

Neil Roberts



Title screen graphics from the “If I could say one thing” video series.

In a conversation about giving advice to students a lecturer remarked to me; “If I could say one thing to students, it would be to buy the bloody coursebook!!”.

At the time it struck me that most staff and students would also have a golden nugget of advice that new students could learn from. This idea formed the basis of this video project.

Project Overview

The aim of this project was for Bond students and academic staff to present one piece of advice to new students in a short 1 minute video clip.

The idea of a short video clip originated from the TV consumer advice program “The Checkout”.

This has a segment called “If I could say one thing”, where experts give their advice starting with the words “If I could say one thing, it would be...”

Working in conjunction with Learning and Teaching, we selected 10 members of staff and students from a range of faculties and backgrounds, who we felt would have good ideas and would present well on camera.

Over the course of two days, we timetabled them in to OLT for a videoing session of a talking head. After videoing, an animation and music was added for the beginning to give it a similar feel to The Checkout video.

Benefits and Successes

All the participants performed extremely well on camera, and some only needed one take. Because each clip was only one minute long, it meant that it was very easy to do with a minimum of stress and mistakes, and for most people, the videoing process only took 5 minutes. It was also extremely easy to timetable people in over the two days.

The advice that was given was varied, and included “don’t be afraid to ask for help”, “study in different locations”, “go to tutor consultations” and “seize every opportunity at Bond.” The advice also fitted with the Bond philosophy of personal attention, as many of the clips emphasised the access to support at Bond.

The videos have been put on the Student Learning Support website and iLearn site for easy access for students. We have also embedded the relevant clips into Student Learning Support workshops both face to face and online, as well as student welcome sessions.

Challenges

The whole process was actually very smooth, and apart from a couple of timetabling issues, there were very few challenges. I think one of the keys to this was the fact that the project involved 10 very short videos, which made could be managed as 10 short tasks.



Associate Professor and Associate Dean Libby Taylor encourages students to discuss problems with their teachers

Feedback

We received excellent feedback from staff, who found the videos very useful. Participants also commented that they enjoyed the experience of making the video. It is more difficult to judge the students’ reaction since it is not something that they would comment on or write to us about. However, we have found that students tend to pay more attention and take advice from peers or from lecturers, so this medium has proved very successful, especially as it is very short and to the point. In our workshops, it also provides variety and a different perspective.

Advice to colleagues

This was a very useful and manageable task to do. ■

The video series can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/oltbond>

Neil currently works in Student Learning Support, where he provides academic support for students.

Neil has taught English as a foreign language since 1987 in UK, Argentina, Spain, Turkey, Singapore and Australia.

He has worked as a teacher trainer on various courses including MA TESOL, Grad Cert TESOL, DELTA and RSA Cert TEFL.

Neil has been a Director of Studies and Assistant Director of Studies in various institutes, and has worked as an examiner for the IELTS and Cambridge exams.

He has co-written scripts for an English language teaching programme shown on television in Japan and starred as the teacher in the programmes.

Neil has taught pronunciation courses for Singapore Airlines cabin crew and he has written an EFL reader of Chinese short stories; “The Jade Goddess and Other Stories”, Federal Publishing.