Conduct a Technology Check

Technology tools help us teach, learn, and communicate online effectively and efficiently. As these technologies are evolving with each year, they require time and effort on our parts to ensure that they are updated and working properly and that we are using them correctly (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016).

Similar to the way in which classroom teachers might visit their classrooms before the first day of the course to ensure that everything is working properly, it is best practice for online teachers to conduct a technology check prior to the course start date.

Conducting the Technology Check

When conducting a technology check, you will want to:

- navigate file and resource paths;
- review all links to outside resources (blogs, articles, videos, etc. may be taken down or no longer available);
- double-check that all audio and video files are fully uploaded and accessible;
- ensure that students can download any assigned readings that you have posted;
- ensure that any quizzes that will be assigned are created and ready for students to take;
- consider sending an email to the entire class and asking each student to confirm receipt to make sure you have the correct contact information for all students.

This technology check will save course time by avoiding delays and other issues. It also saves you from having to quickly troubleshoot unexpected problems.

Synchronous Meetings

If you are attending or facilitating a synchronous meeting or discussion, conducting the technology check is even more important. Many of the meeting software programs and applications will work differently on every computer and browser, so it is best not to assume that because you have used something in the past it will work seamlessly. For instance, you may need to update your version of Zoom or Skype in order to use it—you do not want to be late to the meeting because you are waiting for the update to download to your computer. To avoid such issues, log on early and make sure that your video and audio are connected and working properly.

If you are leading the synchronous lecture or discussion, take the time to ensure that you are familiar with any tools, such as breakout rooms and whiteboard annotation, that you plan to use. You may even do a test run of the entire session ahead of time. If a function is not working or you are not very comfortable with it yet, it may be better to adjust the lesson or activities to avoid using them for now. Make a note to go back and learn how to use these functions and incorporate them into future sessions.

Source

Boettcher, J. V., & Conrad, R. (2016). *Online teaching survival guide: Simple and practical pedagogical tips* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.