I think my school is ready for some change. We have teachers trying to push their curriculums to the next level every year; however, there is a large void in the faculty’s knowledge. Most seem to know little or none about educational technology.

I was recently hired as the Chair of Educational Technology, a position we have never had at the school. There have been two typical conversations I have had with most of the faculty since the announcement of my hiring. First, they ask me if I can put more computers in their classroom or make sure they have DVD players in their classroom. They are focused on purchasing more hardware and hoping this hardware contains magical teaching benefits. The second typical conversation is, “Great to hear about your new position, does this mean you can help me fix my printer?” Both conversations demonstrate a complete lack of understanding of what Educational Technology really is.

The same people who have had these conversations with me are the ones who are actually doing a pretty good job with educational technology in their classroom. This has been a red flag to me. It is clear to me that I must do some ground work in order to be successful as an educational technologist at my school. First, I want to make sure everyone knows what is meant by educational technology. I want them to know where they can find out more about the subject and who is already doing a great job in their classroom. Examples seem to help teachers the most, basic language is the second requirement. Too often, teachers feel intimidated by technical jargon. If I can get them to understand things on a very basic level, I will have a good start.

Next, I want to get them excited about all of the possibilities associated with educational technology. One of my favorite parts of teaching is learning a new way to teach something – it gets me excited to rework some lessons and get in the classroom to try it out. I want to stoke the same fire in my faculty. I have confidence that they experience the same kind of excitement when they learn something new. I just need to hook a few faculty members, get them using something new, and I will gain the trust of others to try new things.

Once I am able to help the faculty understand what is meant by educational technology, it will be my job to stoke the flame. What I mean is that I need to constantly help them find new way to rework lessons and teach topics in a different way. If I can get them to understand the philosophy of educational technology, I think with will be entirely possible. However, without the ground work, no amount of new gadgetry and tools with get the faculty excited.