

# TILT ALTC 2016

Using visual imagery to enhance reflective techniques in transformative learning and increase student engagement whilst on work placements

Sue Mc Kinnon

[susan.mckinnon@ncn.ac.uk](mailto:susan.mckinnon@ncn.ac.uk)

'The secret to happiness is, find something more important than you are, and dedicate your life to it'  
(Dennett, 2001).



# Background Information

FdA International Tourism Management & Aviation Operations  
FdA Hospitality Management

Requirement of at least 600 hours of paid or unpaid work in order to complete Personal Professional Development (PPD) module in the 1st and 2nd year of the FdA

Referred to as a placement  
20 credits

## What is Transformative Learning?

“Transformative learning (TL) is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience in order to guide future action”(Mezirow 1996, p. 162).

Or “the idea of people changing the way they interpret their experiences and their interactions with the world” (Cranton, 2006).

Why are these quotes so relevant for my students?

Hold a limiting view of the world

40% of students opt to do their  
placement overseas

Transforming students into global citizens (Caruana & Spurling, 2007)

# Several Steps to TL & Professional Development - underpinning PPD module

- Planning a course of action
- Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plan
- Trying of new roles
- Building of competence and self confidence in new roles and relationships
- Both personal and social-cultural are significant factors
- Reflection is essential in the process of TL

Luke 22 yrs  
Boston MA  
6 months placement



Alison 21 yrs  
Mauritius  
6 month placement





Ray 27 yrs  
Boston MA  
6 month placement



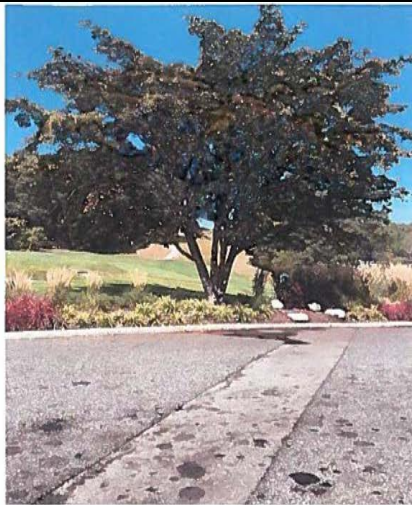
Scott  
19 years  
Boston MA  
6 months



Anne 28 yrs  
Colorado  
12 months



Ben 21 yrs  
Miami  
6 months





# How is Transformative Learning and reflective practice captured during and after the placement experience?

All work carries a 20% of marks for the module and consists of;

- Capturing information via the VLE during the placement period
- Academic poster
- Journal

Clear themes emerging from the above supporting TL

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU WITH THE PLACEMENT JOURNAL.

Picture Gallery  
Upload your pictures here taken during your placement.

Building\_Vision\_and\_Valu  
[Download \(28KB\)](#)

What are your visions & goals for the future, read this short piece on what you bring to work!

Popular leadership styles.doc  
[Download \(53KB\)](#)

Read through this document, it will help you to complete the tasks that have been set out in the learning journal. Remember this journal will be marked and forms part of your overall grade for this module and your final year of the FdA.

PPD2 feedback.docx  
[Download \(20KB\)](#)

All aim to visit as many of as possible during July. form will be completed ing my visit with you. If for reason I PPD2 (PPD2) to see this form completed by and your placement sup before leave your placement in

YOU MUST GET A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION OR REFERENCE FROM YOUR PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE PLACEMENT/JOB IN September.



# Example of Academic poster Capturing TL

# Pinebrook Country Club



## History

Pinebrook Country Club was founded in 1924 by a group of Jewish men. Following the death of the original owner of the house this became a member's only club. Surrounding the house there is 100 acres of land.

## Location and Facilities

Pinebrook Country Club is located in Weston, one of the wealthiest areas in Boston Massachusetts. With the town of Weston which is a 5-10 minute drive which has a town hall, local supermarket and a bank this would be ideal if you didn't want to head into downtown Boston, which is around a 15 minute drive it would be advised to get a Uber which is a cheaper way of travelling around than the local taxi firms and a 30 minute train ride.

The facilities include four outdoor tennis courts, four in door tennis courts, which the members can book online or via calling directly. There is also a swimming pool, a pool snack bar, a 18 hole golf course, a golf snack bar "The Turn". Other facilities for the members include, the Grill room this hosts lunch and dinner, ladies and men's locker rooms, a gymnasium, living room bar and the dining room which hosts events.

