

# Chapter 3

## Fostering Self–Efficacy for Higher Education Online Instructors

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This book chapter explores the best practices and strategies that can be used by higher education online instructors to foster self-efficacy among their students. Based on insights from higher education online faculty, the chapter discusses how instructors can create a positive learning environment, promote learner autonomy, and provide appropriate levels of support and feedback. It also explores how instructors can use technology to facilitate effective communication and collaboration, and how they can adapt their teaching methods to the unique needs of online learners. Ultimately, the chapter aims to help higher education online instructors create an effective learning experience for their students. The specific strategies and best practices are discussed in the chapter. The chapter outlines particular tools and technologies that can be used to foster self-efficacy, such as discussion forums, collaborative learning tools, and interactive learning activities.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Fostering self-efficacy among higher education online instructors is crucial for ensuring high-quality online learning experiences for students. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a particular task or achieve a particular goal (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). When fostering self-efficacy among online instructors one can consider clear communication; professional development; peer support; work-life balance; recognition and feedback; leadership support; transparency; autonomy; workflow management; personal growth; student feedback and professional identity. Providing clear and frequent communication to online instructors can help them feel supported and confident in their role. Providing online instructors with opportunities for professional development, such as workshops, webinars, and mentorship, can help them develop new skills and knowledge, boosting their confidence (Johnson, et al., 2019). Facilitating peer-to-peer support networks can help online instructors learn from each other, share best practices, and build their self-efficacy. Encouraging work-life balance for online instructors can help them avoid burnout and maintain their motivation.

Recognizing and providing feedback to online instructors for their efforts and achievements can help them feel valued and appreciated (Prilop, et al., 2021). Providing effective leadership support, including consistent communication and collaborative decision-making, can help online instructors feel supported and valued in their role. Ensuring transparency and clarity in online instructors' roles and responsibilities can help them feel confident and competent in their work. Providing online instructors with autonomy and flexibility in their work can help them feel ownership and control over their work. Providing effective workflow management tools and resources can help online instructors feel organized and productive in their work, supporting their self-efficacy. Encouraging personal growth and development opportunities for online instructors can help them feel challenged and engaged in their work, supporting their self-efficacy (Ventura, et al. 2015). According to Hsia, et al. (2016), collecting and sharing student feedback with online instructors can provide valuable insights into their performance and help them feel supported in their work. Promoting a strong sense of professional identity among online instructors can help them feel confident and competent in their work.

Horvitz, et al. (2015) and Zheng, et al. (2020) posit that fostering self-efficacy among online instructors in higher education is a global concern. Several perspectives on fostering self-efficacy among online instructors in different regions are highlighted. In the United States and Canada, online learning has become increasingly common in institutions of higher learning (Chau, 2010; Picciano, et al., 2010). Many institutions are investing in professional development programs and support services for online instructors to help them feel confident and effective in their work. In

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