834 TIPS
FOR SUCCESSFUL
ONLINE INSTRUCTION

Produced by

THE eLEARNING GUILD

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I. How to Use These Tips

A. Introduction

In early 2005 The eLearning Guild conducted a survey of its members on the subject of Synchronous Instruction. A total of 644 members responded to the questionnaire. The last question in the questionnaire asked members who have online instruction experience to list their favorite tips to share with other online instructors; a remarkable total of 336 members contributed usable tips.

As might be expected the tips ranged from a single word (Plan! or Practice!) to as many as fifteen separate tips running over 350 words! They also ranged from the simple and obvious to the unusual and subtle. They covered the complete gamut of behavior for an online instructor. We are providing these tips to everybody who is interested in being more effective at doing online synchronous instruction.

The raw list of tips was overwhelming, so we examined several schemes for categorizing them, none of which worked very well. Finally, we decided to let the tips fall into more or less natural categories as suggested by the tips themselves. Most of the categories relate to functional roles: instructor, manager, and design and development team. The remainder gives more generic advice about implementation and miscellaneous matters. Many tips clearly fall into a specific category, but we could equally well place a large number of tips into several different categories. We put them where we thought they fit best, knowing full well that people may disagree with us.

The vast majority of the tips apply to the online instructor. This seems wholly appropriate. At the same time, we believe that everyone concerned with synchronous e-Learning will benefit by reading through all the tips. There is repetition and overlap between the tips, and we left things that way so that the reader could judge (without our editorializing) how much emphasis practitioners placed on the various aspects of synchronous e-Learning.

We have devised a way to credit the members who contributed the tips (the Tipsters). We follow most tips with a number indicating who contributed it, and an indexed list of Tipsters appears at the end of this book. Note that a few numbers are missing from the index, and that some members did not provide their names when doing the survey so there are a few tips without numbers. All tips are in the Tipster's own words, with editing only for spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

We deeply appreciate the effort that contributors made to create these tips. We hope you find at least one valuable idea — and, hopefully, many valuable ideas — that can help you when doing online instruction.

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II. Tips for Instructors

HAVE FUN! — 105

Expect it to be more work than a traditional course, because it probably will be. — 40

Do not expect to be successful at this because you are a good live classroom trainer. Seek out successful e-Trainers for advice. Look for good professional training. Schools and experience in the live training area is not sufficient preparation for e-Training. — 14

Whenever possible, make the transition from classroom to online instruction incrementally, over time, monitoring and adjusting as you go. — 287

Subscribe to newsletters geared toward online designers and developers (e.g., eLearning Guide, Online News and Reviews, etc.); stay connected with other professionals in the field. — 25

You should have (or build) your confidence, both in the system, and in your ability to deal with an unseen group. — 160

Have good documentation regarding the hardware setup; and software knowledge and interpersonal skills needed to teach effectively. — 163

Be prepared to receive and immediately respond to vast amount of email from your students. — 191

Jolt Cola, king-size Snickers, and mighty wrists to avoid RSI from typing for hours on end each day. — 196

Be prepared with course notes, instructor's guide, knowledge of participants, i.e. ethnic and cultural backgrounds, formal education, entry level knowledge of the topic being taught, etc. — 223

My favorite tip would be to stay organized in order to stay ahead of the presentation curve. — 239

You need to have first-hand experience. — 313

You must know the online teaching process inside and out. — 328

A. Prepare thoroughly for facilitating synchronous events

1. Be familiar with the software, tools and technology

Get very comfortable with the technology. (Know what you're doing!) — 105

Know how to use your virtual classroom software. — 3

Learn your technology tool and practice!! — 15

Be familiar with the presentation platform tools. — 260

Know the delivery tool and don't learn how to use it during a live event. — 18

Develop proficiency in navigating the technology used within the environment. — 37

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Know the technology you are using! Be very comfortable with it — it will make your life easier and students will rely on you for assistance. — 94

Use ALL the tools provided by Centra (or WebEx, Placeware, etc) to make up for the lack of a physical presence to keep the students' attention. — 100

Understand and practice with any tool (WebEx, Centra) with a willing test student until the controls are familiar. — 111

LEARN THE TECHNOLOGY!!! — 88

Solve any PC skill or technology issues before you start. — 190

Prepare. Prepare. Prepare. Be as familiar with your electronic tools as possible, so their use by the trainer is as transparent to the online instruction process as is the use of a whiteboard in a classroom. — 267

2. Be prepared to teach in the online medium
(See section II.B.2 on content delivery for additional tips.)

Know your medium before you set out to teach in it. — 216

You have to be an expert with the virtual classroom technology. — 55

The online instructor has to acquire the kind of necessary knowledge and understanding about new media so you can apply it to the content being both taught and learned. — 195

Know your tools — be familiar enough with the technology so you can focus on your content and your learners / participants. — 215

Know your tool — many times I've attended sessions where virtual facilitators did not have a good command of the tool they were using and/or did not take students through the tool to explain things. — 133

Know and use your online toolbox. Make your virtual classroom a "tangible" thing. — 165

Learn to use the tools such as highlighters, pointers etc. — 188

Develop the ability to multi-task as you need to watch for raised hands, text chat, etc. as you are talking. — 138

Don't be intimidated by the technologies. — 42

Know how to use the technology well. — 46

Understand the zillions of capabilities of the technology. — 49

Learn and use the tools provided by your product. — 220

Preparation is the key! Prior to your training, TEST the technology being used. Go through the steps in logging in, connecting etc. Ensure that your PC has the proper plug-ins etc. — 266

Become familiar with the features of your synchronous product and use them! Some are "better" than what you get in F2F (polling, chat questions, shared whiteboards, etc.). If you don't use them, neither will the students.

Bob Joyce, Coordinator of Continuing Ed., Center for Biosecurity & Public Health Preparedness

Know your content, exercises, and activities explicitly for each class session. Test all exercises and activities, etc., prior to sending them out to everyone — and if computer-based, test on a computer other than the one on which you created them.

DAN HILL, MANAGER,
TRAINING & EDUCATION,
GROUP HEALTH
COOPERATIVE

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Use the tools that are available in any application you use to distribute learning. — 322

Use tools like Mallard or CAPA. Use simulations. Use a tool like CollabSS. — 323

Utilize all interactive tools available in the specific learning environment (polls, click on screen, type on screen, chat, etc). — 327

Never expect an online student to be able to do something in the online program which you as an instructor cannot do yourself. — 328

Use the whiteboard features in PowerPoint presentations. You can't physically point to the screen as you would in a face-to-face session, so I find it helpful when online presenters use the whiteboard markup features to highlight or point out items in their slides. — 336

3. Know the content

Check the accuracy of the content material. — 271

Make sure you are extremely knowledgeable about your content, and have prepared a set of outcomes for where you want to lead the group. — 230

Try to look at your own classes as a student sees them; then ask yourself if you would want to take this class. — 280

Check out your material and teach to that format. — 243

Be prepared at all times. Know what you are going to teach, how you are going to teach it, and how much time it will take. — 46

Know the content well. — 46

Know your material. — 131

Know your subject matter. — 218

Know your subject. — 159

Know your material inside out. — 259

4. Develop a "Plan B"

Plan for the unexpected. — 105

Prepare for the unexpected — redundant phone lines, computer consoles, etc. are key to successful events. If one goes down, the show must still go on, so having extras is always a good thing. — 133

Build a trainer's guide that tells you how to deal with typical things that can go wrong during a presentation. That way you have a resource to smoothly deal with issues as they arise, without giving the appearance of helplessness. — 18

Always have a Plan B.

Barbara Fillicaro

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Have a backup plan in case something goes wrong with plan A, especially for synchronous training. (For example, if I plan to do a live demo of a business application; what am I going to do if that application goes down during the training? I need a backup plan. A PowerPoint slide set or avi/wmv file that I created ahead of time that I can use in place of the live demo.) — 18

Have alternatives in place if the technology fails. Don't allow one site with difficulties to bring down the whole presentation. Hand them over to a help desk; find out if they can connect at another time, etc. — 217

Practice is just as important for online delivery as for classroom, if not more so. Awkward pauses in the classroom are easier to remedy than strange pauses online. If you are having a technical problem, simply explain the situation and either remedy it quickly or go immediately to Plan B (printed slides you provided, backup conference call number, etc). — 303

Avoid surprises by preparing thoroughly for each event. — 7

Have a "Plan B" and a "Plan C." — 7

Have a backup plan should a certain tool not work. — 21

Anticipate possible issues on the access and learning obstacles and be ready to resolve, encourage, or re-direct where appropriate. — 35

Be prepared for anything. — 95

Be prepared with Plan B in case of technical difficulties. — 96

Have a Plan B in case technology goes awry. — 161

Be sure to have a Plan B because whatever can go wrong eventually will. — 215

5. *Get some experience as a learner*

Attend as many online courses as you can and keep a notebook of ideas. — 263

Take online classes so you know what you liked and didn't like. — 296

Take an online course to experience the role of student. — 27

Become an online learner before you teach online. — 101

You must have been an online learner yourself. — 167

Make sure you attend several online sessions yourself to see what's good and bad in others. — 231

Take some online credit classes in a brand new field. — 293

Go through the courseware from a user's perspective. — 271

Keep proper balance between the presentation and the content. Allocate convenient time table.

Satish Ingale, PL, HSBC

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Read all assignment descriptions as though you are a student looking for a loophole in a vague deadline or project requirement. — 272

Be a good participant — know what it is like to participate, and identify when you are engaged, and bored, as a participant. — 9

6. Plan, prepare, practice

Practice — practice — practice! (Know your content!) — 105

Knowledge of the environment: — 271
1. Computer literacy: the basics of how to deal with typical computer issues.
2. Networking basics: minimum understanding of the issues involved with transmitting over the internet (e.g., lag time, presenter / learner resolution differences, etc.).
3. Know your platform: overview of common features in virtual classroom platforms.

Principles of online presentation: — 271
1. Speaking: emphasis on energy, pacing, diction, and tonal variation.
2. Listening: active listening skills, both aural and written (e.g., chat messages).

Before the Meeting — Attend an online presenter's workshop or complete an online tutorial. Develop an outline of your meeting, with a script or notes of what you're going to say. Make your meeting interactive, engaging the participants and requiring them to respond to you, the content, or each other. Keeping your virtual meeting or classroom interactive helps the participants to stay focused and tuned in. Build interactive techniques into your presentation. Build well-designed slides. Have someone proofread your slides. Practice, practice, practice! Hold a practice or test meeting and run through the presentation with a colleague. Reserve a conference bridge for the audio portion of your web meeting. Send out invitations for the meeting to participants. Send copies of slide presentations to participants before the meeting in case you run into technical problems. Locate a site where you can conduct your web meeting away from noise and distractions. Using an office or room with a door is ideal as it will eliminate background noise and minimize interruptions. Print the Do Not Disturb sign and post it on your door or cubicle. Be organized with your notes, as shuffling and rustling papers can be annoying to others and doesn't lend itself to a professional delivery. — 307

Have a plan for delivery and stick to it. This should include a script and a timeline. — 18

Plan well. — 254

Plan, plan, plan. — 27, 255

Before giving the session PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE! — 21

Rehearse — you really don't know what the graphics will look like to your learners until you try them. Also, if you're going to application-share make sure you try it with co-workers before you try it on learners. That way you know what the learner's experience will be. — 3

Practice first, preferably with a test audience. — 24

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Practice in front of 2 machines — one the leader and the other the participant so you can see the cause and effect between the two. — 9

Practice giving your course with a colleague behind a partition or over the phone. — 28

Be prepared. — 93

Be prepared for a lot of writing! — 94

Rehearse well enough that you do not need to read the material word for word. — 56

Preparation. 2. Preparation. 3. Preparation. — 32

Practice, practice, practice. — 161, 177, 215, 262, 263

Practice, practice, practice — too many times facilitators don't practice enough for the virtual environment. In a traditional classroom, many folks can "wing it," but in the virtual environment it's much harder to do that. — 133

Practice — revise — practice — revise — practice. — 190

Practice your presentation delivery. — 260

Rehearse with an audience. — 275

Rehearse!!! Also, if recording the session, record your rehearsal.... recorded sessions are usually very boring, but a mocked-up session can be controlled to keep a learner's interest. — 276

Rehearsal and small group tryout are essential. — 188

Rehearse any areas where you will be giving a demonstration. — 223

PRACTICE! — 261

Test drive your course on co-workers before presenting it to students. — 263

Preparation and practice before facilitating the class or course. — 264

Preparation is the key for a successful online course. Just as it is for a classroom course. — 265

PRACTICE before you go live. — 259

Practice your lesson several times before presenting it live to your audience over the Web. Perhaps practice it with a friend or colleague from two computers. — 296

You can never be too prepared! — 335

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2006 Online Forums Schedule

JANUARY 12, 2006
Intermediate Flash Development Techniques for e-Learning

JANUARY 26, 2006
Advanced Flash Development Techniques for e-Learning

MARCH 9, 2006
Instructional Design Strategies for Synchronous e-Learning

MARCH 23, 2006
New Media Tools for Developing High-end e-Learning

MAY 11, 2006
New Technologies for Building e-Learning Communities

MAY 25, 2006
Incorporating Gaming Strategies in e-Learning

JULY 13, 2006
Costing Approaches for e-Learning Design & Development

AUGUST 10, 2006
LMS/LCMS Implementation & Management

SEPTEMBER 14, 2006
Simulations for e-Learning

SEPTEMBER 28, 2006
E-Learning Assessment, Measurement and Evaluation

OCTOBER 26, 2006
Converting Classroom Content to e-Learning

NOVEMBER 9, 2006
Converting PowerPoint Content to e-Learning

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II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

7. Know your learners

Know your students and what the needs of the trainees are. — 33

Understand the audience profile and the challenges they face in this course. — 39

Understand who your learners are. — 46

Get to know your students. Just as you would have an initial interview in a face-to-face setting, you must be able to have that kind of interview online, and be able to know who your students are. Keep it professional, but light. The students should feel comfortable with your abilities after the interview, and you should have a good idea of the abilities of the students. — 156

Know your audience so that you can design in appropriate questions and interactions — 215

Know your participants' names and use them! — 217

Think outside the box — see issues from the student's point of view. — 159

Ensure that content is fresh and relevant to their needs. — 153

Be aware of what your learners might not be aware of. — 104

Plan the course carefully and make sure that it has enough flexibility — this allows you to take your time during the course for actually getting in touch with students, understanding them, and building trust. — 252

Teach to your learner. Find out how they like to learn and adjust accordingly. Just because you are teaching online, your style doesn't have to be set in stone. — 295

Remember that on-line is not the same as page turning. You can make no assumptions about what the learner already knows of the topic. — 278

I would identify that the ability for the online instructor to customize and develop his or her own materials is essential. This means instructors can create content that is special to the needs of those they are training. With e-Learning the potential to do this is immense and should not be overlooked. — 325

Understand cultural issues (dealing with a potentially wider student-base).

