



iDream Project

IO4: Best Practice Guide for Digital Tutors

**Partners: KWC, CEFEC, EUROSUCCESS CONSULTING, VIONE,
IRIS, DOMSPAIN**

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Module 1 Digital Strategies.....	3
Module 2: Personalized learning for students.....	9
Module 3: Communication.....	19
Module 4: Evaluation	27
References.....	37

Introduction

Best Practice Guide for Digital Tutors is a Digital Manual, which will include a set of Best practices for Tutors, trainers, mentors, educators for their transition from the traditional teaching to digital environments.

This Guide will include 4 Modules:

Module 1 Digital Strategies

Module 2 Personalized learning for students

Module 3 Communication Practices

Module 4 Evaluation

Module 1: Digital strategies

Introduction/ Module overview

Modern learners get bored quickly and don't have enough motivation to learn, their expectations are getting the knowledge and skills to make it happen in a dynamic, intriguing and interesting way. This is one of the serious problems of education, the teacher loses the "war" against the smartphone for the learner's attention. A good digital strategy aims to **identify weaknesses** in the way the organization approaches digital and **aims to overcome these weaknesses** through action. Asynchronous education as a form of learning that does not take place in the same place at the same time - ie. all learners can learn the same learning material in a time and environment convenient for them is gaining popularity. Such forms are recorded video lessons or game-based tests that students complete on their own. Even teacher email exchange, online discussion boards and class management systems, and many other digital capabilities are part of asynchronous learning. In this module, we will pay attention to the current trends in digital education and how they can work to our advantage. We will focus our efforts on showing what it is to expect the unexpected and remain flexible. We'll explain how to set clear expectations for the course and to establish a sense of comfort and develop a community of learners.

2.1. Define Tutors' goals and expectations.

The aim is to show what digital strategy is, what new technological solutions are suitable, and some steps on how to build a modern online course. We expect that after completing the modules, users will be more informed about new technological solutions, how to apply them, how to design and organize interesting and interactive courses to attract the attention of their learners. We will point to specific examples of technologies that are emerging as fast, reliable and interactive. The main goal of the module is to provide the necessary knowledge and skills for users to be successful in digital education. The main issues that will be presented are:

- What are the challenges in the digital environment?
- How do we determine what learners need?
- What methods are others using?
- What can we enrich our materials with?
- How to deliver interesting content?

2.2. Know the technology tools

In addition to optimizing a teacher's time, educational technologies can help educators choose topics and teaching methods that are relevant, not outdated. This automatically has a positive effect on student engagement and interest. The means used for technological support of training, which are widespread are many and varied:

- Virtual educational environments (libraries, laboratories, classrooms rooms);
- Game-based learning;
- Virtual and augmented reality in training;
- Use of social networks in the educational process;

In support of the educational process are also included the ability to provide content and audio and video resources through Internet technologies – social networks, blogs, websites, etc.

We will present several applications to enrich the content and make learning interactive.

2.3. Steps to build an online course

One of the modern methods of training is precisely through online courses and online training materials. The many advantages, including time and cost, are just some of the reasons why formal and informal organizations are making the transition from conventional to online learning.

In order for an online training course to be effective and useful, it should be built according to several fundamental principles, which we present to you in 6 easy steps.

Choosing a suitable tool for creating e-learning.

The eLearning authoring tool plays a major role in creating your training course. That's why it's so important to choose the best tool that offers you the features you need. Assess your skills and abilities, as well as those of your team, to find the best fit for you. It's a good idea to look for an eLearning creation tool that offers you a combination of flexibility and ease of use. If you want to take full advantage of an Authoring Tool, then choose one that contains pre-made templates or has a library of ready-made models and elements.

Preliminary research of the target group – the needs of the learners

One of the most important signs that your course will be successful is that it is designed for the right audience. You need to assess and analyze the audience or topic for which you are creating educational content beforehand.

Using templates and training elements - Create new ones or use ready-made ones

There are a number of eLearning tools and sites that give you access to page layout templates that you can use in your course design. Instead of having to create the entire layout from scratch, you can take advantage of these templates and significantly reduce your training content development time. Some of the templates can even be customized and further branded. This gives less experienced eLearning experts the ability to produce their own eLearning courses without detailed programming or design knowledge.

Choosing a cloud learning management system.

One of the most amazing things that makes an online training course a fully professional training is the possibilities that the modern technological world provides for it to be consumed by the users. Through cloud learning management systems, you will be able to determine yourself how your course is used, as well as analyze your learners, their progress and achievements.

Embedding and adding multimedia and resources.

If you don't have the necessary tools or skills to create multimedia elements yourself, you can simply embed links to videos, presentations, and any other online resources directly into your eLearning course. This enables your learners to quickly access information without having to search the web for media that is related to your content. In addition, audio and video elements make the training course more professional and intuitive.

Simple and clear content - video, audio and graphic elements.

The possibilities for creating interactive online learning are almost limitless - Gamifications, Podcasts, Quizzes. Your course doesn't always have to contain every type of learning resource. Reduce long blocks of text and break them up into bullet points or bold subheadings to avoid cognitive overload.

2.4. Expect the unexpected and remain flexible

At some point technology will fail, whether it is a video chat not connecting or assignment and/or resource links not working properly. Have a backup plan for all assignments and assessments that rely on technology.

Be transparent in your communication to students about technology failure. For example, put a policy in place that outlines the actions students should take if they are unable to submit assignments due to technical issues.

Don't be afraid to solve technical challenges in real time, such as during synchronous discussions or collaborative real-time activities, to save time.

2.5. Set clear expectations for the course

Online learning is new to the students as well. Make it clear to students how their grade in the course will be determined now (participation often makes up a much larger portion of the grade than in face-to-face classes).

Set expectations for response time. For example, make it clear that you will respond to emails within one business day, otherwise students may expect you to answer an email within a few hours, and disengage if you don't.

Share resources for students on how to be an online learner. We have one from college students and from professors.

2.6. Establish a sense of comfort and develop a community of learners

Students are looking to you to set the tone. Demonstrate enthusiasm and excitement about teaching the course to alleviate fear, anxiety, and isolation.

Humanize yourself by posting a welcome video, a biography, photos that tell stories about what you are doing to keep busy during social isolation, links to news articles or video clips. Encourage each student to personalize their homepage and spend time going around the class asking students to share information about what they have posted. Incorporate instant messaging, web cameras, blogs and vlogs. Ask questions that empower participants to question each other, and elicit rich discussion. Respond to the community as a whole rather than directing all responses to individual participants outside of the community.

- **Unit in a nutshell**



- A useful tool for engaging the learners during activities is [AnswerGarden](#), a minimalistic feedback tool to use for real time audience participation, online brainstorming.

Source: Screenshot



- [Kahoot](#)

Kahoot! is a free platform to create interactive quizzes. It was invented to be accessible to everyone, in the classroom or in other educational environments around the world.

You can ask a series of questions. The format and number of questions is up to you. You can add pictures, videos and diagrams to your questions to make the test as enjoyable as possible.

- **Further Reading**

- Video: [Daphne Koller: What we're learning from online education](#)
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
- Article: [Beyond Frameworks: Supporting Adult Educators to Leverage Technology and Customize the Learning Experience](#)

Module 2: Personalized learning for students

1.1 Introduction/ Module overview

Nowadays it is not easy to adjust to students' needs and preferences, especially when there are more and more students with special learning difficulties. Regardless of a student's profile and specificity, there are plenty of digital solutions which may support instructors and educators in their everyday work in order to tend to personalized learning.

