Instructor Course Postings - Post with Intentionality, Post with Purpose

1 What is it?

Posting with intentionality is a way to think about the strategies an instructor can use to help them facilitate online learning environments, whether it be posting to discussions or announcements.

2 Why is it important?

Before posting to your course, consider your purpose. What do you specifically want your post to accomplish? Think about what is the intended purpose of the post or what goal it is supposed to achieve. As Lewandowski, van Barneveld, and Ertmer (2016) suggest, "it is important that instructors understand how to engage learners, promote critical thinking, and support the development of a learning environment that incorporates a sense of community (p. 16)".

3 How to do it?

Lewandowski, van Barneveld, and Ertmer (2016) classified instructional scaffolds/strategies into five types: logistical, process, subject matter, application, and affective prompts. The following sections provide a brief description of each type of prompt and a sample instructor post as response to a student inquiry below.

Logistical Prompts help to manage tasks and activities; these focus on procedures. Logistical prompts include directions, guidelines, due-date reminders, hints to available tools/resources, etc.
Good evening - a reminder that your final reflection paper and the discussion board post are due tomorrow (Thursday 12/7) at 11:59 p.m. ET.
Process prompts help learners focus on the learning process, how to engage with course content.

I have been enjoying reading about how you would adjust your instructional strategies based on your learners' characteristics and needs. I especially like how you are incorporating your peers' ideas into your own plans after reviewing their ideas. A great example of learning from one another's experiences and ideas.

Subject Matter Prompts help learners understand discipline-specific concepts, connections to models, or references. This allows the instructor to model the discourse of the field while scaffolding learners.
Thanks for an interesting discussion on definitions and theories of distance education. Everyone seems to agree that distance education is not necessarily limited in the ways that we initially believed. Instead, for many of you, the focus was on the essential aspects of any learning program: outcomes, engagement, social learning, faculty presence, and authentic assessment. Your individual theories of distance education show that you believe that it must be learner-centered, personalized, and flexible and you've based this in your readings on Transactional Distance Education, the Community of Inquiry, and other frameworks.

Application Prompts help learners understand and apply content outside of the class in a real-world setting. They also help show the relevance of the content to the learners.
Working within a team in a professional setting is a lot like working in a team for our course projects. In both cases it is critical the team leader provides feedback in a manner that is respectful yet honest. In other work situations how have you handled this type of tension? Any suggestions for the leader in our scenario?

Affective Prompts offer learners encouragement, acknowledgement of progress, and a sense of instructor presence.

I am very impressed with the level of discussion, interaction, and reflection this week. I have lots of takeaways from this week's discussion and I think you have many new ideas about how to design your project 1. Great job everyone!

In addition, Boettcher and Conrad (2016, p. 161) share two strategies to **wrap up online discussions** and make sure that your online students have clear takeaways after them.

1. **Summarize Key Ideas**: By focusing on critical ideas you are helping students sort and organize the most useful knowledge from each discussion. Summaries can show contrasting ideas, share your own thoughts, offer resolutions, and/or indicate next steps or challenges in the conversation.

2. **Involve students in the process**: By having your students participate in the summarization process you are asking them to apply higher level thinking skills "such as analysis, synthesis, questioning, linking ideas, and identifying patterns" (p. 162). However, make sure that your expert voice is also present.

4 Additional Resources

Take a short tutorial! [Post with intentionality](#), Purdue University.

[See "Discussion Board Facilitation"](#)

5 References

Boettcher, J. V., & Conrad, R.-M. (2016). *The online teaching survival guide*. Jossey-Bass.

Lewandowski, J., van Barneveld, A. Ertmer, P.A. (2016). Posting with Intentionality in Online Instruction: Supporting Instructors' Facilitation Efforts. *Educational Technology, 56*(4), 15-21.