

7 Tips for Successful Learner Introductions in an Online Course

Tip 1: Stay in Context

Consider what kinds of information will be helpful in the context of this particular course: How did you come to enroll in this course or program? Do you have experience with the topic? What do you hope to gain from this class? Keep the information you include, and the tone you use (i.e., language, approach) professional and relevant to participation in the course.

Tip 2: Include Professional and Personal Information

It's helpful to include something about you and your interests outside of class. Adding your location may also be beneficial –many students like to meet in person if they can, and study groups emerge this way. Providing your city is fine, no need to include details such as your home address. Offering up your time zone at a minimum does give some indication of your availability for group work and live sessions.

Tip 3: Consider Adding a Picture of Yourself

From the instructor's perspective, it's always nice to put a face with a username. Keep in mind that if there are guidelines for an introduction assignment you are uncomfortable with (e.g., adding an image, information about your family) just let your instructor know about your reservations in an email –alternatives may be available.

Tip 4: Focus on Your Instructors and Classmates

Focus on the other person. What do you want them to know about you? Asking yourself: "What do I want to know about them?" may be a good place to start.

Tip 5: Mix in Multimedia

Extend your introduction by adding links to a personal webpage or social media profiles you are using for professional networking (e.g., LinkedIn, Twitter).

Tip 6: Use Your Instructor's Introduction as a Guide

This is a good model of what information your professor thinks is important to share. Take a closer look and use it as an example of what to include in your introduction and how long it should be.

Tip 7: Don't Forget to Respond to Your Classmates

You won't find an instant connection with everyone, but "building a rapport through common ground" begins with class introductions. Reach out to classmates with shared interests by replying to their introduction posts.