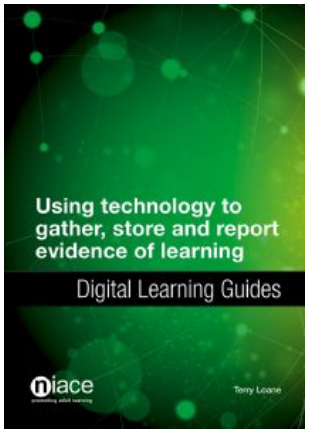

Using Technology to Gather, Store and Report Evidence of Learning

Loane, Terry
International Specialized Book Services, 2014

Book Review

Tags: assessment | learning outcomes | technology and teaching

Reviewed by: Josiah Way, *University of Birmingham*
Date Reviewed: March 26, 2015

In this short synopsis, *Using Technology to Gather, Store, and Report Evidence of Learning* from NIACE's Digital Learning Guides series, Terry Loane presents an overview of the current prevailing technological methods for collecting and reporting evidence of learning. Largely, the guide is sufficient and serves as a solid reference for non-technical educators; it demonstrates the best methods for individual circumstances by providing ten vignettes of real-life situations. Loane's opening theme of "a revolution whose time has come" (4) flows fluidly through the seven chapters, comparing and contrasting old ways with the new.

Loane explains both the need and value of utilizing common elements of modern technology like mobile devices, online tools, and e-portfolios, in order to efficiently and effectively collect and present the fruit of one's learning. He notes that the days of simply having to state that a qualification was met are gone; now the learner can present learned skills using easy and effective methods like mp3 recordings, YouTube videos, and blogging (55). The majority of the book covers the various forms of evidence gathering, technological means for data collection, and options for long-term cataloguing and presentation of one's learning. The methods covered do offer a satisfactory representation of current options; however, as Loane notes, "the world has indeed moved on in just five years" (23). With rapid technological shifts, we must be open to adjusting our methods. Even since this book was published in early 2014, technology has moved more toward video, the one method Loane warns readers includes a range of issues involving lighting, intrusiveness, file sizes, and non-standardized codecs (28-29). As these obstacles are fast being worked out, and becoming more standardized, this guide may have a short shelf life and be in need of a second edition in the near future.

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What I found most intriguing was Loane's futuristic idea – and possible current direction in the use of technology in preserving evidence of learning – of developing an "Online Record of Learning, Experience, and Achievement" (5) that will "rehumanize learning" by showing that learning is more than marks on paper (56, 57). The development of an online clearinghouse of sorts for learners and assessors to store and share evidence of learning is one that could greatly benefit the educational community as a whole. Loane rightly demonstrates that even technology that learners and assessors use everyday (like smart phones and tablets) has all the tools necessary to easily present learning and to create such a system, offering the ability to take certifications and evidence of learning along as one moves from institution to institution and job to job.

I recommend this guide as a suitable reference tool for the non-technical educator, learner, or assessor seeking to move from old paper-and-pen methods to contemporary digital options. As Loane demonstrates, the benefits of embracing technology in learning far outweigh the hindrance of changing former traditional methods.

https://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/resources/book_reviews/using-technology-to-gather-store-and-report-evidence-of-learning/