B. Ensure an effective delivery

Always have an "icebreaker" question or text on the screen during session logins. — 65

Always provide paper-based resources as a student reference to back up your training. — 67

Always think of the students' needs. — 70

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Apply the relationship between text, sound, motion and graphics. Think about what you are doing, how students use the on-line environment, and how to foster learning. Then apply your teaching techniques and learn from student learning. — 73

Develop a routine to manage your online course effectively. — 84

Include 15-minute pre- and post-studies, job aides, or other media. — 190

Icebreakers. — 213

1. Get started on the right foot

Allow registration and setup time before the class commences. — 2

Open the e-Meeting Room early. — 49

If there are special pages of other documents like word, PDF, etc., have it turned to the page you want to show in the e-Seminar before attendees sign in. — 49

Log in as the leader 1 — 2 days before and again 1 hour before the event. — 7

It is critical to test and ensure that technology issues are dealt with prior to the course commencement. — 67

Set up your room (on-line) hours before the class starts. — 232

Show up early and test the system to be sure all systems are functioning properly. — 283

Use a pre-live checklist. — 262

Have two computers logged on to understand and see what happens on participant's computers. — 44

If at all possible, especially if you are a one-person group, have a second computer available so you can see exactly what the participants see, e.g. lag time from your click to their screens. — 177

If possible, have a second computer logged on as a student, so you can see what the students are seeing. — 178

Make sure you have a Shadow Computer. — 232

Utilize two computers (one hooked up to the internet simulating the student with the slowest internet connection). — 164

Before present-ing, put a pic-ture of a person (a representa-tive student) on the side of your computer moni-tor and talk to that student.

TOM BERRY, GALILEO SYSTEMS, LLC

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

a. Visualize the learners

Slow down and imagine the audience in front of you. — 53

If you are active in the class, students are more likely to take an active role. — 94

Since there's no eye contact and oftentimes limited feedback, I always placed a large poster of a classroom setting in front of the instructor. It seemed to ease the transition a little. — 169

Face-to-face contact is a must somewhere in the program, if not for each session. — 191

Put a picture of a group of people up next to the monitor so you can see the students you are speak-ing to and talk with your hands. Although the students will not see the non-verbal movements, the trainer's delivery will be smoother because it will be natural. — 273

Visualize the audience in your mind. — 329

Visualize the people you are speaking to: they are not abstract. They are real people who deserve your top effort. — 330

b. Prepare the learners for success in the synchronous environment

Establish the meeting ground rules: Expectations and guidelines. How and when you'll take ques-tions. Time frames. Etiquette reminders. — 307

Use a multiple-choice (check all that apply) tech poll to do a quality check on the video and audio at the start of the presentation. — 154

Introduce learners to the interface with a quick synchronous session or a recorded asynchronous session a week prior to the training session. — 306

Keep the learners active on their end through making them raise their hand, click the answer to a question, poll, etc. — 306

Encourage the learners to applaud, laugh, joke using the interface. — 306

Make sure that your students understand and feel comfortable with the technical media being used; don't assume a level of comfort or understanding that may not be there. — 25

Regardless of the online media, clearly state expectations, objectives, tool functionality, etc. of all online instruction so everyone begins on the same page, understands how to operate any tools, and knows what to expect. — 25

Provide online office hours and phone appointments. — 27

Use a printed handbook for learners to write notes, do assignments, and stay engaged. — 36

Send out ideas and tips on "How to Learn." — 39

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Provide students with a download of the workshop contents. — 43

Remind students that "online" does not equal "easier learning." — 45

Let students know exactly how the online class will work. Let them know who they can contact if they have technical questions, etc. — 46

Clearly define both student and instructor expectations. — 54

Set clear expectations. Use a syllabus or outline to manage student expectations about your response time for individual emails, and define student participation so that students know there is a reward for quality as well as for a minimum number of postings, and as much for their responses to classmates as to you. — 57

Send out lots of preparation information to make sure attendees are comfortable in their environment. — 74

Be explicit about what your expectations are concerning participation. — 87

If this is an ongoing course, create a participation metric and let the students know what it is and how it impacts their grade. — 87

State your expectations up front. — 81

Develop a policy for students to follow. — 84

Classroom etiquette for participants: — 112
1. Close other open applications (especially Outlook) for resource reasons.
2. Set phones to forward calls directly to voicemail (only if using voice-over IP (VOIP).
3. Keep telephone on "mute" when not speaking (only if using teleconference feature).
4. Hang a "Do Not Disturb" sign outside your cube / office.
5. Use the "yes", "no", and hand-raise icons to participate and indicate there is a question or comment.

Provide support, particularly to new learners. — 92

Make sure the learners understand technology and can demonstrate the ability to use it before they begin to use online learning. — 109

I've been a student in an online course. A tip from this experience would be to know the limits of the system they are using. Clearly state what the student will be doing, in my class it was a ton of writing — which is not bad, it was just a bit of a surprise. — 108

Ensure that there is a regular expectation for course meetings during a regularly defined semester or quarter. — 143

Require learner participation within a set time period; too much time between hearing from learners creates its own problems. — 143

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Give specific guidelines for message board posts, with points assigned for meeting the criteria. — 157

Manage expectations. Ensure learners know timetables, performance expectations, participation expectations ... etc. — 167

Provide a comprehensive syllabus to include a course description, objectives, and grading rubric. — 147

Send out tip sheet in advance of session. — 153

Set ground rules (close down all other applications, create a protected learning space). — 262

Set parameters for your online instruction early; e.g. computer use guidelines, instructor availability, online etiquette, addressing email properly so filters can be in place, etc. — 282

c. Include a round of introductions

Get personalized with the students. — 271

Create a nurturing environment by providing opportunities for the students to get to know you and each other. — 27

Don't dispense with the introductions in this format if the number of learners is manageable. The technology allows it. This is a good way to help build the class spirit. — 30

Get your participants talking to you, and to each other. — 34

Ask students to provide a short bio and optional photo to include on your site. Show pictures of students on a map to show where the students are from. — 77

Allow time at the beginning of an extended course to allow students to get to know each other online. — 157

If the class size permits it, have people introduce themselves. — 329

d. Help learners develop media literacy

Allow time for initial online sessions and practice with the technology in advance. — 63

If online learning is new to the people you are training, spend some time helping them learn how to use the equipment or programs or whatever. Otherwise this can be a stopper to the learning. — 109

Don't assume that the trainer and student are on the same level with the technology. — 124

Don't assume that the "e" part of e-Learning won't confuse students. Don't frighten off those older students who may feel out of touch with "electrickery." — 127

12 Tips for More Effective Virtual Classrooms

Before the training session…

1. Use what you've got
   a. Don't recreate the wheel – use the material you have.
   b. Don't convert or change formats unless absolutely necessary. Your virtual classroom solution should allow you to present your content in its native format.

2. Narrow your focus
   a. "Chunk up" your content – the shorter you can make it, the better.
   b. Try to limit online sessions to 1 hour whenever possible.
   c. Smaller classes are easier to manage – 10 to 20 learners max.
   d. Supplement the online session with job aids such as hand-outs, recorded content, reference guides, etc.

3. Look for every opportunity to engage your audience
   a. Use Q&A, Chat, Polls, White-boarding and other interactive tools to keep people involved.
   b. Cover no more than 4 slides without an interaction.
   c. Get personal – Involve <u>individual learners</u> whenever you can.

4. Practice, Practice, Practice
   a. Master the techniques & the technology.
   b. Use 2 computers for both practice sessions and actual sessions to see (and experience) what your audience sees.

5. Automate registration and reporting
   a. Use your virtual classroom's registration function to automatically capture a record of who attended training sessions.
   b. Collect poll and test results for assessment and analysis.

6. "Can" what you can
   a. Record static content and post for on-demand viewing.
   b. Offer live sessions for material that needs context and interaction.

12 Tips for More Effective Virtual Classrooms

During the training session…

7. Partner with a colleague

    a. Another presenter adds interactivity and helps manage the class.

    b. Additional Panelist can monitor Text Chat and Q&A.

8. Set the stage

    a. Start with a 5 minute intro to familiarize attendees with environment.

    b. Focus on how to participate (chat, Q&A, raise hand, audio, etc.)

9. Keep it simple

    a. Avoid "dense" material such as intricate charts or lengthy spreadsheets within a slide.

    b. Keep it short & sweet: Limit your talk time to < 5 minutes per slide.

    c. Use videos and animations sparingly.

10. Record for review and reuse

    a. Record the session to post for those unable to attend.

    b. Save whiteboards, annotated documents for distribution and review.

After the training session…

11. Follow-up for follow-through

    a. Don't assume your audience "got" what you taught – ask them! Use e-mails, surveys, polls or phone calls to follow-up.

    b. Provide opportunities for questions or coaching after the session.

    c. Schedule a follow-up session within 30 – 60 days to see if learning was applied.

12. Measure & market your successes

    a. Define success criteria & measure the results.

    b. Capture quotes & success stories, and then publish them (newletters, emails, even in your next class announcement.)

    c. Use your sessions to identify and recruit new SMEs & teachers.

From the WebEx Training Center Team

3 Critical Skills for Virtual Classroom Instructors

First the good news! The skills you use everyday in traditional classrooms are equally valuable in the online environment. However, there are a few areas that need special focus when teaching a "virtual" class:

1. Energy!

   - Remember how bored you were the last time you sat in a class and listened to the instructor drone on and on and on? Put that instructor in a virtual class environment and you can take that feeling and multiply it by a factor of 10.

   - Make a conscious effort to put all of your energy, enthusiasm and excitement into your voice and let your learners know that this is a class worthy of their time and commitment.

   - *Action Item: Record your practice presentations. Ask a colleague to listen to the first 10 minutes and rate your energy on a scale of 1 ("Nap Time") to 5 ("Showtime!") Anything less than a 4 is cause for concern.*

2. Brevity is a Virtue.

   - One great thing about virtual classes is that they enable your audience to gain a learning experience right in the middle of their work day. Don't dilute that benefit by trying to cram 4 hours of training into an already hectic schedule.

   - Virtual classes are at their most effective when they are focused, brief (1 hour or less) and interactive. Ensuring that your classes meet these criteria requires work and discipline. Look for logical break points in your content and "chunk" it up into smaller, more focused segments.

   - *Action Item: Review your slides and pare down your information down to the core concepts you need to communicate. Work to shave your talk time to <5 minutes per slide (2 minutes to cover the core material and 3 minutes for context and depth.) Target 40 minutes of presentation for each class hour and dedicate the rest of the time to class interactions.*

3. Focus on Interactions

   - In a virtual class, there is no way to ensure that your students aren't playing solitaire, catching up on email or even napping. How do you handle this?

   - Use Q&A, Chat, Polls, White-boarding and other interactive tools to keep your learners engaged and involved. Look for opportunities to engage individual learners. And don't forget to use audio conferencing for interactions whenever you can. A dynamic vocal discussion can really jump-start the learning process.

   - *Action Item: Place small, unobtrusive visual cues on your slides to remind you to engage your audience. Some instructors use a favorite icon such as a light bulb to let them know it is time to pause and ask a question or open the floor for discussion.*

Put these 3 skills into practice & super-charge your virtual classroom experience!

From the WebEx Training Center Team

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Take a few minutes up front to walk people through the key features of the tool. — 215

In creating the Global SDM Training Strategy now in place at Ford Motor Company, our team found that there were numerous avenues of interaction that should be considered for implementation of a blended learning model. My tip would be to ensure that an instructor has verified that students with a tendency for participation in a single avenue are, at least, exposed to other tools during their course. For example: where email, chat and threaded discussions are commonly in use by most students; you may still find some have avoided learning what they need to function in one or more of these modes. A single exercise, or assignment, is not enough to ensure minimal competence. — 187

e. Present a professional image as the instructor

Typing skills: — 271

Patience: knowing when to keep your hands off the mouse.