Personalized learning means tailor-made instruction and expression of learning and assessment to each student's unique needs and preferences. While one-to-one instruction geared towards the strengths and challenges of each student has always been an ideal, only in recent years has technology allowed it to become a reality in education.

Personalized learning capitalizes on students' almost instinctual ability to use technology, but it is so much more than technology and algorithms. It is the purposeful design of blended instruction to combine face-to-face teaching, technology-assisted instruction and student-to-student collaboration to leverage each student's interests for deeper learning. When done right, it leads to a more rigorous, challenging, engaging and thought-provoking curriculum.

However, each teacher should remember that even any initially planned or assumed curriculum needs constant adjustments, as our students are different and making the learning process more personalized is challenging, indeed.

1.2 Scope of each sub-module

- ✓ *Turn the classroom into a personalized learning meeting individual students' needs.*

The module covers useful tips that can be used by any teacher to take students from a traditional learning environment to a tech-assisted personalized learning harbour.

- ✓ *Best tools and practices to make teaching unique and applicable to each student's needs.*

In this module we will try to discover any favourite user-friendly tech tools to inspire teachers as well as students, boost their creativity and make this dynamic shift to remote learning more comfortable for both groups. Having an opportunity to familiarize with new tools and tech-based educational practices, will make teaching more unique and needs-specific.

- ✓ *Examples of innovative tools tutors might not be aware of.*

Apart from a brief introduction to the CONNECTIVISM theory, the readers will be provided with a variety of selected cutting-edge digital tools that are applied by educators of any type.

2.1. Turn the classroom into a personalized learning meeting individual students' need.

➤ Learn from others

The journey from old to new post-pandemic reality might seem difficult at first. Each teacher had to start planning their lessons more thoroughly, dealing sometimes with technical issues or choosing the wrong method of delivery for various types of content or skills. Constant work though on their performance and seeking of improvement may offer a lot of benefits. In those times, teachers started to exchange good practices, look for useful information on the internet, support each other, exchange ideas and identify students' needs through their feedback. Students' input and further pedagogical study may vastly help to refine the lesson planning process.

➤ Use the technology you know

Computers, MP3 players, DVDs, radio, television and the Internet used to convey various types of information including text, graphics, sound and video can significantly assist students at any level of education. The use of these devices and technologies in schools changes the teaching process. Skilful use of ICT (Information and communication technologies) enables a change in the current concept of school teaching thus a change in their quality. Nowadays, it is an inevitable process.

Technology plays a significant role in the success of this approach, as it allows the differentiation of instruction, assessment and expression of learning, as well as the collection of student data. Students — who are co-learners and other teachers — may help to adapt to any tools available. Students are allowed to use their cell phones for educational purposes.

○ Mobile learning BYOD/ BYOT

Because of the popularization of mobile devices, the trend known as **consumerization** is becoming more and more common. This is another model of ICT integration in the educational process called **BYOD** (*Bring Your Own Device*) or **BYOT** (*Bring Your Own Technology*), which promotes the use of own mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) in class.

During the courses, adult learners using private smartphones, tablets and laptops for educational purposes can:

- create and share a variety of texts
- spontaneously communicate with people from different parts of the world,
- have contact with a language outside the classroom,
- analyze own statements in a foreign language,
- create artefacts and share them with others (Kukulska-Hulme, Norris, Donohue, 2015:7).

➤ Let your students make their own choices

Take a more personalized approach to various assignments. Class can start with a mini-lesson, which then flows into students' decision-making process. Students can have the flexibility to choose their work in order to meet specific learning targets aligned to the standards.

Guidance could be offered to the students while allowing them to choose their own learning pathways and complete the activities that make the most sense to them. For instance, while reading a short story, they can choose between just reading or reading along as they listen to a story. They can also decide whether to annotate online or on a printed copy. They can take notes on paper or record their thoughts verbally as they analyze the story.

While students are still required to write traditional essays, they also get the chance to show their learning in a variety of other ways. If relevant, they can submit their analysis by writing a traditional essay, creating a website, creating infographics, or writing a script for a video.

➤ Choose the best content delivery method

Try to simply use technology instead of traditional face-to-face teaching.

Carefully construct the units with specific learning goals that drive the method of delivery and learning activities.

When deciding how to structure your lessons, look at the learning activities you've used in the past to decide which were successful and which need to be refined or replaced.

As a result, instead of lecturing to students and showing them a PowerPoint during class time, just give them screencasts or videos to watch at home.

➤ Assess in a different way

Instead of just giving a written exam at the end of each unit, try to use formative assessment to guide and assist your students. For sure, they will tell you what they need. You can use lots of tech-oriented methods. For instance, video lectures may include some interactive questions to assess their understanding of the material. When you create quizzes on Kahoot!, your classroom will be probably noisy and active, however, at the same time it will give you instant feedback on what you need to do next, who needs re-teaching and who would be better off in a group that pursues extended learning while you re-teach the rest of the class. Then you will spot many benefits of a customized learning approach.

You can also collect formative assessment data through:

- discussion threads,

- self-grading quizzes, which give students immediate feedback on their proficiency in specific skills,
- monitoring of students' works in progress on Google Docs,
- exit tickets, which assess the class' comfort level with new concepts.

2.2 Best tools and practices to make teaching unique and applicable to each student's needs.

The term CONNECTIVISM comes from the English word connect - to connect - which nowadays means "a theory of teaching-learning in the digital age." It is based on the belief that the goal of teaching is to learn to think, which takes precedence over the acquisition of knowledge.

The key competence in this theory is the ability to properly use technological advances and find messages in external databases (the so-called know-where), rather than, as before, from information learned or gained, and to associate and link them with other pieces of information. On this basis, the student is able to draw conclusions, thus acquiring key skills that are very valuable in the 21st century job market.

AT THE PEDAGOGICAL LEVEL OCCURS:

- Individualization of learning, support of the learner's autonomy – readiness to take responsibility for their own learning to meet their own needs, which results in the willingness and ability to act independently or in cooperation with others,
- encouraging students to use **Open Educational Resources (OER)** – materials available on the Internet with the possibility of their further use (with the recommended use of the so-called free licenses), which teaches the ability to search, evaluate, interpret specific content and make them aware of the need and advantages of sharing knowledge,
- changing the emotional and motivational attitude to the learning process – connected with access to modern sources of knowledge, breaking with the predominance of the spoken word and print in favour of the presence of many "languages" and activating the student with the use of multimedia.

➤ Self-paced learning/self-directed learning



The contemporary approach to teaching, taking into account the effectiveness and optimisation of the learning process, encourages us to use innovative, intuitive forms, but also to build positive experiences of participants in this process. Apart from the forms of conveying knowledge and practising new skills, we pay attention to the way they are made available and shared.

Source: talentlms.com

As the name suggests, the basic assumption of **self-paced training** is to adapt the teaching process to the individual abilities of a given participant to acquire knowledge. While in traditional forms the pace is set by the lecturer/educator / teacher, self-paced training has different rules – the course even assumes the absence of the supervisor.