## Placement Experience

The over all positive impact on myself was I went out of my comfort zone by going to another country with mixed nationalities. According to Bista (2015) Going to a foreign country with a second language can cause students stress and self-conflict. This reflected on one of the challenges I faced whilst on placement was adapting to the American life style as I have not been away from home for a

long period of time before this, also caused conflict with other students and colleagues. I overcame this by having the support from other colleagues and making new friends.

Whilst you are taught your job role, another good way to improve yourself and knowledge was to go out into the Boston area whenever you have free time as this encouraged me to work hard as there are so many things to do whilst you are there for the summer. The skills that I obtained whilst been on placement was that I am now able to manage.

When I managed the snack bar on my own and working with one other chef full time for over 2 months, I was then able to train other team members that have not worked in the golf snack bar before, this has improved my communication skills and teamwork.

## For Future Students

The advice I would give to future students is prepared to work hard but you will get recognised and most probably be rewarded. This may come as a culture shock because of been away from home and if you are living above the club this may seem as a negative because as living and working in the same building this may feel claustrophobic.

Most importantly go out and explore Boston, go and do the tourist things to do such as Harvard University there is usually free tours for that. The Boston common where there is a river and sometimes there is social events on at different times of the year. You are able to book some time off but tell the managers in plenty of time and make sure it isn't around an important date. Get to know the people you are working with as they may suggest places for you to visit. Keep checking online for the events going on Boston Globe and I would recommend going on the "Duck Tours" this takes you around the city.

## Types of Customers

PBCC has a limited customer based of around 430 members plus family members and guests. The establishment is mainly the Jewish community of Massachusetts. The membership is normally passed on in generations. The respect from the member to the club is high, so the standard of service has to be of a high standard, this is remembering their names and also knowing what the customer wants. This high standard was reminded almost every day so the staff didn't lose the service that was expected from them by the club and from the members.

The members fees ranged from \$30,000 a year this is excluding been a tennis member and a golf member, most of the members would have lessons in there specialised area either golf or tennis and the lessons would go up to \$150 a hour.

## Evaluation of the placement

Overall as a business to work for PBCC is good at encouraging staff to work hard but also to encourage interns to have a good time and explore Boston in your free time. As a result of working hard there could be rewards such as Boston Red Sox tickets, an end of contract bonus, Six flags tickets and a trip to a beach which is normally after independence day (July 4<sup>th</sup>).

The management worked together as they had different skills which suited in different areas, the system went smoothly for service for that day. The management also makes sure you are safe when you go out and also if you have any medical bills as from a personal experience the medical insurance didn't cover my costs and the management helped out.

## Training

The training that takes place in the establishment takes place together in the first coming weeks that is why going in April is important as Junior has more time to go over the menu, work the computer systems and more importantly order of service. According to Pratten, (2003) Restaurant waiting staff are normally under valued and training is often neglected. However at Pinebrook training is always constant at the beginning in your working time, you are advised to read the menu ask questions and be proactive with the training.

## Team Work

Observation from the team work aspect team members helped each other out if they needed it, they are supportive and show you on how to do things correctly. From observing I personally noticed that they didn't want help as much even if you offered it to them. As we was together for a long period of time been friends with them became easier to work with them as this would cause friction especially with other team members. The establishment didn't have a high turn over of staff as it was convenient for other team members to have other full time jobs as pinebrook is only seasonal.

## Average Working Week

The average hours of the week you worked depended on which area you worked in. the Grill Room was 40/50 hours. The opening hours of the area are 10.30-3.00 for lunch and 5.00- close for dinner. The Pool snack bar was capped at 40 hours a week due to this department been quiet and the Golf snack was approx. 50/60 hours a week this was open 8-5 Tuesday- Sunday. PBCC is a good starting business if you want to improve your customer service skills but also if you want a career in Fine Dining then you will learn the relevant knowledge which will benefit your future career in hospitality.

# Summarise ...

- Transformative learning is captured during and after the placement experience by the use of images and written text.
- Reflective practise is key in helping students realise the placement experience; enhancing professional development, thus guiding them towards their next career goal.
- The Transformative Learning approach is revisited several times during the 2nd year of study.



The idea, then, that some kind of cognitive dissonance, some kind of realization that what one believes isn't necessarily making sense anymore, is at the heart of a transformative learning experience.

*“a structural change in the way we see ourselves and our relationships”*  
(Mezirow, 1978, p. 100).

Questions?

