

Michael E. Simons
EDU 6700: Advanced Media and Technology

Abate, Ronald J., & Bagaka, Joshua Gisemba. *Middle School Technology Use – Design Impediments Versus Classroom Needs*. Cleveland State University.

The basic idea presented in this article indicates that technology used by teachers in the classroom is biased against the findings of researchers. In general, teachers are required to use technology that fail to do what they need for it to do short- and long-term. As a reference, the article stated that existing tool/ productivity software has been designed for industry and/or business, not the classroom. The context and content of class and office are markedly different.

Being a teacher and having been a business owner as well, I find that teachers who either cannot or will not use existing technology, even if it is business-world oriented, to be rather troubling. It seems to me that teachers, if they are to be life-long learners, would want to know, understand, and use as much technology that is available. I disagree with the premise that business productivity software (such as Microsoft Office, which I have used since 1995) is cumbersome, and borders on useless.

While I agree that software for the class should include tutorials, simulations, and the like, I think that there simply may not be enough demand for larger software developers to manufacture a product that may not be used nationwide. Such is the case with productivity software. Businesses run and need productivity. In fact, based on what I have seen with some educational products, I'll keep the office-type software I have used, because that is what I know and understand, thank you very much. I'll look for the software that will match what I need for my students. But in my role in the class, productivity software has enable me to become a better instructor, and a better manager of my time too.

What is our purpose in the classroom? To prepare students for the real-world positions that they will assume in the future. And I can't think of a better way to prepare them for that, than with what is available. If it is truly the situation that teachers work in less than optimal conditions, as stated on page one, then why would they not want to have tools that will enable them to manage time more effectively? I do not understand that position.

It appears to me that teacher training must take place for educators to become comfortable with more high-powered technology, so that their students will be comfortable in using it themselves. As a computer technology instructor, I am comfortable with teaching my students the tools that are used in the workplace, because I use it on an almost daily basis myself. I convey that to my students, and I think that our students will be better for it. Design impediments? Perhaps in the minds of those who want to be content with the status quo, which is not needed in our classes.