Details

10 Tools Every Coach Can Use Tomorrow - 070
In this episode, I'll share ten of my favorite tech tools and ways that you can use them to support other educators, connect with families, or lead your own classroom. You'll also hear how these tools can boost productivity and efficiency in the work you do.

Introduction

Hello there! My name is Monica Burns, I'm a former classroom teacher and now I spend my time sharing tips, strategies and activity ideas to make EdTech integration easier in your classroom. You may be familiar with my books, like Tasks Before Apps or my blog ClassTechTips.com. Whether we've met at a conference or special event, you've followed along with my EdTech tips for years, or simply joining in for the first time today, I'm so glad you're here!

In this bite-sized podcast you'll get some quick info and actionable tips to energize and elevate teaching and learning!

You can head to my website classtechtips.com/podcast for all of the show notes. That's where you'll find the transcript for each episode, links to resources, and any of the free downloads I mention.

Promotion/Reminder

This month I'm opening up the doors to the Easy EdTech Club, my membership site for educators who want to do a deep dive into one EdTech topic each month and get access to exclusive content like step-by-step guides, planning pages, ebooks, and more. Almost 400 people are currently in the group and over 1,000 people are on the waitlist and will be the first to know when the club doors open. Head over to classtechtips.com/club to learn about the Easy EdTech Club and get your name on the waitlist.

Today's Intro

This week's podcast episode is titled: 10 Tools Every Coach Can Use Tomorrow

Episode Transcript

This week's podcast episode is titled, *10 tools Every Coach Can Use Tomorrow*. Now, when I use the term coach today, I mean an instructional coach, someone who supports other teachers, but I know that these 10 tools are ones that any educator can use in their role, and I'm so excited to bring these to you today. Now, if you've

followed along for a while, or maybe you follow along on Instagram and have seen me snap pictures of different things, you know that I love things that help me stay productive, that help me save time. I'm all about ease and efficiency whenever possible, having systems and routines, not just in my business that I run now, but also as a classroom teacher, making sure that I had everything in one place. I now do a lot of work with schools where I have to stay organized and remember who needs what, or what they would like me to talk about on a webinar, or just reminders of things so that I can keep information all in one place.

And so today, I'm going to share with you 10 of my favorite tools and ways that you can use them, if you are also supporting other educators, maybe even connecting with families, or leading your own classroom and wanting to stay more productive. I know that sometimes I share tips and I don't always love the term 'hack,' I guess, but using a tool a little bit differently than you might think, or something quick that can give you a big win, I've been sharing a lot of these this spring and summer on TikTok. So no dance moves or anything particularly fun, but just a lot of 15 second quick tips. So you'll hear me mention some things that I've also featured in TikTok videos, too. So if you are interested in that and not really sure if TikTok is for you, you could always just send me a message on Instagram @classtechtips, and I can get you some of the links to those videos that go along with our big topic for today.

I've organized this list of 10 tools every coach can use tomorrow into four categories: staying organized, staying connected, building capacity, and sharing resources. So let's go into the first category, staying organized, and I've got three tools to highlight for you. The first one is Google Keep. Now, if you have been around for a while in my kind of podcast universe, if you will, you know that earlier this spring, I did a whole podcast episode on reasons I love Google Keep.

So I'm not going to talk for 15 minutes all about Google Keep, but I'm going to kick off our list with Google Keep because I love this as a tool to stay organized. I use it for digital to-do lists that I can access from different places, and as a coach, you may find Google Keep to be especially helpful because of the collaborative features with it. So Google Keep is first on the list. It is a to-do list and note taking tool. You can access it straight from your Gmail, if you have that extra extension on the right hand side of your screen, you can access it on an application, so you can bounce around and see your list of things to do, and special notes in multiple places.

The next tool on the list for staying organized, is Adobe Spark Page. I love the Spark tools, especially as a student creation tool, but Spark Page, from a coaching or a teacher perspective, is also a great tool to keep organized. Now, I've done some work with the Spark team, I'm a part of the new Adobe Creative Educator Program that launches today, if you're listening to this, on the day that the podcast episode goes live on the 14th. And so, Spark Page is essentially a website building tool. So you can combine links, and images, and text onto a page. Now, why do I like this as a tool for coaches to stay organized? Well, Spark Page allows you to put links and resources all in one place, and have a nice, simple landing page. This is super duper useful if you're collecting resources on one topic and want to distribute it to your colleagues, so you can create a single Spark Page website all around one topic.

Next up on our category of staying organized, is Evernote. So Evernote is also a note taking and note organization application. It's more robust than Google Keep, so Evernote allows you to tag different things, to keep things organized into different categories. You can almost think of it as different notebooks. So Evernote is great if you are going into a pretty much digital space to keep track of your notes. And what I like about it the most is the tagging feature, so that way, you can maybe tag by PLC teams, you could tag by teacher if you're doing some mentor work, and that way, you can put in a quick search and find all of the notes about that particular topic. So on our list of staying organized, those tools are: Google Keep, Spark Page, and Evernote.

