

**ENCOURAGING STUDENT CREATIVITY IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT:
CONNECTING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND APPLICATION WITH TECHNOLOGY**

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Abstract

Students are returning back to higher education at a record number, especially in the area of virtual learning (Babson, 2013). While their reasons may vary a majority of their reasons focus on job mobility, career development, as well as on a sense of their own meaning of work. According to authors on the topic of meaning of work (Chalofsky, 2003), people may be tired of working for others, but sense an internal need for working for themselves. However, the key in their search is finding their own niche, enough training to help them in this personal endeavor, and connecting to the right network of social capital. However, with the onset of newer technology, social media and growing consciousness of immediate gratification, even educators are seeing a growing need in the adult learning population to see changes in the way education is presented, implemented and nurtured. Can new learning approaches signify a change in the way education for both learner and educator and can educational institutions make immediate and future changes?

With the introduction of more educational technology over the decades, the presentation of material has changed dramatically in some educational institutions, while restricted in others per the oversight of educational administrators and steadfast instructors. This presentation will challenge the current status quo and demonstrate how one virtual course, over the past ten years, has substantially changed their course offer in one key graduate-level business course in consulting to connect content knowledge with technology to awaken a new set of student skills sets that traditional have been limited to traditional research papers and small “limited” projects. This presentation will over how the instructor was able to overhaul a traditional educational course and add in a special application project that not only met all learning outcomes, but provided an extra element of “unexpected” discovery for the students. Students were given the tools and steps to help create their own virtual consulting business in order to thoroughly understand the inter-workings of business creation, implementation, and ongoing dialoguing throughout the course to help simulate how a consultant goes from step one to business while learning the use of social media, virtual networking, and importance of consulting principles.

Keywords: Career Development, Consulting, Adult Learners, Online Learning