Bearing in mind the comfort of the participant, who decides when and where to study, self-paced training allows you to fully adapt the teaching process to your preferences and possibilities.

An important factor here is also the greater freedom of the individual in managing the time in which he or she can and wants to acquire knowledge.

Therefore, the self-paced training approach requires a certain maturity, sense of responsibility, determination and motivation of the participant at a high level. Thus, it can be considered that such a learning process shapes the personality of the participant themselves. Of course, the learner can self-impose deadlines for tasks in advance, but it is entirely up to the learner how responsibly and conscientiously he or she meets the imposed deadline.

Even if we divide participants into groups and narrow down the group levels as precisely as possible, we will always notice discrepancies in the pace of learning or performing tasks. Self-paced training is a very individual approach – if someone needs more time for a given material and to work with it, that person follows his or her own pace and does not compete with anyone, which, however, in most cases disheartens the participant in the group. Those "smarter" and with greater aptitude or much better time management will not feel bored. The participant of an e-learning course becomes decisive, independent and gains valuable experience through self-education.

➤ **Teaching 1:1, i.e. a laptop for everyone**

There are countries with decades of experience in mass teaching with laptops in a 1:1 system. However, in our country teachers who have decided to use such innovative solutions are only beginning to overcome problems and their own limitations related to lack of experience and appropriate competences.

They mainly concern:

- technical intuition (e.g. assessment of the effectiveness of a wireless network by teachers: sharing via a wireless network with too low bandwidth of a DVD containing multimedia with high definition image),
- use of specific multimedia possibilities (e.g. built-in webcam as a video conference medium, digital camera, audio and video recorder and player),
- didactic and communicative use of Web 2.0 mechanisms (e.g. creating discussion groups, public commenting, using discussion forums and blogs, virtual communities, social networking sites in teaching),
- adequate use of available programs (e.g. for processing graphics, sound and video, for creating and viewing mind maps),
- efficient search for valuable information on the web, especially foreign language information.

Netbooks in schools are a positive change. Despite various difficulties and limitations, students learn to use modern equipment, learn about its functions, especially in the context of usefulness in the learning process, use multimedia more often, and show higher motivation to learn. Parents are much more interested in their children's education. Teachers see the need for further training.

➤ **Time-shifted learning/flipped learning**

A flipped classroom model is a methodical approach that reverses/replaces the traditional order of lessons. In the traditional model, the teacher introduces students to a new topic in the classroom (mini-lecture, presentation, text work, explanation, etc.) and students are expected to solve some of the tasks at home in the process of consolidation. In the flipped classroom, the student's homework is to become familiar with the new topic on their own

Source: szk.szkolazklasa.org.pl



(Usually through a video lecture prepared by the teacher), and in the lesson, the student

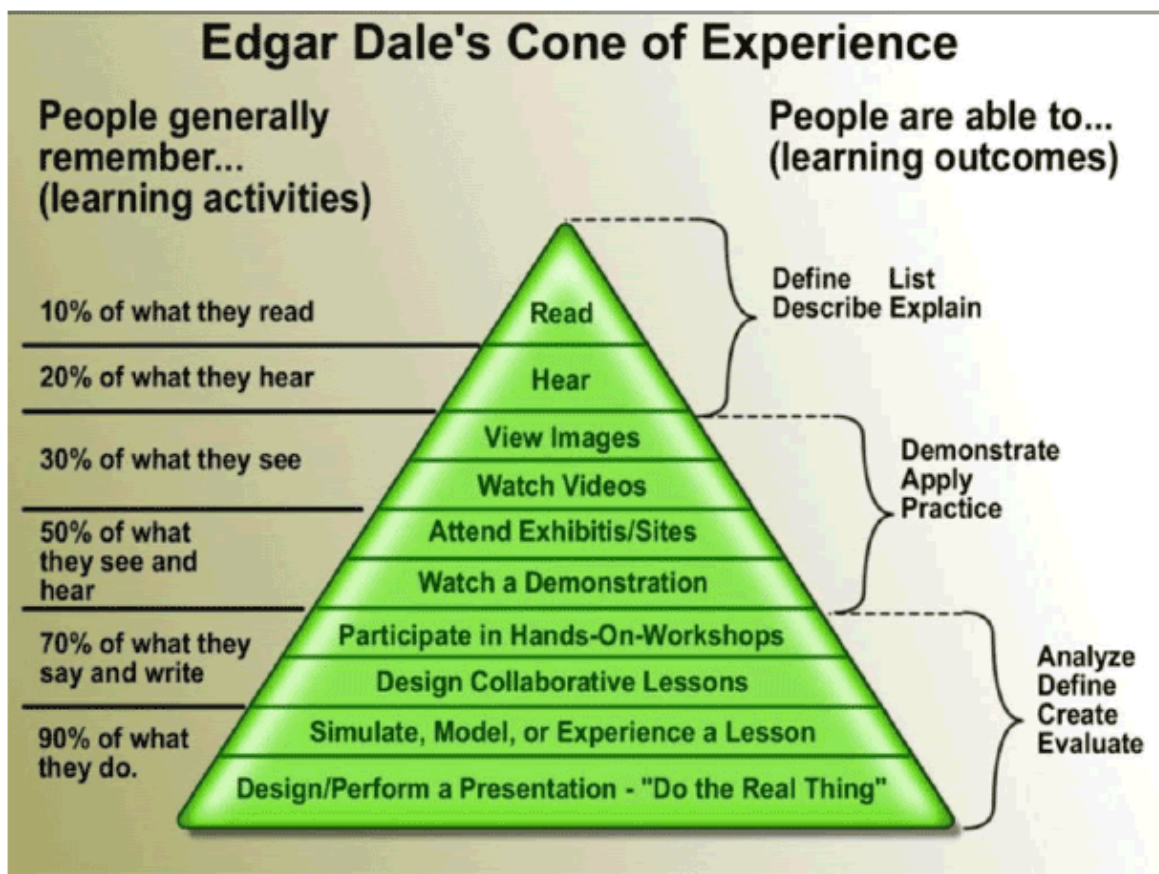
attempts to solve the exercises through creative work in groups.

The role of the teacher in this model is significant and requires more input than usual in substantive content and evaluation. The teacher must observe students, give them support and feedback on their activities, and evaluate their work. At the same time, the classroom becomes an interactive learning environment, adapted to the needs and possibilities of individual students.

➤ **Collaborative learning**

According to the idea of collaborative learning, teamwork or collaboration, participants in the learning process share tasks, develop and improve social competencies and gain mutual benefits. The role of the teacher is significant here. The teacher fully supervises the didactic process, gives it the right direction and creates the right atmosphere and conditions for the development of students' cognitive processes, increase in knowledge and skills. The teacher is a close observer and assessor of learners' activities/tasks. He/she supports the group work on an ongoing basis.

Figure 1. Average ability to memorize by Edgar Dale's cone experience



Source: www.uczsieskuteczniej.wordpress.com

The learning pyramid above is a graph showing the influence of the didactic form on the

increase in knowledge and the learner's ability to remember. The graph shows the inexorable percentages indicating how much information we can remember depending on the means of imparting knowledge involved by the educator. This pyramid is the foundation of activation in education and proves that "*people learn most effectively through experience*". The segments of the triangle imply that people remember 10% of what they read, 20% of what they heard, 30% of what they saw, 50% of what they saw and heard, 75% of what they said and wrote down (recorded), and 95% what they said and used in practice.

