

## Collaborative Video Production

# Leadership and Best Practices in Educational Technology Management

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# Collaborative Video Production

*Management, Facilitation, and Best Practices*

*By*

Joe P. Gaston and Byron Havard



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Cover illustration: iStock.com/Hero Images

All chapters in this book have undergone peer review.

The Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available online at <https://catalog.loc.gov>

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: [brill.com/brill-typeface](http://brill.com/brill-typeface).

ISSN 2666-7010

ISBN 978-90-04-68033-3 (paperback)

ISBN 978-90-04-68034-0 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-68035-7 (e-book)

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*For our families, students, and fellow educators*





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## Series Editors' Foreword

It is important within teacher preparation to ensure that modern teachers have the tools to engage students in the technologies that today's students are growing up using. This is a book that not only prepares teachers on how to teach collaborative video production, but it takes a step further by focusing on how to manage collaborative projects. The management concepts shared in this text can not only be used for collaborative video projects, but could also be easily adapted into any other collaborative or technology focused individual or group projects. Joe P. Gaston and Byron Havard provide a wonderful resource for not only students in teacher education programs, but also for seasoned teachers wanting to expand their abilities with teaching video production and collaborative projects.

*Christopher T. Miller and Anthony A. Piña*

## Preface

*Jasmine was doing remarkably well with the fourth quarter video production assignment. Her team was tasked with creating a video that described the important geological features of their assigned North American shoreline. Jasmine took on the roles of scriptwriter and props manager. While most of the scriptwriting was completed in class, Jasmine took it upon herself to create certain props at home. She even used materials from home to create cue cards for her teammates who would be acting in the video. This was a big deal for Jasmine. It was a big deal because it was the first time all year Jasmine had done any schoolwork at home. Most of her middle school teachers attributed her refusal to do homework to her learning disability and her behavior management issues. There was something about the video project, however, that had her excited, motivated, and engaged.*

*Tanisha was growing more and more excited while her fifth grade class was in the computer lab. On this particular day, her class was learning how to use the video editing software, Movie Maker. We couldn't help but notice Tanisha's excitement as we walked around the room. Growing curious, we asked her teacher if she had noticed Tanisha's behavior. Her teacher indicated that Tanisha loved movies. In fact, she told us Tanisha had a notebook full of movie scripts and stories she had written. We asked the teacher if Tanisha had made any movies based on her scripts. She told us she had not because she didn't know how. It was then we realized why Tanisha was so excited. At that very moment the world of video production was opening up to her for the first time.*

From a management perspective, when you decide to conduct a CVP activity with your students, several things will happen. One is that you will be giving up some of the control in your classroom. If this is not something you are used to, it might seem a little scary at first. The truth is, however, it can be quite a liberating experience. Another thing that happens is the change in classroom dynamic. When you give your students a project to work on that they are interested in and excited about, discipline issues become almost nonexistent. Students who typically act out or students who are often disengaged may suddenly become the group leaders or contribute in some other unexpected ways. You will also have the opportunity to remove yourself from the central focus of the classroom and take on the role of facilitator. So rather than standing at the board and teaching, you can manage the activity more successfully by moving among the groups to listen in on conversations, offer suggestions and advice, clear up misconceptions, and provide encouragement.

This activity will also give your students the opportunity to practice social skills in a collaborative setting. We are not born knowing how to work well with

others, but most of us end up with a job in which it is expected. Learning to work well with others has to be taught and practiced. Sharing responsibility, listening to others' ideas, resolving conflict, and working towards a common goal are just a few of the skills students get to practice when they work in collaborative groups. Students need as many opportunities as possible to practice these skills, and CVP is a great activity for them to do so.

Even though the responsibilities and expectations of the students will vary depending on their age, CVP projects can be conducted at any grade level and for any content area. Although kindergarteners may need help with shooting and editing video, they are perfectly capable of participating in all of the other steps described in this book such as storyboarding, scriptwriting, creating props, and acting.

When conducting a CVP project with students, it is usually best to use it as a culminating activity. The process of producing the video will give students the opportunity to revisit the content and study it more deeply as they discuss it with their groups, develop their script, and shoot their scenes. This means less time can be spent when initially teaching the material because the students will have the chance to engage with the content again during the CVP project.

Let's say your students have been studying potential and kinetic energy in science. They have read about the two concepts, learned the definition of each, and maybe watched a video that demonstrates the difference between them. For the culminating CVP activity, you have asked the students to work in groups to create a video that demonstrates their understanding of the two types of energy. Aside from establishing the groups (Step 1) and having the students come up with their ideas (Step 2), you will need to develop some parameters. Students need to know what kind of time constraints they will be under, what type of equipment and resources they will have access to, and any other expectations you may have for the project. In terms of your specific guidelines, we recommend developing a rubric (see Table 1) that explicitly states what you will be looking for from each group and the points they have the potential to earn.

