

ADDING SOME TEC-VARIETY

**100+ Activities for Motivating
and Retaining Learners Online**



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING TEC-VARIETY

Do you want to know who you are? Don't ask. Act!
Action will delineate and define you.

—Thomas Jefferson

Background

There comes a moment when you just know the time is ripe to push into an area. Today that area happens to be motivation and retention in online learning. Some might argue that the need for such a book was already apparent more than a decade ago. Online learning exploded in the late 1990s, especially for those in adult sectors like higher education, corporate training, and the military (Allen & Seaman, 2004, 2007, 2010b, 2014). The K–12 sector, in contrast, heated up much more recently (Picciano & Seaman, 2008; Watson, Murin, Vashaw, Gemin, & Rapp, and colleagues at Evergreen Education Group, 2010; Watson, 2007). Research conducted at the turn of the century, including that by Bonk, revealed enormous online drop-out rates. In higher education settings, it was not unusual to hear about the loss of 20 to 30 percent of enrolled students (Bonk, 2002a). That percentage would often double in the world of corporate and military training (Bonk, 2002b; Frankola, 2001a). These data were troubling. What was happening to cause so many individuals to give up their quest to learn online? And what could be done about it?

The common refrain was that there was little engagement within online courses. Students would complete assigned tasks similar to those given in a correspondence or television course and wait for feedback or comments from the instructor. For many, there were technical barriers and problems that surfaced even before they could enter the online course. Once they surmounted such challenges, they had to figure out what was expected and when. The directions for all this were often sketchy and assumed a level of online technology prowess that few had.

Overcoming such issues was not particularly easy. Making matters worse, all that your technology access got you was a stamp on your ticket to the online learning club. Then it came time for completing your assigned tasks and submitting them. Unlike traditional classrooms, there were often no peers to run ideas by, remind each other of upcoming tasks, or discuss and debate ideas with. Given that online learning was so new for everyone involved, there were limited examples of prior work and minimal job aids for completing tasks. Compounding such problems, most online content was severely lacking in quality.

For those who persisted with their online learning quests, there were few learning enticements in those early online learning days. Online courses typically provided limited goals or products to strive toward. When there was a goal, there was a highly constrained or unclear audience for learners' work. Who would be providing feedback on students' final products? Too often, little such feedback came. There was much irony here given that, unlike in F2F settings, students working in online or blended courses expected feedback on everything they posted to the Web. This was somewhat of a revelation for those accustomed to teaching in traditional, walled classrooms. Those with experience teaching correspondence courses or with tutoring students might not have been so shell-shocked. But most were not adequately prepared for this brave new online learning world.

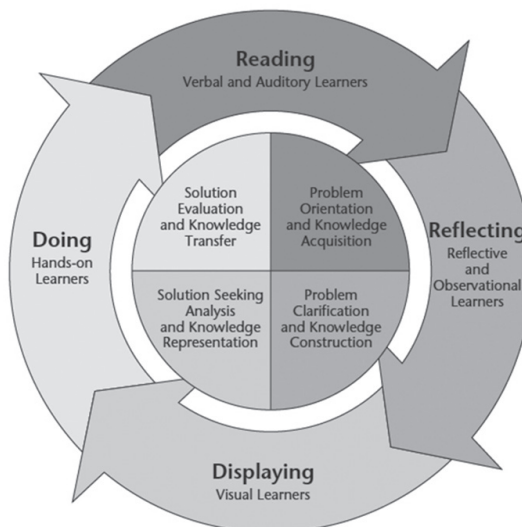
Suffice it to say, without feedback or comparison points, online students were uncertain of their learning progress. They were in a state of learning limbo. As Stanford psychologist Albert Bandura (1986, 1997) might say, there was scant opportunity to develop students' self-efficacy as online learners. Part of the problem was that there were few benchmarks to which to compare their performance. And when there was a target, they were often told that they were lacking in some skill or competency and could not pass on to the next level. Such gated learning communities with limited forms of feedback were especially prevalent in military and government training settings (Bonk, Olson, Wisher, & Orvis, 2002).