Thus, collaborative learning has very rewarding effects, as it develops the ability to perform a task and teamwork at the same time, it teaches cooperation, responsibility for their own actions, and also makes students appreciate the contribution of other people and see the effect of joint struggle.

➤ **Asynchronous teaching model**

Teaching in the asynchronous mode assumes that during the course the students and the teacher do not have to be in the same place at the same time. Asynchronous solutions are oriented towards independent learning by the student and it is up to the student to decide when to do this. Working in asynchronous mode, the student chooses independently not only the date of the study, but also the content of the exercises, and also solves tests on websites or FTP servers on the Internet. The training material may also be delivered on CDs.

ASYNCHRONOUS SOLUTIONS

Asynchronicity means lack of contact of the learner with the teacher and other students who could give advice and correct mistakes. IT solutions of this type are still valid today, and the most popular of them are *Topclass* or the almost synchronous *WebCT*.

2.3 Examples of innovative tools tutors might not be aware of.

➤ **EDMODO**

VLE or *Virtual Learning Environment* represents educational platforms that can support the organisation of learning in the spirit of connectivism. They are both a place that allows for a convenient, electronic way of organising and managing classes (e- class register, uploading materials, e-testing, correspondence with parents, boss, etc.) and a virtual space where students in traditional classes have the opportunity to create the course content at the time and place convenient to them, sharing at the same time common learning goals with others.

A popular example of a virtual learning and teaching environment is the **EDMODO** platform. Often described as the "Facebook of education", Edmodo has a user-friendly interface that reminds the layout of Facebook's content, thus facilitating quick learning of the portal, which is very important when using new technologies. Edmodo is not the only virtual learning environment (other examples include **Google Classroom**, **Blackboard**, **Moodle** or **Itslearning**), but it has features that allow you to apply the connectivism approach in foreign language classes

in a simple and effective way.

Edmodo allows you to record your course electronically from the first to the last class, accessing information even after the meetings have finished. Course syllabus, material distribution and goals intended to be achieved, can be included.

Messages from the teacher can be both pre- and post-class information. Before the class, it is worth telling the students what the next meeting's agenda will be, thus allowing them to prepare in advance and remind them of important projects or tasks. Additionally, a fixed point can also be included here: "Homework consultation" or "Active repetition".

➤ Massive Open Online Course

Mass Online Open Courses (MOOC) – undoubtedly fit into the idea of connectivism. Created online and made available on special platforms (e.g. *coursera.org*, *futurelearn.com*, *edx.com*, *Udemy*), they allow for a virtual meeting of an unlimited number of participants (even hundreds of thousands) from any location in the world, who share a common goal – gaining or expanding knowledge in a given area with the assistance of specialists in a given field.

Figure 2. Examples of MOOC platforms



Source: <https://medium.freecodecamp.org/a-massive-list-of-free-online-course-providers-from-around-the-world-925766226f46>

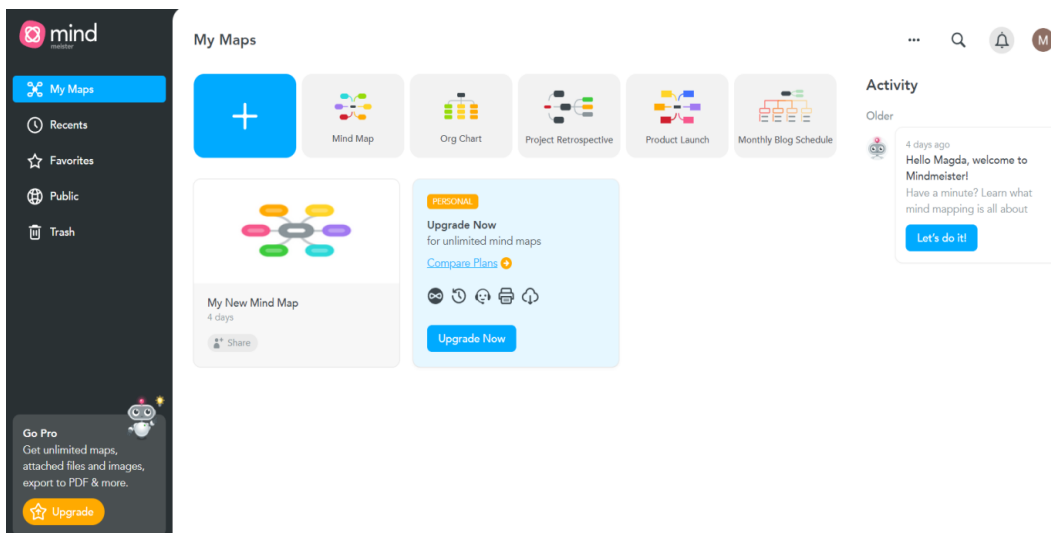
Thanks to technology, for the first time in the history of education, every Internet user can have access to the knowledge offered by the best universities in the world, materials prepared by recognized specialists in a given field. Thanks to technology, MOOC students learn at their own pace, at their own convenience, both in the home environment and outside.

Koller & Vaan, 2013; Leber, 2013

2. Unit in a nutshell

- The learning process is non-linear. Teachers cannot expect all students in their classroom to learn in the exact same way or pace.
- Students in a personalized learning environment improve their knowledge significantly.
- Sharing in goal-setting helps students develop motivation and reliability.
- Engaging in self-assessment helps students develop self-reflective abilities.
- Determining their best learning activities and co-creating assignments help students develop self-advocacy skills.
- Using any technology during classes by students can be a great advantage if they are properly instructed how and what they use it for.
- Both teachers and students should be regularly updated and trained on how to use newly-emerging digital tools/ solutions that may facilitate their work and make it more enjoyable.

➤ Mind Meister

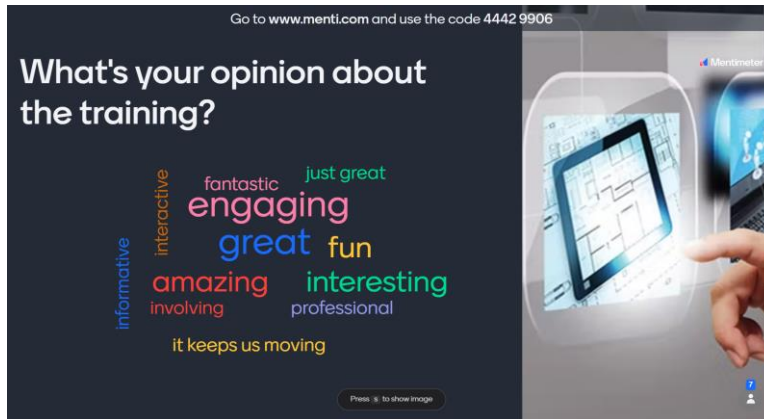


Mind Meister is an online mapping tool

- It is simple and intuitive. The program offers many templates and the possibility of personalization.
- Thanks to the integration with the Internet, you can quickly add images and videos available through the search engine installed in the program.

- Sharing is important – it allows us to work together. It is an interesting tool for online brainstorming.
- MindMeister also allows you to create presentations.

