

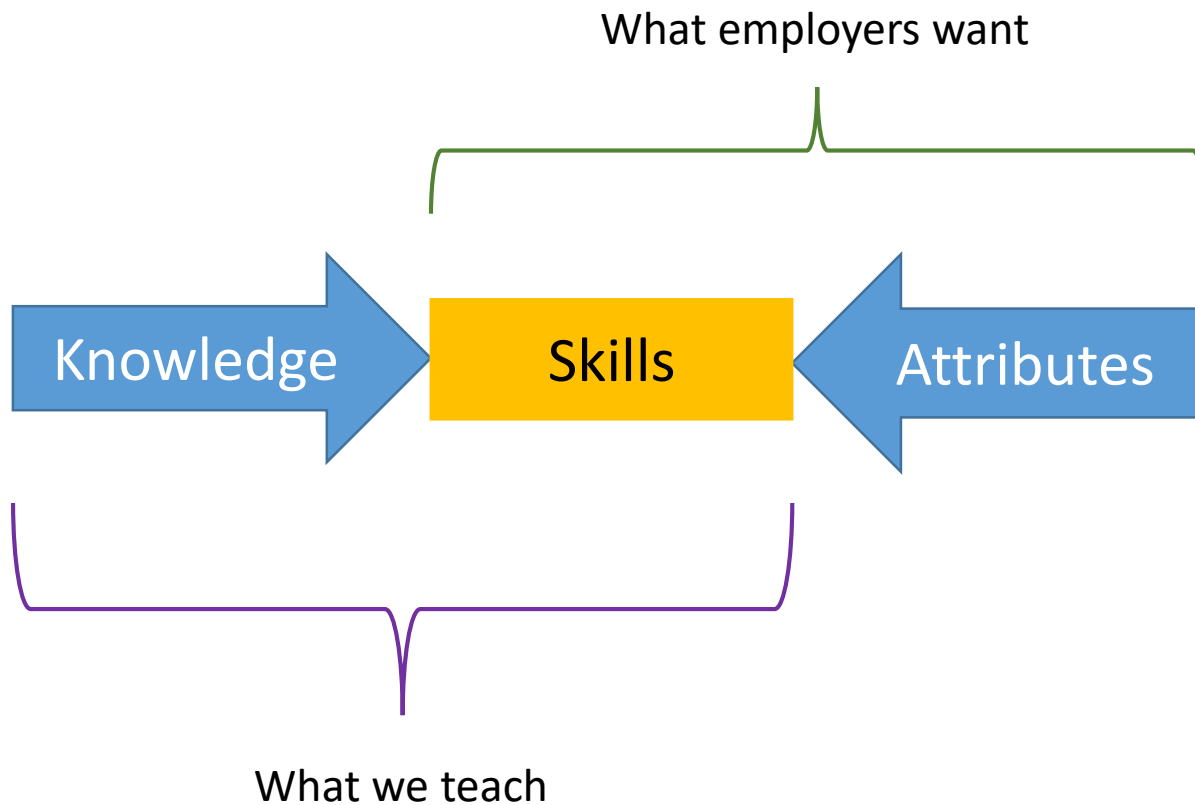
The land of content lost

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Knowledge – Skills – Attributes



Active learning...

... is a **good thing!**

But Bonwell and Eison give four barriers:-

- The difficulty in adequately covering the assigned course content in the limited class time available;
- A possible increase in the amount of preparation time;
- The difficulty of using active learning in large classes;
- A lack of needed materials, equipment, or resources.

C Bonwell and J Eison, *Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom*, ASHE-ERIC reports, 1991

A module's learning objectives

- Might be stated as things students can **do**
- But course content might be given as knowledge students should acquire
- See [CS15020](#) for example...
- (How) do we introduce students to this knowledge?

Lectures...

- Are a way of delivering content to a large classes.
 - Effective? Perhaps not
 - Efficient? In a way
- I dare say lecture slots aren't going to be replaced any time soon
- If we interrupt lecturing for active learning, less time to deliver content
- English and creative writing people should look away now ;)

The land of content lost

What are these well remembered slides

In PowerPoint™ so plain?

What of the lore I loved to teach

But may not teach again?

It is the land of content lost

To landfill or to burn

To the fire my knowledge tossed

While active students **learn**

With apologies to A E Housman

and any English or creative writing teachers too slow to look away...

Programming for scientists

- For MSc students
 - So a small cohort
- Introduces programming using Python
- 3 contact hours a week
 - 2 "lecture"
 - 1 practical
 - but all in the same computer room
- Assessment by two practical assignments
 - No exam

Possible approach

- Don't spend (much) lecture time telling students things they can look up
- Tell them what they need to know so they can look "facts" up
- Point them at where they can look things up
- Make Panopto style podcasts available before the lecture so student have seen the material
 - We can discuss rather than present the material in class
 - So it's more like a tutorial

Questions, questions...

- Will this approach work?
 - If not, why not?
 - Will it scale up to larger cohorts?
- Can we present material in such a passive way?
 - (That's passive on our part, not the students' !)
- What approaches have you tried?
- Can (should!?) we place less stress on knowledge and more acquisition of skills?