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. Register and learn!
   - Prepare a method of recording information.

2. Be patient, firm, and flexible.
   - Students will need to learn the following things, all at once, all online!

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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’ questions.

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 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.


• 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.

• Response Time: Set expectations for teacher and student responses.
• Work in grammar and spelling gradually.
• Continually challenge.
• 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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