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# Moving Forward with Online Learning

Project Socrates  
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# Agenda

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- Why more questions?
- Defining OLL quality
- Instructional effectiveness (for whom)?
- Make vs. buy

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# OLL isn't cookie cutter

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- What problem are you trying to solve?
- Which students are you trying to serve?
- What resources are you willing to invest?
- What does your community want?
  - Students
  - Parents
  - Teachers
  - School board
  - Administrators
- Who buys in to what?

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# The Process - Evaluating

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- What type of product are you looking for?
- Curriculum review process
  - Isn't "their" word good enough?
- Stakeholder involvement
- Established criteria

*Ask not "Is this good?" but ask "Is this good for us?"*

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# The Critical Attributes

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- Face validity
- Standards alignment
- Curriculum structure
- Type and variety of assessments
- Level of interaction (3 types)
- Type of feedback to students
- Onscreen information
- Technical assistance
- Supplemental tools & resources
- Teacher materials

*Ask not “Is OLL good?” but ask “What makes good OLL?”*

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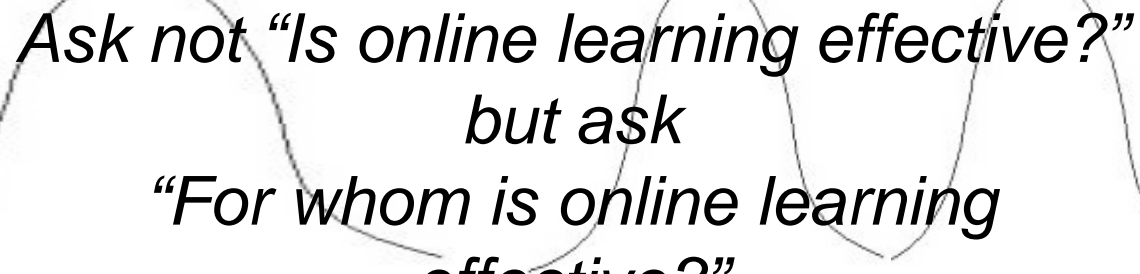
# Is OLL effective?

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- No Significant Difference
  - Like nearly all media-comparison studies
  - <http://teleeducation.nb.ca/nosignificantdifference/>
- Well, maybe
  - University of Phoenix
- Glick's hypothesis:

Traditional

Online



*Ask not "Is online learning effective?"  
but ask  
"For whom is online learning  
effective?"*

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# For *whom* is OLL effective?

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- The critical characteristics:
  - Motivated (intrinsic, extrinsic)
  - Strong organizational skills
  - Self-directed learners
  - Independent problem solvers
  - Strong writing & communication skills (maybe)
  - Internet comfort

*Of any age or ability level!*

So to be a good student, you have to be a good student.

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# Make vs. Buy, Part I

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## Make:

- Type of course?
- Professional development (large)
- Higher ed estimates:
  - \$10,000-20,000
  - 50 hours development for 1 hour of instruction
- Course Management System (CMS)
  - Web tools (instruction requires interaction)
  - License?
  - Instance?
- Content customization
- Growing district expertise
- Flexibility
- Complete local control

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# Make vs. Buy, Part II

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## Buy:

- Type of product?
- Professional development (small)
- H.S. courses:
  - \$300/student/semester course
- Supervision & mentoring
- Low initial investment
- Standardized curriculum
- Consistent quality (?)

# Make vs. Buy, Part III

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## Make:

- Higher initial cost (maybe)
- Higher risk
- Greater effort
- Greater flexibility
- Greater customization
- Greater capacity development
  - Staff
  - District
- Re-sell options

## Buy:

- Low initial cost
- Lower risk
- Lower effort
- More courses
- More consistency (maybe)
- Less capacity development
- Nothing to own

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# ROI - The bottom line

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**This critical question  
has no answer.**

***Program evaluation is critical***

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# Yeah, but...

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- It sounds like lots of work!
  - You betcha!
- We need to get going *now!*
  - You betcha!
- This is going to take some time & money!
  - You betcha!
- We don't *really* know if it will pay off.
  - You betcha!

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# My Four Certainties

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1. OLL can provide high quality learning experiences.
2. Your students can have access to more learning opportunities than they have now.
3. Professional development is critical.
4. OLL will cost time and money to implement.

*Protect your students, protect your investment.  
If you choose to do it, do it well.*

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# *Discussion*

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