Problem solving: what to do when it doesn't work. — 271

Plan ahead: introduction, content sequence, interactions, practice sessions, summary / conclusion; technology set up and shake down; student access to instructor offline. — 251

If you're using a headset, position it so the microphone is not directly by your mouth. This will help the volume be normal and eliminate the sound of heavy breathing. — 307

Eliminate fillers such as "uh," "you know," and "uh-huh" to improve the quality and professionalism of your presentation. — 307

Act professional! — 62

Always be on time. — 62

Rehearse often. — 62

Be proactive in thinking of new methods to make synchronous learning effective and engaging. — 62

Be accessible. — 80

Be adaptable to the customer. — 82

Be available to your students. — 83

Be courteous to students, no matter what. — 84

Attend to adult learning concepts. — 85

Be timely in your responses to class participants. — 91

Self-discipline is vital. An on-line instructor must be able to stay on schedule, and be aware of students that are falling behind or are not engaging.

James Genovese, President, Pro-Ware Computing, Inc.

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Be organized and keep up or ahead of the class. — 91

Be flexible. — 138

Manage your time wisely. — 114

Obey the rules of online instruction. — 243

Start on time from breaks (sound familiar?). — 310

f. Be proactive about the "housekeeping" details

Use audience feedback tools (such as changing seat colors in Microsoft Live Meeting) to get consensus for sound check and other yes/no type questions. "If you can hear me clearly, change your seat color to purple." — 242

Keep your separate grade sheets offline with notes on assignments so that you can respond quickly to private emails regarding grades, assignments, or feedback. — 91

2. Manage the main event: Content delivery
a. Keep the learners engaged

Engagement: — 271
1. How (and when) to elicit interaction from students — through both technical and verbal means.
2. Understand the differences between online and in-person student engagement.
3. The increased availability of distracters.
4. The openness afforded by anonymity.
5. The safety of lurking.

Provide motivation, support, and feedback for discussions. Summarize responses; bring the discussion back on track. Encourage student-to-student interaction. Tap learners' knowledge. Make students responsible for summarizing the week's discussion. Teach others a concept. Assign group projects. Arrange student's role-plays. Use peer-review for projects. Motivate them to display their work publicly. — 271

Call on by name. Listen to your voice — your tone of voice should always be warm and friendly. Have a smile in your tone. To do this, you may want to place a small mirror on your computer monitor to observe yourself. If you are frowning, so is your voice. Vary your voice inflection to avoid sounding monotone. Be enthusiastic in your presentation. If you are energized and enthused about the information, your participants will be also. It will also be easier for them to stay tuned in. — 307

Interactivity is vital. — 191

Just like in the physical classroom, teachers need to be able to provide some "spark" — creating your lessons and web pages in the summer with no further work during the year is "boring" for students! Adding something new, now and then, keeps students interested and asking "What is this instructor going to do next?" — 197

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Check for audience engagement every 3 to 5 minutes. — 306

———————

MARKUP TOOLS / WHITEBOARD: — 112
1. Use the Markup tools on slides to:
    a) Focus participants' attention.
    b) Add visual stimulation.
    c) Replace animation.
    d) Summarize what has been discussed.
2. Let participants add a drawing or a diagram when appropriate.
3. Don't allow too many participants to work at one time.
4. Assign participants to different sections of the whiteboard to define the workspace.
5. Save important markups to the Agenda.

———————

Use the online tools appropriately to enhance the teaching and learning environment. — 35

———————

Use the annotation tools (in WebEx, for both the instructor and learner) — 49

———————

Have a video camera for personalizing the e-Seminar. — 49

———————

Use tools such as a pointer, or draw on the slide, to engage interest. — 53

———————

Clear the participant panel before each new question. — 112

———————

Creatively use the features and functions of the synchronous classroom tool to engage participants — polling, marker tools, small group discussion via chat, etc. — 119

———————

Use polling. — 90

———————

Don't be afraid to use the tool to its fullest. Use class breakouts, use the whiteboard and app sharing. If you don't you will lose the class within 5 minutes no matter how "exciting" you think your slides are. — 247

———————

Have supporting materials and utilize as many tools as possible to enhance the learning experience. A lot of instructors only use PowerPoint and not application sharing, breakout rooms, surveys and chat capabilities. — 288

———————

Try to engage the students every 5 minutes. — 21

———————

Find ways to check in with your students in an on-line synchronous classroom by using the audience feature of the software. — 43

———————

Periodically (every 5 — 10 minutes) engage the virtual audience, either by name or by an action such as a polling slide. — 53

———————

Check in with each attendee every 15 minutes. Ask a pointed question to a specific attendee. — 110

———————

Elicit regular feedback (every 5 minutes minimum) to ensure student understanding.

———————

Encourage participation by randomly calling on participants. — 137

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Call on individuals for specific input every five minutes, or almost the entire group will be doing email. — 107

Do not go longer than 10 minutes without engaging the audience in some discussion or interaction. One way sessions are not as effective and participants get distracted easier (they may be multi-tasking). — 153

Include some type of interactivity for the learners every 5 minutes. — 161

Have your learners interact in some way about every 7 to 10 minutes. — 165

Don't try and teach more than 5 minutes without some form of interactivity (solicit feedback often from audience). — 169

Insert interactions at least every three minutes. — 164

Don't forget about the telephone. You can always have students call you or vice versa. Be sure to learn how to use chat rooms and instant messaging. — 293

Pause to ask questions and encourage discussion at least every 5 minutes. — 320

Encourage very frequent student involvement. — 146

Plan an interaction every 5-10 minutes. — 262

Stay engaged. — 289

Don't overdo participation in discussion threads, but don't be invisible — there is a happy medium. — 27

Always initiate discussion ... never assume that because learners are not communicating via discussion forum or emails, that they are fine and that they are learning. — 66

Ensure all participants have some input to the lesson, wallflowers do not learn all that they could or should. — 67

Initiate discussion, then guide from the side. — 81

If you use Discussion Boards, particularly with active discussions or larger classes, set expectations for students clearly and assign forum moderators (students who get extra credit for this) to serve as the first person to call for help regarding that forum, and who write a weekly synopsis of the forum's most active discussion points for you. This makes it much more possible that you can handle the increase in work that can come when the use of discussion boards takes off. — 182

Always set up one forum on a discussion board that you name something like "Student Lounge." Tell the students that they can use this forum to discuss any topic they would like — new car, movie, a great party, etc. This gives them a place to "meet" with classmates informally, discuss common interests, and, therefore, makes it more likely that they will stay on topic in the subject-based forums. — 182

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Be sure to involve each student individually in some way during the session.

Jeff Tyson, Manager of Multimedia Development, Tech Resource Group, Inc.

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Require discussions with peers and the instructor to synthesize and ask additional questions to promote "discovery" learning. — 143

Use a blank PowerPoint slide or a white board slide to type topics brought up in discussions. For small groups, divide the slide into a tic tac toe type board and give each person their own area to list their ideas, and then discuss them. — 242

Consider chat vs. threaded discussion. Asynchronous threaded discussions have tremendous instructional potential and value. Chat does not. A "café" discussion thread dedicated to off-task interaction better serves its social function. The pseudo-instructional value of chat can more efficiently and effectively be accomplished with a phone call. — 287

If you have print-based materials and tasks that are working for you, you don't always have to rewrite them. Get them distributed, and then engage your students in excellent and focused threaded discussions. Consider the powerful potential uses of attachments. Simple, yet effective! — 287

WebCT Discussion Board Ideas & Information: Asynchronous discussion boards allow learners to complete reading assignments, reflect on their contributions, and construct a well-prepared contribution before posting to the discussion forum. Asynchronous discussion is one of the key components in interactivity for courses taught online or totally at a distance. The idea is to build a learning community. Set up course discussion protocol: Explain what a threaded discussion is and how to post. Post, reply, quote, etc. Even distribution of postings (timeliness). Length of postings. Respond to main question(s). Cite readings frequently. Respond to others. Bring in related prior knowledge and experience. Use proper etiquette. Begin with an ice breaker. Main forum area of WebCT: Ask students to post bios (do yours first). Ask students to comment on syllabus or other issues of concern. Respond to various bios, acknowledging student's contributions and emphasizing the richness and diversity their backgrounds and experiences will bring to this course (get them to buy into it). Play a game: Have students mention 3 things about themselves, 2 true things and an untruth. Then have people guess which one is the untruth. Model one "real" discussion that is based on first or second week's reading assignment. Emphasize that this will NOT be graded. Emphasize that everyone should contribute. Develop protocol. Follow the protocols. Acknowledge and encourage. Provide a synthesis of the discussion in class. What did we learn? Emerging issues? Grading: Discussion must be part of the grade (follow required student outcomes in your Syllabus). Determine how many online discussions you'll have during semester. Assign a facilitator(s). Facilitators are required to lead online discussion. Provide begin and end times. Determine group size. Provide a separate forum area for each discussion. Integrate readings and projects into discussion. Set guidelines (protocol) and explain or demonstrate how they work. Model at least one discussion. Monitor your students: provide assistance. Provide frequent feedback. Acknowledge and encourage: refer to forum discussions in future lessons. Evaluate student discussion: Make changes as necessary. Criteria for evaluating the quality of a discussion message, a good message is: Substantial (relates to the course material). Concise (one screen may be the ideal message length). Provocative (encourages others to respond). Interpretive (expands concepts or connects ideas in new ways). Timely (occurs in a reasonable time frame — when the topic is under discussion). Logical (supports point of view with reasons and evidence). Grammatically correct (is well written). Only those comments that meet these criteria of a good message receive full credit. — 332

You can't just do your F2F methods in the online. Get students "speaking" in the discussion board and your email inbox will not be so full. — 335

Use polls to get discussion going when needed. Most people will respond to a poll.

Dr. Diane Kramer, CEO, PeakSkills Learning Systems

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Trust your instincts. Try to get a read for the group about how much facilitator intervention they need, as in an ideal group dynamic they should only need guidance not regular intervention. — 11

Use other voices to teach and lead — both planned and on the fly — the art of letting students go — true learner-centric learning ... by breaking up topic. — 12

Write clearly and concisely. — 13

Don't forget that discussion is a form of interaction ... it doesn't have to just be interactions created within your synchronous technology tool. Be creative! — 15

Focus on the student's / participant's needs and not on the content or the tool. — 17

Be clear about the session's objectives. — 17

Encourage or require group interaction — this will help alleviate feelings of anxiety caused by the isolation of learning online. But be very aware of possible group interaction problems ... and intercede when absolutely necessary. — 27

Encourage participation in course daily by stimulating further discussions. — 37

Include interaction — between everyone plus the community or environment of the subject. — 38

Communicate with students clearly and regularly. — 40

Vary delivery methods to spark interest. — 42

Provide timely and meaningful feedback to learners. — 42

Promote online debate. — 45

Make every student feel as though they are a valuable contributor to the learning experience. — 54

Instructor should be accessible at various times. Some students may be from a foreign country and in a different time zone. — 60

It is difficult sometimes, but I feel it is important for the instructor to be available for chat as well as email for the students. — 60

Acknowledge every contribution as far as possible, even if just "Thanks, name." — 61

When asking for responses, make sure you pause long enough for participants to respond. — 15

Periodically, ask questions and invite thoughts from the students. — 17

Keep the adult learning model in mind: encourage your participants to add case studies, experiences, and electronic resources on the training topic. — 22

Address learners by name so that they feel a personal connection to the instructor. — 23

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Provide success within the program. — 33

Stay close to the computer. — 38

Be available by phone, fax, email, IM, etc. — 38

Call those students who are not showing up in print. — 38

Be Proactive. — 39

Ensure you are always active and positive in the discussion forums. — 39

Keep contact alive. The worst thing is to let student's motivation go down by disappearing. Email students as often as possible, post interesting articles, spread news on the subject (via email, discussion forum). — 45

Be interested in each of your students. Read all their emails. Ask them how they are doing. Go further than just the perceived academic performance. — 45

Give constant feedback. — 45

Be prompt with your email responses, be prompt to synchronous discussions, and review your emails and discussion board postings every day. — 46

Make sure you ask your audience to give you feedback — and then respond to it. — 47

Utilize your questioning skills in a variety of ways, rather than over-utilizing polling and subsequently diminishing the polling excellence. — 49

Set "office hours" and ensure you are able to promptly respond to inquiries. — 54

Recognize that few students may have sufficient (communication) bandwidth. — 54

Visualize the participants both as individuals and a group — keep this picture in mind as you work. — 55

Be visible in your online classroom. Make frequent appearances in the classroom, every day or every other day, rather than concentrating all your activity into a few weekly work sessions. — 57

Divert separate email correspondence into the shared classroom venue. — 57

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate. — 57

Include the participants, sharing the microphone as much as possible, keeping clear objectives in mind. — 58

Ask lots of questions — use the polling feature, or whichever other options are available to keep people involved and interested. It's not that different from classroom training! — 77

Be available at all times. Give cell phone numbers, Instant Messaging names, and email addresses when you can. The more you support the learner, the better they will learn.

