



EDUCATIONAL

TOOLS TO CREATE MORE EFFICIENCY AND

TECHNOLOGY

EFFECTIVENESS IN YOUR TEACHING

ESSENTIALS

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PROFESSOR AND LIFE-LONG LEARNER

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INTRODUCTION

Technology affords us opportunities to connect, communicate, and co-create with our students like never before. However, it also has the downside of offering unparalleled potential for barriers to learning, as the potential for distractions is ever-present.

The educational technologies listed in this ebook are ones I use regularly in my teaching. I primarily teach 18-22 year-olds in an undergraduate business and management program. However, I also teach educators in a doctoral program and in the corporate training environment. I'm grateful to be able to leverage these tremendous tools in my teaching and personal productivity systems.

Rather than trying to implement too aggressively and getting overwhelmed, I suggest that you choose one or two items from those listed in the following pages to try out per semester/term.

COMMUNICATE



Remind: I use this service to text students, either about something urgent (such as a change of classroom location), or as a scheduled series of updates (as when they are studying for an exam). Remind values privacy and gives assurances to both teachers and students that their cell phone numbers will be kept private.



Twitter: I use Twitter more with doctoral students than with my undergraduates, though I suspect that this may change in the coming academic years. I set up a different Twitter list for each course, so I can follow the dialog from that particular cohort in one stream.



Email: While some people might think of email as too basic to be included with edtech tools, it is essential in my teaching. I practice a zero inbox approach to managing email and respond to students within one business day. I also use TextExpander to save email verbiage that answers frequently-asked questions by students, as well as saving template emails for different situations that happen throughout the semester.



LinkedIn: The best way I know of staying in touch with other professionals and past students is LinkedIn. It is like an ever-updating Rolodex to me, keeping me current on where people are working and their up-to-date contact information. Consider joining the Technology-Using Professors group, to collaborate with others who are using technology to facilitate learning.

DEMONSTRATE



Captivate: I've been using Adobe elearning products for as long as they have been making them. With Captivate, you can create a narrated lecture, with PowerPoint slides, your voice recorded with it, and embedded quizzes. On the more advanced end of things, you can create software simulations that demonstrate, teach, or test learners.



Tapes: Record your screen and your voice with this Mac application. When you're done, a link to the video / screencast you just created is ready to be pasted into an email, or anywhere else you might want to place it. This is how I give feedback on many of my students' assignments.



Snagit: Screen capture software is important to have in any educator's arsenal. While you can capture screenshots using the built-in tools on a Mac or PC, Snagit takes the features to a whole new level. You can add annotations, text, and even auto-numbered icons to your screenshots. Snagit is also a good option for recording short video demos.



Clarify: This Mac / PC app is one I wish I had been able to use back in my franchising days, when creating manuals. Clarify offers an incredibly easy way to document step-by-step instructions. The most practical application of this app is to use it to show your students how to do something in an application or on a website, but no doubt more creative uses abound.

FACILITATE



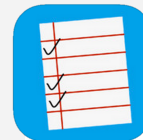
PollEverywhere: This web-based service lets you poll/quiz an audience and have them answer “everywhere” (on their smart phone, via text message, on Twitter, or on a computer/web browser). Their free service allows for up to 40 responses per poll. As long as you don’t have classes larger than 40, you can leverage their free option, easily. Students can also be charged by them for the service, which gives the professor the service for free, in addition to more advanced features (such as student tracking).



Zoom: This synchronous web conferencing tool is the perfect combination of simplicity and power. You can view the people who are online in Brady Bunch fashion, with all their web cams on the screen at once, or let Zoom automatically switch your view to have the person who is talking be viewed front-and-center. Breakout rooms open up even more options for maximizing engagement and giving opportunities for deeper conversations.

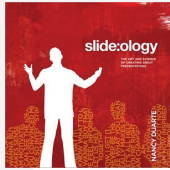


Harvard University’s Justice course: A description of educational technology to facilitate learning would hardly be complete without a mention of Michael Sandel’s Justice course. Harvard has taken their most popular class and recreated it for the online environment. Seeing how the course has been orchestrated for the online format provides ample examples of the richness an online environment can offer.

