

Four Digital Tools for Teacher Mentors

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Remember how nerve wracking your first day, week, month or year of teaching was? If you could only go back and share what you know.

Unfortunately, we can't go back in time. We can, however, provide better assistance to new teachers, thanks to a number of digital tools now available. These technologies make mentoring first-year teachers a smoother, more efficient, and beneficial process. They support better communicating, demonstrating and critiquing, both synchronously and asynchronously. Here are four teacher-tested favorites:

Flipgrid is a video discussion platform used by millions of K-12 and college students across the globe. The platform lets mentors and mentees share daily reflections with each other, without having to be in the same room or building. By posing a prompt, the educator can share their thoughts, ideas, struggles, and questions via video with their coach. Mentors can, in turn, respond with feedback and suggestions asynchronously.

Slack is a communication platform that offers real-time messaging and information sharing. Teachers and their mentors can use it to connect, discuss issues, exchange content and build a workflow. You can connect directly with a specific user or user group. You can also create "channels" in the system, around specific topics. For instance, an educator can post a question or ask for assistance on a lesson or topic via a channel. Mentors receive notification and can respond with text, audio recording, or even video. If you're mentoring several educators, you can set up a channel for the whole group. This is a great way to brainstorm on best practices or get feedback on classroom challenges.

Google Hangouts is another communication platform. You can use it for SMS messaging as well as phone and video calls. It is cross-platform and device agnostic. Google Hangouts can help mentors work with educators who are spread out among various locations—and using different devices and operating systems. The videoconferencing feature lets users see each other and screen-sharing capabilities let them exchange content and lessons. Now, reviewing or demonstrating is possible from any location. Set up appointments in Google Calendar and add a video conference to the invite. If videoconferencing is not convenient, teachers and coaches can communicate using the platform's chat feature.

Hoonuit offers analytic tools and professional learning modules for educators. The professional-learning modules are available on a subscription basis. Mentees learn and demonstrate understanding through the platform's learning framework "Learn It, Do It, Share It, and Prove It." At the end of a module, educators receive a certificate of completion that they can use for professional growth credit. You were chosen to be a mentor because you have demonstrated the ability to be an effective classroom teacher, a great trainer of teachers, and understand how to personalize learning for your mentees. These digital tools can help support your efforts and the growth of your educator peers.

Source: [SmartBrief](#)