

# INTERNAL NEWS RELEASE



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## **A Great Launch for the Fall Session**

The energy was almost electric in the Vanier College Amphitheatre on Thursday, August 23, 2007 as Don Fraser, one of Canada's leading authorities on student success and retention, led a motivation seminar that kicked off the Fall Semester. Invited by George Archer, Dean of Applied Technologies, Peggy McCoy of Student Services, and Bev Chandler of Vanier Communications, to give a boost to the teachers and coordinators in the Professional (Technology) Programs, Don Fraser made every minute spent in his company worthwhile, as he talked about classroom and program culture, about being professional, about how it's not the students or the programs or the teachers who need to be improved, it's the attitude and the approach to teaching itself.

"The seminar went way beyond my expectations and I think the turn-out was fabulous," said George Archer. "I wanted to focus teachers' attention on the importance of their performance and interaction with students in retaining students. I also wanted teachers in the Technology programs to get to know one another and feel they are part of a Program and not just their Department."

Centering his talk on the best practices in student motivation from day one to graduation, Fraser put his audience through exercises that were simple, fun, informative and easy to use in the classroom; exercises that would help teachers connect with their students immediately and grab and hold their attention from the very start of classes. Understanding students' needs and expectations, respecting them, acting professionally and leading the way for students to see themselves as professionals were part of the approach he urged. "It's up to you," he said, indicating that facilities, equipment and great students don't make a great program, teachers do.

"I really enjoyed the positive energy," commented Joan Taylor, of Micropublishing and Hypermedia. "It's such a privilege to teach, that you feel you want to give the student the best first impression possible, and Don showed us how you can." "It was the first time in years all the technologies people were together," adds Joan's colleague, Marielle Beauchemin. "It's an interesting group of people and I enjoyed meeting new teachers."

The thrust of Fraser's seminar focused on giving students the right start with an approach that is student- based and faculty-driven, and that targets relationship-building, career vision and college success skills. Equipped with the Instructor's Manual for "Making Your Mark", a booklet summarizing many of his ideas, teachers will be able to go over his suggestions, gain more insights and add to information that was only touched on briefly during the seminar. "Wow!" exclaimed Quentin Van Ginhoven of Environmental and Wildlife Management. "I got lots of ideas, and my mind has been running at high speed ever since. We're already implementing some of his suggestions on a course by course basis."

"The excitement and energy was phenomenal and the sheer delight people felt in meeting other colleagues whom they did not know was wonderful. It was a first-class event and the next step will be to bring Don back and perhaps have him give training to teachers who can then pass it on to students," concluded George Archer.

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