Remote Learning Strategy

What is Remote Learning?

Also referred to as *Distance Learning*, this encompasses various tools and technologies to allow flexibility and variety when in-person learning cannot be achieved. In addition to eLearning courses, educators are able to host Online Live Sessions through applications to engage learners in the virtual space, providing synchronous communication.

How is it Different From eLearning?

eLearning is entirely online with no direct communication between the trainer and student. **Remote Learning** allows for direct communication between the trainer and student. This can be done through several mediums (phone, email, online forum, Zoom, FaceTime).

Pros and Cons of Remote Learning

Pros:

- **Flexibility** – The online content can be divided into sections to fit around the learner's busy schedule. The schedule can consist of both synchronous and asynchronous learning
- **Structure of content** – The remote education format, allows the instructor to be direct
- **Lower cost** – Does not require learners to travel to be in the same place
- **Mobility** – The learner has flexibility to learn at any location
- **Pedagogy** – Remote Learning promotes active and independent learning

Cons:

- **Lack of organized schedule** – A learner with low motivation can quickly fall behind
- **Technology issues** – The learner needs to have devices that are compatible with the Remote Learning software as there is also the risk of having technology issues
- **Computer proficiency** – Not everyone is comfortable using computers, even if the software is user friendly
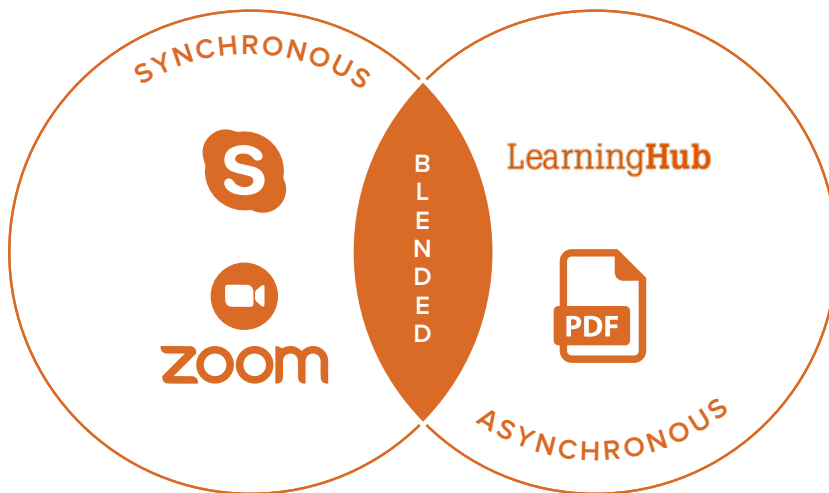
Process Step by Step

1. Before Starting

Start simple and if you need, readjust later. Consider:

A. ACCESSIBILITY

- How comfortable are you with the online learning environment?

- Is the course **synchronous, asynchronous** or a **blended**?

- What is your availability for this course (to develop and to facilitate the synchronous portions)?

- What is the longevity of this course?

Synchronous
Thanks to Skype Business or Zoom for example, it is possible to schedule a live session with learners. This is the closest replication of an in-person session.

Asynchronous
The facilitator (potentially with the help of online learning instructors) designs, records, and uploads the eLearning materials. The learner can access this material from anywhere, at anytime.

Blended Course
A blended approach gathering asynchronous time and synchronous learning is possible. It would allow the learner to review the content at their own pace while keeping social interaction with other students and trainer.

B. LEARNER PROFILE

- Who are the learners? (demographics)

- How comfortable are the learners with the digital environment?

- How will the learners access the course?

- Do the learners have reliable internet and access to the LearningHub?

- Do the learners have time, digital skills, and access to a relevant digital device?

- What compliance is required: completion, audience, passing grade, etc.?

2. Content

- **Clarifying Learning Goals and Objectives**

- **Going straight to the key points:** must-know versus nice-to-know

- **Avoiding verbosity:** the shorter, the better!

- **Giving rhythm to the content:** alternate between text, visual, and video

- **Editing a video into shorter sub-topic videos**

- **Supporting varied learning styles:** visual, reading, listening

3. Navigation

- **Ensuring that the learners are not lost**

- **Providing visual cues** to what the learners will be instructed to do and how they will be evaluated

- **Showing progress throughout the course** so that the learner understands how much longer until completion

- **Allowing an option for pausing the course and returning** when the learner is able to continue the learning

- **Providing contact info** should the learner have any questions

4. Interactivity

- **Keeping the learners engaged through organized interactivity:** if the learning is synchronous, how can the learners interact?

- **Deciding what type of interaction** between peers and/or with the trainer

- **Providing a discussion forum.** Do learners have access to a forum? What is the etiquette? Who is the moderator?

5. Assessments

2 TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS:

Formative

The goal of a formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessments:

- Help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work.
- Help instructors recognize where students are struggling and address problems immediately.

Summative

The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.

6. What is the Best Tool to Use?

Keep tools simple to stay focused on your course learning goals.

The perfect tool does not exist! Every tool requires a learning curve for the instructor and the learner. The easiest would be to stick to a familiar tool.

How the Learning Technologies Team Can Help

Learning Technologies is a multidisciplinary team whose mission is to create engaging learning experiences to support the continued learning of VCH staff. The team can support all stages in the development of Remote Learning - from analysis, instructional design, multimedia design, development, to evaluation.

For more information visit http://vchdesign.ca