Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

The Link Between Communication, Education, and Technology

Dan Matthews · Wednesday, August 14th, 2019

Communication is one of the cornerstones of our culture. It is how we describe ourselves, our thoughts and beliefs, as well as how we understand the feelings and emotions of others. Likewise, it is how we get work completed, learn, and move through other tasks. The quality of our communication can greatly influence our relationships and effectiveness in nearly everything we do.

However, the ways in which we communicate are changing faster than ever before thanks to major technological advancements. Technology has given us the ability to communicate to a broader audience, connect with people from around the world, and enrich our lives with easily accessible new information. In many ways, these advancements have changed our lives for the better.

Particularly when it comes to workplace management and education, communication technology has vastly impacted our lives. We need good communication, and we can utilize technology to facilitate even better communication. The trick is making these communication tools and strategies as human-centric as possible to capture the voices of everyone in the audience.

What does it mean to be Human-Centered?

To design technologies or other products to be human-centered seems like a really straightforward idea at first. But then you may ask yourself, what exactly does it mean to be human-centered? How is this really different than anything else we do? What exactly does this have to do with communication?

The crux of human-centered design is, essentially, to be focused on the end-user experience throughout the entire design process. And this means designers have to be communicating to determine what the end-user wants or needs. What does the end-user or consumer want in a product, what type of marketing draws them in, and what makes them develop loyalty over time?

This idea is valuable both in the realms of education and business. Technologies can do a lot to improve communication, but developing human-centered communication strategies is the real key to success. After all, nobody wants to use a virtual meeting platform that is difficult to understand or learn in an AI world that feels designed by computers. Likewise, communication isn't effective without understanding how the end-user will receive your message.

Putting Learning First

There is no shortage of technologies that are revolutionizing the ways we can educate our kids. Great teachers can capitalize on new tech to revitalize their students' curriculum and improve learning outcomes by reaching children at their interest levels and making learning fun. Using technology to better communicate educational material is a staple strategy in most progressive classrooms.

Some of the ways educators are using education technology in a human-centric way to reach the specific learning goals of their student's include:

- Adaptive learning
- Learning analytics
- Simulations, game-based learning activities, and virtual or augmented reality
- Competency-based education
- Open educational resources

Adaptive learning, for example, helps teachers adjust their teaching method to enable students to follow unique learning paths to reach the same educational goal. For instance, some students learn better working in small groups, while others benefit more from using a computer simulation to explain the same idea in a slightly different way. These types of adaptive methods can help students to focus on weak spots in a fun way, while also giving teachers more time to work with individual students where needed.

Applying it to Work

Effective communication strategies are not only essential for teaching students, but also critical for creating a happy and productive workplace. For instance, nearly every employee (think end-user) will admit that one of the most important factors of a good work environment is a manager who is easy to communicate with, is open to new ideas, and provides feedback in an understandable and actionable manner. They provide little gray area without breathing down your neck.

Good managers will come up with a communication plan to help them manage projects in a positive way. Many use some level of technology to help accomplish the goals of their communication plan. This tech can be as simple as checking in with employees via email, getting the project group together for a meeting over a video conference call, or using tech programs to track projects and tasks through their completion.

Technology is truly changing the workforce by altering the way projects are managed and even how we get jobs in the first place. For example, in the business realm, it is almost essential to have an online resume profile. Prospective employees often search for jobs online and applicants are usually tracked using some sort of software program.

Communication is critical to nearly everything we do, and technology is becoming a valuable factor within that realm. Tech is changing how we communicate information both in education and business. Focusing on developing human-centric communication tools is important for long-term success of any communication strategies, especially those that are capitalizing on tech.

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