

TIPS



TOOLS

SUGGESTIONS

GENERATING MOTIVATION AND EXCITEMENT IN THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

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GO! 

MAXIMIZING IMPACT IN THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

Generating Motivation and Excitement in the Virtual Classroom



TIPS

Anticipate and prepare for participants' questions and difficulties.

Determine relevant characteristics of learners and the instructional setting.

Express feelings and emotions.

Establish and maintain a warm learning environment



TOOLS

- Shared folder

- Microphone
- E-mail
- Polling

- Chat
- E-mail

- Lobby view
Camera
Microphone
- Virtual office hour meetings



SUGGESTIONS

Prepare standard answers and remedial material in advance.

- Send e-mails to participants prior to the class to determine what makes them tick (e.g., What excites them about their job? What do they enjoy doing outside of work?).
- Poll learners at the beginning of the class to determine similar information.
- Use emoticons such as :) for smile, ;-) for a wink, or :-< for frown, as well as Thumbs Up for good or agree, or Thumbs Down for not good or disagree.
- Click [here](#) to print a listing of common emoticons.

- Set up the room prior to the meeting using a "Lobby". Include instructor and participant bios, photos, a self-running presentation, and an exciting-sounding agenda.
- You can even arrange pre-course chats.



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TIPS

Establish and maintain a warm learning environment (*cont'd*)



TOOLS



SUGGESTIONS

Use a wide variety of instructional activities and media.

- All

Don't feel that you are limited by the media. Try performing any activity that you currently use in face-to-face classes.

Use additional reading, presentation, and exercise materials.

- Shared folder

Here is where you store information to support off-line classroom activities.

Effectively use discussions and questioning.

- All

Ask lots of questions.

Listen actively, from a non-judgmental place.

- Microphone
- Chat
- E-mail
- Whiteboard

- Think before responding to chats. Post, or privately request others to post, comments that look at the issue from a different perspective.
- Post points on the whiteboard.

Listen for understanding and context.

- Microphone
- Chat
- E-mail

- Look at patterns in chats.
- Post comments that recognize, summarize, & weave together discussion threads.



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TIPS

Read not only individuals, but also the interactions between individuals, and the subtleties of the group.

Be attentive to when participants are/aren't being authentic or genuine.

Create constructive conflict or "creative abrasion."

Employ observation skills

Encourage open communication.



TOOLS

- Whiteboard

- Chat
- E-mail

- Microphone
- Chat
- E-mail

- Chat
- E-mail

- Microphone
- Chat
- E-mail
- Shared folder
- Whiteboard



SUGGESTIONS

- Whiteboard
- Summarize major points on the whiteboard.

- Carefully review postings.
- Notice patterns.
- Respond honestly.
- Call or send a private posting or e-mail.

- Ask leading and thought-provoking questions.
- Request and represent other points of view.
- Insist upon respect.
- Explore the content in a new context (e.g., in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* the author used the metaphor of a farm to illustrate the dangers of capitalism as a form of government).

- Review postings carefully.
- Verify your perception.

- Set ground rules. Insist upon respect.
- Allow select participants to guide discussions.



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TIPS

Use outgoing participants to get the discussion rolling and make room for the quiet ones.



TOOLS

- Chat
- E-mail
- Whiteboard



SUGGESTIONS

- Send private messages along with provoking leading questions to more outgoing participants with a request to start things going. Allow them to use the whiteboard. Then ask them to refrain from the discussion.
- Send similar private e-mails to quieter participants to draw them out to continue the discussion. Be sure they get involved more than usual in the discussion by recognizing and complimenting their contributions.

Extract positive outcomes from difficult situations.

- Microphone
- Chat
- E-mail

- Direct the question to the group.
- Ask the group for solutions or methods to find solutions.
- Call upon specific participants to help out.

Use games and prizes (Password, Bingo, 20 Questions, Jeopardy).

- Microphone
- Chat
- E-mail
- Whiteboard
- Shared folder

You are only bounded by your own imagination. Store game equipment and instructions in the shared folder, use PowerPoint to develop a Jeopardy game, etc.

Frequently measure participants' understanding, engagement, and consensus with the content.

- Polling

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TIPS

Frequently measure participants' understanding, engagement, and consensus with the content. *(cont'd)*

- Polling



TOOLS

- Microphone
- Chat
- E-mail
- Shared folder



SUGGESTIONS

- Use the polling function to ask questions to measure participants' mastery of the materials, as well as assess how interested and engaged they are in the course. You can also use the polling feature to determine participants' level of agreement or understanding of the content.

Create tension and suspense.

- Create activities (e.g., discussions, games) where the results are not predictable. Also feel free to change the rules while the activities are still in motion. Do it by e-mail.
- You can also use chat, selective e-mails, and different shared folders to provide different groups with different rules or instructions.

Foster participant collaboration and team learning.

- Microphone
- Chat
- E-mail
- Separate Virtual Classrooms

- Create group learning activities using instructions in different shared folders (one for each group). Enable groups to communicate using chat areas or e-mails. If you are bold, you can have groups set up their own virtual classrooms in order to work together. Be sure to assign a leader for each group.



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TIPS

Use discovery learning techniques.



TOOLS

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SUGGESTIONS

Encourage participants to search for their own resources (e.g., website). Request that participants use chats to ask their own questions. Ask participants to work in groups or individually to teach back content using the features of the virtual class.

Be clear about which postings are public and which are private.

- Chat

Usually, you will wish to share postings with the whole group, but not always (e.g., constructive feedback). Be careful to consider and differentiate if a posting or e-mail is for the group or select individuals.

