NSS: sharing what has worked & what has not

Key Points

Specific example - project (languages)
To explore student perception of and their understanding of the phrasing of NSS questions

Results indicate that students do not understand questions
- They do not understand that middle responses have a negative impact
- Also, their responses may be time bounded (ie they are reacting to events near to the time they are answering the survey rather than taking a holistic view)

Discussion
After UPG, make opportunity to engage in dialogue with students before they take the NSS. Discuss issues related to the phrasing of questions and what choosing the middle option might mean for the results

Example from FBS

90% feedback on time
But student perception does not match - therefore find ways of communicating with students to address their perception

Other suggestions on communication strategies re UPG and NSS results
- Staff/student forum - have as agenda item?
- Let students know that the results of the NSS are external and not solely for internal use
- Example from Healthcare - electronic newsletter (short) with ‘post it’ on the front highlighting results
- You said……..we did

A comment from the floor on the overall excellent results from medicine but the apparent intractability of some areas was that this suggests that it may indicate that within the general ‘happiness’ of students there are some areas that are harder to address – perhaps to do with students own expectations or their assessment of confidence and personal development or as a result of a prevailing culture within a cohort. This led to a discussion of mentoring and other means by which we can make students ‘feel loved’

Example of a good idea but didn’t work
- Welcome back meetings for 2nd and 3rd years but was poorly attended
- Suggestions from the room included move to week 0. This was broadly considered to be a good idea

Other suggestions included

- Increase small group teaching
- Personal tutoring
- Leeds for Life
- Social Events/parties

The importance of support/continuity of personal link was discussed as well as the need to let all new initiatives ‘bed down’ (eg LfL)

The remainder of the discussion centred on raising response rates to surveys – a good example was to offer students a budget for a social event if response rate rose above a threshold - in the hope that students themselves would encourage peers to complete rather than being nagged by staff/school