

# 10 things you should consider when you #GoOpen

## Introduction

So now that you are convinced that Open Educational Resources (OER) might be useful for your school and educational activities, what steps do you need to take to see if your project could work out? What do you need to get teachers to like it, and to stay out of trouble? What do you need to get the best results for the money you spend?

## 1 Understand how OER works

We are all creative. And we all want to make good use of our limited resources, to achieve our goals easily and safely. We want to build on the work of giants (or their smaller friends).

Therefore we search, evaluate, select and download stuff that we want to use in our own work.

We create our own expression of genius, and want to make use of good stuff we downloaded without being accused of being a thief.

It's easy if we build on work with an open license. It's even easier if we publish and share our work with an open license.

Then our work and the work of others contributes to the common pool of good stuff that makes our society smart, strong, innovative and more joyful to work in.

## 2 Share, reuse and improve

Encourage people to work together – OER is all about cooperation. Find the resources that are useful to you, and build on these if you need more. Start small. You can start by reusing OER to supplement your books.

Remember that OER often allows for remixing and adaptation so resources fit your needs.

If you have made something you are proud of – always remember to share.

## 3 Use and create content in ways that really cater to everybody

Remember there is plenty of content already created – try finding and reusing before you reinvent the wheel.

If you can't find content useful to you, try to make it. Graphics, interactives, animations and videos may be difficult but worth the money.

Chose open formats when searching and creating content – open formats can be used with free software.

Go for editable formats so that it is easy to extract and reuse – or adapt – for any part of a resource, or share the parts separately.

Let your users use tools they like (e.g., Microsoft Word) then convert to open editable formats if necessary.

## 4 Understand your financing options [schools]

Find out if you can use your core financing for textbooks and resources, and for creation and implementation of OER, or if you need to find some funding on the side.

Figure out how to compensate teachers and other creators for their work on OERs (not only in monetary terms).

## 5 Understand your financing options [NGOs]

Understand your core business and how OER can help you make it more sustainable.

Focus on services and value you can add to the content so that others will be willing to pay for.

Check into one of the many workable financing options (public and private grants) and possible revenue streams (subscriptions, services around OER, selling additional apps and content).

Reach out to the community for support and money – as you can for their open content.

## 6 Use existing technology to make sharing simple

Don't reinvent the wheel. You can do everything with existing technologies and services.

Use and publish formats that can be edited by everyone. For example, if you share a PDF version, no one will be able to adapt and improve the document.

Share your work on the Web so that other people can find it.

Add some description and tags. This will help other people find it.

## 7 Minimize the barriers and maximize the potential of your work

Make it simple! Educators should care about education, not about copyright issues.

Choose a straightforward and efficient license. This will be CC0 or CC BY.

Avoid restrictions! Every additional restriction, whether it is SA or NC or ND, will raise obstacles for people using OER.

Tell people where to find out more about OER and licenses. For example, simply link to an existing website with information on OER.

## 8 Get support to meet curriculum standards and provide high-quality materials to students with disabilities

Identify allies at a state or regional level who can help implement OER as part of the curriculum.

If central curriculum is static, consider OER for supplemental materials or teacher training.

Ask your state or local superintendents for resources and help in making your educational resources accessible for students with disabilities.

## 9 Look for allies!

**TEACHERS:** talk to the teachers, listen to them and develop solutions that will make their lives easier!

**STUDENTS** are probably your most important allies, though they are forgotten too often. Don't make this mistake.

**PARENTS:** OER will help save them money, and you need their support in aiming to change educational practices.

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION:** give them the resources they need and the freedom to experiment with openness.

**ECONOMY:** employers are looking for people who can cooperate and solve problems. Show them how OER can help achieve this goal.

## 10 Positive side effects: Be brave – other people are going to reuse the awesome stuff you create

**REMOVING BARRIERS:** You are a part of a global movement: – anyone can use your input, you can benefit from an enormous amount of materials.

**CREATING A CULTURE OF TRUST AND COOPERATION:** Raise engagement among the school community, show teachers and students they can be authors.

**DEVELOPING DIGITAL LITERACY:** Teachers and students create resources all the time, help them do that in the digital way.

**SAVING TIME AND ENERGY:** What you are looking for may already exist (great minds think alike).

**MANAGING YOUR BUDGET:** You can redistribute your savings according to your needs.



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