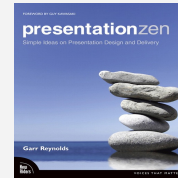


Attendance2: This app is also listed under the administrative tools. With regard to facilitating classes, small groups can be created instantly in the app to encourage dialog with others in the class with whom students might not normally share. Individual students may also be randomly identified in the app, making sure it isn’t the same few students who are called upon to contribute. I use this random feature to quiz myself on names at the start of a semester.

ILLUSTRATE



[Slideology](#): PowerPoint was not designed as a handout tool. It was intended to enhance presentations. Nancy Duarte shows you how to build slides that will captivate learners' attention and drive retention. Slide:ology is also packed with examples, including some before-and-after projects. It is the best book on slide design I've ever seen.



[Presentation Zen](#): Tucked away on my bookshelf next to Slideology is Presentation Zen. Garr Reynolds articulates how to develop a presentation from start-to-finish, including getting to know your audience, honing your key message, and delivering your talk dynamically and with impact.



[PowerPoint](#): Since this powerful application has been so misused by educators and business communicators alike, its value has been undermined. The key is to avoid using the standard templates and actually have less on the screen. PowerPoint isn't supposed to be your teleprompter. It has the potential to communicate ideas visually and really engage an audience.



[Apple Pencil](#): This is hands down the best stylus I've ever owned. It charges quickly and just glides across the screen. I use it in conjunction with an app called [Doceri](#) that lets me create pencasts (videos of me drawing sketches related to my lectures, with audio of me talking while the drawings play back).

ADMINISTRATE



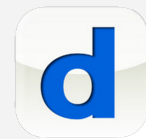
[Attendance2](#): The app I use most during a typical teaching day is Attendance. Rosters may be imported via Dropbox, along with photos. Custom statuses may be set up for present/absent; late; participated; etc. Emails may be sent to students to update them on their attendance. Reports may also be generated and sent in a format easily opened in a spreadsheet application.



[Evernote](#): This cloud-based notebook describes itself as a way of collecting and finding “everything that matters.” I use it for storing reference material and taking photos of white board brainstorm. Students receive recorded voice feedback on their assignments. The [Evernote/Moleskin notebook](#) is a great way of capturing important ideas and meeting notes.



[OmniFocus](#): I refrain from using email to manage my to do's. Instead, all tasks are entered into OmniFocus. Tasks can be entered from their Mac app, an iPhone, or via email. I keep all the tasks associated with the start of a new semester in an OmniFocus template, which I then populate at the start of each semester to guide me through the preparation process. OmniFocus is not the simplest task manager out there, but it is a power house.



[Doodle](#): Getting a group of faculty together for a committee meeting can be a challenge. Doodle makes that process easier by sending out a list of proposed dates/times that you specify to your meeting attendees and letting them indicate which ones work for them. Everyone's responses are tracked and the most ideal time is identified. Even the least technical professors I know are able to easily give their input.

CONCLUSION

It's easy to get overwhelmed with the vast array of educational technology. The best way to start is to narrow your exploration down to the one or two tools that will best support your efforts to facilitate learning or increase your productivity. Then, adopt the tool that you predict will give you the most leverage and get good at it over the course of a semester, or a year.

I keep a list of potential tools to adopt in Evernote, as a part of a checklist I use when preparing for a new semester. Keeping the list there means I can be confident that I won't forget about something that could turn out to be tremendously valuable. The checklist prescribes the selection process in one of the tasks, to reinforce my self-imposed restriction of only adopting one tool at a time.

Now that you have gone through the list, please visit the Teaching in Higher Ed [Facebook page](#) or my [Twitter account](#), to share what is working best for you in your teaching.



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I am grateful for the opportunity to engage with learners during pivotal times in their lives. My vocation is fulfilled when students identify and enhance their strengths, while being challenged to achieve beyond what they thought possible.

Thanks for subscribing to my weekly update.
Feel free to connect and stay in touch:





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