

Colvin Clarke, R. & Kwinn, A. (2007). Getting Started in the New Virtual Classroom in *The New Virtual Classroom Evidence Based Guidelines for Synchronous e-Learning*. (p.231-247). San Francisco CA: Pfeiffer

This is the final chapter in Clarke and Kwinn's book and it pulls together the advice given in previous chapters by providing the reader with seven principles that act as a foundation to planning virtual classroom events. In addition to listing the principles the authors provide guidelines for virtual classroom facilitators who may need to convert an existing course for online delivery or who may be about to embark on designing a course from scratch. The chapter closes with the experts' forum which provides suggestions for applications which may be used in the virtual classroom to increase engagement and reduce cognitive load.

Once again this chapter provides practical advice for someone starting out to plan virtual classroom events. The principles cover preparation before the event and approaches that should be taken during the event to ensure effectiveness. If converting an existing course the authors provide guidelines to the facilitator which will enable them to make the call regarding the suitability of the existing course structure for conversion allowing them to provide rationale to make the proposal that the course will need to be redesigned from scratch.

From my perspective the principles provided by the authors could be given to any of our trainers to use as a checklist when planning an event with the knowledge that if they use the guidelines they will design effective online training. Although listed one to seven the diagram provided in the book illustrates the principles as a cyclical procedure suggesting no one principle is any more important than the other. My thoughts are that at the beginning it may seem daunting to trainers to ensure that these guidelines are incorporated. Lack of familiarity and ease with the technology may lead to suggestions that some principles could or should be omitted. In addition some limitations within the particular package that will be implemented will require creative thinking as to how the principles may be applied.

However I feel that using the principles as guidelines will generate discussion on how best they can be achieved based on the experience and confidence of trainers as they move to the online environment.