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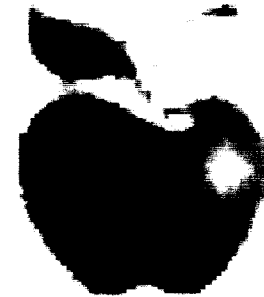
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The Audience

- ◆ Focus on the needs of the students not on the powers of the technology.
- ◆ Students may have a wide range of technological skills. Allow opportunities for the advanced students to experiment, but bring them back on task to make important points.
- ◆ Be patient and encouraging with students who are new to the technologies and assume no prior knowledge.
- ◆ Begin your session by asking questions to gauge your audience's technical knowledge.
- ◆ If possible, have someone assist you by roving around the room and handling problems while you are presenting.
- ◆ If an assistant is not possible, solicit help from your audience.
- ◆ Some students may suffer from technology anxiety and may need extra patience and encouragement.
- ◆ Always explain what you are going to do, then do it slowly.
- ◆ Plan your sessions carefully. A demo or a hands-on session will always take more time than a lecture.
- ◆ Always plan time for questions.
- ◆ If possible, allow time for hands-on exercises. More is learned by doing than by watching.

Always prepare for the unexpected!

Library Instruction Teaching Tips



Technology in the Classroom

American Library Association
Library Instruction Round Table
Research Committee

Advances in technology have proven to be both a blessing and a curse for instructional librarians. Technology helps us illustrate points that, in the past, have eluded easy oral definition. At the same time, all of us have been victims of unstable network connections, incompatible software, and other nagging problems associated with technology. Hopefully, the following tips will help to defuse problems before they can occur.

The Software

- Try your presentation on the equipment you will be using. Even though some software is produced to be compatible over different platforms, try it to be sure that the software you are using is compatible with the equipment in the room.
- Ask permission before installing any software onto the instructional workstation.
- If you are not sure of the proper installation procedures, ask the room contact to install the software for you.
- When using any type of presentation software, be sure that a compatible version of the software is installed on the workstation you will be using.
- When planning "live" online sessions, have low-tech backups, such as overheads or handouts to use in case of an emergency.
- Prepare and use off-line browsers to reduce the risk of network failures.

The Room

- Make arrangements to get in the room in advance of the session. If at all possible, try to spend as much time as you can getting acquainted with the room. If the instructional room is not under your control, identify the main contact for the room. This person should be able to answer any and all questions about the room access and equipment.
- Locate electrical outlets. If they are not convenient to your presentation area, locate some extension cords. (Cords tend to come and go in classrooms. It is a good idea to have your own and travel with it.)
- If using a live connection, locate the nearest network drop. If it is not convenient to your presentation area, locate some network cables. (Again, having your own cables can prevent last minute crises trying to find a cable or re-arrange the furniture.)
- Locate the light controls. If they are not convenient to the area where you will be presenting, be prepared to ask a member of the audience to help you with the lights.
- Try the lights. Do they dim? If not, find a combination of lights which allows your audience to see both you and the screens. Plan when you will have to turn them on during your presentation.
- Be prepared to re-arrange the classroom furniture. The room arrangement will govern your teaching style. Make sure it is arranged to maximize your presentation. Audience members should be able to see you and your presentation from every seat in the room.

The Equipment

- Know exactly what equipment will be available to you in the room. Knowing this will help you decide what equipment you need to bring yourself, or allow time to plan your presentation accordingly.
- Try out your entire presentation in advance using all of the required equipment. This is the best way to spot possible problems.
- Take time to acquaint yourself with equipment with which you may be unfamiliar. This is especially important if you are a PC user and the instructional workstation is a Mac, or vice versa.
- Identify the contact person in case of a breakdown during your session. Contact them in advance, tell them when you'll be there, the equipment you'll be using, and verify that their availability should you need them.
- Get a list of necessary passwords and authorization codes for the machines you will be using. If possible, identify alternate means of access for your presentation.
- Check all connections and power sources.
- Learn the proper way to restart the machines. Simply turning them off and on may damage the equipment.
- Learn to operate the light panels and projectors. Many are configured for a particular type of platform. If you need an adapter, locate them and try them out in advance.
- If using an overhead projector, learn how to change the light bulb. Many projectors have an emergency backup bulb. Locate this and know how to use it.
- If using a digital projector that is also used as a video projector, learn how to switch from video to computer and back.
- Learn how to adjust the volume and focus on digital projectors.