

Michael, K. (2012), Virtual classroom: reflections of online learning, *Campus-Wide Information Systems*, 29(3), 156 – 165.

This paper focuses on the reflections of teachers and students collected over a twelve month period when piloting online classes. The study concentrated on two areas, firstly the achievements of learning outcomes using the online classroom and secondly the reflections of all participants on the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot project. Michael begins by discussing the rationale for exploring the use of an online classroom and continues with a description of the online class atmosphere to help simulate the environment under discussion. She goes on to discuss the number of themes that arose from the online pilot. The themes arising were increased flexibility for student and teacher and cost reductions, the technical challenges arising, the resistance to online learning by all participants, the extension of online facilities and increased student engagement and finally the level of visual literacy skills among students. Michael concludes with a summary of results and an indication of areas for improvement to ensure online learning success.

The affordances of increased flexibility for learner and instructor coupled with cost reductions and the problems caused by technical issues are identified in other studies. My interest lies in Michael's discussion of the resistance to online learning by all participants. Being a proponent of online learning means it can be easy to forget that not everyone will embrace this experience with open arms. The author identifies faculty's scepticism regarding the effectiveness of the technology to achieve learning objectives coupled with a preference for traditional teaching methods. With students she has identified the perception that they may be disadvantaged if face to face methods are eliminated. For me this means that there is a need to anticipate the areas of resistance that may be encountered during this project. Over the coming weeks I intend to show trainers the short link that has been made as a brief introduction to the technology and interview them regarding their perceptions of the technology and teaching online. Although a brief introduction has been made my thoughts as a result of this article are that there may be a need to create further short modules targeted at specific audiences such as trainers, managers and the first prospective students which will aim at addressing fears or scepticisms about learning or teaching online.