Given this situation, it was no small wonder that there were quite hearty student dropout numbers and plenty of other problems in those early years. Of course, these were just a few of the barriers and challenges facing online learners. Further fuel for the online retention travesty was the general lack of instructor and student training for such environments. Add to that poorly designed courses, insufficient or inept strategic planning, and constantly changing demands and expectations, and much could and did go wrong in those early online courses. Still, the hype bandwagon kept playing the all-too-familiar songs, such as "if you build it, they will come" and "if you do not jump in now, it will be too late."

The Read, Reflect, Display, and Do (R2D2) Model

In partial response to this situation, in 2005, Bonk and Professor Ke Zhang at Wayne State University designed an easy-to-apply and highly practical framework for addressing more diverse learner needs (Bonk & Zhang, 2006). It is called the Read, Reflect, Display, and Do (R2D2) model (see Figure 1.1). The R2D2 model was published in a book titled *Empowering Online Learning: 100+ Activities for Reading, Reflecting, Displaying, and Doing* (Bonk & Zhang, 2008). In the book, there are 25 activities for each of the four quadrants of the model, or 100 activities in total. As explained in *Empowering Online Learning*, some might think of the R2D2 model as a knowledge acquisition and use cycle as well as a problem-solving wheel.

FIGURE 1.1: R2D2 COMPONENTS.



The first phase of the model emphasizes reading, listening, and text-based activities. That initial phase or component helps to focus instruction on acquiring knowledge through various mechanisms including online readings, podcasts, and Web-streamed lectures. Next, in the second phase, the R2D2 model highlights the observational side of learning. In this component, the online instructor targets reflection on content and self-checking or reviewing learners' understanding of, for example, blogging, online practice tests, and shared online video reflections. Third, the model highlights visual forms of learning including timelines, concept maps, flowcharts, and videos. Here, the learner is required to create visual representations of her learning and put it on display for the instructor or others to review and comment on. Alternatively, a learner might use or review the visual content or depictions created by others. Finally, the fourth phase of R2D2 is intended to encourage practice or hands-on experimentation with the learned content. In this phase, learners operationalize the content by solving cases, completing various problems in a simulation, or posting a report or video summary. As these activities take place, course content and activities become more enriching and personally meaningful for learners.

As with any educational model, there are many caveats and guidelines. For instance, the four phases can proceed in any order. In addition, those using R2D2 should keep in mind that many activities take place in two or more phases of the model. In the end, the instructor and others involved in the design, delivery, and implementation of the course can decide on how, when, and where R2D2 might prove beneficial for their context. They might even employ it as a means to design or prepare instruction.

Rather than an instructional design model per se, R2D2 is a means to make sense of the learning and instruction possibilities of the Web. It is a simple four-part model of what is now possible online, and is also intended to help with addressing diverse learners and offering more variety, flexibility, choice, and learning empowerment. Some may, in fact, use it as a learning style model. Others could use it to fashion courses from a problem-solving point of view.

Whatever the perspective, R2D2 can help teachers think about their online instructional practices. It is just one model. But it is a starting point for online teaching and learning considerations. And it can be a means of reducing the tension and stress of teaching online. Given the never-ending parade of emerging technologies for learning, both experienced and novice online instructors face great difficulties deciding which tools, activities, and resources can enhance their online and blended courses. R2D2 can help.

The TEC-VARIETY Framework

A second guide to assist those new to online learning or seeking additional support is an acronym called the TEC-VARIETY framework. As indicated by the title, this book will present many stories, examples, and ideas regarding how this easy-to-remember mnemonic aid can enhance online instruction. In some ways, the TEC-VARIETY framework builds on the R2D2 model. For instance, it also synthesizes the varied ways for enhancing Web pedagogy into a few principles or ideas that, when combined, can powerfully boost the chances for online learning success. However, instead of four aspects of learning—reading, reflecting, displaying, and doing—this framework addresses different aspects of learner motivation. In fact, as noted below, each letter of TEC-VARIETY stands for one or more motivational principles.

