

Like Driving a Car

A concept in my current field that is much like driving a car is the use of digital learning tools, for example MS Teams.

In the course of using MS Teams, users must understand terms such as file, folder, desktop, OneDrive, Calendar, chat, share, Channel, app, program, browser, etc. Note the capitalization of some of these words as they represent proprietary Microsoft terms.

To use Teams, users must be able to search for, download, and install the program (*though they could also skirt these requirements and use the browser-based version instead well*). They must have a relevant email account and know their password. They may need a Duo token authenticator. Once logged in, they should be able to join the relevant Team. Does their team have a Team? Can they navigate the Chat in order to chat with colleagues and students? When trying to work in a Teams call, are they able to locate and navigate the relevant windows from the Task Bar? When files are shared to them, can they locate these downloaded files? Were they saved to the Desktop, to My Downloads, or directly to OneDrive?

This final example represents one common task when using a computer. Most users understand the differences, but many do not. Without understanding what happens when you download a file, it can be difficult to explain to users where this file is now located, let alone being able to attach it to an email, share via Teams, or drop in the Chat.

Adept users are able to utilize this existing knowledge and experience to competently utilize the MS Teams platform, much like an experienced driver hopping into a new vehicle and driving it without issue. Inexperienced users unsure of the difference between a file and a folder will struggle to make sense of any platform, much like a new driver turning the key for the first time.