



# Virtual Engagement Strategies for Asynchronous Learning

## Competency

Facilitator uses a variety of strategies and digital tools to engage learners in asynchronous learning.

## Key Method

Facilitator uses a variety of engagement strategies to connect with learners of multiple ability levels, creates a safe and comfortable virtual learning environment, and encourages respectful collaboration between participants.

## Method Components

### Asynchronous Learning

Asynchronous learning includes forms of education, instruction, and learning that do not occur in the same place or at the same time. The term is most commonly applied to various forms of digital and online learning in which students learn from instruction—such as prerecorded video lessons or game-based learning tasks that students complete on their own—that is not delivered in person or in real time. It may also encompass a wide variety of instructional interactions, including email exchanges between teachers, online discussion boards, and course-management systems that organize instructional materials and correspondence, among many other possible variations. Whether learning is synchronous or asynchronous, the facilitator establishes an environment that is engaging, motivating, safe and respectful..



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## Why is Virtual Engagement Important?

People learn socially, even in an online setting. Effective online learning requires facilitation that allows participants to interact with content, apply skills, and discuss their learning and questions with others in similar settings.

## Tips and Strategies to Motivate Learners

Sessions include opportunities for participants to acknowledge, embrace and learn from others of different backgrounds and perspectives in a safe learning environment where collaborative dialogue can occur. . In a professional learning setting, the participants bring unique experience and knowledge to the group. Facilitators encourage networking and sharing of ideas, active listening and new learning.

- There are a variety of interaction strategies to foster an inclusive environment
- Participants actively use technology to share their experiences
- Time is given to ask questions and to interact with the material and each other
- Routines and expectation, such as “netiquette” are established

## Tips and Strategies to Engage Learners in Online Discussions

Discussion boards should allow learners to dig deeper into the content and should encourage participants to learn from each other through respectful and open dialogue. Online discussions should have rubrics to guide participants in online protocol, content and expected responses, rather than recall of facts. Facilitators create open-ended questions that encourage the participants to respond to both the question and to each other. Schedule of posts allow time for thoughtful response to questions, as well as opportunities to respond to each other.

- Collaborative discussions
- Questions and feedback promote deeper thinking, not just recall
- Questions are intentionally open-ended

## Creates a Safe Environment

Facilitator in online learning will allow learners to participate at a comfortable level that is respectful of student backgrounds, situations and individual learning needs. Tasks should be manageable by learners, and safe to participate in. Participants should be expected to engage in the learning and ask questions.

- Tasks are relevant to the learning
- Participants are encouraged to join activities and share work
- Activities allow participants to interact with the content and apply their learning.
- Feedback is positive and timely



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## Digital Platforms for Asynchronous Learning

- NEA edCommunities
- Facebook Groups
- LinkedIn
- Google Classroom
- Digital Promise
- Online class LMS with discussion boards
- Schoology

## Supporting Rationale and Research

The Power of Virtual Coaching

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct11/vol69/num02/The-Power-of-Virtual-Coaching.aspx>

Mackey, Julie. "Blending real work experiences and virtual professional development." (2008).

[https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/1966/12611007\\_mackey.pdf%3Bjsessionid%3DEAF47473986D9A185AF2D2CD761A84EF?sequence%3D1](https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/1966/12611007_mackey.pdf%3Bjsessionid%3DEAF47473986D9A185AF2D2CD761A84EF?sequence%3D1)

Laxton, Amber, et al. *A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market*. Digital Promise, 2017, *A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market*.

<http://digitalpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/accelerating-learning-for-adult-education.pdf>

McConnell, Tom J., et al. "Virtual professional learning communities: Teachers' perceptions of virtual versus face-to-face professional development." *Journal of Science Education and Technology* 22.3 (2013): 267-277

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZAKnVW1BUazIZgJuDJFUCdMI5tNGFI7/view?usp=sharing>

King, Kathleen P. "Professional learning in unlikely spaces: Social media and virtual communities as professional development." *International Journal of Emerging*



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Technologies in Learning (iJET) 6.4 (2011): 40-46.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dEjyJukVBz\\_aVd5sNybk3lejYaMsLWq\\_/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dEjyJukVBz_aVd5sNybk3lejYaMsLWq_/view?usp=sharing)

Knight, Jim. "What Good Coaches Do." Educational Leadership, vol. 69, no. 2, Oct. 2011,

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J5vI5fKsja-TbKpMtlYuev4qmA0N1JWh/view?usp=sharing>

West, Lucy, and Antonia Cameron. Challenging Assumptions About Coaching. Challenging Assumptions About Coaching.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vBA9LXPN1o6VX9MZ-9Hn68nqirpA2T0l/view?usp=sharing>

## Resources

Facilitating Online Learning

[Facilitating Online Learning: Tips and Suggestions](#)

[Blended and Online Learning](#)

[A Checklist for Facilitating Online Courses](#)

Ice-Breaker Strategies

[IceBreaker Activities](#)

[Icebreakers](#)

[The Importance of Icebreakers in Online Learning](#)

[Ten Online Icebreakers](#)

[Five Creative Icebreakers and Assignments for the Online Classroom](#)

Discussion Strategies

[Online Discussion Strategies](#)