Our next category is staying connected, and tools that help you stay connected. Let's look at the first one, and then we'll dive into the next two. First up is Twitter. Twitter is a great way for coaches to stay connected, and especially staying connected to people that they might meet either virtually, or face-to-face at a conference or special event. I love using Twitter to stay connected after a special event. So if I've attended a webinar and there's a hashtag, I might go and peek back in and see if more people watched the replay and shared resources, or if I go to an event like ISTE or FETC, I know that I can check the hashtag to stay connected with people who went to that event, or are talking about that event afterwards. So that's one of my favorite ways to keep the conversation going, and to get new ideas.

The next tool in our staying connected category is Google Forms. Google Forms is great to stay connected with your own group of educators and colleagues, because you can use Google Forms to keep track of requests, and that way, if you create a Google Form that says, "How can I help you?" then someone can fill it out and you can understand better how you can help that person. Now, Google Forms are really

robust and that's kind of a simple example, but essentially with Google Forms, you are making a survey style form, sharing it with your group and then getting information back from them. So Google Forms can help you stay connected, especially during a remote or distance learning where you might want to send a note and just remind people that they can fill out this form and ask for help, or they can fill out that form and sign up with a time to connect with you.

Now, the third one in this category of staying connected, is Voxer. If you haven't heard of Voxer before, I kind of think of it like a walkie-talkie app almost. It's primarily voice messages, so it's an app that you would use primarily to send voice messages. Now, when Voxer came on the scene, other tools like iMessage and WhatsApp weren't really supporting the voice messages the way we talk about it today, but Voxer's really great because you can have it as a group, maybe for a PLC, or for a leadership team, or a grade level team, and then you have your own group and you can leave audio messages.

You could put in messages of text, like a text message, or links, but it's also great because just like a podcast, you can play it quickly. So if I'm talking too slow and you're just like, "Come on, Monica, get to it, get to it," you can always make me talk a little bit faster on your podcast app by increasing the speed. You can do the same thing on Voxer, which is one reason I know a lot of people really love it as a tool for staying connected. You can hear someone's voice, but you can also kind of get through all the messages pretty quickly. So in our staying connected category of tools for coaches: Twitter, Google Forms, and Voxer are the three we're adding to the list.

Next up are two tools to help build capacity. So when I talk about building capacity from a coaching role, right, you are helping someone else get better at something, build confidence in what they're doing. And so, building capacity tools are ones that can help facilitate discussions, keep track of growth, and that's where the two for this category really fall into. So the first one is Flipgrid. So Flipgrid, absolutely a fantastic student tool. I've used it with students of all ages, super powerful for getting them talking about their learning, but we, as adults, can also use a Flipgrid to talk about our learning, or to share updates or goals, or even ask for help or feedback. So you might set up a Flipgrid for your group of educators, maybe for a PLC, or a grade level team, or maybe you're hosting a book club and they can use Flipgrid asynchronously, so showing up at their own time and giving a response, and then replying back to someone else. So this is great for asynchronous professional development as well.

The second one on our list is Book Creator, another student tool. And just to give you a little bit of background with both Flipgrid and Book Creator, I love using tools that we think of as only for students for professional learning, because it's a way to practice using a tool that we think is for kids, as adults, and then we get better at it and we get more confident at it, and then we feel better about sharing it with students. So kind of like double duty here in terms of what we're thinking about. But Book Creator falls into our category of building capacity if you use it like a journal or a portfolio for the educators you support.

Now, I love Book Creator. I've done work with their team, and run a bunch of webinars for them. They're just the best, but Book Creator, from a professional standpoint, you can use it to chronicle your learning journey as an educator. So if you are supporting people, your colleagues, as they are building capacity this school year, you might set up a Book Creator account, invite them in as students, and then you can have them share updates, give weekly responses, and you can actually peek in and leave little audio messages, recording your voice, where you give them some feedback or you answer a question that they have. So it could really be a two-way process as well, especially if you have something that might be more of a mentor-mentee type of relationship with your colleagues. So that's our two building capacity tools, Flipgrid, and Book Creator.

Now, let's finish off our list with the last category of sharing resources. So tech tools that you can try out as a coach, fall into multiple categories, and this last one is really about sharing resources to help people get the information they need to be successful on their own. So two that fall into this category, are one that will allow you to create a quick, how-to video to explain something, and then get files or resources in the hands of your colleagues.