Colleen ONeil, CLO, Alva Learning Systems

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Arrive early and greet your attendees when they arrive in the room. — 74

Don't be afraid of silence. Pause to allow others to respond. — 126

Silence is deadly … like dead air on a radio station. It's easy to lose your audience so keep the session interactive. — 284

Be able to connect with the learners and be able to facilitate the discussions of the group. — 81

Be creative and keep your e-Learning sessions lively. — 86

Let them participate, involve the learner so that they will learn and remember. Make it easy for them to come back to learn something new or something over again. — 109

Keep class interactive. — 90

Engage the learners by raising their curiosity and encouraging full participation. Be inclusive and seek out diverse views and different ways of looking at things or solutions. — 140

Engage the learners in the learning experience. Don't just let them sit there. — 141

Engage your learners by asking questions! — 142

Make the session fun, challenging, and have valuable prizes (Dollar store…). — 164

For online learning events that are Web-based self-study, remember to have tests for understanding every four to five screens. This will keep the participants involved in the learning process. — 179

Involve the audience to keep them from multi-tasking! — 192

Keep people involved. Ask for participation. Initiate participation. Create ways to encourage people to stay involved. — 210

Keep the group engaged through online activity. — 213

Build games and competition into the session where participants can call in and answer questions live — a competitive format with prizes seems to get some enthusiasm. — 214

First and foremost — make it interactive. Keep the participants interest and engage them at every opportunity. This should be part of the instructional design. — 153

Keep ALL students engaged. — 146

Look for opportunities to add interactions to promote engagement. — 226

Make it interactive! Use break-out rooms, research exercises, and collaborative tools. — 229

Strive to add excitement to each screen. Use multimedia (voice, video, and data) to keep the student's attention. Engage the student by deploying lots of interaction. Employ simulations wherever feasible. — 290

THE eLEARNING GUILD

> *To keep students from multi-tasking during your training, use interaction to keep them involved.*
>
> LINDA WATHEN, IMPLEMENTATION COORDINATOR, MEDIAPLEX

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Engage learners by asking questions or selecting certain people to answer a question, or setting up a competition between groups or people. — 288

Encourage collaboration. I have been in online sessions where the instructor did not encourage audience participation and lectured the entire time. It was easy to drift off and surf the web and not pay attention because the instructor would never know. You have to keep the online sessions active, otherwise people get bored. — 288

Use a variety of interactivity techniques. Throughout the session, use as many interactive or engaging activities as possible. — 259

Plenty of participant involvement. — 257

Ensure that everyone participates and is comfortable doing so. But don't be too pushy — there's no way to know how the learner is feeling or what is happening in their life during the online course unless they tell you. — 274

Try to involve everyone and use first names when possible. — 308

Use the learner's first name. — 310

Use creative interactivity. — 326

Let the community know if you are going to be away for any length of time. — 81

Commit to the community and follow through. — 81

Commit yourself to establishing a personal, personable, trusting, and mutual confidence and encouragement-building relationship with every participant in your online course. — 113

Encourage participant interaction with other participants. — 131

Assign group projects online to make the experience richer. — 157

Build a team of learners (community building process), including developing a set of joint values.... — 167

Building authentic relationships online is as important as it is in the physical classroom. The goal is to build a community of learners who can support as well as learn from each other. Understanding a constructivist approach to teaching and learning would certainly help. — 195

ENGAGE the learner through interaction with other users. — 222

Establish an environment that encourages participation. — 148

Call on participants regularly, by name, to promote engagement and attention. — 262

Encourage learners to learn from each other. — 313

Develop collaborative groups. Have your learner groups take responsibility for delivering some of the learning. Ensure that the learners understand their commitment to the learning community.

Beverly Wood,
Professor, USC

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

b. Remember there are two different views on using scripts

Take the time to develop a very detailed script of what you want to say and what actions you will do, with what application, how, and when. — 88

Don't script — natural conversation is vital for this environment to make it successful. Like animals sense fear, learners sense memorized lines and it makes events less engaging. If a presenter speaks "from the heart," it adds to their credibility. — 133

c. Be careful when giving directions

Be very specific in your communications to students, especially with respect to testing connectivity before the session and for first-time online students. — 21

Give very, very clear directions. — 27

Be deliberate about guidance for the student. First we are going to do this. Next we do this ... and after that we will ... . Here are the opportunities where we will stop for questions or feedback or practice ... or whatever. — 87

Be explicit when describing what you are doing. Where on the screen are you going (left, center, right, top, middle, bottom; specific labeled section) and what exact link, button, value, you are clicking, choosing, or selecting? — 88

Be deliberate about explaining to the student what you are doing and why. (I am opening XYZ software to show you examples of ... .) — 87

Detail and clarity are important to eliminate confusion. — 94

Give clear directives to participants when asking for responses. — 112

Overwrite instructions. They can't see your face or hear your voice for many things. — 249

Be clear in instructions and say it again, again, and again. — 305

Enunciate! Be clear in direction. — 301

Use the tools available in your synchronous session environment to help guide participants eyes to relevant topics. Don't overuse tools available — i.e. happy mouse syndrome can drive participants crazy. — 321

d. Use care when speaking to your "audience"

Transitions are key — if facilitators can keep things flowing smoothly without utilizing "cheesy" transitions such as "Isn't that right Joe?" "Back to you," etc. While OK from time to time, we've found learners say facilitators lose credibility with these types of transitions. — 133

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Know your audience and call on them as you would in a live classroom. This ensures people are paying attention and not multi-tasking during the session. — 214

Establish a friendly and meaningful atmosphere. — 146

Think talk show, not lecture. — 304

The internet can be impersonal — how can you make this session more personal? Use voice inflection, interaction, and participatory activities even more than you might in the traditional classroom. — 303

Patience is a must. Students don't listen to instructions well, and tend to wait to the last minute to get work done, which makes the instructors' work all that more difficult. — 280

Go for interactivity, comprehension checks, simulations, online quizzes etc. Don't pile on lecture and links and have students inundated with just reading material. — 282

Be there virtually! A teacher's presence is still needed, and this contributes to the dynamics of the class. Don't put your material on "Kiosk" mode and disappear from the learning environment." — 282

Think about and experience the course as much as you can from the learner's perspective — they are surely having a different experience than you as the teacher. — 303

You are still the instructor, not the technology. — 334

Use both synchronous & asynchronous modes of interaction. — 313

Must be able to think on the fly and get the audience involved. — 322

Mix up delivery of content. — 81

Stay ahead of your participants (this means post often, compliment and re-direct off-topic discussion, and be the most prepared in your course). — 22

Re-emphasize important points. — 44

My most favorite is use of a favorite formula: S=5W+H where: S=story; W=Who, What, When, Where, Why; H=How. — 48

Take time with each slide. — 53

(Be an) online presence serving as the guide on the side. — 37

Be succinct.

Communicate early — be clear and concise (give examples). — 81

Don't read the slides. — 132

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Pace yourself to your audience. Monitor the speed of delivery, and adapt if needed. Involve your audience. Ask interactive questions periodically. — 132

Teach to multiple learning styles. — 92

Set up real-world scenarios for participants to interact with. — 131

Engage the audience. — 138

Engage the audience as if they were in your living room. — 139

Use a wide variety of devices to keep the pace, rhythm and energy in the session. (Devices mean speaking, asking questions and seeing a raise of hands, directing learners to reflect, presenting a wide variety of visual and multimedia inputs...). Prepare. Prepare. Prepare. Make sure all the stuff you want to have come up on screen is working — and working in the way you want. — 160

Stand up on occasion to deliver the presentation with more energy. — 178

Remember to mix it up! Talking the whole time will not keep the audiences' interest. You should have some interactivity if you are presenting live. — 179

Interact with your audience. If you just do a slide show without any communication between you and the audience, the audience may sleep through the presentation. — 189

Use interaction if at all possible. — 190

Fun, and interaction keeps them involved. Use specific types of content. — 155

It is absolutely necessary to take frequent breaks from a long presentation. — 169

Teach people how to help themselves and each other, rather than being the sole provider of information. — 167

Guide the learners through the process, rather than traditional "expert to novice" approach. — 167

If you're using uploaded slides, interact with them a lot! An instructor's voice droning on while showing a static bulleted list of items is fodder for naps, not learning. Mix it up. Change things, whether you show a video or switch to an application or web page, or put up an interactive quiz that they respond to and you share the results. — 184

It's pretty important to maintain a dynamic instructional flow in an online setting. This includes the appropriate integration of text, graphics, images, audio, video, etc. for the specific course. — 195

Keep content brief and to the point. Break content up into short sentences and short paragraphs.

Remember to facilitate learning, i.e. "The guide on the side versus the sage on the stage." — 223

It's not about you; it's about the learner and the learning. Create hooks to hang learning memories on. — 241

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Speak slowly because not everyone has broadband bandwidth. — 288

Use the tools — teach people to waggle the icons to get attention, use the "go faster" or "go slower" capabilities, and send chat messages to the presenters and to each other. — 320

Push to make it relevant to all learners in the mix. — 190

Death by PowerPoint is even more deadly in a virtual classroom! — 215

Don't just have text on your screen. Use graphic examples to help your audience visualize your topic. Remember, they usually can't see you, and if you do have a web cam on, they can't see your face clearly enough to stay interested. You have to give them something to look at or the audience will stray. — 219

I found that using cartoon (Flash) technology interspersed with instruction also was very useful. — 169

Pause to make sure that everyone is seeing what you are seeing. — 148

Make it clear in your mind what you want your students to learn and do, and communicate that to your students. — 227

Focus on establishing the context for the content. — 226

Don't get carried away with the "wow" factor. Focus on accomplishing your instructional objectives. — 226

Make it engaging — it's not PowerPoint. — 228

Limit the use of PowerPoint slides. — 229

Keep your communications short and as sensory-based as possible. — 230

Make your instruction engaging for the learner. Do not just lecture! Include a wide variety of presentation methods and activities. Use graphics, sounds, and transitions appropriately, and selectively. — 233

Make your training personal; let the learners see/know who you are. — 235

Online instructors must give clear information without deviating from the topic. The material they provide on screen must be direct, precise, accurate, and interesting. Use pictures and images relevantly, not like it should look jazzy to attract the user's attention. — 245

Take slight digression from the linear nature of the subject wherever possible to offer alternative perspectives on the subjects, just as you would do so in class for students who do not understand the subject matter from the initial outlay. — 292

Structure your sessions so you are facilitating, not lecturing. Just because the tools give you god-like control, don't let it go to your head. — 291

Be an online moderator instead of an online instructor. I prefer to use the term moderator instead of instructor because I believe that a training or learning activity or process should be LEARNER-centric instead of PRESENTER- or CONTENT-centric. That is a big difference; also referring to competencies and skills needed.

JEROEN SPIERINGS, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, BT

Keep it engaging! Do not make your courseware the online equivalent of the old "Death by Slides" instructor-led training.

Russ Weddle,
Consultant, Chadde
Custom Computing

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Provide CONTENT on screen! Don't leave it up to the learner to have to listen to your lecture. — 269

Control participant communication or feedback activities if possible. — 260

Pacing and surveys. — 250

Slides are not the presentation. This is true of both classroom and web-based training, but is more important on the internet. Any slide you use should support your message, and offer the learners another way of getting the information. A graphical representation of what you are saying is reinforcing. Heavy text is often just a distracter. — 303

Remember that most of the folks in the session are probably there for one reason: to get information from an expert, not to have Websites recited to them. Make it fun and interesting. Folks learn more when they feel comfortable than when they feel like they are in class — just my opinion. — 277

Remember this is a classroom ... not a library. — 279

The number one important thing is communications. Develop as many channels as possible, and put important messages out over all of them. — 280

Understand the baseline knowledge of the students & adapt delivery accordingly. Before anything else, ensure that the students can access the training material — in some cases this may involve some basic IT skill training across the workforce. — 309

Voice inflection, types of interactivity, frequent questions, sharing applications with members of the class, and how to build the class for the delivery method. — 331

Use a scenario. Get the student involved before the session even starts. Appeal to learning styles and guide their learning, don't lecture them. — 311

Strive to make the class as interactive as possible. — 313

Use as many relevant examples as possible.

Highly interactive — from both the content itself as well as the surroundings of the content. — 174

Use teletechniques. — 319

(Have the) gift of gab, but talk slow and deliberate. — 44

Gesture and smile while you speak — no one will see you, but it will add to the conversational tone of your voice. — 564

Keep your voice expressive. No one wants an instructor like Ferris Bueller had — especially online!

Always smile, and always be positive! — 68

Be personable! — 81

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Be the voice for "radio" when working in the online environment. — 100

Change your voice pitch and speed. Sound like you are interested and excited. A dull voice is more deadly online than in person. — 109

Connect and be personable with users. Don't act condescending — tone of voice, etc. Avoid jargon — users hate that (and so would an instructor if, for example, a surgeon was explaining heart surgery using medical terms). Slow down and be sure that information is clear enough. — 115

Don't talk — facilitate! — 114

Be motivating. — 90

DELIVERY: — 112
1. Check all participants' audio before the event begins.
2. Speak slowly and clearly.
3. Wait for the slides to load (or screen to refresh during AppShare) before speaking.
4. Ask participants to indicate the screen has loaded during AppShare / Web Safari by giving a "yes" or "no" response.
5. Include some participant activity every 5 — 7 slides.

Don't read from a script. — 131

Keep the presentation flowing. — 139

Imitate your favorite DJ. — 185

In a synchronous environment, pretend you are a radio announcer — do not allow dead space! — 186

Being boring in person is even more deadly online. Use varied vocal inflections and vary the pace. — 217

Treat everyone equally. — 159

Keep it short and keep it visual — avoid too much teacher talk. — 200

Ensure you are matching your teaching style with your student's learning style. — 144

Establish an effective communication structure immediately. — 147

Summarize frequently. — 146

My favorite tip is to always remember that the learner is by himself or herself, and does not have the support of a live instructor. — 238

You are not driving a tour bus. Do not fall into PowerPoint presentation mode. Actively engage your learners continuously throughout. — 291

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Smile when you talk ... the audience can tell the difference. Stay on topic... we usually have to stay on a pretty focused time frame — try to stay on the topic. Don't get nervous when you think that you are talking in front of hundreds of people. — 286

There are many tools that can support the development of an online course; your focus should be learner-centered. As an online instructor your role is to facilitate student learning — not be the "sage on the stage." Communication. — 300

Your voice says it all — think about your favorite DJ and emulate that type of upbeat, active voice.