1. **T**one/Climate: Psychological Safety, Comfort, Sense of Belonging
2. **E**ncouragement: Feedback, Responsiveness, Praise, Supports
3. **C**uriosity: Surprise, Intrigue, Unknowns
4. **V**ariety: Novelty, Fun, Fantasy
5. **A**utonomy: Choice, Control, Flexibility, Opportunities
6. **R**elevance: Meaningful, Authentic, Interesting
7. **I**nteractivity: Collaborative, Team-Based, Community
8. **E**ngagement: Effort, Involvement, Investment
9. **T**ension: Challenge, Dissonance, Controversy
10. **Y**ielding Products: Goal Driven, Purposeful Vision, Ownership

The TEC-VARIETY framework represents our combined three decades of research, teaching, and general exploration in Web-based learning environments. Since the start of this millennium, each of us had thought deeply about ways to elevate the quality of online learning. From time to time, we shared our insights and ideas with each other. Initially, we were concerned about issues related to effective online moderating and facilitating. Khoo, in fact, closely studied online moderation for a number of years as part of her dissertation research. As the two of us discussed, reflected on, and wrote about effective pedagogy, we found among online educators and those considering teaching online a general lack of understanding about how to motivate their students and raise their level of engagement. This concern extended to Web-enhanced or supplemented courses, not just fully online ones. In fact, the following quotation from an instructor whom Khoo interviewed epitomizes some of those issues. He described how his online teaching pedagogy eventually evolved from “shovelware” into a more refined practice: “We’re all new at the game and we all evolve in how we go about teaching because when we did start we were very much ‘shovelware’ sort of people. We almost transcribed our on-campus lectures and put them up there on the computer for people to sit and read our lectures but as time has gone by, we’ve found that that isn’t very effective.”

The transition for this instructor, however, did not happen overnight. The evolution required a constant examination and reflection of his teaching beliefs and practices coupled with a degree of risk taking and experimentation to take advantage of the Web’s capabilities to enhance his students’ learning. Only once this had occurred could this instructor begin to recraft and perfect his art at online instruction—an important point which we will revisit several times in the remaining chapters of this book.

It was also clear from our own experiences and from the prevailing literature that motivation has a direct bearing on student satisfaction and ultimately on learner retention in online and blended courses. Of course, we realized that motivation was a major concern not only for instructors but for administrators faced with decisions about whether to offer particular classes, degrees, or programs online. Students, too, wanted to be assured that they were not being sent to some type of learning purgatory or detention camp when enrolling in such courses. Although technology-rich learning environments initially intrigued them, many had heard horror stories about online courses and programs.

With that in mind, we spent a couple of years collecting, reading, and categorizing articles related to student motivation. For over a decade, Bonk has presented ideas related to online motivation and retention to many audiences, from K–12 to higher education to corporate and military training and beyond. During this time, he has accumulated a suite of online learning examples for an assortment of motivational principles from audience members, colleagues, and his own personal explorations. Gradually, these principles became formulated in the “TEC-VARIETY” mnemonic or framework.

We hope that, like R2D2, TEC-VARIETY can be a catalyst for discussing, developing, and delivering online courses or course components. Each time we share the TEC-VARIETY framework, audience feedback indicates extensive interest. They soon discover that when the ten principles are combined, the results can be extremely powerful. People who have applied the framework have not only told us that it works, but they have sent us hundreds of engaging examples of how they are using it.

In addition to such anecdotal evidence, our own research in corporate and military training as well as K–12 schools and higher education environments indicates that each of the 10 principles plays a key role in online learning success. As you will discover in the ensuing chapters, our research and that of many others highlights the importance of moving from traditional instructional formats with teacher telling or lecture-based practices and requisite textbooks to an environment where there is much more learner discussion and reflection on content. Success occurs when learners feel that they know each other well. It also happens when there are choices and at least some degree of flexibility in learning, when students take ownership over their learning, and when galleries of learner projects and products are on display for others to discuss and debate. Such environments are more hands-on, collaborative, and active (Kim & Bonk, 2006). TEC-VARIETY can guide and facilitate such educational transformations.

Each framework, R2D2 and TEC-VARIETY, can play a role in enhancing your online courses and activities. Their respective use will depend on your course content and context, the cultural backgrounds of the participants, student and instructor familiarity with online learning, and any known learning preferences. As indicated, we firmly believe that motivation provides the core structure for online learning success. When instructors can capture student interest in the specific learning activity, or, better yet, the overall course or program, then the road to success is more swiftly and energetically traveled. Besides a desire to learn, students need to feel curiosity and excitement about the course contents as well as some sense of tension and challenge along the way. They need to experience a sense of empowerment and control over their learning destinies, enhanced by the social presence of their instructors and fellow students. Such individuals help lay the markers and signposts along the trail of learner success.

