Virtual Engagement Strategies for Synchronous Learning

Educator uses a variety of strategies to engage their learners in a synchronous setting.

Key Method

Educator creates an environment that is safe and inclusive and that supports learners as they collaborate and learn in a blended setting by using a wide variety of strategies for facilitation, collaboration, and the learning environment in order to address a variety of learning styles.

Method Components

Instructional Coaching is linked to successful classroom practice. In the 21st Century, it is important for instructional coaches to develop the skills needed to mentor, coach, and teach in virtual environments. This stack will help coaches hone their skills for working online in both synchronous online environments. This stack is tool agnostic and focuses on skills rather than technology.

Why is Virtual Engagement Important?

People learn socially, even in an online setting. Effective online learning requires facilitation that allows participants to interact with content, apply skills, and discuss their learning and questions with others in similar settings.

Set Norms for Meetings and Class Time

Synchronous meetings in an online setting should have clear expectations for participation, timing, and a process for sharing information.

- Participants understand the logistics of the meeting
- Facilitator provides and follows through with outcomes and agenda
- Meetings should follow expected routines

Create a Safe Environment

A facilitator in online learning will allow learners to participate at a comfortable level. Tasks should be manageable by learners, and safe to participate in. Participants should be expected to engage in the learning and ask questions.

- Tasks are relevant to the learning

- Participants are encouraged to join activities
- Activities allow participants to interact with the content and apply their learning.

Provide Opportunities for Learners to Participate and Collaborate

Online sessions include opportunities for participants to learn from each other and to share their questions. In a professional learning setting, the participants bring experience and knowledge to the group. Facilitators encourage networking and the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and new learning.

- There are a variety of interactions strategies
- Participants use the technology to share their experiences
- Time is given to ask questions and to interact with the material and each other

Supporting Research

The Power of Virtual Coaching
Ascd. "The Power of Virtual Coaching." *How Student Progress Monitoring Improves Instruction - Educational Leadership*, **www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct11/vol69/num02/The-Power-of-Virtual-Coaching.aspx**.

Mackey, J. (2008). Blending real work experiences and virtual professional development. In Hello! Where are you in the landscape of educational technology? Proceedings Melbourne 2008. **https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/1966/12611007_mackey.pdf%3Bjsessionid%3DEAF47473986D9A185AF2D sequence%3D1**

Laxton, Amber, et al. *A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market*. Digital Promise, 2017, *A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market*. **http://digitalpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/accelerating-learning-for-adult-education.pdf**

DuFour, Richard, and Casey S. Reason. Professional Learning Communities at Work and Virtual Collaboration: on the Tipping Point of Transformation. Solution Tree Press, 2016. **http://www.nea.org/tools/63691.htm**

McConnell, Tom J., et al. "Virtual professional learning communities: Teachers' perceptions of virtual versus face-to-face professional development." *Journal of Science Education and Technology* 22.3 (2013): 267-277 **https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/37234299/McConnelletalJoST2012.pdf? AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1524605375&Signature=xUgnDsz2DBJtZPkSrXLKhONDjsE%3D&respo content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DVirtual_Professional_Learning_Communitie.pdf**

King, Kathleen P. "Professional learning in unlikely spaces: Social media and virtual communities as professional development." International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET) 6.4 (2011): 40-46. **http://www.online-journals.org/index.php/i-jet/article/view/1765/2013**

Knight, Jim. "What Good Coaches Do." Educational Leadership, vol. 69, no. 2, Oct. 2011, **www.bcpss.org/bbcswebdav/institution/PUBLICINFO1112/CAO%20Leadership%20Institute%20SY11-12/December%206-9,%202011/What%20Good%20Coaches%20Do.pdf**

West, Lucy and Cameron, Antonia, Challenging Assumptions About Coaching in NEMJ Volume XLV, "Mathematics Coaching: Implications for Change." pp. 41-60. NEMJ, Keene, NH: 2013
http://metamorphosistlc.com/images/Resources/Articles/Challenging_Assumptions_About_Coaching.pdf

Resources

Facilitating Online Learning

The Importance of Facilitating Online Learning
https://drkellyedmonds.com/the-importance-of-facilitating-online-learning/

Deliver a Fun Online Learning Session
https://drkellyedmonds.com/fun-live-learning-sessions/

Facilitating Online Learning: Tips and Suggestions
https://scienceonline.terc.edu/facilitating_online_learning.html

Blended and Online Learning
https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blended-and-online-learning/

A Checklist for Facilitating Online Courses
https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/a-checklist-for-facilitating-online-courses/

Ice-Breaker Strategies

IceBreaker Activities
https://ce.uwex.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/IceBreaker.pdf

Icebreakers
https://laulima.hawaii.edu/access/content/group/fb8c10fd-5445-420b-0034-bad118df6196/TeachingResources/icebreakers.html