Use constructive language with everyone. — 314

Use humor only when you are sure your participants will understand it. Avoid the use of humor in a cross-cultural audience. — 17

Use humor wisely — context is more difficult to create in an on-line world. — 22

Have a sense of humor during class and online, but be careful not to sound condescending, sarcastic, or angry in tone. — 46

Inject light-hearted humor where possible. — 50

Add fun technologies like "Crazy Talk" and "Talking Slide" to liven things up. Let a hamster tell them when it is time to take their exam or emphasize key points. No matter how serious the topic, interject levity. — 50

Humor — 168

Use humor to lighten the atmosphere and encourage participation. — 315

Use humor, students are mostly stressed in a classroom, and a little humor will go a long way. — 316

Use humor when appropriate — it puts the participants at ease, especially if they have never used the technology. — 161

A good sense of humor helps as well! — 195

Use appropriate humor.

Interject humor. — 310

e. Ask questions

Make the learning interactive. — 306

Ask your participants questions that will indicate whether or not they understand — 34

Never assume anybody is on the same page you are during a webcast, so you had better ask them! — 47

What are the HOTTEST topics facing e-Learning professionals these days?

Here are two hints...

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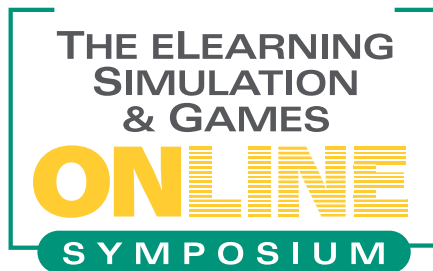
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II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Don't suggest answers to questions (let people use their own words). Don't finish ideas for folks (let them struggle to find their own valuable ones). Don't accept the first answer (let the group exhaust all possibilities). Don't judge, compare or contrast people with others (real or imagined). Don't provide false feedback, insincere praise, or unwarranted criticism. Don't assume what is best for a group (help them to decide for themselves). Don't always focus on negatives, mistakes, setbacks, failures, and weaknesses. Gathered from the Online Facilitation eGroup managed by Nancy White of Full Circle and Associates USA (http://www.fullcirc.com) and adapted by Josephine Murray Pelion Consulting Pty Ltd. TAS. Australia 2001 (http://www.pelino.com.au). — 26

Ask questions throughout to ensure that learning is taking place. — 67

Make the learning experience as interactive as you possibly can. — 67

Ask frequent questions. — 76

Be sure you use questioning to get at the student's meta-cognitive processes — it is critical that both you and the student understand how they are thinking about the subject. — 92

Be sure to ask lots of questions as a way to gain interactivity. The questions can be a test of knowledge, point of view, or just for fun. — 98

Don't assume — ask questions and clarify. — 80

Feedback via questions. — 174

Involve the participant by personally asking questions to each (or some individuals) to engage them in the process. The event should not be a data / information dump — there should be activities to ensure the knowledge is transferred. Otherwise you can just send them a document to read, why bother with the live event? — 193

Since you can't read faces or body language for cues, solicit feedback or ask questions at regular intervals. — 217

For easy interactions, ask questions that can be answered by hand signals or icon buttons. — 154

If participants are participating as a group, with a single connection per group, make sure you have extra "dead air" for the participants to discuss answers to polls or questions. — 154

Ask lots of questions (even if it's just click the green check for "yes" or the red X for "no")! It's much easier to disengage when you're participating online, so participation is the key. — 336

INVITE learners to give you their questions by explaining the multiple methods they have for asking them (voice, chat, etc), and planting your own "seed" questions. Remind people several times during the presentation to use the chat room for questions. Start each session with an explanation of how to participate. We will have to do this until webinars are ubiquitous. People know how to walk into a conference room and participate in a meeting or class (sit down in a chair, raise your hand to ask a question, nod when you agree), but they are often nervous about this new type of classroom, and need more guidance. Once they get comfortable with the format, then they can focus on content. — 303

Questions must drive a conclusion or training exercise. Do not ask questions just for the sake of asking.

Chris Bond, President, Bluewater Interactive Consulting group

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Ask questions throughout to ensure that you are not losing the learner. — 148

Pose questions that you are sure at least some people can answer. — 230

Posing synthesis and evaluation questions. — 258

Know how to ask questions and probe for understanding of content. — 322

Polling the class and sharing results can be effective. Use the polling device to have people respond with "yes," "no," "maybe." — 329

f. Listen to learners and to their answers

Listen to what the students are saying — learn to listen to the written word! — 224

Listening and hearing is an order of magnitude more important than talking! — 225

Offer creative insight, be receptive and understanding (Bob Zimmer and Gary Alexander, 2000) — 244

Respond to inquiries as soon as possible — within 12 hours if possible. — 38

Answer all questions. Even if you have answered them 5 times before, answer them again. — 46

Always take lots of time when explaining answers to student's questions. Make your answers concise and step-by-step logical. — 69

Respond to every audio sound you hear — it's a heads-up that an important participant's feedback or question is just about to come in. — 55

Answer the student's inquiry expediently and as precisely as possible, breaking down the course language into layman's terms, and giving examples. — 72

Ask students to identify themselves when they speak. — 87

Let the class take the lead in answering their own questions, before you do (be facilitative in the learning process). — 91

When responding to a question that doesn't require you to be looking at the monitor, close your eyes to remove all other visual distractions. — 103

Always be ready to answer a question. — 122

Don't waffle! — 134

Repeat questions before answering. — 138

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Listen intently. Intonations and inflections impact the quality of the session. Be positive and uplifting at all times. Never show your frustration with a participant's inability to understand a specific piece of material. — 223

Create a list of possible questions participants may ask and develop your responses. — 223

LISTEN closely to what people say. HEAR how they are saying it. — 222

Be brief, concise, and clear. Craft model answers or model responses and simply customize them for different learners — you can save hours of repetitive thinking and typing, and still provide individualized service. — 291

State when you will answer questions. — 288

g. Include exercises in your sessions

Always have Pop quizzes and surveys in the middle of lessons to get an idea of whether learners are actually responding to your instruction. — 30

Organize your discussions to accommodate high levels of interactivity. — 57

Create an assignment where each participant has a chance to moderate an online discussion. Provide the participant with tips for moderating, and ask him or her to summarize the discussion. — 117

Employ an exercise or game that requires participants to send individual messages to one another — this triangulates the learning; give them a five-minute work-by-yourself assignment and then go around the horn displaying results. — 136

I do a lot of software training over WebEx, and I use a model of passing the mouse over to the students so they can show what they have learned after major sections. Because only one person at a time can drive the mouse, I create various roles for the other students. I always have the Driver, but then I also select a Picker, and a Talker. The Picker selects the example to demonstrate, and the Talker must instruct the Driver what to do with the mouse. The Driver may not move the mouse unless the Talker instructs to do so. The remainder of the audience serves as Coaches, who have three roles. The first role is to "harrumph" if the Driver moves the mouse without instruction. The second role is to "ahem" if it appears that the Talker is sending the Driver in an incorrect direction. The coaches further serve as a resource if the Talker asks for help. This keeps everyone focused on the screen and they are thinking thru the steps as the process occurs. It creates collaboration and reinforces the steps of the activity. The students have a lot of fun with this, especially when there are mixed levels in the audience and someone gets to tell their boss what to do. — 170

I like to have students take control of the screen and have them practice what we just discussed. If I am teaching how to use PowerPoint I will give students control and have them work on a slide so we are building a presentation as we go. — 173

Include exercises in the handouts with the answers revealed online. — 154

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

If your handouts are the same PowerPoint file as your presentation, don't forget to remove any answer pages from the handouts. Seems like a no-brainer but it is an easy detail to forget. — 154

Provide exercises using "live" applications and websites where possible. — 229

Provide multiple opportunities and multiple modalities for students to demonstrate skill and/or knowledge mastery. — 253

Use review exercises appropriately (true or false, multi-choice, short answer, review games, and puzzles). — 318

Creatively adapt classroom exercises for synchronous online delivery. — 327

h. Make student assignments clearly and precisely

Balance individual and group assignments. — 57

Set clear guidelines for posting and labeling assignments. — 57

Stagger your assignment due dates to give your students ample time to read and comment on their classmates' postings before the next section of the course begins. For example, make discussion questions due on the third day of the week instead of the last day. This also helps the instructor manage his or her own time since there will be more time available to give feedback on student work before turning attention to the next subject. Think about adding at least one peer-evaluated assignment or activity to the mix. — 57

Give ample time for assignments, reiterations, and revisions, etc. — 72

If your learning strategies include assignments, make sure instructions are clear and complete. — 223

Don't make everything due at once or on Friday. Provide a window of time for response ... theirs and yours. — 287

i. Set up class activities

Be flexible — it's not always easy to predict what activities (will work). — 11

Do not try to TEACH the user — let him LEARN on his own (that is why he chose this medium). — 19

Send out announcements prior to important activities or milestones. — 39

Always prepare chats beforehand, prepare interesting questions, topics, and, if possible, distribute the questions or the information beforehand so that chats can be useful. Don't think a useful chat will last more than 40 minutes. Think of 40 minutes devoted to academic issues and use the remaining time to promote interaction. — 45

Design activities that promote not only dialogue through on-line venues, but with those who are in the same location for project work, discussions etc.

Kathleen Hueser,
Principal ISD, UDLP, ASD,
Army Training

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

You'll never learn the directions if you're the passenger in a car. Best way of learning is doing it yourself. Deliver the material online and give a breakout session with a hands-on example for them to do at the end. Pose a question or simulation they need to perform. This is very useful for complex simulations, or CAD programming etc. Give them an hour and then share results. — 2

Don't lecture on content or material as the ultimate and only method expecting learning to occur. Create ways to use content causing a student to analyze and apply content. — 41

Before creating group activities, have students assess their personalities and group them accordingly. Try to create a balanced group before assigning a project. This will lead to greater success for the group, and a greater appreciation of each personality type. — 102

Allow lots of activities. — 127

Include individual and small-group activities if manageable. — 190

Keep the students active by having them perform on-line tasks, if it's having them do mediocre tasks. Announce in the very beginning of the session that you will be calling on students to perform tasks at any time. Rather than being embarrassed, the students will pay closer attention to you are teaching, in the event they are called on to perform something. — 211

Provide enough time for participants to interact during the activities. Don't rush. Provide enough information to enable participants to do the activities. Try to appeal to people with different learning styles, e.g. some talk, some listening, some doing, something creative, etc. Follow up on-line learning with time to reflect, and then come back together to discuss. — 270

Instill lots of interactivity such as games, simulations, and directed discussions. — 274

Use breakout rooms with facilitator present guiding. Someone other than the facilitator should run the technology. — 317

j. Use demonstrations effectively

My favorite online tools simulation is where I show how its done and get them to use the tool, and at the same time build their own statistical model on their PC, configure the USB chip etc. — 2

Know your setup. If you are going to demo it, use a screen capture to show the point / clicks. Play back the demo and concentrate on talking about the screen action. — 132

k. Include appropriate simulations and games

With simulation, allow plenty of pauses for questions, and to allow clarification and even to ensure users are all on the same page! — 2

Add games and simulations to your lessons. — 114

Don't be afraid of games. Just make sure that they are tightly bound to the content. — 125

> *When moving into application share, remind students to click the Expanded Display (or app share maximize) button.*
>
> Jeff Tyson, Manager of Multimedia Development, Tech Resource Group, Inc.

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Don't use e-Learning for the learning domain of psychomotor skills unless you have a huge budget to create simulators. — 190

Utilize games where practical. — 146

Make your online sessions more interesting with little games or activities the learner can do. Developing sheets together is building up a team which is very important for success. — 234

Push a Web address for a simulation exercise for "hands on" software interaction during the event. — 242

l. Don't be afraid of sharing applications

SHARING APPLICATIONS / WEB SAFARI: — 112
1. Open the application you are sharing prior to the session.
2. Keep the AppShare session short.
3. Set up an application entry point to focus participants' attention.
4. Involve experts in the class as presenters.
5. If sharing a participant's application, prepare that application to launch in advance of the session.
6. Click on another Agenda item or choose another CentraOne tool to stop the AppShare session.

App Sharing — consider recording the demo and playing it back while the presenter speaks. We have done this using Camtasia and saving as a Flash file. The audience can't tell the difference, and it can minimize some of the live app-sharing pitfalls — high bandwidth issues, waiting for menus / windows / dialog boxes to appear, app running more slowly in app sharing mode, app failing and/or crashing. Advantages would be that it requires the presenter to plan / rehearse, and the demos can be repurposed. — 154

If a meeting tool does not adequately support your materials, such as animated and active slides, use application sharing. Do not just make do!!! More interactivity — still more — I mean a lot more!!! — 176

Always have a place for sharing resources. — 274

Sharing applications in real time is more effective than (by now predictable and boring) survey questions. — 324

m. Include offline activities in your plan

Use regular posted assessments to get polls from audience.- 2

Make use of offline media. — 313

Utilize standard media which most students have access to, such as PDF files, html files, etc. — 328

When using a link to Internet resources, include an alternate link with similar information in case the first (and probably best) site is unavailable. — 333

THE ELEARNING GUILD

Assess early and often.