Book Content and Organization

As in the R2D2 book, a set of instructional options facing online instructors and support personnel has been detailed for each activity in this book. These options include the degree of risk, time, and cost; all are rated from low to high. We also note the degree of learner-centeredness of each task. Most online instructors we encounter in our respective travels claim to be seeking activities that contain minimal risk, are user-friendly and inexpensive, and do not chew up a ton of time. Although low-risk, low-cost, and low-time activities can pique instructors' interests, in actuality, many are quite willing to experiment at the outer edges of the risk and time continua. Some might even have funding to pay for websites or tools that charge a fee. Our detailed information about such variables is intended to help with task selection as well as professional reflection on your teaching. We hope that it also helps to nudge many of you reading this book to try out ideas you had not considered previously and then share them with your colleagues.

In the coming chapters, we will often mention an educational setting where we have seen an activity used. That does not preclude its use in another area or environment. In fact, it is crucial to point out that an online activity deemed applicable to a particular discipline, educational group, or age level can often find substantive use within another educational

population or environment. With appropriate modifications and guidelines, nearly all of the 100 strategies outlined in this book can be applied to any population of learners.

The format of this book is intended to help the reader make sense of the powerful learning opportunities in this Web of Learning. As with the R2D2 book, in this particular book, you will find the following:

- Details on 100 easy-to-implement online instructional activities.
- Ideas for varying and extending each activity, amounting to a wealth of ideas for creating highly motivational online learning courses and environments.
- Caveats and practical guidance for each activity as well as recommendations for the TEC-VARIETY framework as a whole. Such advice should prove beneficial to online instructors, instructional designers, courseware designers, course management developers and vendors, training managers and administrators, and many others.
- Ideas, anecdotes, and examples to which online instructors and their students can personally relate.
- An assembly of Web-based learning tools and resources that are potentially useful in a range of learning situations, educational sectors, and fields or disciplines, in addition to ideas for how to thoughtfully integrate them.

This book is divided into three parts. At the beginning of the first section, the Preface describes the background information for this book. Here in Chapter One, we introduce the TEC-VARIETY framework and explain the journey that led to it. We also delineate the purpose and scope of this book. The second chapter lays out the theory, research, and practice related to online attrition and retention. In the third chapter, key motivational concepts and principles are detailed from the standpoint of four perspectives on human learning—namely, behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and sociocultural theory. We also delve more deeply into the associated psychological principles of the framework. Given that research on human motivation extends back for more than a century, we will focus on that which is most pertinent to online learning environments. As such, Chapter Three will concentrate on principles such as feedback, psychological safety, control, dissonance, fantasy, engagement, goal setting, and interactivity. The first few chapters along with the Preface, therefore, will form the core or base for the online motivation-related applications documented in much of the rest of the book.

The TEC-VARIETY framework has 10 main principles. Each principle will have its own featured chapter; that is, Chapters Four to Thirteen will each contain 10 activities, forming the second key section of this book. To help the reader, Table 1.1 is an overview of the 10 main principles of the framework and the corresponding instructional activities for each principle detailed in this book.

In the third section, Chapter Fourteen offers an assortment of ideas for how to work with resistant and less experienced online instructors, those who are new to online learning and instruction, and those who are more experienced but have not yet attempted a blended or fully online course. As noted in that chapter, such ideas should be bound into a systemic professional development program or initiative, not simply treated as one-off solutions. Finally, Chapter Fifteen recaps the journey within the book and the components of the TEC-VARIETY framework while suggesting how the framework

TABLE 1.1: 100+ ACTIVITIES FOR TEC-VARIETY.

