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**BLENDED MODE OF
TEACHING AND LEARNING
FOR TEACHERS COMMUNITY**

Volume -2

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Blended Mode of Teaching and Learning for Teachers Community

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Safer Learning Environment

If there's anything 2020 taught us, it's that being in one place with a bunch of other people can have its complications. And seeing those people only on the screen is unbearable. The blended approach makes learning safer by reducing the number of hours learners spend together offline but still provides them with live communication.

Interactive Learning Process

Theoretical materials can be challenging (if not boring). It's one thing when learners sit and listen to a speaker for a few hours. And it's radically different when they learn that same information by clicking on buttons, participating in a dialogue simulation, taking a game-like course, and so on. Acquiring new knowledge can be fun, and blended learning provides lots of tools to make it so.

Learner Autonomy

Being able to control and schedule an individual learning path is essential for learners – and especially adults. Learning isn't the only (and hardly the most important) activity of students and employees. Work, family, hobbies, and friends – people's lives are made up of many facets, and learning shouldn't become an obstacle. In blended learning, learners can access courses 24/7 – whenever they want it and have the opportunity.

Greater Learner Engagement

No business or institution wants to force its employees or students to learn, because it won't work. You need to engage learners in learning to make it effective. Blended learning leads to greater learner engagement by providing different opportunities and using digital tools.

Better Comprehension

One of the most popular blended learning models, called the "flipped classroom," results in better comprehension by having learners study all theoretical materials alone at their own pace and practice new knowledge and skills during in-person sessions.

Detailed Analytics

With blended learning, you won't even spend a minute – a learning management system will do everything for you. Based on learner progress, you'll be able to see how competent a learner is at specific topics, whether they are ready to move forward or need to revise some materials, and much more.

Disadvantages of Blended Learning

Now that you know the 'why' of blended learning, let's also look at the 'why not.' Here are the cons of this learning approach:

- New skill set for teachers/instructors
- Plagiarism
- Higher cost

Let's look at each of these aspects more closely.

New Skill set for Teachers/Instructors

Blended learning requires particular digital competence, as instructors need to create online courses, assign them to students, monitor their progress, and much more. Some eLearning tools have a steep learning curve, and not all teachers might be willing to invest the time and trouble needed to master a new technological tool.

A new skill set also refers to the fact that digitally inexperienced teachers may give too much content to study just because they don't have classroom time limits and think: "Well, it's not that much. And learners are at home, so they have lots of spare time." And this could lead to cognitive overload on the part of the learners.

Plagiarism

The more eLearning content you create, the greater the risk of plagiarism. Instructors might do this by accident, such as if they find an image that highlights their idea and add it to their online course, whereas the image is protected by copyright. If this occurs, it's the company or university that might get into trouble.

Higher Cost

If you use eLearning, you pay for eLearning software. If you have classroom learning, you pay for light, gas, equipment, etc. And if you have blended learning, you pay for everything.

However, these disadvantages will not become an issue if you use these tips:

1. Choose easy-to-use eLearning tools.
2. Explain the peculiarities of the digital learning process to your teachers or instructors.
3. Determine your learning needs, calculate your budget, and find the tools that satisfy both issues.

Essential Tools for Blended Learning

Office 365

Schools and other educational institutes can also utilize technological tools to take advantage of Blended Learning via Office365 (O365) solution. A Microsoft Gold Partner and Cloud Service Provider, Center price is the ideal partner to help you facilitate a tailor-made solution. O365 is a digital learning platform that gives teachers and students the ability to work together in real-time. Task updates, subject material, and extra study resources are all instantly accessible and stored

Learning Management System

The ultimate aid to building an ideal BL operation, finding a Learning Management Systems (LMS) partner, should be at the top of your list of Blended Learning technology tools. They can design your system to facilitate both in-office and remote training. And once in place, your LMS partner can work with you to create personalized training experiences while tracking employee progress. This ensures an efficient process as you can quickly see how effective the program is, including areas that need to be adapted or improved to better staff performance.

Digital Badges

Digital badges are a prominent Blended Learning technology tool that can be game-changing when applied right. Each badge would contain information about the skills and accomplishments reached. They can help staff distinguish the different courses within a learning management system as well as incentives employees to perform highly due to a tracking or even ranking system, with top performers earning rewards.

Several companies, such as Best and Open Badge Factory, provide elite digital badge service, they are a simple and productive way to improve your staff's learning experience.

Audience Response System

Gamification in training helps employees actively learn in a less stressful environment by bringing a different type of energy to the session, adding immense value to Blended Learning. One such way is through Audience Response Systems (ARS). During the session, the staff gains a device pre-installed with an ARS app. The instructor then asks various questions on a specific topic, with the answers inputted in the app and processed immediately before displayed back to the users in a graph format. It can be a highly beneficial Blended Learning technology tool that helps staff to remain engaged while recording data for future training use.

Webinars

Webinars help smooth the combination of in-office and remote training and are the perfect happy medium for a Blended Learning environment. Staff interaction, whether it be peer-to-peer or peer-to-instructor, can be done, and the webinar itself recorded for those who miss the session.

For encouraging participation, webinars should be scheduled at a convenient time for all, with timely reminders of the session and what it will entail before the date. This gives staff ample time to do background research on the topic and plan questions they may wish to ask.

Conclusion

Learners who experience blended learning will see the world as they know it reflected in the programs where they learn and will deploy critical thinking skills to participate in the society where we are required to create, collaborate and communicate in digitally mediated networks. A blended learning approach provides access to diverse and flexible learning environment and nurtures enriched literacy and learning.