Lisa Wieland Handy, AVP / Sr. Consultant, Mellon

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

n. Assess progress

Evaluating student participation can be difficult when online communication tools create more text than one instructor can evaluate. — 272

I get them to give me a precise answer following what I've just shown them. Gives me buy-in from them, and they get to understand it better. — 2

Evaluate learning success. — 8

In a synchronous classroom, use the poll feature as mini-quizzes to ensure understanding. — 43

At 30% or 40% of the course categorize the learners into Red, Amber, and Green areas based on regularity and activity completion, and think of addressing and treating these groups differently in terms of message tone, content support, motivational support, etc. — 39

Create concept guides that are brief and direct. These will work as quick references the learners can brush through while they prepare for the final assessment. — 39

Blend synchronous classroom with subsequent one-on-one coaching by using the email system to check student performance and provide feedback. — 43

Having a quiz at the start or end of the live session makes people prepare before hand. It is necessary to use techniques to force this habit since students have years of doing it the other way, attending class and then studying afterwards.

Track each student's progress on a regular basis. — 114

Clear and distinct outline of level of training achieved. — 174

If you are using online quizzes or tests, create a "sample" test for students to try out. This allows them to familiarize themselves with the format of the test (i.e. how to navigate between pages, how to "save" answers, that type of thing) without being under the pressure of learning these new things as well as answering the test questions, within a set time limit. — 180

Follow up lesson with knowledge assessments. — 243

If your online training system (For example WebEx) has a survey tool, you can use this to pretest / posttest students during a lesson. You can also have an informal quiz at the end of a module. This helps both attention and retention. — 183

o. Remember the course evaluations

EVALUATIONS: 1. Tell participants explicitly to answer the questions and click Submit when complete. 2. Tell participants to give you a green check mark when they have submitted the evaluation. (This helps with gauging time.) 3. Give participants a time limit and tell them how many items are in the evaluation prior to showing it to them. 4. Use evaluations to review material as necessary. — 112

In giving feedback on assignments, your most detailed responses should be to the first individual assignment and the last or major project. (The former, to establish your baseline standards and help students understand what is expected.)

Mark Veljkov, VP, Education OnLine, Inc.

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

C. Pay attention to four special skills
1. Give and receive feedback

Take the feedback or an acknowledgement from the learners. — 271

Provide a survey to get user feedback and then follow up. — 13

Feedback is a must. — 29

Provide timely feedback to students. — 37

Remember to follow up. — 39

Provide swift and continuous feedback — whereever possible let the computer provide it. — 92

Students want timely feedback so respond to posts and assignments as quickly as possible with constructive and substantive comments. — 94

Provide feedback on a regular and timely basis. — 114

Provide feedback in a timely manner. — 147

Feedback, Feedback, Feedback! It encourages students and increases their productivity. — 151

Read before you post a comment. Tone, especially a disparaging tone, really does come through in online communication. I've seen learners totally turned off by an instructor who was a put-down artist. And I know the instructor would never have said the same words if they had been face-to-face with the learner. — 274

Provide timely and meaningful feedback. — 313

Give everyone thorough feedback so there is not just an evaluation of work but a real, personalized learning experience that, in a way, can be a lot stronger than in the traditional classroom. — 314

Invite feedback.

Make sure you ask for feedback when you do sessions yourself. — 231

Ask for feedback from your students about what is working and what is not, and don't wait until the end of the course to do this. — 243

2. Be effective when correcting learners

Learn how to interject a correction without sounding harsh or critical online — which is a much different environment than being face-to-face because there is no body language to indicate "how" something is being said. — 91

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

3. Handle silence without fear

Manage silences and dead air. — 12

Silence does not equate with understanding or consent. — 34

It is very hard to hold someone's attention online. You only have one visual object for them to focus on. Even a 15 second pause can lose a student. — 31

Allow silence to happen — distant sites may be un-muting or experiencing a slight lag and may need more time than F2F in order to respond. — 217

4. Deal with problems effectively and professionally

Dealing with conflict or difficult students. (271)

Have sufficient technical knowledge to perform first-line troubleshooting. — 10

Know how to troubleshoot the technology from a learner's point of view. — 46

Know what to do if something goes wrong — lost connection, screen freezes, etc. — 111

Have a phone number or contact to route support questions. — 4

Be flexible — we are all adults and life happens. — 38

When moving into application share, if students cannot see the application, have them close out of the LiveMeeting session and re-enter it. — 56

Have a backup presenter and hard copy of slides just in case technology goes down. — 74

Have alternate activities handy in case something is not working well. — 259

D. Do your follow-up

Acquire feedback regularly. Continuously improve on the design and delivery. — 105

Incorporate student's suggestions or feedback in the WBTS. — 271

Keep in constant email and/or discussion thread contact. If someone appears to be missing contact that person, individually, and find out what is wrong. — 198

Plan to interact with your online students and your course daily. Do not make excuses for your lack of presence or your lapse in participation in the online learning experience. Answer email and grade assignments within your stated response time frames (i.e. 48 hours). — 253

Communicate often with your students. — 114

II. Tips for Instructors *continued*

Connect with learners — make it crisp, interactive and follow up on material. — 116

Let your personality shine through in your emails and discussions. Use appropriate humor to let your students see your lighter side. — 221

Set expectations early and often, and do not disappoint — if you tell learners you will always respond within three days, do so, if only to acknowledge receipt; if you set the expectation at within 24 hours then live up to the promise. — 291

Answer email and phone calls, it is a way students connect. Be prompt with your responses. — 305

Use synchronous learning wisely, not just because you want to. (306)

The instructor is encouraged to adopt best practices such as the American Association for Higher Education's Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (available at http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/seven.html). (240)

Enough transparency of the technology to achieve the goal: learners learn. (240)

III. Tips for Managers

A. Selecting online instructors for success
1. Choose instructors based on competencies

The instructor has taught the course in a face-to-face setting, or is highly experienced with the content. — 240

The instructor must communicate effectively in writing, and is able to express ideas, concerns, suggestions, and answers to students succinctly and clearly. — 240

The ability to troubleshoot basic technical issues without sounding frustrated. — 240

2. Choose instructors with the right attitudes

The instructor is willing to modify and adapt teaching methods and strategies based on student or participant feedback. — 240

The instructor has an understanding of the increased value of asking good questions and prompting responses — 240

The instructor has an appreciation for the complexities of what used to be easy: small group activities, file sharing, testing, etc., homework assignments. — 240

A positive customer service attitude — no whining, no blaming! — 240

Remember that the online environment requires more effort on your part to develop a learning community. Check in with your online students in some way at least every 48 hours — through an announcement, a group email, personal emails, responses to homework, or discussion posts.

DONNA WELSCHMEYER,
DIRECTOR, ONLINE
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT,
COLORADO COMMUNITY
COLLEGES ONLINE

GMAC accelerates business processes and saves over $12 million a year using WebEx.

Virtually all GMACCM employees rely on WebEx to help them train rapidly, communicate with team members quickly, and get their jobs done more efficiently. The results have been substantial. The company is slashing travel costs throughout the organization. Training takes place online instead of onsite. Sales reps get in front of more customers in less time. And the company is able to provide fast help desk support to remote users. WebEx is a vital part of the culture in this organization.

A WebEx customer since 2000, this premier financial services company uses a full suite of WebEx applications.

" *We developed a cost-to-benefit analysis when we first deployed WebEx that showed we were saving $3,500 in cost per trained employee per year – that's comes to over 12 million dollars a year we saved.*

— Sandra Morris, Vice President, Learning and Employee Development

GMAC Commercial Mortgage Corporation (GMACCM) is a premier financial services firm with extensive funding sources that, coupled with a broad menu of innovative financing programs, serves the needs of borrowers of commercial real estate debt as well as the providers of capital. GMACCM is an industry leader in loan origination, servicing, asset management, investment management, and technology services. This diverse lending and servicing specialist and its affiliates employ 3,500 staff in more than 100 offices worldwide.

The Challenge
In 1999, GMACCM was planning their first company-wide rollout of a new PeopleSoft Time Card system. The company's training team, led by Vice President of Learning and Employee Development Sandra Morris, prepared to support the rollout by supplementing their six-person training staff with six consultants. This extended team would rotate between GMACCM's 100 global locations in North America, Europe, and Asia, doing live, onsite training with local employees. Difficulty in scheduling times at the remote offices, however, interrupted the preset training schedule and trainers frequently had to leave for the next leg of their trip before ever getting in front of a classroom. "We spent a lot of time and money on this training plan, and then ended up having to do it all over again via phone and email," says Morris. "Quite frankly, it was a disaster."

The Solution
According to Morris, "I was introduced to WebEx by one of our sister companies. After I talked with the company and saw what it could do, I was ready to move forward." Morris began using WebEx in 2000 to deliver a series of common business application training sessions. The

intention was to slowly introduce WebEx to the organization, gain adoption in individual departments and workgroups, and let it migrate at a comfortable pace across the enterprise. "It took about six months before our employees knew about it and what it could do," Morris says. "We gave them the option of taking trainings via in-person classes, or online with WebEx. The first WebEx users immediately asked for all their training content to be delivered online—they didn't want in-person trainings anymore."

GMACCM's training group now facilitates one training a month on its twelve common business applications, plus a number of new hire presentations, via WebEx Training Center. "The only time we offer in-person classroom trainings now is when we have an upgrade that the entire company needs to get," says Morris. "Then we use a blended in-person/online training model that lets us rollout as efficiently as possible."

GMACCM expanded its use of WebEx online meeting applications by adopting it for use by business managers for routine meetings. This use dramatically increased after 9/ll, when GM put a moratorium on all business travel. "We were slammed with people requesting training on how to use WebEx," says Morris. "We started training our business teams on how to host their own WebEx meetings. Now our executives are using it to facilitate collaboration among their departments and to communicate and collaborate with all their internal and external constituents."

Morris feels WebEx has become an integral part of GMACCM's culture, noting that everyone at every level of the organization uses WebEx business applications. One of the more interesting changes WebEx has driven was the adoption of a

new Management Curriculum for senior executives. According to Morris, "Prior to WebEx, a senior executive would not step foot into an in-person classroom training because there was a perception that high-level execs shouldn't need that kind of information. WebEx created a new training environment that engaged their interest. After we saw their attendance increase and knew that our adoption was going to be high, we evolved our Management Curriculum, delivered via WebEx Training Center. It's now required."

WebEx is also fully integrated into the company's backend Learning Management System (LMS), the PeopleSoft Learning Enterprise, and Morris' team schedules all WebEx training sessions directly through the LMS. This facilitates automated emails with registra-

tion information, tracking attendance, updating employee records, and keeping department managers notified of their staff training activities. The integration also enabled a very successful deployment of the company's Performance Management Training. Required for all managers, the trainings were delivered over a three-week period via WebEx Training Center, along with follow-on performance appraisals. Those with low appraisals were supported with additional instruction until they achieved the required performance levels. "In the past, we actually had entire groups that never completed the appraisal process," says Morris. "WebEx allowed us to ensure performance levels company-wide and track those appraisals within our LMS. We never could have accomplished this without WebEx."

The efficiencies that the GMACCM/WebEx synergy has made possible are also being noticed by other GM divisions. Morris's use of WebEx to host a meeting of the GM Training Counsel, of which she is a member, generated high praise. "I had sixty attendees signed onto WebEx for a 4-hour session. After the meeting, I was overwhelmed with feedback saying that the WebEx session was the best they had ever attended. GM was using Placeware (now Microsoft Live Meeting) at the time and the service was always a challenge. After my presentation, GM did an analysis of WebEx based on our positive experience and the savings we were realizing, and effective in 2005, made it mandatory that everyone in their organization use WebEx."

Deploying WebEx Across the Enterprise

DEPARTMENT	APPLICATION USE
Employee Development	• Trained 1,100 employees and managers on an upgraded Time Card System in a three-week period • Trained more than 1,700 employees on a new Performance Appraisal Process over a four-week period • Deliver 144 WebEx trainings on standard business applications per year, plus new employee trainings • WebEx is primary solution to deploy training to remote employees in Asia and Europe
Information Technology	• IT subject matter experts use WebEx to deliver global technology training on the fly • Helpdesk tool to assist users in learning new procedures and perform routine installs • Technology training has been delivered successfully, as users are able to open two windows to see the instructors' navigation while following along • WebEx used to deploy several Windows upgrades
Risk Management	• Developed an instructional library of WebEx sessions for viewing on demand
Servicing	• Routine servicing of loans and loan products to commercial customers
Product Management	• External business meetings • Product rollouts • Product training • Research and product feedback
Legal	• Replaced weekly in-person meeting of globally distributed team with WebEx meeting
Sales	• Business managers and various subject matter experts are trained to use WebEx to deliver demonstrations to potential clients in other states to reduce travel costs • Developed an instructional library of WebEx sessions for viewing on demand
Enterprise	• Business units use Webex to conduct training across business lines • Routine internal and external meetings

> *We gave [our employees] the option of taking trainings via in-person classes, or online with WebEx. The first WebEx users immediately asked for all their training content to be delivered online—they didn't want in-person trainings anymore.*
>
> — Sandra Morris, Vice President, Learning and Employee Development

The Results

The quantitative results realized from GMACCM's WebEx installation have been unprecedented. Morris's team has repeatedly delivered company-wide trainings for major system upgrades in as little as three weeks—processes that previously required several months to execute. "We developed a cost-to-benefit analysis in 2001 that showed we were saving $3,500 in costs per trained employee per year – resulting in over 12 million dollars a year in savings," says Morris. If the analysis had included all the other groups that were using WebEx at this time, this figure would probably have been doubled."

WebEx's qualitative benefits have also been substantial, with virtually every GMACCM employee relying on WebEx to help them train rapidly, communicate with team members quickly, and get their jobs done more efficiently. According to Morris, "We are slashing travel costs throughout our organization. Business units are training across business lines, our technology trainings can happen online instead of offsite, and our sales teams are getting in front of more customers without wasting time and money flying from place to place." GMACCM has even adopted WebEx to deliver help desk support, enabling real-time viewing of remote desktops and the ability to share applications and teach end users on new products.