➤ **Mentimeter**



- Mentimeter is a tool that offers several ways to measure the opinions of training participants.
- Mentimeter offers various forms of collecting and presenting opinions, is ideal for evaluation purposes.
- The results appear immediately on the screen.
- Example activities: word cloud, multiple choice, picture selection, slider scales, response rankings, open-ended responses, simple quizzes.

Module 3: Communication

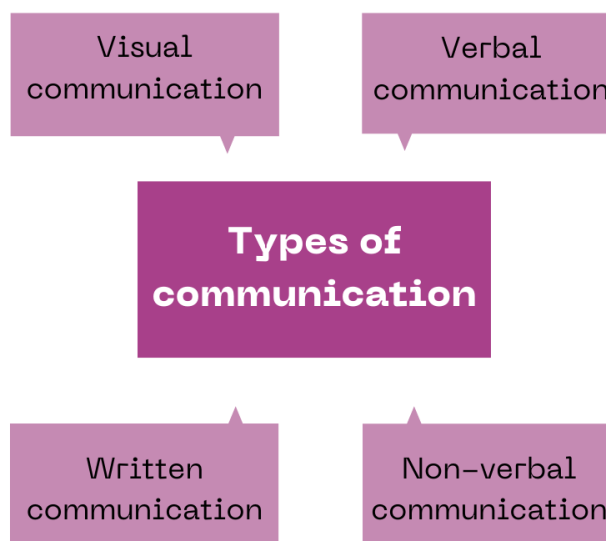
Module Overview

Communication in the classroom is one of the most important things as it helps learners to learn effectively. Many studies have shown that the key to the success of both learning and teaching, is 50% knowledge and 50% communication skills.

There are mainly four types of communication:

- Verbal communication: receiving or sending information through languages using sounds.
- Non-verbal communication: sending information without words through body language such as gestures, facial expressions, posture and even the tone and pitch of the voice.
- Written communication: receiving or sending information through any type of writing.
- Visual communication: communicating information through visual elements.

The goal of the highlight the effective between students as well tips on how to properly in the environment to get used to both suddenly without preparation coronavirus started.



module is to importance of communication teachers and as provide some communicate online which we had to rapidly and any prior when the pandemic

This module will

- Communication engagement between tutor and learner
- Why effective communication is required in an online class
- Communication guidelines

cover:

Communication engagement between tutor and learner will consist in the following submodules:

1.1. Why is it important to have good communication between tutor and learner?

1.2. How to achieve good communication between tutor and learner?

Why effective communication is required in an online class will consist in the following submodules:

2.1 Differences to the communication in an online classes

2.2 Why is effective communication so important and effective in this environment?

2.3 Tips to achieve an effective communication

Communication guidelines will consist in the following submodules:

3.1 Importance of discussions

3.2. Opening and maintaining a discussion

Communication between tutor and learner



1.1. Why is it important to have a good communication between tutor and learner?

It is said that in all professions soft skills, which consist of leadership skills, teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills and communication skills among others, are of great importance. Being a teacher is not an exception to the rule.

Good communication between a tutor and a learner is crucial mainly because of the four following reasons:

- it facilitates the learning for students since the teacher is the one who needs to convey difficult concepts in ways that are understandable for students as well as the one who motivates the students
- it decreases the possibilities of a teacher's burnout
- it increases the chances of spotting problems in the classroom at early stages
- it influences how teachers are perceived by both students and their parents
- it facilitates the conversation with the parents concerning sensitive topics, for instance, misbehavior of the student.

1.2. How to achieve good communication between tutor and learner?

Since we have already explained why good communication in the classroom is key, let's take a look at how to achieve good communication between a tutor and a learner:

- Make sure that the environment in the classroom is safe, i.e. that all students can

feel free to express themselves or ask questions without having to worry about being judged. It is proven that supportive teachers enhance the participation, engagement of the students as well as their achievements. Make sure that neither you nor other students humiliate each other, laugh at each other, judge each other and the like.

- Learn the names of the students. It recognizes their individuality and at the same time makes them feel respected.
- Organize assignments which need to be done in groups or group discussions since it is more probable that students will start opening up and gaining trust when working in small groups.
- Control your body language by making sure that all the signals that you give through your facial expressions, posture, gesticulation are positive.
- Keep eye contact with your students as a sign that you are attentive.
- Be an active listener, nod your head and make sure that you understand well what your students try to communicate to you by asking additional questions.
- Give feedback to your students – not only about what they need to improve but also about the positive things that they do, such as putting their hand up when they want to say something. When grading assignments, can use the method of “Two stars and a wish” which consists in praising the student for two things and pointing out one thing that needs to be improved.
- Tell jokes or anecdotes to ease the tense atmosphere.

Why effective communication is required in online classes

2.1. Differences to the communication in an online class

Sandra Mitchell-Holder (2016) states that the goal of online communication is the same as the goal of face-to face communication, i.e. to share information, to build and maintain relationships, to be heard as well as understood. Yet, depending on whether the classes are stationary or online, teachers need to employ different types of communication.



It is vital to realize that online communication has its own restrictions. As we could see in the Coronavirus pandemic, sometimes it was challenging to convince the whole group of students to turn on their cameras during a lesson. Therefore, it was challenging to see if they could understand the content of the lesson, if they were confused or satisfied.

That is why, the first step on the way to achieve a good communication between a tutor and a learner is to ensure that all participants have their cameras turned on. The cameras enable us to see (to some extent) the facial expressions as well as the body language of the participants. Therefore, communicating solely through text messages is even more challenging as one cannot even rely on the pitch and intonation of the voice. Hence, both teachers and students are deprived of the signs conveyed through non-verbal communication.

2.2. Why is effective communication so important in this environment?

Effective communication in the online environment is important because it helps to create the sense of community which facilitates making friends. It is vital since in the online environment, students do not have breaks in which they can engage in small talk with their peers.

Thus, all interactions actually happen during online classes.

2.3. Tips to achieve effective communication

Let's have a look at tips that will help you as a teacher improve the level of communication with your students:

- Give your students clear information on how they can contact you in case of doubts (e-mail, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.) and specify how long they will have to wait for the answer (maximum 24 hours, maximum 2 days, etc.)
- Use Zoom (<https://zoom.us/>) to create rooms in which students can discuss in small groups
- Give your students detailed feedback
- Express yourself clearly since nuances cannot be communicated well via text
- Opportunity for video calls whenever possible
- Use Canva or Genially to create presentations and, subsequently, to make your students more engaged in the lesson and to foster communication
- Act according to the Netiquette.

What is Netiquette? Netiquette is a word that denotes the set of rules that should be followed to ensure that you communicate both respectfully and appropriately online.

Communication guidelines

3.1 Importance of discussions

Sharing ideas with other people in the group can be extremely mind-broadening. As a result,

people get out of their own bubbles. When encountered with contrasting views, a discussion may spur out. Discussions can bring benefits – they help students process information as they do not only need to memorize certain pieces of information, they need to understand it to be able to develop an argument.

3.2. Opening and maintaining a discussion

I am sure that every teacher has experienced (at least once in their lives) a situation in which he/she tried to open a conversation and there was only one student responding or the whole classroom was silent as if the teacher himself or herself was about to do the talking.

Conversations as well as discussions teach students to vocalize their opinions thanks to which you can understand them better and make your job easier, for if you know your students, it is easier for you to adjust activities to their attitudes as well as needs and increase their satisfaction.