TONE/CLIMATE	ENCOURAGEMENT	CURIOSITY	VARIETY	AUTONOMY
1. Personal Introductions	11. Critical Friends	21. Online Events in the News	31. Online Séance or Roundtable	41. Cool Resource Provider
2. Video Introductions	12. Student Polling and Voting	22. Live Science, Creative Expression, or Artistic Invention	32. Virtual World Role Plays	42. Technology Tool Demonstrator
3. Goals and Expectations	13. Online Suggestion Box	23. Live Scientific Discovery or Invention	33. Mobile and Social Networking Content Games and Apps	43. Starter-Wrapper Technique
4. Personal Commitments	14. Minute and Muddiest Point Papers	24. Just-in-Time Syllabus	34. Educational Music Videos	44. Shotgun Questioning
5. Eight Nouns	15. Comments and Annotations	25. Just-in-Time Teaching	35. Database Problems and Search Competitions	45. Hot Seat Questioning
6. Two Truths and One Lie	16. Screencasted Supports and Directions	26. What's My Line Guest Games	36. Task and Activity Randomizer	46. Open Exploration Weeks
7. Accomplishment Hunts	17. Embedded Reviews and System Scored Practice Tests	27. A Day in the Life of a Scientist, Scholar, or Celebrity	37. Time-Constrained Presentations	47. Open Educational Resources Explorations
8. Course Fan Pages	18. Asynchronous Expert Feedback and Mentoring	28. Cultural or Contextual Blogs and Resources	38. Virtual Community Brainstorming	48. Pick and Choose Options
9. Favorite Websites	19. Synchronous and Mobile Mentoring	29. Extreme Learning	39. Extreme Teaching and Online Mentoring	49. Open Syllabus Course Portal with Options
10. Online Cafés	20. Learner-Self-Interaction and Self-Feedback Forms	30. Quests and Probes on the Web	40. Exploring Dynamic Web Content	50. Open Teaching and MOOCs

RELEVANCE	INTERACTIVE	ENGAGEMENT	TENSION	YIELDING PRODUCTS
51. Multimedia Case Vignettes and Decision Making	61. Scholar, Scientist, or Innovator Role Play	71. Interactive Maps and Databases	81. Debating Controversial Online News, Blogs, and Other Media	91. Cartoon and Animated Movie Productions
52. Job Connection and Strategic Planning Papers	62. Interactive Learner Questioning and Discussion	72. Interactive Multimedia Glossaries	82. Structured Controversy	92. Student Documentaries
53. Wiki Editing Projects (including Wikipedia)	63. Jigsaw the Online Content	73. Talking Dictionaries and Lang. Translation	83. Structured Role Debates (e.g., Court Forums)	93. Course Video Summaries and Movie Festivals
54. Language Learning Conversations and Mentoring	64. Flipping the Class	74. Interactive Timelines	84. Online Study Group Challenges	94. Book Trailers
55. Online Current News Feeds and Streaming Data	65. Product Brainstorming and Co-Creation	75. Exploring Animations, and Simulations, and Pop-Up Media	85. Timed Disclosures and Issue Voting	95. Online Book Reviews
56. Cross-Cultural Web Conferencing and Interactions	66. Collaborative Mindmapping and Idea Visualization	76. Virtual Tools and Scientific Instruments	86. Argument and Debate Mapping	96. Content Databases and Learning Portals
57. Instructor Online Video Demos	67. Collaborative Video Annotations	77. Microblogging Course Discussions	87. Challenge-Based Videoconferencing	97. Oral History Interviews
58. Video Study Guides, Tutorials, and Microlectures	68. Video Discussion and Questioning	78. Online Subject-Specific Picture Galleries	88. Digital Media Competitions	98. Grammar Check, Peer Check
59. Podcasts and Researcher Interviews	69. Word Cloud Interactions	79. Interactive Online Exhibits (e.g., Art and Bones)	89. “Best of” Nominations (e.g., Quotes)	99. Recording Accomplishments (e.g., I Done It)
60. Oral History or Situational Research	70. Backchannel Conference and Course Participation	80. Three-Level Questioning	90. Online Games, Puzzles, and Quizzes	100. Poster Sessions and Gallery Tours

might find even more extensive use in the future. In this final chapter, we summarize the 100+ activities and assorted ideas from the previous chapters into one table showing the degree of time, risk, and cost for each activity. We also discuss ways to integrate various principles of the framework to create more effective and engaging fully online and blended learning courses.