The Importance of Icebreakers in Online Learning
https://dl.sps.northwestern.edu/blog/2015/07/the-importance-of-icebreakers-in-online-classes/

Ten Online Icebreakers
http://joitskehulsebosch.blogspot.com/2009/03/10-online-icebreakers.html

Five Creative Icebreakers and Assignments for the Online Classroom
https://adjunctworld.com/blog/5-creative-icebreakers-assignments-for-the-online-classroom/

Adult Virtual Icebreakers
https://sites.google.com/site/adultonlineteachingstrategies/virtualicebreakers/adult-virtual-icebreakers

Discussion Strategies

Online Discussion Strategies
https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/developing-assignments/blended-learning/online-discussions-tips-students

Online Learning
http://advanced.jhu.edu/5-essential-online-learning-strategies/

Techniques of online discussion
https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/

Collaboration Strategies

Reasons Why Collaborative Online Learning Activities are Effective
https://elearningindustry.com/collaborative-online-learning-activities-reasons-effective

How to Make Group Work Collaborative
https://onlinelearninginsights.wordpress.com/2014/08/14/how-to-make-group-work-collaborative-in-online-courses-four-strategies/

Student Collaboration Tools
https://www.commonsense.org/education/top-picks/best-student-collaboration-tools

Fostering Collaboration in the Online Classroom
https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/fostering-collaboration-in-the-online-classroom/

Other Helpful Links

Zoom Meetings:full list of tutorials available
Zoom.us

Sample Zoom Meeting
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ZTh2PkreVmUDVyWHvT7voFRKiNKgoxAiYMV1eJnWucs/edit?usp=sharing

How to run a Google Hangout
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPZb3D0500I

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must answer the questions with a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and receive a proficient for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions

175 - 250 words

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

1. Explain why you chose this micro-credential and how it fits into your current role or goals for professional development.

2. Explain the course that you are facilitating including the target audience, outcomes, and schedule.

- **Passing:** Response provides reasonable and accurate information that justifies the reason for choosing this micro-credential to address specific needs of both the teacher and the student. Educator includes a learning goal that describes what they hope to gain from earning this micro-credential.

Part 2. Work Examples / Artifacts

Submit the following **three artifacts** as evidence of your learning. *Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers*.

Artifact 1: Agenda or Presentation

Submit an agenda or presentation for your course that demonstrates that you have established norms for the meeting time and planned outcomes for the learning. If the outcomes are co-created, be sure to share the document both before and after the session.

Artifact 2: Video of Class Session

Submit a video of one session with time stamps OR screenshots labeled to show the following items present:

- Agenda or schedule of course
- Outcomes
- Pace is appropriate for learner and content
- Icebreaker used
- Strategies use for discussion of content or assignment
- Participants have an opportunity to interact with the content

Be sure to obtain permission from participants to share their images or obscure identifying features of your participants. Timestamp relevant times in the video, or edit to no more than 15 minutes in length.

Artifact 3: Evidence of Collaboration

Evidence of collaboration is one piece of student work that demonstrates how you facilitated collaboration between participants. This can be a presentation or assignment that shows contributions from two or more participants.

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Agenda or Presentation	Agenda or Syllabus for class/course shows that the outcomes and schedule is planned. Norms are set for the course by either the facilitator or co-created during the class session	Agenda or Syllabus is missing outcomes or schedule. Norms may be vague or not present.	Agenda is missing key elements of the requirements

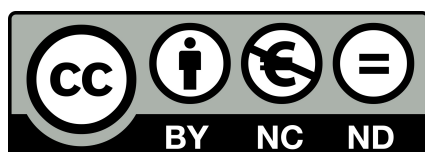|			
Artifact 2: Video of Class Session	The class session demonstrates that a safe environment is created, and learners participate in introductory activities. Activities are relevant and appropriate for adult learners. The amount of material is appropriate for the time allotted.	Video is not edited or time-stamped. The key points are not evident for the reviewer. The activities may be inappropriate for the audience or not connected to the outcomes.	Video is too long or not time-stamped, OR screenshots are not marked for the reviewer. There is no evidence of introduction, activities, or collaboration.
Artifact 3: Evidence of Collaboration	Artifact clearly demonstrates that two or more learners participated in the assignment or discussion. OR Facilitator moves discussion along through effective engagement strategies during the class.	Artifact shows some level of collaboration, though it may not be clearly identified. OR Discussion is led by the facilitator rather than participant discussion.	Participants are not given opportunities to interact with each other or the content.

Part 3 Reflection

350 - 500 words

Please answer the following reflective questions. Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

1. How did your facilitation in an online setting change because of your learning in this micro-credential?

2. Explain one take away from this micro-credential that you will continue in future online learning (teaching?).

3. Choose either planning, icebreakers, or online discussion and explain how appropriate use of these strategies increased engagement for your learners.

- **Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.