



OR in Education Volunteer Tips

Think about the delivery

Students are likely to be more interested if the delivery is engaging and interactive. Ask questions to break up a presentation and keep them thinking, and make full use of our interactive workshops.

For example, instead of explaining OR straight away, create a discussion about an illustrative example: talk about how OR was used to model the Emirates stadium to ensure it met fire safety regulations and ask how they would make sure they could evacuate everyone from the stadium if there was a fire. Another effective tactic can be to give students time to discuss answers in groups.

For example, when using the Lego workshop, be sure to give students time to play with the Lego and build tables and chairs. Then get students to show their tables or chairs to the group.

Relate it back to real life

Find ways to connect to students' personal experiences in order to promote successful encoding and retention of new information. Because OR is fundamentally embedded within so much of everyday life, we're very fortunate that there will be at least one way you can make a connection between your role or research and a students' day to day life.

For example, if you give the example of OR in supermarkets, ask the students "how many of you or your parents have a supermarket loyalty card, such as the Tesco Clubcard or Sainsbury's Nectar Card?" When we then go on to explain that supermarkets know exactly when and where their family buy their bread and milk and why they gather that data, the students can then relate their personal experience to OR, which should help them remember the topic.

Use an abundance of praise

Studies have found that most students (84%) prefer to be praised for effort rather than ability, so consider phrases that reflect that.

For example, "You've all worked really hard on that" or "Fantastic! That was a carefully planned response".



Interest is key

Interest, motivation and attention are prerequisites for meaningful learning. This means that students need to be interested in what they're doing if they're going to learn. Students are interested by new and unfamiliar topics or methods, so telling them what you do is a great opportunity to engage them.

When developing and updating our resources, we try to present information in different formats (e.g. oral, video, hands-on) because we appreciate that students cannot be expected to learn the same material at the same time in the same way. Keep them interested by using different resources.

Workshops and presentations

- Walk around the tables and engage with students when they are completing a task and ask them how they are getting on, what they've found etc.
- Encourage discussions (either group or whole class) so students take ownership of the topic and seek solutions.
- Humour is great, but keep it non-discriminative and light-hearted.
- Avoid reading directly from the screen of a PowerPoint – instead talk around it.
- Be prepared: know the order of your content and how long it lasts.

Questions

Choose the right time for questions. For presentations where the duration is less than 20 minutes, allow for questions at the end.

If your presentation duration is more than 20 minutes provide several opportunities for questions between sub-sections of your presentation.