"We use WebEx to tell us how our products are doing," says Morris. "I use the polling feature to not only check retention, but to get the user's opinion on the product. I want to know if it's valuable to them, if they see themselves using it, and how it can help them work better. This feedback filters throughout the organization and business units can make better decisions about the tools and applications we choose to deploy."

WebEx has migrated to virtually all parts of the GMACCM organization, with individual groups focusing on the features that best facilitate their needs. "Our sales teams are using the recording function to establish their own library of sales training materials for on demand access," says Morris. "Our Risk Management group is doing something similar. We had a team of lawyers that met every week, literally flying in from every part of the globe. Now they use WebEx, saving time and costs, while still getting the job done."

The Future

Morris definitely sees WebEx continuing to be an integral part of GMACCM's culture and ability to do business. Future applications include adding more content to its training library for on demand access. "We're a small staff," Morris says, "and we're frankly running out of time to prepare all the content for the number of business applications we're now training on. We want to establish an on demand library of WebEx sessions that will help us meet this need without adding headcount."

Morris adds, "There is no way we could have done all we've done without WebEx. Our peers in sister organizations ask us how we handle training rollouts at the speeds WebEx enables. They're blown away by it. It has made our lives very simple and made our team look very good."

HIGHLIGHTS

- GMAC Commercial Mortgage was hampered in deploying training by the size and geography of its global workforce.

- WebEx Training Center reduced training deployments from several months to a few weeks and generated savings of $3,500 in costs per trained employee per year, with a total of over 12 million dollars saved.

- WebEx migrated to enterprise-wide use after 9/ll—now the entire organization is speeding communications, collaboration and business processes via online meetings and training.

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SS-GMAC-101005

III. Tips for Managers *continued*

The instructor comes prepared to teach Plan A with Plan B and Plan C in place. — 240

Willingness to support learners via email and/or phone before and after sessions. — 240

3. Choose instructors with the right knowledge and skills

The instructor has a basic understanding of the Internet, word processing, and email. — 240

The instructor has some background or experience in teaching or training. — 240

The instructor has an understanding of instructional design for synchronous online.- 240

4. Take into account other considerations when choosing instructors

The instructor has good Internet access at work or home (depending on where they intend on doing the most work on the course). — 240

The instructor has significant time available to devote to course development and to complete initial drafts of the course content at least 10 weeks prior to the course open date. — 240

The instructor is able to devote 10-15 hours per week to teaching the course for a 3-credit hour equivalent course (depending on the level of interaction and volume and length of assignments). — 240

B. Set the instructor up for success
1. Ensure that there is organization support for synchronous e-Learning

Make sure you have top-down buy-in into any online learning initiatives; this will help you secure resources, including the necessary technical tools. — 25

Use champions to help increase the likelihood of successful adoption. — 25

Make online learning part of your overall learning programs. Have people in your company who can help and give advice to other learners. Integrate in-person training with online. Have as many forms of learning going on for as many subjects as possible. -109

Get your stakeholders involved, and keep them involved throughout the project, to ensure ownership and uptake of the product (important in academic settings). -255

2. Ensure there will be IT support

Have technical support available for participants. — 260

Provide off-line support, especially a technical support person so that the instructor is not spending the entire time diagnosing connection issues. — 288

III. Tips for Managers *continued*

3. Establish a complete delivery team

Have a co-presenter monitor participant activities. — 260

Use a producer. — 310

Use a producer when possible. The role of the producer is to take attendance, type on the white board, check on AWOL participants, etc. — 161

If you are presenting through a Webcast, have a producer available to manage the software, instant messaging, and assessments and surveys. — 179

Instructional Partnerships work better than solos as it give interaction and a lively social presence. — 188

Have a host or facilitator to assist with the live presentation to handle technical issues or respond to chat, etc. — 99

Multiple facilitators are a must! — two sets of eyes and ears are helpful on content and questions, but also the vocal variety helps the students from disengaging. Much like throwing in different interactive slides from time to time, different voices keep the students engaged. — 133

If you have a large audience, enlist the aid of another instructor if you need help managing text chat that may be a part of the presentation. — 18

Have a second person to take care of chat questions or other things that might pop up. — 232

If the class is large have an assistant instructor to keep track of chat and technical difficulties of stu-dents. — 247

TEAM TEACH — having more than one facilitator in an online class allows the presenters to trade off on different parts of the presentation, which helps to maintain student interest. It also offers students the opportunity to get one-on-one support for questions, and in the case of one instructor dropping off line due to technical problems the other can step in and keep the program running. — 256

Use an assistant early on until you are comfortable with the technology. — 312

Allow for inter-activity of the users (incorporate quizzes, tips, movies, and graphics).

Stephanie Sanford,
Online Learning
Specialist, America's
Second Harvest

IV. Tips for Design and Development Teams

Learning can be enjoyable. Don't be afraid to have some fun. — 34

Keep it simple. — 202, 203, 204

Keep it simple. Don't overestimate your student's e-skills. Take small steps. — 205

Keep it simple. Write in a conversational tone. Keep in touch with learners to prevent any feeling of isolation. — 206

Keep it simple, keep it fun. — 207

Keep it simple. Use interactivity (not page turning) on every frame / page. Avoid lecture pages. — 208

Keep it simple. Make it fun, and interesting. Online is different from other forms of teaching. Don't put a "book" online and expect it to teach. — 209

A. Apply these design tips

Build a solid instructional design. Pay attention to detail during the development phase. — 105

Alpha & Beta test BEFORE release! — 105

Relying too heavily on assigned readings and book-based tutorials can leave students wishing they had saved their money by simply reading the required texts on their own. Give your e-Learning added value with resources that go beyond the book, such as: interactive media and educational games, relevant and hard-to-find essays or articles, abridged study guides, printable quick-reference guides, and organized lists with vital tips. Leverage the technology available to you to create unique assignments and promote collaboration. — 272

List procedures numerically, breaking up lengthy ones into different segments. — 13

Consider your audience! — 16

Blended is the magic word. — 29

Repurposing a classroom-based course for online delivery doesn't work unless it's redesigned for e-Learning. — 54

Be mindful of the diverse groups of learners and their learning needs. — 35

Be organized. — 38

Make sure your content is accurate. — 42

If your content is PowerPoint slides, include the notes — better yet — enriched notes. Otherwise they are useless. — 43

IV. Tips for Design and Development Teams *continued*

Include asynchronous, self-paced opportunities to practice (review) in downloaded workshop content. — 43

Don't think that more animations and heavy images necessarily make courses of better quality. — 45

Prepare your PowerPoint slides very thoughtfully. — 49

Use relevant documents in addition to PowerPoint, to augment the subject matter. — 49

Assess student skills and tailor the course to accommodate the broad range of skills. — 54

Don't forget to personalize the last slide. — 56

Design, design, design! Redesign your course from the beginning with the target number of students in mind. It's much more difficult trying to add on or change approaches once the course has started. — 57

Always inter-space learning with testing and summaries. — 19

Review materials for spelling, grammar, and flow. — 24

Tailor the training to the trainee and the company's profile. — 33

Keep all subject matter precise. — 33

Know the desired outcome of your training — 33

Outline your work before you begin. — 50

Open your mind to creative ideas that may enter in the process of material development. — 50

Read your own copy as though you know nothing about the subject. — 50

Get a lot of external input, proofreading and editing. — 50

Remember always that your audience is giving up time from their busy lives to participate in this course, so put thought into every word, keep it direct and empowering, and at the same time make it fun. — 50

Always view your programs through the eyes of the end customer. — 71

Gauge the class size to the subject matter involved. — 72

In your design, build in ways to actively engage the learners. Otherwise, you might just as well make a video and send it out for people to watch. — 96

Chunk your material. — 111

Be sure to address ADA compliancy issues and design techniques.

Stevie Daniels,
Coordinator Academic
Computing, Fresno City
College

IV. Tips for Design and Development Teams *continued*

Don't assume stand-up PowerPoint slides equal online training. — 111

Do not let the aesthetics of screen design compete with the message of the learning event. — 123

Don't create replacement books. — 127

Don't get carried away by fancy plug-in routines, the main focus is the delivery of information not how fancy the site appears. — 128

Don't overlook email as an effective teaching aide. — 130

Easy navigation is the most critical. — 135

Do not get too caught up with static PowerPoint slides. There needs to be motion and action to maintain attention. — 139

Establish good design practices so that the course is broken up into learning modules or content chunks that are easy to absorb, but challenging. — 143

Prepare materials very differently — leverage what this mode can offer. Discard the stuff that might work very well in a classroom but which has no way of working in this mode. — 160

Make online sessions one tool in your blended delivery approach — not the only tool. — 164

From the management point of view it's critical to establish common guidelines and approaches for all the online classes. You don't want each instructor delivering in a totally different way when each class is part of a curriculum. Consistency can appear boring to the designers but is critical for the student. — 164

Pilot every new course before delivering to students. — 164

Have a good design on paper before you start actually committing your materials to the learning platform / virtual learning environment. This design, if done properly, will certainly allow you see which tools you will need to use from the learning platform / VLE to get the best possible solution for your students and your company's requirements. — 181

Increase your instructional integrity over classroom material through tight ISD concepts aimed at the medium. — 188

The design of the learning is most crucial. — 297

Distance education instructional design is not a re-format of traditional classroom delivery: recognize the differences and embrace them. — 335

B. Provide support for learning

Plan useful web site(s) to explore that are relevant to the e-Seminar content. — 49

Build content that is not just a series of linked slides. Some of your users will drift away if the one-size-fits-all mentality is applied.

Al Moser, Support, ReadyGo, Inc.

IV. Tips for Design and Development Teams *continued*

If you have dull information to present, find ways to be creative. Use pictures or charts if possible. Use Flash presentations since they are more Web friendly. Find a vendor who can help you with this if you do not have the abilities yourself. — 109

C. Make Forums a useful tool for learners

Encourage students to find new sources of information and share them with the class via discussion boards, online chat sessions, or web logs (blogs). Discussion threads and other online communication forums can quickly get off topic and grow faster than teachers had anticipated. If use of discussion forums or other similar tools are a part of the grading criteria for a course, be sure to set clear expectations for the quantity and quality of the information being exchanged. — 272

Design your question and discussion strategies. Do the math! 30 people posting something, and then posting one response to someone else's posting plus additional free responses = how many posts to read ... how often? How will you monitor or check for understanding? — 287

D. Consider other tips (incl. advice and asynchronous items)

Record the e-Seminar for many reasons including faculty playback for self improvement. — 49

Don't consider a linear lecture / PowerPoint format an effective design for the synchronous classroom, or instructor-led classroom for that matter. — 15

For asynchronous events, make it easy for the learner to leave, and then return to the point of departure later. Don't force them to start at the beginning each time. — 18

If all you plan to do is narrate a PPT slide show without any adaptation, just record your voice, and post that with your course. You've probably seen that this repels students, so don't waste your time or your student's time. Have content that you can adapt. — 28

Use well-chosen media effectively. Don't just use PowerPoint. — 30

Unless you have considerable instructional design experience in an e-Learning environment, don't try to design the course yourself. — 54

Keep the number of words on a page to the minimum. — 19

Be careful about what info is in each page — reduce instances of having to go back to previous pages for reference. — 19

Read any e-Course scripts aloud to ensure that they sound conversational. Minimize the amount of text on e-Course pages and where possible, use graphics to summarize and emphasize key points. — 25

Include interactivity through games, simulations, and demonstrations followed by mini quizzes (Knowledge Checks), etc. — 25

"During the initial rollout [of our $13 million Capital Connect project], we spent six months traveling to train users on the system. Now with WebEx, we can do the same in 30 days.

— Michelle J. Brennan, Professional Development Consultant, Securian Advisor

Securian Financial Group accelerates business processes, speeds information delivery and improves quality of learning with WebEx.

INDUSTRY
Financial Services

WEBEX APPLICATIONS
Presentation Studio, Training Center, Meeting Center

SUMMARY
Securian Financial Group needed a more effective way to deliver trainings to a growing number of customers. By implementing WebEx throughout the enterprise, Securian was able to accelerate its customer communications and overall business processes using blended training methods. As a result, the organization speeded information delivery and significantly improved the overall quality of learning.

ABOUT SECURIAN
Line of Business
Financial security for individuals and businesses

Headquarters
St. Paul, Minnesota

Number of Employees
5,000

WebEx Customer Since 2003

Securian Financial Group is one of America's leading providers of financial security for individuals and businesses, providing more than $430 billion of insurance protection and safeguarding approximately $24 billion of assets. Securian's wide range of product and service offerings includes insurance policies, retirement plans, financial planning and investment services. This 125-year old company works with an extended network of financial managers, agencies, and firms throughout the US to consistently bring quality products to its customers and maintain its top ratings.

The Challenge
In 2003, Individual Business Technology, a Securian business unit performing sales software training, faced a critical challenge. The number of trainees flying in from around the country had increased by 60% while the facilities and equipment required for hands-on training remained fixed. Instead of the typical 20, groups of 50 or more people – including new asset managers, insurance agents and brokers – would come into the St. Paul headquarters for 3-4 business days. "I had an hour and a half to deliver hands-on training to the people who sell our products, but that no longer gave us enough time to provide a really useful, face-to-face interaction," says Michelle J. Brennan, who trained the group at the time.

