

Choosing a Training Delivery Method Decision Guide

Determining how to best deliver training content to participants is a complex decision. There are many factors to consider including the content, the audience, the timeline, costs and resources required. This document outlines the factors that should be considered when determining whether a training course should be designed for classroom, online or blended training delivery.

Content Considerations:

- **What is the volume of content (in hours) of training that need to be delivered?**

There is a **relatively small volume of content**. The content can be delivered in 6 hours or less. The content is limited in scope. It may be possible to cover all material in a single online course or in up to three online modules. Courses that are shorter in duration and those that have a limited content scope are better suited to online delivery.

There is a **relatively large volume of content**. The content is complex or broad in scope. The content will take more than 8 hours to deliver, and may require more than three modules to cover. A large volume of content can be delivered via online or blended course delivery, however, courses that have a large volume of content or will need to be segmented into content sections of no more than three hours each.

- **Are the course learning objectives primarily knowledge based or primarily skill based?**

The course learning objectives are primarily **knowledge-based**. Participants are being exposed to information they will need to be aware of, understand, and remember. Knowledge-based content lends itself better to online delivery than skill-based content. However, online delivery can be used to deliver skill-based content.

The course learning objectives are primarily **skill-based**. Participants will need to practice and perform tasks or apply principles to a measurable degree of competence, accuracy, or completeness.

- **If the course learning objectives are skill based, are participants expected to Practice or Apply content?**

Focus on **Practice**: Participants will perform the skills they acquire in this training to develop confidence and deepen understanding through activities such as classifying, describing, discussing, explaining, identifying, locating, completing, selecting and paraphrasing.

Focus on **Applying**: Participants will employ the skills they acquire in this training to develop proficiency through activities such as demonstrating, dramatizing, utilizing, illustrating, interpreting, operating, solving, and writing. These types of tasks require higher order thinking skills than basic practice.

- **Is the content of the course likely to remain stable for a period of time after rollout or is it likely to change frequently?**

Stable: The knowledge and methods in this training are likely to remain unchanged for the foreseeable future, until or unless changes are made due to research findings, in accepted best practice, in the law or in organizational responsibilities, for example.

Frequent changes: The knowledge and methods in this training are likely to change in ways that will require frequent updates in order to remain relevant, current, and beneficial to the participants.

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- **Is an objective assessment of participants' mastery of the course content required? For example, do we need to assess participant's knowledge acquisition at the end of the course via a quiz or test?**

Measureable level of content mastery required:

Online training delivery can facilitate the administration of assessments in a controlled environment, but assessment of participants' mastery of skill may be more difficult to assess via online training delivery.

Measureable level of content mastery not required:

If an informal assessment of participants' mastery of the training content is sufficient, this can be readily achieved via a trainer's classroom observation.

- **If an objective assessment of data is required, is it necessary to collect data on each participant's performance (test results).**

Assessment Data Required : If records of participant performance outcomes are necessary for reporting, research, certification or other purposes, online training delivery can provided an efficient method to collect, organize and maintain these data.

No need to collect Assessment Data: If there is no identified need to collect, analyze or maintain information on participant assessment outcomes, classroom training may be an appropriate training delivery method.

- **Do participants need to interact face-to-face either with their fellow participants or a trainer in order to practice skills or assess achievement of learning objectives?**

Face-to-face interaction necessary:

If In-person interaction with the trainer or other course participants is necessary, either for the appropriate and realistic practice or demonstration and assessment of the skills and competencies acquired in this training, a classroom, distance learning or blended training delivery method are better choices than an online only training delivery method.

No face to face interaction required: If practice with or demonstration and assessment of skills and competencies acquired in this training can be achieved without in-person interaction with the trainer or other course participants, then the course may be suitable for online training delivery.

Audience Considerations:

- **What is the projected size of the participant audience?**

Small audience: If the participant audience for the course is limited in size to fewer than 500 participants, or the training content is targeted to a specific audience, classroom training delivery may be the most suitable delivery method to delivery this content.

Large audience: If the participant audience for the course is greater in size than 500 participants, or training audience is anticipated to expand to include a very large number of participants, online or blended training may be a suitable training delivery method.

- **Are the participants geographically dispersed or centrally located in a few locations?**

Co-located: If participants are all within a single location or region, or are geographically grouped in another manner, classroom training delivery may a suitable delivery method.

Dispersed: If participants are distributed throughout the state, or throughout a large portion of the state, online or blended training delivery may be an efficient way to deliver training.

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- **Do participants have access to the technology (computer with speakers, adequate internet access, video capability, etc.) needed to complete an online course?**

Adequate Technology: Technology meeting the minimum requisite specifications is readily available to every participant to enable participants to complete an online or blended training course.

Inadequate or No Technology: Technology is unavailable or access is unlikely, or there is no assurance that available technology meets the minimum requisite specifications to enable participants to complete an online or blended training course.

- **Do participants have the baseline computer skills (keyboarding, mouse skills, etc.) needed to complete an online or blended course?**

Computer-ready: Participants possess baseline computer skills sufficient to complete an online or blended course.

Computer-challenged: Participants lack baseline computer skills sufficient to complete an online or blended course.

Time Considerations:

- **Is there a deadline for participants to complete the learning?**

Fast deployment to meet deadlines: Online or blended training delivery can enable the CWRC to deliver training to a large number of participants in less time than using classroom training delivery.

Training need not deadline driven: Delivering training to a large number of participants utilizing classroom training delivery takes longer due to classroom availability, trainer preparation, availability and participant availability considerations.

- **Is reducing the participant's travel time/time away from their job to complete training a goal?**

Reducing time required for training is important. Online or blended training delivery can eliminate or significantly reduce participants' time away from work by reducing or eliminating time spent traveling to training sessions.

Ensuring that participants focus on learning is important. Some participants have a difficult time making time for completing online or blended training when they are in the office. For these participants, going to the classroom to attend training helps them to focus on learning.

- **Is there adequate time to develop, test and deploy an online or blended course?**

Online development takes more time. One hour of online or blended training content takes more time to develop than one hour of classroom training, however, once it is developed, it does not require additional time to deliver.

Classroom training development takes less time, but... Classroom training delivery requires less time per hour of content to develop. However, one should keep in mind that classroom training takes significantly more time to deliver.

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Cost Considerations:

- **Are participant travel costs a concern?**

Online learning eliminates travel cost. Online or blended training delivery can eliminate or significantly reduce participants' costs incurred by traveling to training sessions.

Regional delivery reduces travel costs. Because of CWRC's regional training delivery structure, for many participants, travel expenses to training sessions are minimal.

Resource Considerations:

- **Does the CWRC have the facilities available to deliver the training via classroom training delivery within the specified timeframe?**

Capacity to deliver online learning is virtually unlimited. Once an online learning course is developed and deployed, a very large number of participants can complete the online courses within a very short timeframe.

Capacity to deliver classroom learning is limited. Classroom and trainer availability limit the number of participants who can complete a classroom delivered course within a specified timeframe.

- **Does the CWRC have the resources needed to provide support for the expected number of participants if the training is delivered in an online or blended format?**

Support needs for online or blended training delivery: Online training delivery requires that the CWRC have staff available during the work day and perhaps during evening hours to provide support and assistance to participants in online learning activities. Should the CWRC increase the number of courses delivered via online delivery or should the number of participants enrolling in online courses increase, additional support resources as well as new and expanded policies, processes and tools may be required.

Support needs for classroom training delivery. Support for CWRC classroom training delivery is provided by CWRC staff and CWRC contracted trainers who are in the classroom. Established policies, processes and procedures for supporting classroom training delivery exist.