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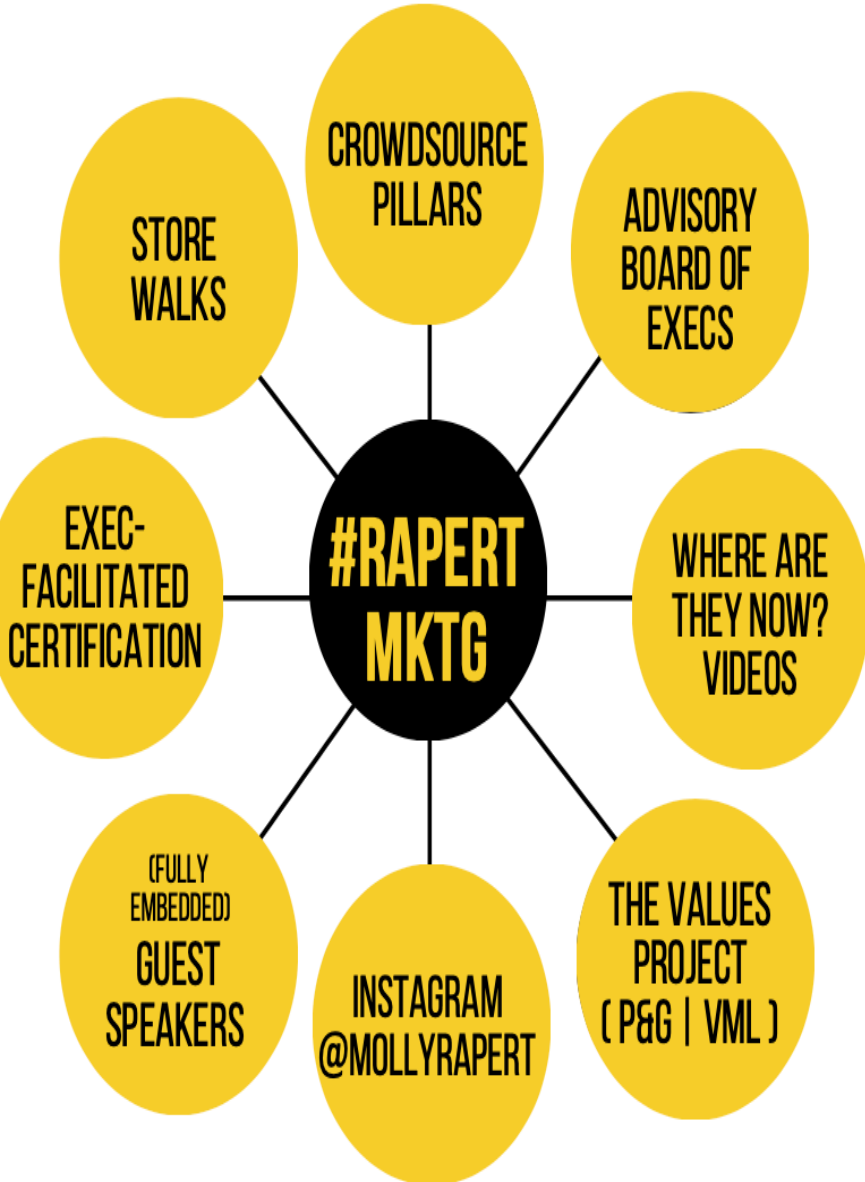
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“ THE NEXT BEST THING TO BEING WISE ONESELF IS TO LIVE IN A CIRCLE OF THOSE THAT ARE. ~ C.S. LEWIS



Molly Rapert

CIRCLES

CORDES CHAIR SEPTEMBER 2022

7:30am of my freshman year at the University of Arkansas, first class of the semester, I walked into the Science Engineering Auditorium to take Chemistry. Little did I know that my professor, Wally Cordes, was an iconic legend on our campus. But that would quickly become evident to me. And I never imagined that 41 years later, life would circle back around to that starting point through this opportunity to celebrate teaching via the Cordes Chair. Thanks to Carole, Lynn, Richard, and Lori at TFSC and the rest of the teaching "family" at the UA who work so hard to live out the student-centered part of our mission. It's been fun to reflect on my time here and I hope that I share some thoughts that are worthwhile. And if not...there's always free pizza!

the conversation:

- why should we talk about teaching?
- the impact of our platform
- being true to your superpower
- building a course using the voices of others

DAN ARIELY'S PREDICTABLY IRRATIONAL

PEOPLE ARE IRRATIONAL - AND PREDICTABLY SO.

It is always interesting to me that people can be so uniquely different - while also being remarkably predictable. Knowing that there is a fairly consistent set of issues that students will ask about, I invest time in drafting thorough responses and then utilizing those as much as possible.

WITH EVERYTHING YOU DO, IN FACT, YOU SHOULD TRAIN YOURSELF TO QUESTION YOUR REPEATED BEHAVIORS.

At the end of every semester, my students evaluate the main aspects of the course and I drop whatever receives the lowest evaluation - replacing it with something new to try next time.

YOU CAN THINK ABOUT LIFE AS A BATTLE BETWEEN YOU AND A DOUGHNUT SHOP. THE DOUGHNUT SHOP WANTS YOU TO EAT ANOTHER DOUGHNUT AND PAY THE MONEY, AND YOU WANT TO DO IT IN THE SHORT TERM, BUT IN THE LONG TERM IT'S NOT GOOD FOR YOU EITHER FINANCIALLY OR FROM A HEALTH PERSPECTIVE.

My course is heavily weighted towards behaviors that will be expected in the professional workplace. Students learn quickly that they will have to invest time in the long run in order to meet those goals. And it will hopefully be worth it.

IN TERMS OF THE ACTUAL CURRICULUM FOR EDUCATION, MY OWN VIEW IS VERY SIMPLE-MINDED: THE WORLD IS INCREDIBLY COMPLEX, IT CHANGES ALL THE TIME, AND WE SHOULD NOT EVEN HOPE THAT WE COULD CREATE A GENERAL MODEL THAT ACCURATELY DESCRIBES THE WORLD IN ALL ITS POSSIBLE STATES.

I recognize that even if I am successful in capturing the complexity, my discipline deals with ever-changing human behavior combined with the velocity of technology. Hence, you can see that I have intentionally tried to focus on activities that foster life-long learning habits.

BRANDS COMMUNICATE IN TWO DIRECTIONS: THEY HELP US TELL OTHER PEOPLE SOMETHING ABOUT OURSELVES, BUT THEY ALSO HELP US FORM IDEAS ABOUT WHO WE ARE.

When I design my syllabus and set up parameters for what I want the environment of my course/classroom to be, I try to keep in mind that my choices will tell students something about me ... and will also help me form ideas about who I am, who I want to be.

why should we talk about teaching?

where do you stand alone?
teaching, research, service

the impact of our platform

forged letters and elevators

being true to your superpower

challenging, organized, quiet, relationships

"So stay true to your own nature. If you like to do things in a slow and steady way, don't let others make you feel as if you have to race. If you enjoy depth, don't force yourself to seek breadth. Being relatively unmoved by rewards gives you the incalculable power to go your own way." Susan Cain, *The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*

building a course using the voices of others

"I live my life in widening circles that reach out across the world." ~ Rainer Maria Rilke