

# Appendix B: Tips for Teaching Distance or Blended Learning

## Tips for Teaching Distance or Blended Learning

Below are some tips for distance teaching with adult learners.

### 1. Be prepared.

- Know your materials.
- Study the online procedures as a student.
- Prepare a method of recording information.

### 2. Be patient, firm, and flexible.

- Students will need to learn academic, digital literacy, study skills, and online learning strategies all at once.
- Provide clear directions.
- Make adjustments in order to meet learners' needs.

### 3. Try to really understand the learner's reasons for studying online.

### 4. Don't judge a person by their writing in an email or text message.

### 5. Develop an online persona.

- Personality: Match their speed, expectations, and rhythm.
- Sense of humor: Remember that humor can be difficult to interpret without seeing facial expression and body language and knowing the person well.
- Sixth sense: What do they mean by that?
- Educational presence: Be a resource for the learners' question

### 6. Respond quickly and frequently.

- **Response time:** What can students expect from you? One or two business days? Consider texting students for quick check-ins or to schedule a meeting time.
- **Form letters and emails:** Use BCC to send updates to multiple students at once.
- **Form answers or an FAQ page:** Provide help resources for frequent content questions and technology problems.

### 7. Respond appropriately.

- Watch terms and expressions.
- Never promise something you cannot deliver.
- Protect anonymity.
- Do not take it personally.
- Keep responses nonpolitical, nonreligious, and nonjudgmental.

## 8. Collect necessary information.

- Send a warm welcome email or video introduction immediately, asking about their current situation, educational background, goals, email address, and computer experience.
- Send Friday Progress Reports that they can just check and email back.
- Use multiple-recipient emails with discretion. Students prefer their anonymity. Send each email separately or use BCC, unless they know they are part of a class.
- Keep a file of individual email correspondence for quick reference.

## 9. Motivate and encourage.

- Offer certificates or digital badges for completed sections.
- Send praise, ecards, congratulations, digital badges. Ask opinions.
- Ask for help.
- Stay on top of regional happenings to mention in your correspondence.

## 10. Handle duplicate responses.

- Create a website, community, or Word/email document for posting and sending resources, references, duplicate questions, and website problems that affect everyone.

## 11. Set educational expectations.

- Set expectations for teacher and student responses.
- Work in grammar and spelling gradually.
- Don't always jump right in to solve learners' problems. Allow [productive struggle](#), ask questions to help guide learners, and provide support when needed to build learners' confidence and skills.
- Use Open Educational Resources (OERs).
- Ask about classes in the students' areas, and offer to find an organization near them.
- Remind students often about their goals and progress towards reaching them.

## 12. Keep yourself motivated, energized, and enthused!



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