Let’s have a look at some tips on how to open conversations as well as carry them out effectively.

Carrying out a discussion	
DOS	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare and educate yourself; ● Prepare open-ended questions that are related to the topic you are dealing with at the moment, for example, if you are about to talk to your students about travelling, ask them if they have ever travelled abroad or what they have experienced during their last trip, etc; ● Give some time to the students to look for information on the specific topic since in this way they can delve into it and create their own opinion about it; ● Be an active listener; ● Let students talk first. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do not initiate a discussion about the topic you haven’t studied thoroughly beforehand; ● Do not ask yes/no questions; ● Do not impose your opinion; ● Do not interrupt; ● Do not judge your students.

Moreover, you should also remember about useful expressions and phrases for opening as well as maintaining discussions:

- What's your opinion about ...?
- How do you feel about ...?
- Could someone tell me ...?
- What do you mean by...?
- Are you saying that ...?
- Are you suggesting that ...?

Useful tools

1. Padlet

Padlet (<https://pl.padlet.com/>) is a tool that is worth considering for an effective sharing of information since the students can share their thoughts /opinions with the class and the rest can see the content in real time. Not only can students share phrases or drawings but also files, videos or audios. Padlet also gives everyone the option to react to other people's comments.

Padlet consists in a variety of different layouts and options to choose from:

- Wall;
- Canvas;
- Stream;
- Grid;
- Shelf;
- Backchannel;
- Map;
- Timeline.

Depending on the option you choose, the comments as well as the content itself will be located differently – it can appear in a series of columns (shelf); along a horizontal line (timeline); on a map (map), and the like. Padlet may turn out to be a very powerful tool as it may make shy students active as they will not be forced to talk or ask questions in front of the group and they can do it anonymously. What is more, it might make students open up more as they would not have to be worried about being judged. Thus, their creativity as well as confidence may be boosted.

2. Flipgrid

Another useful tool for discussions in the online environment is an app called Flipgrid (<https://my.flipgrid.com>) which was created specifically for discussion. The tool may result to be useful for you in your professional as well as private life. For professional purposes you can use it as a platform by means of which your students can connect with their colleagues, conduct a discussion, and share opinions. In your private life you can use it to broaden your horizons while getting to know people from various parts of the world and attending book clubs or learning a language with video coaching.

Unit in a nutshell

- Educators need to work on their communication skills
- Online communication requires different approach from an educator
- Tips that might help you ensure effective communication with your students exist
- Let your students talk first, without revealing and imposing your point of you on them
- Digital tools available online might help you to communicate with your students effectively

Module 4: Evaluation

Evaluations are in place to understand if a course, program or learning outcome has been met.

It helps to determine what went well and what needs to be improved.

Evaluation is a vital step in learning and should be carried out at regular intervals; these should be set at the start of any learning and agreed to by learner and tutor.

There are five main types of evaluation:

- Formative – Undertaken during learning to help shape what you deliver
- Summative – judges the learning using standards already established.
- Process – During and after learning to gauge how the learning is being undertaken, identifying what is/went well and how it may be improved
- Outcome – Measuring what happened due to the learning
- Impact – A broader evaluation relating to a long-term impact



Figure 1

This module will cover-

- Evaluation techniques for learners and tutors.
- Self-reflection.
- Setting goals and expectations for learners' support.
- Best practices for evaluation.

Evaluation Techniques for learners and tutors will show a variety of techniques that can be used and how, including pros and cons

Self-reflection will discuss the importance of and share methods of self-evaluating

Setting goals and expectations for learners' support will focus on helping tutors choose realistic goals for learners

Best practice for evaluation will have guidelines and principles of evaluation

Evaluation Techniques for learners and tutors

Evaluations are the most effective way to judge a learner's understanding of a subject and determine if the teaching is the most beneficial it can be.

There are a variety of techniques available to the tutor, to allow them to evaluate and assess the learner, learning and even themselves.

- Online quizzes (true/false, single/multiple select, multiple-choice, etc.).
- Drag-and-drop activities (matching, dropdown, etc.)
- Open-ended questions
- Essay questions
- Online polls/surveys
- Online interviews
- Dialogue simulations
- Game-based learning activities
- Peer evaluation and reviews
- Discussion/forum posts
- Fill in the blanks
- Crossword or puzzles

A tutor will find the best method for the subject they are delivering and the students they are teaching.

When planning evaluation techniques, it's important to consider the following, while applying the principle of VACSR

- VALID - What will be evaluated – is it relevant and at the right level
- AUTHENTIC – Ensure it is the learner's own work
- SUFFICIENT - How will I measure it - what criteria is it measured against What is to be achieved by learners if their goals are met
- CURRENT – Is it relevant to the current time
- RELIABLE - How will they know that they have achieved their goals and is the work consistent

With the growth of digital teaching, there has also been the same in evaluating, meaning, tutors have a variety of techniques available to them, including

Kahoot

[Kahoot! | Learning games | Make learning awesome!](#)

Kahoot, is a friendly, relaxed and playful way of evaluating. It is game led and the tutor can design their own quizzes to suit the subject and the learners. This is a free website available to all.

Google forms

[Google Forms: Online form creator | Google Workspace](#)

Google forms requires an account with google and for the tutor to devise the template/survey/evaluation document, however there is an option where the results can be analyzed and summarized.

Survey Monkey

[SurveyMonkey: The World's Most Popular Free Online Survey Tool](#)

Survey monkey allows tutors to create polls, quizzes and surveys. Like Google Forms, these can be analyzed. There is a free basic plan, but for more advanced options, there is a fee.

Mentimeter

[Interactive presentation software - Mentimeter](#)

Although similar to the others that Mentimeter can be used to create quizzes and polls, this can also be used while delivering online, and is interactive while in “live” use. However, a fee is needed for most packages.

Quizlet

[Learning tools and flashcards - for free! | Quizlet](#)

Quizlet also has live quizzes, games and even practice assessments. Quizlet does carry a fee. There are also a variety of apps, website and tools available online to allow tutors to make their presentations such as Nearpod [Nearpod: You'll wonder how you taught without it](#), or Flipgrid [Flip \(flipgrid.com\)](#)

These allow the tutor to ensure learning throughout and allow them to evaluate whether they need to change their method immediately.

However, when choosing a technique, its also important to consider the evaluation model you follow.

1. Kirkpatrick's Model of Learning Evaluation.

[Kirkpatrick's](#) model of learning evaluation has been used for more than 50 years. The model encourages us to evaluate learning on four levels:

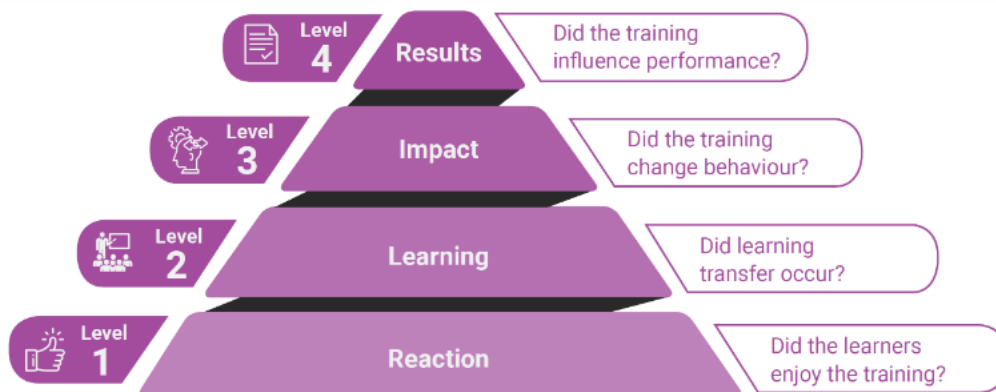
- Reaction – Did they enjoy the training?
- Learning – Did they pass the assessment?
- Behavior – Do they work better?
- Results – Did business metrics improve?