So the first one is Screencast-O-Matic. Now, there are lots of screen capture tools, but I love this one. It has built-in captioning, depending on if you use the free or the paid version, but essentially with Screencast-O-Matic, you are recording your screen. So as a coach, if you were helping someone with anything that they are doing, and it requires you to explain a concept or show how to do something on a computer, you can use Screencast-O-Matic create a quick tutorial, and that way, you have a video and your voice that explains something.

Now, this is really useful because if you make one and it answers a question, so for example, maybe someone emails you and says, "Hey, I know at our training you showed us how to color code our Google Drive folders so that we could stay better organized, I forgot how to do it. Which button do I press again?" Well, instead of trying to explain it in an email, you can record your screen as you tap on the different buttons, and then you can send it to them. And then what I always suggest to do, working smarter, not harder, is save that as a video on your computer, and then if someone else ever asks you the question, you can just send them that video link, and now you have a pre-planned answer for them. So Screencast-O-Matic allows you to create your own video tutorials.

Now, next up and our last one on our list of 10, is Dropbox. Dropbox is a great tool for sharing resources, especially if you don't have one schoolwide system in place just yet. So if you are not using Google Drive, if you are not using Office 365 and storing files in there, Dropbox is great, and you can do a lot with it, totally for free. Now, if you are using those other tools, but it's not part of your regular schoolwide workflow, Dropbox might be one that you also want to check out, just because Dropbox, I love on my phone because if someone hands me a sheet of paper, I can snap a picture and upload it straight to Dropbox, and it converts it into a PDF file.

So that is a great way for me to keep organized when I'm getting a lot of papers my way. Even if we think everything's digital, we still get handed plenty of papers throughout the school day, so that might be one that is useful, of course, for our sharing resources category. Once you have something in your Dropbox, you can get a link to it, and then you can share that link as well.

So let's sum up our list of 10, starting off with our staying organized tools: Google Keep for note taking and to-do lists, Spark Page for creating collections of resources, and Evernote for keeping your notes tagged and organized. Then our staying connected tools, Twitter for extending conversations after an event, Google Forms for making sure you're hearing requests from your team, Voxer for having voice friendly conversations. And then our building capacity tools of Flipgrid for asynchronous video PD, Book Creator for portfolios and two-way feedback. And then our last category of sharing resources, with Screencast-O-Matic tutorial videos, and Dropbox for snapping pictures, creating PDFs, and then sharing links.

I'm going to put together a list of all of these for you to click on and explore on the blog, so just head over to the show notes page for this episode, by going to classtechtips.com/podcast, and you will find it there.

So let's make this EdTech easy...

1. First, choose your big focus, like staying organized or staying connected.

2. Next, look at a tool that can help you accomplish your goal.

3. Then share a best practice that worked well for you with a colleague.

4. Finally, keep adding to your tool belt over the course of the school year.

Promotion/Reminder

Outro

I love bringing you free resources like this podcast to energize and elevate teaching and learning! Can you do me a favor? If you like the podcast, leave a review on Apple Podcasts, Spotify or wherever you're listening to this... tell a friend about the podcast, or post a link to the episode on your social media. And if you'd like to stay connected follow @classtechtips on Instagram or your favorite social network. I visit schools and conferences all over the world and support organizations remotely with webinars and virtual professional learning, so if your organization is in need of professional learning -- just send a message my way!

Episode Resources

- [Dropbox](#)
- [Evernote](#) (Note-Taking App)
- [Adobe Spark Page](#) (Free Web Page Builder)
- [GoogleKeep](#)

- [Google Forms](#)
- [Book Creator](#) (create ebooks on iPad, Chromebooks and on the web)

- [Voxer](#) (Voice Communication App)
- [Screencast-o-Matic](#) (Screen Recorder & Video Editor)
- [FlipGrid](#)
- [The Educator's Guide to Flipgrid](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [TikTok](#)
- [Adobe Creative Educator Program](#)
- [How to Link Google Forms to QR Codes](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [Quick Tips for Taking Ownership of Your PD](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [How to Curate Curriculum Resources with Adobe Spark Page](#) (Blog Post)
- [How to Make Spark Post Graphics for your Google Keep Notes](#) (Blog Post)
- [7 Reasons I love Google Keep](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [How to Create Digital Portfolios with Spark Page](#) (Blog Post)
- [How to Create a Class Newsletter with Spark Page](#) (Blog Post)
- [How to Link Google Forms to QR Codes](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [How to Use Flipgrid for Book Clubs](#) (Blog Post)
- [Tips for Attending Conferences from Your Couch](#) (Podcast Episode)
- [How To Use Adobe Spark to Make TikTok Videos](#) (Blog Post)

3 EdTech Tools To Help You Stay Organized (Google Keep, Spark Page, Evernote)

3 Ways Teachers Can Staying Connect this School Year (Twitter, Google Forms, Voxer)

Building capacity (Flipgrid, Book Creator)

Sharing resources (Screencast-o-Matic, Dropbox)