Using the two recap tables, the reader can quickly find needed information applicable to one or more component of the TEC-VARIETY framework. When combined, Chapters Four through Thirteen contain the 100+ advertised activities of this book. If it is the start of your online class and you are in need of an icebreaker, there are 10 sample ones in Chapter Four. On the other hand, if you are reaching the end of a unit or the course, you might find the product-based ideas of Chapter Thirteen more to your liking. And if you simply desire a change of pace, then the ideas and activities of Chapter Seven on variety may have just what you seek. In whatever ways you plan to use this book, it is vital to be thoughtful in your integration and exploitation of Web technology.

As indicated, there are more than 100 different activities in this one book. To help the reader review and understand as many of these as possible, a description and purpose is included for each activity. Also detailed are the skills and objectives, advice and ideas, and various instructional considerations related to the degree of time, risk, cost, and learner-centeredness of each activity. We also offer a variation for each activity. Such variations raise the pool of instructional ideas in this book from 100 to at least 200. And when the ideas from both the R2D2 book and this one are combined, juxtaposed against one another, and intermingled in ways heretofore not seen, there are seemingly countless ideas for online instructors to consider.

What should become apparent is that this book simultaneously provides an overarching lens related to motivation with technology as well as a series of specific approaches for effective instruction. You will find a macro framework in addition to dozens of more micro-level ideas that can be implemented each time you journey online. This book should provide you with a convenient and purposeful toolkit to boost your confidence as an online instructor or instructional designer. It should also offer needed information for managers and directors of learning organizations and enrichment for the casual observer who is simply interested in online learning. As TEC-VARIETY becomes part of your instructional blood, it may even have an impact on your instructional decisions in traditional F2F instructional settings. Once the framework is internalized, you might be better equipped to address diverse learner needs and personalize their learning environment in novel and exciting ways. We hope so and we look forward to hearing about your results.

As a resource for more personalized and engaging learning, we hope that you will make journeys back to sections of this book as needed. When you do, you will come across several key learning resources intended to help you best use this book. First, embedded in Chapter One is a table listing the 100 activities in this book according to the main 10 motivational principles of the TEC-VARIETY framework. In addition, a similar table in the final chapter recaps these activities according to indices of time, risk, and cost as well as learner-centeredness. There is also a list of Web resources which are sorted by chapter to help with your search. These Web resources and references at the back of the book can be used to further explore most topics mentioned in the book. To expedite your explorations, both the book references and Web links can be found at the book's website,

<http://tec-variety.com>. Of course, we welcome and appreciate any suggestions you may have for enhancing the site.

Goals and Uses of this Book

This book can be employed in a variety of settings and situations. Some might use it in a master's course in educational technology such as online learning leadership, instructional design, technology and motivation, distance learning, and e-learning. Others could use it with pre-service or in-service teachers in one or more technology applications or methods courses. Students in such courses will begin to grasp the range of learning opportunities on the Web as well as grapple with how they could personally employ various technology tools and Web resources.

Those in corporate, government, and military settings may see this book as a means to create, review, and modify online course content and activities. They might set up institutes, workshops, and summits around some of the ideas from this book and others in the field. Many individuals we have encountered in such adult-based learning situations are in the midst of a significant overhaul of their online content due to concerns about learner completion rates, sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and the impact of their training programs. We believe that the TEC-VARIETY framework speaks directly to each of those concerns.

As noted with the R2D2 book, this book offers one view or perspective on how to design effective online and blended learning environments. There are countless others. Neither R2D2 nor TEC-VARIETY is intended as an instructional design model. Still, each provides a mechanism for reflecting on the quality of online courses and course contents as well as a guide for designing new ones. TEC-VARIETY is a tool to assist those pondering teaching online for the very first time. It can also help the more seasoned online instructor seeking to verify her online teaching practices and perhaps push beyond them. The audience of the book, therefore, includes instructors, tutors, trainers, instructional designers, administrators, and anyone wanting to know about effective forms of Web-based instruction.

Caveats Regarding the Web Resources, Tools, and Activities Listed

Many aspects of this book are purposefully intended to help the reader understand and then find resources that can assist in motivating and retaining online learners. We cover a wide gamut of Web resources, technologies, and disciplines. As already mentioned, at the end of the book, we recap the Web resources mentioned along the way. We must caution the reader, however, that we did not select a particular technology tool or resource to promote or advocate personally, nor do we offer any guidelines or recommendations

for deciding between them. Nevertheless, in each chapter, we include references to the prevailing literature related to many of the techniques and tools suggested.