The important thing is to measure at all four levels so you can see exactly how each stage of your learning design was effective. Design your learning program by starting with a business problem. Then identify the actions needed to solve that problem and the learning needed to support those actions. Once that's complete, design the program needed for that learning to happen. Your evaluation metrics should follow that same chain so that if you don't meet the

business goal, you'll know where it went wrong.

Figure 2

2. Kaufman's Model Of Learning Evaluation.



Several models build on or react to Kirkpatrick's. Kaufman's model of learning evaluation is one of those. He makes two significant changes from Kirkpatrick:

1. Kaufman splits Kirkpatrick's level 1 into "input" and "process". Input is the learning materials and resources available to learners. Process relates to the actual delivery of the learning experience.
2. Kaufman adds a fifth level above organizational benefits to look at the benefits to society as a whole or to a business' clients.

Kaufman encourages us to evaluate learning resources separately from delivery as these really are different things. However, the fifth level is slightly unrelated to that of learners. Most organizations struggle to capture data about the impact of a learning program on business metrics, let alone asking us to puzzle out the impact on society as a whole. The impact on customers is certainly important, but this is normally already wrapped up as part of business metrics



Figure 3

3. Anderson’s Value Of Learning Model.

If a learning program led to an increase in factory production by 50%, you might think it was successful. But if the organization where the program took place already had surplus stock and not enough sales, the real story is that the learning program was poorly aligned to the organization’s priorities.

[Anderson’s Value Of Learning model](#) encourages us to focus evaluation on the alignment between the learning program’s goals and the strategic goals of the organization. Only once the goals are aligned can we evaluate the success of the learning program in meeting those goals.

	Senior management trust in the learning contribution ∨	The organization requires learning value metrics ∨
Emphasis on the short-term benefits >	Learning Function Measures	Return on Investment Measures
Emphasis on the long-term benefits >	Return on Expectation Measures	Benchmark & Capability Measures

Figure 4

4. Brinkerhoff’s Success Case Method.

Sometimes learning programs are resounding successes, and other times they are total flops. Most of the time they are somewhere in the middle. However successful the program may be as a whole, there will always be a few learners who were successful and few others for whom the program didn't work.

Brinkerhoff’s Success Case Method (SCM) involves identifying the most and least successful cases within your learning program and studying them in detail. By comparing the successes to the failures, you can learn what to change to ensure success in future endeavors. Based on

what you learn, you can also write and publicize success stories to show how valuable your program has been.



Figure 5

What is Self-Reflection

“Self-reflection is a process by which you grow your understanding of who you are, what your values are, and why you think and act the way you do.”

Self-reflection is a way of evaluating yourself, and in this instance your teaching, and encouraging your students to reflect on their learning.

A self-reflection can include:

- A list of accomplishments
- Goals achieved
- Goals not achieved
- Plans for the future

Benefits of self-reflection:

- Better Perspective
- Work on dedicated goals
- Identify areas for improvement
- Higher self esteem
- Better work performance

- Challenge your thinking
- Recognize change
- Track your progress

There are various models to assist in self-reflection, including:

- Gibbs Reflective Cycle by Graham Gibbs

Gibbs Reflective Cycle

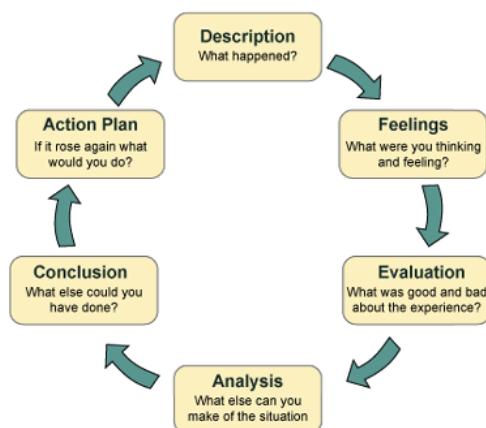


Figure 6

Professor Gibbs devised this model as a technique for reflection as he believed it helped people learn from situations.

- Kolb reflective cycle

The Experiential Learning Cycle

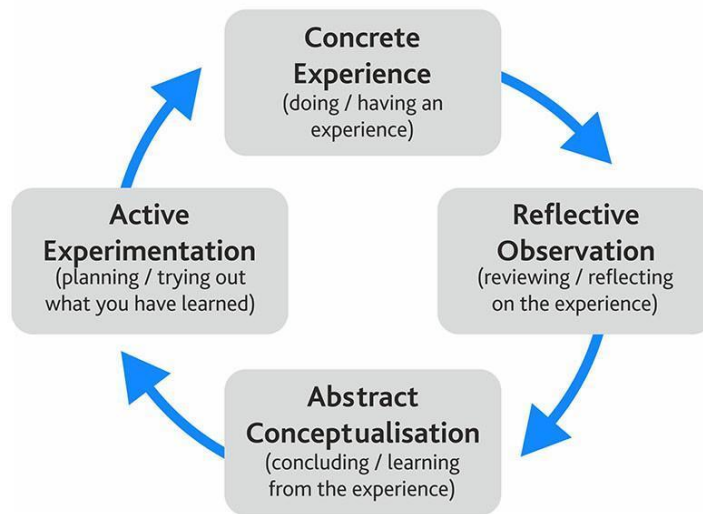


Figure 7

The experiential learning cycle is unique in that a learner can enter/begin at any stage.

Using a model will give an individual a “starting” point and allow them to ask and answer questions, honestly.

While self-reflecting, one must take the good with the bad and learn from the process. If strengths are identified, continue to grow these, however if weaknesses are, put a plan in place to build on these and turn them into strengths.

Setting goals and expectations for learners` support

When setting goals, the tutor must ensure these are suitable for the learner. They are devised to motivate and guide learners to their ultimate goals.

When setting goals these should be SMART

- S – SPECIFIC
- M - MEASURABLE
- A – ACHIEVABLE
- R – REALISTIC
- T – TIME BOUND.

These guidelines will ensure that a goal is set clearly and with defined boundaries, but also that they can be proven to both tutor and learner.

To Make goal setting work:

- Start early.
- Do it often

- *Make it visual*
- Create personal relevance
- *Center student choice.*
- **Bringing it all together**

Goal setting should be agreed with all parties involved and should be reviewed at regular intervals; interventions may need to be put in place if a learner is struggling with a particular goal.

It can also be beneficial to set goals visually, either as basic as a word document or storing on one of the previously mentioned systems such as google docs. This allows the learner to review but makes it more tangible.

Best practice for evaluation

Best practice is a set of guidelines or a standard that has been used previously or has been proven to produce a good result.

