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SEVEN TIPS FOR ENGAGING YOUR ONLINE STUDENTS

1. **Connect with your students.**
   Your students want to learn from someone they can connect and relate to, someone who faces real-life challenges and has professional goals similar to their own. Share with them a little about who you are on a regular basis. Expose them to the positives and negatives of your professional world.

2. **Set expectations on the first day of class.**
   Together, you and your students create the culture of your online classroom. Ask students what they expect of one another and of you. Share what you expect of them. The more explicit you are with your expectations and the more you know about your students' expectations, the more likely you are to match.

3. **Tell stories.**
   Embed relevant, real-life experiences in your lectures, discussions and activities as much as possible. Students want to hear about and work on that which is most professionally relevant to them. Be humble in your story telling and reflect on how the stories connect to specific content or topics in the course.

4. **Chunk your lectures into 10-15 minutes segments.**
   The average adult attention time span is 10-15 minutes. Chunk your topics into pieces, with breaks for questions, discussions and/or activities. Give students an opportunity to apply or reflect frequently on the topics you are presenting throughout your class, be it via a collaborative discussion forum or individual assignment.

5. **Activities, activities, activities.**
   Encouraging students to apply their learning through individual or group activities keeps them focused on the concepts you are presenting. Whether students are taking two minutes to complete an ungraded self-test or analyzing a case study in virtual teams, students are more likely to be engaged with the material at hand because they are actively involved.

6. **Provide timely feedback.**
   Students like to know where they stand in their achievement of the course objectives. Let students know how they are doing with written or audio comments, suggestions, and praise. Be sure to clearly communicate how and when feedback will be provided in order to manage students' expectations (and to avoid a slurry of "How did I do on the assignment?" messages).

7. **Let the students run the class.**
   Collect feedback in every class. Observe when your students are and are not engaged. Ask your students what is and is not resonating with them and why. Pose short, yet insightful poll or quiz questions to determine gaps in the acquisition of the concepts you are teaching. The more you know, the more you can adjust your teaching in real-time.