell the complaints or convince the BOC and text authors to remove the less than effective techniques from the BOC exam and texts.