

## **My Post: "The Flipped Training Room"**

So I am a little late to join this discussion but I wanted to still provide my input as I am deeply fascinated by the concept of flipping the classroom. As I mentioned in my introduction I'm at a fascinating point in my career, one at which the flipped classroom is very pertinent. As I move from a corporate training environment where the flipped classroom doesn't really exist to a corporate environment where I have the ability to influence the future of educational technology, I love learning about these new trends.

In a corporate setting, there is no impetus to do work outside of the office. So I would modify the idea to fit the corporate setting a little better. Instead of having the lectures and instructional part of the training be done at home, it would probably be more realistic to have them done at the user's desk. What I found when conducting trainings for staff at Harvard Business School is that they show up for a training completely unprepared. They have no idea what they're about to learn, and have been mandated to attend by their boss. So, what if we provided them with the training online before they came. Then, once they got there we could all workshop together to actually do the work they're learning this subject to do. For example, we use Microsoft SharePoint extensively. It's a very complex, but versatile product that has confused many a computer genius. We conducted many trainings on SharePoint but always found that our users learned better by doing. So we would show them the basics and then have them go back to their desks and actually use it. This was incredibly effective, but it was not efficient. We were teaching the same thing over and over again. Given the model of the flipped classroom it might have been more beneficial to create an online lesson in which the user learned those basics and then came to the "training session" with actual work to do. That way they could share their ideas and skills with the other trainees, and we could really workshop the development of their sites.

As far as my new job is concerned, I'm more responsible for staying on top of the trends in Educational Technology and then work to develop products that can be used in the classroom that are on the bleeding edge of those trends. So from this perspective, it would be beneficial to say, develop an entire lesson on the Civil War that students could watch and interact with at home, or anywhere, really. Then, using the content that we have available to us, develop activities, workshops, and interactive assignments that the students could work on IN class. This way the foundation is learned at home and when the students come to class they have the knowledge to re-enact the congressional vote to end slavery, or they can be assigned the task of advising Lincoln as to what he should do to end slavery. There are endless possibilities here. The point is that the basic knowledge is learned outside of the classroom, and then it is reinforced in the classroom in a fun and useful way.

This brings up an interesting intellectual point that is worth exploring. I think the classroom has become a dull and boring place for students. If this whole idea of flipped classrooms is done

correctly students can learn that they can actually gain knowledge anywhere, especially outside of the classroom. Too many students believe that learning begins when the bell rings, and ends when it rings again to dismiss them. What we should be reinforcing, and what is actually reinforced by the flipped classroom is that learning can happen anywhere, any time. And the classroom is a place to practice what you learned. It's not some cage where you are trapped for several periods a day. It's a stage where you can perform what you know for others. It's an office environment where you can work with others to accomplish a common goal. It's an arena where you can prove yourself to be competent and knowledgeable about a subject. The classroom can be anything but dull and boring, and I think that when done right, the flipped classroom accomplishes this.

### **My Reply to Deirdre Begeron:**

Remember those moonshots I talked about? Well, get ready.

So not being a classroom teacher I have a bit of a skewed view of education. It's a very idealistic, and admittedly futuristic view, but hey, a teacher can dream. I think that the flipped classroom begins and ends with the teacher. The success of a flipped classroom initiative depends on the interest level of the teacher, the effectiveness of the teacher, and the teacher's ability to engage the students and make them WANT to learn this way. Because in the end, this is a much better way to learn, and a much more engaging method.

Several people touched on this earlier in the thread, but I want to expand a little on the idea of doing a flipped classroom "correctly". If a teacher is recording their voice over a PowerPoint to watch at home, and then giving students worksheets to do the next day, they are doing it wrong. If a teacher is assigning a video on YouTube created by Joe Schmo in Nebraska who has no qualifications but rather just decided to rant and rave one day, they are doing it wrong. If the teacher is doing the same thing every time, video at night, and creating a re-enactment of the material the next day, they are doing it wrong.

And so, what do we need to create in order to make the flipped classroom a success? Role models. We need data-backed, easily replicable, and easily-accessible resources for teachers who want to work on the flipped classroom model. For example, using a Google+ community called Flipped Classroom, teachers can share their successes and failures with the others in the community so that others don't make the same mistake. Teachers should be able to share their models for the flipped classroom with others who are interested ALONG WITH some kind of data around how successful the lesson was. (That brings up another point about how we determine if the flipped classroom is successful. Is it really just whether more students pass?) So many people talked about finding YouTube videos, or articles online, but you shouldn't even

have to look for them. There should be a place you can go and join a community to share resources, lesson plans, ideas, and most importantly results. This way there is no excuse for running the flipped classroom incorrectly. You can find and use tried and true lessons from other teachers. Sure, this kind of thing exists ad hoc in some places, YouTube for example, I'm sure Khan has some kind of way for teachers to communicate, but there isn't one place to look. A quick Google+ search revealed a few communities but some were private (the opposite of what this initiative should be) and others were just stale message boards.

If we want flipped classrooms to work then we need to find out what makes them work, and then share that with other teachers so that they can CORRECTLY use the flipped classroom. In my personal experience with educational technology, the worst thing a district or school can do is mandate that technology be a part of any lesson. Similarly, mandating that teachers use the flipped approach is destructive, and would probably be more detrimental.

### **My Reply to Ryan Brown:**

Ryan, I loved when you said, "Obviously, flipping the classroom is much different than using videos to differentiate your instruction. Flipping takes more time, thought, effort and requires hardware and software." Perfect. So many schools don't realize this and tell teachers what they need to be doing, and then don't support them in actually doing it. Flipping a classroom, if done properly, requires enormous effort, and resources. As I mentioned in another post, one thing that can help with this is creating a community of teachers who have flipped, want to flip, or are thinking about maybe flipping. They can share ups and downs, challenges, successes and failures, etc. I think all teachers want their colleagues and peers to succeed, so I think if there was a platform on which to share experiences, it would be a huge step forward. Just like 1:1 is not giving students a laptop and saying, "Go.", flipping the classroom is not telling teachers what it is and saying, "Go."