Principles

- **Clarity:** Evaluations should be designed, conducted and reported with a clear purpose that is transparent to all who are part of the evaluation.
- **Integrity:** The practice of evaluation should demonstrate responsibility to participants according to agreed ethical principles and assure the veracity and validity of the findings.
- **Independence:** Evaluations should be independent of vested interests and power differences. **Accessibility:** Findings of evaluations should be available in the public domain and communicable to agreed audiences.
- **Trust:** No evaluation can effectively proceed without trust which needs to be developed and nurtured through agreed ethical procedures for conduct and reporting that are fair and just to all.
- **Equity:** The conduct of evaluation should respect the perspectives and human dignity of all participants and stakeholders, irrespective of their position in professional contexts or social structures.
- **Transparency:** The principles underlying an evaluation, its approach, ethical practices, limitations and uses should be made explicit to all stakeholders.
- **Diversity:** Evaluation should respect cultural, gender and age differences and strive to include all relevant standpoints including those of the traditionally disenfranchised, marginalized or hard to reach.

References

- Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning. Discussions. Indiana University Bloomington. <https://citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources/teaching-strategies/discussions/index.html>
- Classroom Communication: Why It Matters and How to Improve It. Rise Vision. (2021, November 26). <https://www.risevision.com/blog/classroom-communication-why-it-matters-and-how-to-improve-it>
- Hanifan, Olivia. 5 Ways to Establish Effective Communication in the Classroom. Mentimeter. (2022, October 1). <https://www.mentimeter.com/blog/interactive-classrooms/5-ways-to-establish-effective-communication-in-the-classroom>
- How Flip Works. Flip. <https://info.flip.com/getting-started.html>
- How to create an open conversation with your students. Ellison. <https://www.ellisoneducation.com/blog/how-to-create-an-open-conversation-with-your-students/>
- How To Improve Communication in E-Learning. Learn Dash. <https://www.learndash.com/how-to-improve-communication-in-e-learning/>
- Issa, Suzanne. How to get students talking—with minimal input. EF. (2020, January 16). <https://teacherblog.ef.com/advanced-conversation-class-little-teacher-preparation/>
- Kaplan, Zoe. Forage. Home > Basics > What Are Soft Skills? Definition and Examples
- Mitchell-Holder, Sandra. PressBooks. Humanizing online teaching and learning. <https://pressbooks.pub/humanmooc/chapter/lets-talk-effectively-communicating-with-your-online-students/>

- New EdTech Classroom. Padlet Tutorial for Teachers. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dC69Sr-OQik>
- Online classes: improving communication with students. BlogCoursify.me. <https://blog.coursify.me/en/online-classes-communication/>
- Pocketful of Primary. Padlet Tutorial for Teachers + 8 Ways to Use With Students. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9IQVofS43I>
- Sinha, Prerna. Why Good Communication Skills are Important for Teachers. Classplus Growth Blog. (2022, July 16). <https://classplusapp.com/growth/why-good-communication-skills-are-important-for-teachers/>
- Sword, Rosalyn. Effective Communication in the Classroom: Skills for Teachers. Hub. (2020, November 16). <https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/communication-skills-for-teachers/>
- Useful phrases for discussions. <https://ocw.upj.ac.id/files/Slide-LSE-08.pdf>
- Types of communication. Valamis. <https://www.valamis.com/hub/types-of-communication>
- Verner, Susan. In the world of language learning, communication is king. Busy Teacher. (<https://busyteacher.org/23001-get-students-talking-more-5-easy-strategies.html>)
- What Are Soft Skills? Definition and Examples. <https://www.theforage.com/blog/basics/what-are-soft-skills-definition-and-examples>
- What is Netiquette? 20 rules Internet Etiquette Rules. Kaspersky. <https://www.kaspersky.com/resource-center/preemptive-safety/what-is-netiquette>
- Alawamleh Mohammad, et al. The effect of online learning on communication between instructors and students during Covid-19 pandemic. (2020, August 10). <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/remote-hub/docs/effect-online-learning-on-communication-instructor-student.pdf>
- Berry, Elizabeth. Foster Connections in the Classroom by Checking Out These 9 Tips on How to Communicate with Students. Science and literacy. <https://scienceandliteracy.org/how-to-communicate-with-students/>
- Millennial Era to Create Students' Self Regulation Capability in Learning. <https://www.scitepress.org/Papers/2019/100181/100181.pdf>
- Ramadhani, Emilia. Effective Communication between Teachers and Students in the
- Tag: Success in Online Learning. Michigan Virtual. <https://michiganvirtual.org/blog/tag/success-in-online-learning-blog-series/>
- Uwe, Baumann, et al. New challenges, the role of the tutor in the teaching of languages at a distance. Cairn Info. (2008, March). <https://www.cairn.info/revue-distances-et-savoirs-2008-3-page-365.htm>
- <https://www.iste.org/explore/personalized-learning/turn-your-classroom-personalized-learning-environment>
- <https://www.prodigygame.com/main-en/blog/personalized-learning/>
- www.mindmeister.com

- www.mentimeter.com
- “Model akwizycji języka obcego a aktywizacja sieci neuronalnych w kontekście koncepcji inteligencji wielorakich”, Podręcznik metodyczny, A. Kamont; M. Bednarek, Łódź, 2019
- Personalized learning (theory): <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/personalized-learning-what-you-need-to-know>
- personalized learning (theory): <https://www.hmhco.com/blog/what-is-personalized-learning-in-education>
- video (digital tools): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeBwbVII81Q>
- video (digital tools): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7etwbRgqsg>
- article (best practices in online education): <https://teachremotely.harvard.edu/best-practices>
- Professor Graham Gibbs “Learning by Doing.”
- Goal Setting Guide: The 7 Steps to Effective Goal Setting | Gtmhub
- Evaluation (anngravells.com)
- Lessons Learnt | Better Evaluation
- Figure 1 the peak performance center accessed September 22 Types-of-Evaluations.jpg (401×359) (thepeakperformancecenter.com)
- Symonds research accessed September 22 25 Best Online Tutoring Tools & Software for teachers & freelance trainers. (symondsresearch.com)
- E learning industry accessed September 22 4 Learning Evaluation Models You Can Use - eLearning Industry
- Figure 2 Kody survey accessed September 22 How to Master Kirkpatrick model of training evaluation | Kodosurvey
- Figure 3 Talentlms Accessed September 22 How to Evaluate Training - Criteria, Methods & Tools for 2021 (talentlms.com)
- Figure 4 Watershed accessed September 22 What is Anderson's Model for Learning Evaluation? [OVERVIEW] (watershedlrs.com)
- Figure 5 VSkills accessed September 22 Brinkerhoff’s Success Case Method | Govt Certification | Vskills Tutorials
- A conscious rethink accessed September 22 What Is Self-Reflection And Why Is It So Important? (aconsciousrethink.com)
- Figure 6 Crowe associates accessed September 22 Gibbs Reflective cycle | Crowe Associates (crowe-associates.co.uk)
- Figure 7 Skills hub accessed September 22 What Are KOLB's Learning Styles? | Skillshub
- Kappan online Accessed September 22 Goal-setting practices that support a learning culture - kappanonline.org
- The Power of Collaborative Learning: Josh Bersin
- “9 strategies for effective online teaching”, article written on www.pearson.com
- mmb Institut: www.mmb-institut.de/
- <https://padlet.com/>
- <https://kahoot.it/>
- <https://answergarden.ch/>