The Solution
Brennan quickly realized that prerecording training sessions to view online could better prepare her students before they arrived, and would improve the quality of in-person class time at Securian. While researching several web presentation solutions, she came across the WebEx Presentation Studio and was impressed by the overall presentation and ease of use. Using Presentation Studio, Brennan began providing students with pre-recorded online training presentations that included built-in tests to help retain audi-

ence attention and determine areas requiring additional training. Students completed the activities before coming to an in-person training. "This allowed me to spend face-to-face time addressing students' particular questions. If necessary, I could even assign them follow-up work through the Presentation Studio," recalls Brennan.

Brennan was happy with the improvements resulting from using Presentation Studio, but she still wanted live e-learning capability to make training even more effective and interactive. Suspecting that other Securian divisions were probably facing similar training challenges, she shared her results across the enterprise. Other divisions were impressed with what WebEx had enabled Brennan to accomplish. Consequently, they partnered with her division to purchase a joint license for WebEx Meeting Center, Event Center, and Training Center. Use of the Presentation Studio was then discontinued in favor of live online training.

"WebEx was wonderful in our enterprise rollout. They hosted specialized online training events for their applications," says Brennan. WebEx solutions were adopted by more than seven divisions at Securian, including corporate law, professional development, policy services, and marketing. Some of the divisions even created branded WebEx internal meeting portals, from which they could collaborate and train on their own schedules and in their own ways. Today, approximately 350 users at Securian host WebEx presentations for their customers.

The Securian Advisor Services Division, where Brennan now works, uses WebEx Training Center to deliver 15-20 interactive sales and marketing trainings to insurance firms and financial advisor groups on a monthly basis. They use a variety of Training Center tools such as quizzing and polling, animation, and

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whiteboards to ensure the sessions hold the audience's attention. "Every three minutes, we make sure students are engaged by raising their hands, drawing on a white board, or typing in answers," explains Brennan. Other features, such as breakout sessions and hands on labs, further enhance the e-learning experience. And Brennan makes recorded sessions available for people who can't attend.

Instant sessions and desktop sharing in Training Center enable financial agents and advisors to call in and receive hands-on answers to urgent questions. "If an agent has a scheduled meeting with a client and comes across a glitch in his or her sales materials, we can respond by launching an instant Training Center session. Not only do we solve the problem immediately, but we turn the whole situation into a learning experience," says Brennan.

Brennan's division also uses WebEx Meeting Center for podium-style presentations and broadcast meetings in which new products are announced or strategic information delivered to Securian business partners, vendors and agencies. Brennan points out, "WebEx Meeting Center helps us keep the participants focused on our message whenever we present an investment strategy for a new fund class."

Securian once again supplements live meetings throughout the enterprise using Presentation Studio or the on-demand module of Training Center. On-demand sessions are particularly useful in delivering compliance trainings – such as NAIC (National Association of Insurance Commissioners) and long-term care – as well as mandatory corporate meetings. According to Brennan, "WebEx has the editing and recording tools we need to deliver fully polished presentations without the stops and starts common in live presentations. WebEx supports compliance by telling us who has registered and attended a specific training. We also use viewing times and testing to determine whether an attendee stayed through the presentation and is truly compliant."

> *"WebEx helps our customers view many trainings and presentations when they're available. No more three-day trainings away from their offices. Delivering information in smaller doses and at the customer's convenience improves retention of the material.*
>
> — Michelle J. Brennan, Professional Development Consultant, Securian Advisor Services

The Benefits

With WebEx, Securian improved its enterprise business processes by implementing a whole new approach to collaboration and training. As a result, the organization significantly improved the quality of information distributed to its customers while providing more effective delivery methods. According to Brennan, "WebEx helps us to get information to people a lot quicker than in the past. And it enables us to deliver information consistently. We no longer have multiple teams delivering different messages to our customers."

The impact of WebEx can clearly be seen in the rollout of Securian's 13-million dollar Client Connect project, their client data management system. "During the initial rollout, we spent six months traveling to train users on the system. Now with WebEx, we can do the same in 30 days," explains Brennan. Her division is responsible for training 65 general agencies, including some that handle individual needs such as retirement and insurance. "In rolling out the new system, we've been able to decrease our travel budget significantly because of WebEx. Our time and budget are better allocated these days. Travel to client sites is still important, but we can deliver a lot more information without having to travel all the time."

Securian now uses WebEx to provide customers with a more convenient and useful way of learning. "WebEx helps our customers view many trainings and presentations when they're available. No more three-day trainings away from their offices. Delivering information in smaller doses and at the customer's convenience improves retention of the material," says Brennan.

Enterprise-wide, Securian has now adopted a blend of training that combines online presentations with in-person classrooms—making face-to-face meetings as valuable as possible. "We use the online presentations to get everyone on the same page before they enter the classroom," says Brennan.

The Future

The impact of WebEx has caused Brennan to begin exploring new revenue models and applications. "We want to begin reselling our WebEx license to our close partners. One key partner, a financial planning firm with offices all over the US, has already expressed interest," says Brennan. Her division is also looking into the WebEx e-commerce module to facilitate payment for customer training.

Another goal is to make more sophisticated use of the system's robust capabilities across the enterprise. Plans include using WebEx Sales Center for new product teams and leveraging Training Center's hands-on lab and breakout room features to provide more focus during trainings. Brennan would also like to see growing proficiency with on-demand sessions, using more advanced editing and video, for instance. "WebEx has allowed us to come such a long way with the efficiency and quality of our training. We know our users are happy with the results. So we want to keep incorporating more WebEx applications to help us continue to improve."

HIGHLIGHTS

- Use of on-demand presentations outside of the classroom (in-person and virtual) pre-trained students and improved the quality of face-to-face meetings.

- Stellar outcome from the self-paced module use in one division resulted in enterprise-wide adoption of WebEx Training Center and Meeting Center.

- WebEx accelerated Securian business processes – speeding distribution and improving quality of information, increasing convenience for customers and making face-to-face time more valuable.

IV. Tips for Design and Development Teams *continued*

Provide thorough guidance and share Best Practices with SMEs who have not previously worked in an online environment. — 25

Build content that has multiple navigation paths (e.g. articles with more detail) and tables of contents to skip to the material of interest. — 28

"Talk" with students through your materials. While developing material's contents, think as if you were actually talking to students. — 45

Sit back and review your work every three scenes or slides to gain perspective and to check if you're on the right path. — 52

Choose images that follow a theme, e.g. a color theme, an object theme (all office stationery), etc. — 52

Avoid line after line of text. Students soon grow bored and the instructional message gets lost. Use graphics, non-offensive humor, and interaction (questions, drag-and-drop, etc.) to keep the online training interesting. — 78

Build it small — because Learning Content Management Systems (LCMSs) are what the future holds for online designers. — 106

Divide in small pieces, as much as you can, all the instructional objectives you are pursuing in your course, and make LOs with them. Try to think like some one that does not know anything about the matter you are trying to teach him. — 122

Have more than one way for learners to learn your content. Some people may never let go of the paper so have it available, but connect it to online. At least make them go to a Web site to print out the assignment or to check their answers. — 109

Put everything in one place — an LMS or Web site at least — so people do not have to hunt for the online learning. They will quickly quit looking. — 109

Create templates and reuse them, like learning objects. — 118

Keep it short and deliver very small snippets of information because no one in the business world has hours to spend taking online courses. Build on prior learning. Make it easy to access and available 24/7. — 201

Create an environment that facilitates the student locating information easily. — 147

Explore the Savie handbooks. — 150

Use Michael Allen's approach to stamp out boring e-Learning. — 236

Decide on your design early in the project. — 255

Ensure your online programs have gone through thorough usability testing.

Bruce Karr, Training Consultant, Amex Canada Inc.

IV. Tips for Design and Development Teams *continued*

Construct a Venn diagram of the face-to-face and online versions of your course. What do you see? If you were to design a hybrid version, how would you decide what would be addressed in which venue? Map it. — 287

Simple navigation (3 clicks), include automated feedback and reusable learning objects. — 285

V. Tips for Implementation

A. Manage the class size

Keep classes small. — 90

Limit the audience size depending on what you are trying to do. If your presentation is nothing more than a knowledge dump or demo, you may be able to get by with larger audiences. However, if you are seeking interaction with the learners, and learner interaction with the content, you need to keep class size smaller. If you need to reach more people, give more classes. (For example, when teaching software or business applications, talking about it is OK, demonstrating it is better, but giving them a chance to drive is best. You can't give them the chance to drive if your class size is too large.) — 18

Keep the class load to a size that is manageable. More than twelve students at a time per instructor is a lot to handle, even with an LMS. — 156

B. Manage the class length

A synchronous, interactive e-Seminar should not be less than or more than two hours. — 49

Limit the length of the synchronous session. I try not to go over two hours. — 18

Ensure that your time keeping is vigilant — the longer the lesson, the greater the chance that participants will lose concentration. — 67

Chunk sessions into delivery time frames of no more than one hour. — 32

Limit content to what is needed; do not add extra information that will extend the session. For extended sessions (lasting longer than 90 minutes): Give breaks. Think about breaking session apart into smaller learning modules or chunks. — 153

If you have a long topic, chunk it up. No single online session should be hours and hours in length. — 184

Keep it short — 2 hours is too long. — 190

You need more frequent breaks for online sessions ... try not to go more than an hour before taking a break. — 336

Develop a timeline for each session — however remember it is more important that you ensure learning occurs than it is to complete delivery of all the intended material. In my experience, if a

V. Tips for Implementation *continued*

course has multiple sessions, although some sessions may go slow, others go fast and in the end it all seems to even out. — 223

C. Provide an effective physical setup for the instructor

Have the right tools, equipment and space for the instructor. It's impossible to be an online instructor from your cubicle!! — 164

Deliver synchronous training in an environment free from distractions, i.e. your cubicle may not be the best place; we have a small room dedicated for this purpose. — 18

Eliminate interruptions from office colleagues and telephone calls during participation in an online instruction session. — 223

Carefully arrange your screen with all the shortcuts and needed materials readily at hand. — 176

Use sound to your advantage — invest in a soundboard, music tracks, and other audio aids. — 188

Only teach from a private room. Have a raised desk so you can walk around while you teach. — 247

VI. Miscellania

Don't rely on fancy technologies such as a screen sharing (WebEx) system. Corporate firewalls will frequently kill these. — 28

Be creative. Don't let technology drive your development. Bells and Whistles don't make the learning better. — 85

Be in touch with emerging technologies. — 89

Careful of VOIP — could distort audio. — 153

Technology is still evolving. — 296

Any communication problem is unrelated to differences in goal orientation. — 6

Plans are nothing — preparation is everything. — 55

Student comprehension is the key to learning and application of knowledge. — 41

Don't be overwhelmed. — 42

Continue doing what you do best, teaching. — 42

Forget thinking in terms of regular "classes." Most instructors tend to think that an online videotaped class equals a face-to-face class. Instead, think in terms of the content you want to teach! — 45

VI. Miscellania *continued*

When you hear ... you forget. When you see ... you remember. When you do ... you understand. -1

A danger in uninformed use of technology associated with web-based course delivery is shaping teaching and learning activities to fit the technology rather than using an appropriate technology that fits the activity. "The medium too often assumes a life of its own, supplanting the teacher and resulting in technology-bound activities that are debilitating to both teaching and learning (Parker, 1997 p. 9)." — 5

Online learning needs to be easy to use, engaging and interactive — if you achieve this, the rest will probably follow without too much difficulty. It is much more effective as an integral part of a blended approach — it shouldn't stand alone. In my current role, we use e-Learning to train level 1 basic skills and manage to engage people with no previous qualifications, language or learning difficulties etc. These guidelines do work!! — 268

Remember that there is a life outside the computer. — 51

A good computer user is not someone who knows everything there is to know about computers. A good computer user is someone who can work out how to make the computer assist in the task at hand, and then identify the most efficient way of accomplishing it. — 59

Arrogance is ignorance. — 75

Always be on your toes to learn more about e-Learning and be able to deploy it. — 64

It has to be easy, fun, worth their time. What is in it for them? The online learning has to make the learner think. Not all movies make people think. Whatever technology you have, use it to make people think about the subject. What should they do with this information? How can their skill be improved? Answer those questions in the online training. — 109

It is very important to understand the challenges of a totally online instructional model. These challenges can be in terms of technology, diverse audience profile (experience and motivation levels), cultural diversity, training domain complexity, and so on. The trick is to relate the online model with a classroom situation, and think of parallel methods in the online context for meeting the above stated challenges. — 194

Any instructor who is a good face-to-face instructor will migrate easily to the online forum. They already have the attributes that are required to facilitate learning. — 156

Good communication skills (verbal and written) are vital. — 159

Patience is a virtue. — 159

Go to the point. Make the point a vehicle for deeper digging. Put the point in context and position it in today's worldly context. Don't preach, but lead the way forward. — 158

One person can make a difference!

Online learning does NOT have to be boring!!! — 246

VI. Miscellania *continued*

Design and develop the full course (all learning activities) in advance of the term startup — then concentrate on facilitating it. — 253

Sometimes the tips are imperatives, other times they are reflective questions — 287

Realize that people prefer synchronous events so that they can multi-task (participate and: eat, read, check email, check voice mail, play games, daydream, etc.). Many do it just to be able to tell others they did it without gaining any real benefit. — 338

Developing competencies is good, but not necessarily for certification. They would just be good in and of themselves. — 338

The right amount of information, for the time allotted, delivered in the right way, for the right reason, aligned with the right deliverables. — 298

Teach for your students, not the medium. — 294

These are largely from a participant's point of view: Never assume anything. A program's designer may mean it to be intuitive, but it may only be intuitive to the person who designed it. Be aware always of the additional barrier the computer interface places between instructor and student or the student and learning material. — 302

If it doesn't do it for you, get offline — not every content works online!

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