# I Hate Technology & Other Lame Opinions

By Peter DeWitt

"*I hate technology*." We hear people say it all the time...unless you are one of those people. There are millions of excuses why educators and school leaders do not value, much less, use technology. There are even bloggers who blog about how technology in schools is a bad idea, and then they Tweet about it. Seriously?

*We can model the behavior we want to see in others.*

A couple of years ago I was teaching a graduate education course at a local college, and I encouraged my students to bring in their laptops and tablets. Some of the students thought it was an odd request, which I thought was...*odd*. I assumed that colleges and universities would be at the cutting edge of technology use. After all, encouraging students to connect online and search for information we were discussing, at the same time we were discussing it, has the potential to change the face of the way we were learning together. All professors must feel that way...right?
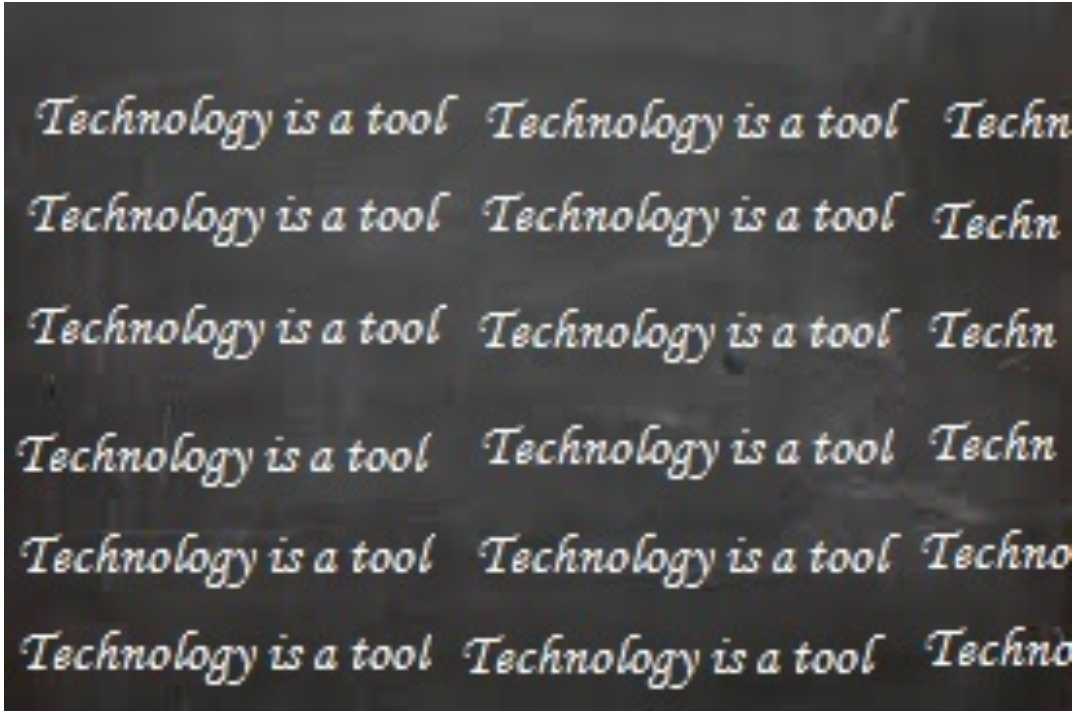
*Wrong*...

I entered into the classroom one evening and overheard two students talking about the difference with the class they were taking with me (7:30 - 9:45), and the one they were taking right before our class together (4:00 - 7:15). One student said, "*This class is so different. Dr. So And So (clearly, not his real name!) doesn't allow laptops or iPads*." I thought it was odd that graduate pre-service teachers were not allowed to bring laptops to class. Classes that all came equipped with document cameras, Smartboards, and no dry erase markers.

After all, if we are teaching the next generation of teachers, shouldn't we model the kind of learning and student engagement we want to see? Not so for this particular professor, and the same is true for many educators and their school leaders. Leaders

lead by example but some of them do it without the use of technology, and that's a mistake.

**Technology is a Tool...and Other Great Excuses**

Let's just get the naysayer argument out of the way first. We know, as if we had to write it on a chalkboard 100x in class that technology is....a tool. We are clear on the fact that it is a tool.



But there are many other arguments out there as well. And just as bad as the arguments is the ambivalence to use it as a tool in instructional and leadership practices. First the arguments:

**Negativity** - We understand that it is used as a tool in cyberbullying, negative anonymous comments, and the breach of security. When topics like Facebook come up in conversation, people who dislike Facebook usually say that they have no need for it, or that too many people are negative on the social media giant. To be clear, those people were negative long before Facebook was created, and will most likely be negative long after we are on to the next big social media giant.

**It's stupid** - Yes, that is an excuse I have heard. People believe technology is the root of all evil and won't stick around for long. They believe that Facebook, Twitter and all the other social media giants are stupid. Technology and social media are only stupid if they are used stupidly. The reality is that they can help connect people, which can be very, very powerful.

**We need to disconnect** - Absolutely. We don't have to be plugged in all the time. We need brain breaks from playing games, Tweeting and commenting on each other's Facebook feed. We don't need to search for everything we cannot remember and ask Shazam to remind us of the name of the song on the radio that we have not heard in a long time. We can be a little less impulsive. It still doesn't mean that technology shouldn't be valued.

**Technology didn't exist long ago and they lived, and I don't need it now** - Yes, that's true. They didn't have dentists, cars, indoor plumbing and used to kill their own dinner too.

**I'm too old** - Technology is not just for young people. It's for everyone. Whether it's using a Smartphone to call someone when you're lost, or getting on Facebook to keep connected with family and friends, technology is actually offering opportunities to help people NOT feel so old. It gives them the chance to see what is going on in other people's lives and inspires them to get a little bit more going on in their own.

**Not everything on the internet is true** - That...is true, which is why it is so important to use technology in the classroom, which will help students understand why it's important to check sources. We should also remember that not everything in print or in the media was/is true either.

**Building a Community of Learners**
In a respectful way, I believe that people who hate technology either don't understand it, are afraid of it, and/or may not know where to begin. Technology can be very

intimidating. As I sit back and think about all of the possibilities I can search at this moment in time, it is amazing and a bit frightening.

Whether I think of my favorite artists, which leads me to search on the history of their techniques before finding an art museum that houses some of their paintings, which offers resources to use in school, I am overwhelmed by the possibilities.

At the same time I do these searches in a pursuit of lifelong learning, I listen to music on Pandora and then download new songs I hear to my iTunes library...and then find a video of the songs on YouTube to watch, which lead me to new music artists that I had never heard of before all in under a matter of minutes, I am overwhelmed by the possibilities (And I listen to vinyl as well).

As I check my Twitter feed in the morning, and connect with my PLN on the East Coast, Mid-West, West Coast, and then realize that I have new messages from some friends in Australia (Aaron) and the Middle East (Marj), all of whom share resources, write blogs, and want to talk about education, I am overwhelmed by the possibilities.

And I think to myself, when used correctly and with respect, how could anyone hate technology?

Source;
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/finding_common_ground/2014/01/i_hate_technology_and_other_lame_opinions.html