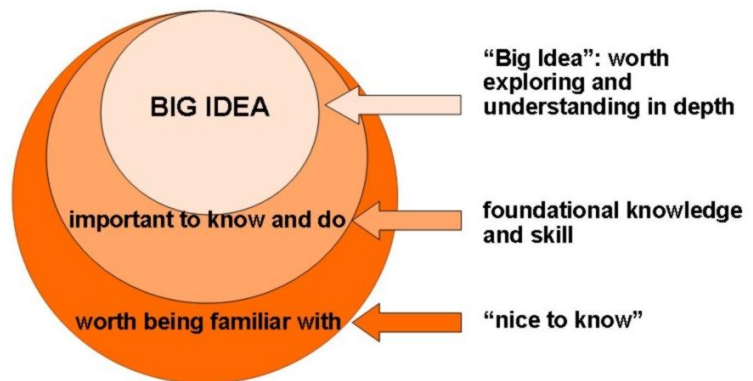


## How Do I Re-design / Re-think My Teaching Approach?

**Overall:** Many teachers approach their teaching with a detailed but cluttered mind! Being expert in an area makes it difficult to sort out teaching priorities in regard to content, amount of detail and learning expectations. It will pay dividends (your satisfaction, student understanding, course evaluation) to re-think your approach.

- For a start, remember that **there is no way** that your students can “know” a subject like you do! You have taken years to get there and you continue to work on it!
- **Backwards design** is an approach emanating from the work of instructional designers Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe;
- Start by focusing on what you want to achieve when you are finished teaching your students;
- Being mindful of your audience (undergraduate? residents? 1<sup>st</sup> year medical students?) **and their level of prior knowledge**, spend some time thinking about your **final “take home” message**. **Review your final summary slide carefully** and work from there;
- Be guided by the figure. Are you sure that your **“BIG IDEA”** is reflected in your “take home”?
- Review your existing content (slides, notes) and **prioritize** it according to: a) “BIG IDEA”; b) “important to know and do”; and c) “worth being familiar with”;
- **Working backwards** from your final summary slide, classify / prioritize teachable items in a) and b) **only**;
- **Do not teach** any items that are in the c) category! Use a different font for these in your notes / handout and tell students that **you will not examine that content**. This immediately frees up time / effort to focus your teaching for the a) and b) content;
- **Design your teaching** around items a) and b), making sure that they lead naturally to your summary slide;
- Re-write **your teaching objectives** so that they focus on topics / items a) and b). Make sure that your objectives are assessable (see sheet #3);
- See if you can write a question that will test **each one** of your teaching objectives. Do not disregard assessment methods just because they are time-consuming to examine and mark, e.g. essay questions, paragraph questions, key feature problems (STC has examples). If you cannot devise an assessment question, consider re-writing that objective;
- Consider using **active learning techniques** that focus on your “BIG IDEA” – see sheet #4.



Schulich  
MEDICINE & DENTISTRY

Please address any comments, questions or requests for support to:

[stc@schulich.uwo.ca](mailto:stc@schulich.uwo.ca)