When your students do a CVP activity for the first time, they are going to learn a great deal about the video production process. They are also going to get new ideas and learn new techniques from watching each other's videos (Step 7). In many cases after watching the completed videos, students will want to do another video project so they can improve upon their craft. Our work with CVP has shown that when students are given the chance to do a second activity, not only does the quality of the finished product improve in terms of technique, but also students have indicated they are able to spend more time focusing on the content because they are more experienced with the overall process, thereby improving the quality of the content as well.

TABLE 1 Sample rubric

Criteria	3 points	2 points	1 point	Score
Vocabulary	Both potential and kinetic energy are clearly defined.	Only one form of energy is clearly defined.	Neither form of energy is clearly defined.	
Example	Video includes accurate examples of both forms of energy.	Video includes accurate examples of one form of energy.	Video does not include accurate examples of either form of energy.	
Credits	All pre-made content (songs, photos, etc.) are accurately credited at the end of the video.	Only some of the pre-made content (songs, photos, etc.) are accurately credited at the end of the video.	None of the pre-made content (songs, photos, etc.) are accurately credited at the end of the video.	
Quality	The video is not shaky and contains a variety of shot types; the audio is clear and intelligible.	Either the video is shaky or does not contain a variety of shot types, or the audio is unclear or unintelligible.	The video is shaky or does not contain a variety of shot types, and the audio is unclear or unintelligible.	

Like other culminating projects, CVP activities require some time to complete. The length of time required largely depends on the intentions of the project. Generally speaking, however, students will need a few class periods to flesh out their ideas, create their storyboards and scripts, and create or gather their props. Most scenes can be shot in a single class period if adequate preparation has been done, and students usually need two to three class periods to complete the editing process. This timeframe can obviously fluctuate depending on the age and maturity of the students but planning on 6 to 7 class periods to complete a CVP project is a fairly realistic time frame. Some teachers choose to spread the work sessions over an extended period of time, while others block off consecutive days to complete the project. In either case, adequate planning and preparation on the part of the teacher will be required if the project is going to be a success. It is the intention of this book to provide you with the information and resources you need to make CVP projects in your classroom successful, meaningful, rewarding, and yes, fun.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the teachers and students who have participated in our CVP research, workshops, and camps. Your experiences, insights, and feedback have significantly contributed to our understanding of CVP, and to this book. We particularly appreciate the insights provided by teachers Christy Roberts, Deniese Burns, Ms. Carden, and Debra Morrow. We would like to acknowledge the contributions made by Dr. Kelly Lomax in helping with the development of the creative thinking and decision-making step in the CVP process, Araya Rieck for being our model, and Jeannine Abadie and Dr. Susan Ferguson for their assistance with the final draft.

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## About the Authors

*Joe P. Gaston*

began conducting video production activities with his fifth grade students in 2011. The initial activities provided a great deal of insight into conducting video production projects in the classroom. One of the biggest takeaways early on was the impact the activity had on student engagement. Throughout the process he noticed students were actively engaged, even those students who were typically reluctant to participate in group activities. After taking a position within his school system as a technology resource teacher, Gaston developed a two-day workshop on video production. Knowing that most teachers did not have a background in video production, he developed a list of steps for conducting these activities with students. These steps helped teachers better visualize how this activity would look in the classroom and they served as a flexible guide through the process. It was during this time that Joe began to refer to this process as Collaborative Video Production (CVP). Gaston is currently an assistant professor at the University of South Alabama College of Education and Professional Studies.

*Byron Havard*

has been interested in video production most of his life, engaging in small personal projects, but did not practice formally until he was a graduate student. He was able to focus his interest on video production through his master's degree project where he wrote and produced a video of vignette's regarding an instructional design model. Each vignette depicted an instructional designer and another individual, such as a subject matter expert, acting out the details of each model step. As a lead instructional designer at a large telecommunications company, he was involved in the planning, scripting, storyboarding, and directing of several training video productions. Years later, after transitioning to academia, he was able to integrate video production into the courses he taught and eventually created a graduate level course focused on the production of instructional video. Digital Video for Instruction is by far his favorite course to teach. Most recently, he had a proposal approved for the creation of a video production studio that will be dedicated to supporting faculty with the production of instructional video for online and flipped-classroom contexts.