Keep in mind that there are undoubtedly dozens of other highly useful tools that you may have heard about or already use in your classes. This is not a technology book nor is it a book devoted solely to instructional methods; instead, it is a text addressing the intersection of technology, pedagogy, and learning. As such, it is filled with options and opportunities to ignite the interest of experienced and novice instructors and that of their students. Given the range of options, we recommend that you test out or experiment with a particular website or tool before incorporating it into a learning experience in your classes.

You should also keep in mind that during the coming years, many of the tools and resources that are documented in this book will be replaced or discarded, or will have morphed into some larger system. Websites and associated URLs may change or disappear in the blink of an eye and then reemerge a week or month later in a more robust or useful format. New ownership often results in name changes or new locations for a popular technology or resource. If you cannot find something that we mention and it sounds interesting, keep searching or perhaps write to one of us.

What should become obvious as you scan through this book is that the 100+ activities outlined in it are often real examples that we have personally encountered or seen in use by others. A few of them may remain future goals and visions for our own classes, but all are possible today. We must also remind the reader that although we have attempted most of the tasks and activities described in this book, there are dozens of different ways to use each one. Our examples, therefore, are not prescriptions or the only ways to use them some of these ideas. Instead, you should flexibly apply these activities according to your specific learning situation or context.

We realize that some of these ideas will not work in every educational sector or course level. Ignore or put a red “X” by activities that will not work for you. Concentrate on those that might find success in your learning environment or situation. And for any activities you are not sure about, use your creative juices and imagination to enhance, extend, and transform them. When you do that, the 100+ ideas of this book explode to tens of thousands. We provide the kernels or skeletons for many instructional ideas. As you review each one, you should reflect on how to add some meat to those bones and get those kernels popping.

You should also realize that there are thousands of other ideas that did not make it into this book. Given that the field is changing so rapidly, it is impossible for a single book to point to all the opportunities educators have today. Need more ideas? Explore the R2D2 book as well as other online learning books. Be patient. If there is something that you really want to do online in your classes or programs, eventually you will be able to do it.

We hope you enjoy the rest of the book.

Praise for *Adding Some TEC-VARIETY*

“There are books on theory and books on practice, however this is the best volume ever written for using learning theory to inform effective practice. This book is a tour de force for creating an environment where students not only succeed in online learning, but they achieve excellence as well.”

—**Charles (Chuck) Dziuban**, Director, Research Initiative for Teaching Effectiveness (RITE), Professor Emeritus and Inaugural Pegasus Professor, University of Central Florida, and Sloan-C Fellow

“An excellent book from world leaders in the field that will be of great value for educators and designers. Presents concrete examples grounded in solid ‘practical’ theory.”

—**Charalambos Vrasidas**, Executive Director of the Center for the Advancement of Research & Development in Educational Technology (CARDET), Associate Dean for elearning, University of Nicosia, Cyprus, and author of several information technology and distance learning books

Based on 10 theoretically driven and proven motivational principles, *Adding Some TEC-VARIETY* offers 100 practical yet innovative ideas to motivate online learners and increase learner retention.

What motivates?

1. **Tone/Climate:** Psychological Safety, Comfort, Sense of Belonging
2. **Encouragement:** Feedback, Responsiveness, Praise, Supports
3. **Curiosity:** Surprise, Intrigue, Unknowns
4. **Variety:** Novelty, Fun, Fantasy
5. **Autonomy:** Choice, Control, Flexibility, Opportunities
6. **Relevance:** Meaningful, Authentic, Interesting
7. **Interactivity:** Collaborative, Team-Based, Community
8. **Engagement:** Effort, Involvement, Investment
9. **Tension:** Challenge, Dissonance, Controversy
10. **Yielding Products:** Goal Driven, Purposeful Vision, Ownership

This is the book you need to grow your online teaching repertoire in innovative ways that will grab your students' attention and imagination. **Additional book resources as well as a free e-book are available for download at <http://tec-variety.com>.**

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