Staying on Track

Do you ever wonder the following: how much time do I need to spend in the discussion area; should I respond to everyone; how do I coax them along without dominating the conversation; will I ever get another weekend off? Collison, Elbaum, Haavind, & Tinker (2000) are here to save the day with the Landscape Post.

The Landscape Post

What?

Maintain focus on initial discussion prompt and student learning objectives using the Landscape Post (Collison, Elbaum, Haavind, & Tinker, 2000).

How?

1. Read student discussion postings and identify themes, discrepancies, and unresolved questions.
2. Refer back to the original discussion question.
3. Write a paragraph using 3 or 4 student quotes that help tie together your original learning objective with the most important matters brought up by the group thus far.
4. Write a critical thinking question about one area where you would like to see more exploration.
5. Revise your message by adding a greeting and fine-tuning your positive tone.
6. Check for spelling and grammatical errors.

Collison, G., Elbaum, B., Haavind, S. & Tinker, R. (2000).
Facilitating Online Learning Effective Strategies for Moderators.

Helpful Tips

Wait until a good discussion starts brewing before you post your land-scape.
Make every student feel recognized and included.
The Landscape Post is not **NOT** a summary.

HINT!

[Write a greeting.]
In this discussion, many of you shared and described [primary themes] that you thought were important to [tie back into original discussion question].

[Student A] discussed ["whatever student discussed on topic"]. In addition, [Student B] offered his/her opinions on ["whatever student discussed on topic"]. And finally, [Student C] really summed it up when she/he said ["whatever student discussed on topic"]. [Insert your own thoughts here to tie the students' comments back to the original discussion question.]

[Insert a follow-up question related to the topic and ask students to explain their reasoning.]

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