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[Techniques of online discussion](#)

Collaboration Strategies

[Reasons Why Collaborative Online Learning Activities are Effective](#)

[How to Make Group Work Collaborative](#)

[Student Collaboration Tools](#)

[Fostering Collaboration in the Online Classroom](#)

Other Helpful Links

[Zoom Video Tutorials](#)

[Sample Zoom Meeting](#)

[How to run a Google Meet](#)

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## Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

*To earn the micro-credential, you must answer the questions with a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and receive a proficient for all components in Part 2.*

### Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

**(175 - 250 words)**

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

1. What do you hope to gain or change in your practice on asynchronous adult learning as a result of engaging with this competency?
2. What experience, if any, do you have with supporting adult learners in a face- to-face or virtual capacity.
3. What tool did you decide to use to create your learning environment? Why did you choose this tool? If the tool was chosen by others, please share that information.



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**Passing:** Response provides reasonable and accurate information that justifies the reason for choosing this micro-credential to address specific needs of both the virtual coach and the adult learners. Facilitator includes a learning goal that describes what they hope to gain from earning this micro-credential.

## Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

Submit the following **two artifacts** as evidence of your learning. *Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

### Artifact 1: Virtual Learning Group

Create an asynchronous virtual learning group using one of the platforms listed in the resources section or another platform of your choosing.

Upload annotated Screenshots of your group, or paste a link to your group in the submission box

### Artifact 2: Description

Describe how you met each of the requirements listed below:

- Purpose or expected outcomes of group
- Evidence of motivating learners
  - Strategies used to engage learners in content and with each other
  - Time is given for participants to reflect on new learning and to share their thoughts
  - Feedback is timely and promotes deeper thinking
- Evidence of online discussion
  - Open-ended questions
  - Dialog between participants
  - Rubric for online discussion
- Evidence of safe learning environment
  - Norms are set for interactions
  - Use of appropriate language
  - Timely feedback

## Part 2. Rubric

|   | <b>Proficient</b>   | <b>Basic</b>   | <b>Developing</b>                                      |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Artifact 1:<br/>Virtual Learning Group</b> | Document includes screenshots, or links for the assessor that | Document includes screenshots, or links correspond to the points below | Document is not clear about which screenshots or links |



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|                                |   |   |  |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|
|                                | correspond to the points below  |   | correspond to the points below   |
| <b>Artifact 2: Description</b> | <p>Document clearly describes the outcomes of the course or group.</p> <p>The content is shared in a way that demonstrates understanding of adult learning to engage with the content.</p> <p>There is evidence of time given to both engage with the content and to respond to other participants.</p> <p>Feedback from the facilitator is thoughtful and encourages the participants to go deeper into the content.</p> <p>Facilitator has created open-ended questions that allow for participants to be reflective.</p> <p>There is a rubric to assist learners in understanding what their responses should be like. The rubric clearly defines the expectations of the discussion.</p> <p>There is evidence of participants</p> | <p>Document describes the outcomes of the course or group</p> <p>The content is shared, but may or may not show an understanding of engagement strategies used.</p> <p>There is little evidence that time was given between responses to the content and responses to each other.</p> <p>The feedback from the facilitator may not push learners to go deeper into the content.</p> <p>Questions are open-ended and allow for learners to be reflective.</p> <p>The rubric for online discussion may not be clear or not fully define expectations of the discussion.</p> <p>There is evidence of participants responding to each other, but their discussion may not be deeper thinking.</p> | <p>The outcome of the course is not clear.</p> <p>Content may be shared, but no evidence of engagement is shown.</p> <p>There is no time given for participants to respond to each other, for example all responses are due on the same day, with no time to learn from others.</p> <p>Feedback may be missing or not constructive.</p> <p>Questions in the online discussion are more recall than reflective questions that encourage discussion.</p> <p>Rubric for online discussion is not included.</p> <p>There is no evidence of participants responding to each other.</p> <p>Norms are not shared with the participants.</p> |



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|  |   |  |  |
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|  | <p>responding to each other not only the facilitator in a respectful and appropriate manner.</p> <p>Norms established for online learning is in the rubric or posted in the community.</p> <p>Language used is appropriate and clear. Facilitator avoids idioms or phrases that can be misunderstood. The content is presented in a way that is clear, concise, and allows learners to participate at their level.</p> <p>Feedback given is timely and encourages the learners to explore concepts. There are opportunities for participants to use the feedback in further discussion.</p> | <p>Norms may be established for learning. It may be posted, but not evident throughout the course.</p> <p>Language is clear, but may include idioms or phrases that could be misunderstood by participants.</p> <p>Feedback is not timely, nor specific to the rubric or outcomes of the course.</p> | <p>Language may not be clear.</p> <p>Feedback is not timely, or is not specific.</p> |
|--|---|--|--|

Part 3 Reflection

**(350 - 500 words)**

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)



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Please answer the following reflective questions. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

1. How did focusing on the engagement of your participants change the way that you set up the course? In what way did you change your teaching strategies?
2. What strategies did you find the most helpful as you reflect on the engagement of the learners in this course?
3. How will the learning from this micro-credential change the way that you plan and implement coursework change in the future?

**Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both Facilitator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.



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