

Move Your **Training** **Online** in **6** steps



Reach a larger audience across the globe with our key steps to effectively move your training online.

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Introduction

We've developed 6 key steps to help us to think about how we 'digitize' our learning content to create more dynamic, consumable and engaging learner experiences as we move from the more traditional face-to-face classroom to more technology-based learning.

When we say moving training online, we mean into the live facilitated world of virtual classrooms, not the self-paced eLearning worlds that we create for our learners.



Corporate use of this learning technology medium is up

Recent research from Towards Maturity is showing us that in the corporate world technology is taking a large part of that learning. For instance, 86% of the top deck (Those in the top 10% of the Towards Maturity Index) report that they are leveraging virtual classroom as part of their learning offering. **We are seeing more organizations moving away from traditional face-to-face learning and creating virtual classroom only content.**

This is not necessarily organizations moving their learning content live & online in a wholesale fashion, they are using virtual classrooms as part of a **truly blended learning offering.**

It is fair to say that virtual classroom will not replace face-to-face completely, there will still be a need to deliver learning to our audiences in the traditional face-to-face classroom.



86%

of top deck
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Live & Online Learning brings many benefits

Moving training live and online brings lots of benefits to us as learning professionals, to our organizations and to our learners. The three key benefits that seem to drive the adoption of virtual classroom are:

Reducing travel

Decreasing overall costs

Saving travel time

Those are very much a given, and you will reduce your travel and training costs as a result of not having to move learners and faculty around the globe to a physical training location.



1) Speeds up the response to training needs – no need to: book training rooms, flights, accommodation for faculty and learners

4) Supports learning for remote workers – remove barriers for remote workers, whether they are joining from home, coffee shops, or other remote locations – learning can take place.

Many benefits go unrecognized using virtual classrooms



2) Improves training quality – often allows faculty to be scripted & deliver consistent learning experiences that face-to-face classroom environments do not.

5) Reduced time out of the office – attend training without the inconvenience of travel or time away from office.

3) Reduces carbon footprint – there are clear environmental benefits of removing the need to travel to learners around the globe.

6) Extends learning globally – accommodating time zone differences so learners can attend learning from anywhere, and able to attend learning they would not have been able to access previously.

Success is not always guaranteed

Just because we have opted to move our training programs from one modality to another does not mean we are going to be successful in that new modality.

Many organizations are being challenged in using virtual classroom for a number of key reasons; which stop them being successful:

- Content has not been adjusted as they move training into the virtual classroom
- Faculty or learners not comfortable enough with the virtual classroom environment
- Learners seeing the reason for moving into virtual classroom as cost cutting
- Learners are multi-tasking because content or delivery is not engaging.

This is backed up by research from the eLearning Guild:

90% of the virtual classroom tools are not being used to their full potential.

88% of the time when designed & delivered properly, virtual trainings are every bit as effective as GOOD face-to-face training.

68% of the presenters do not understand how to use the program properly.



As we move training content into the virtual classroom we cannot expect what we designed for the face-to-face classroom to work as successfully in the virtual classroom – we need a new approach.

– why, you ask?

Adapting to a digital world

In the face-to-face classroom, we can sense that someone wants to ask a question or share a comment or experience by seeing body language or facial expressions. In the virtual classroom we need to provide other ways for the learner to indicate they want to speak or ask a question – so we have to rely more on the virtual classroom engagement tools (tools like the feedback icons or the hand raise tool).



The face-to-face classroom provides us with visibility of our audience. The fact that we are all in the same physical training room means that we have body language and facial expressions.

Part of adapting to online training starts with us as learning professionals.



Our need as instructional designers or facilitators to develop new skills to encourage engagement as we design & deliver training to an invisible audience because virtual classrooms are not just plug and play.

Virtual classrooms are not just plug & play

Many organizations have seen virtual classrooms as plug & play. Using a virtual platform such as Adobe Connect to house your content, scheduling virtual training sessions and inviting virtual learners to attend is plug & play.

What is lacking is the **virtual classroom skillset** that makes these virtual experiences stick with and apply to the learner. More thought is needed on how to develop and construct effective learnings, rather than just putting existing material into a virtual platform (plug & play).



What makes for an effective program that actually sticks with your attendees?

Learn the New Learning Paradigm!

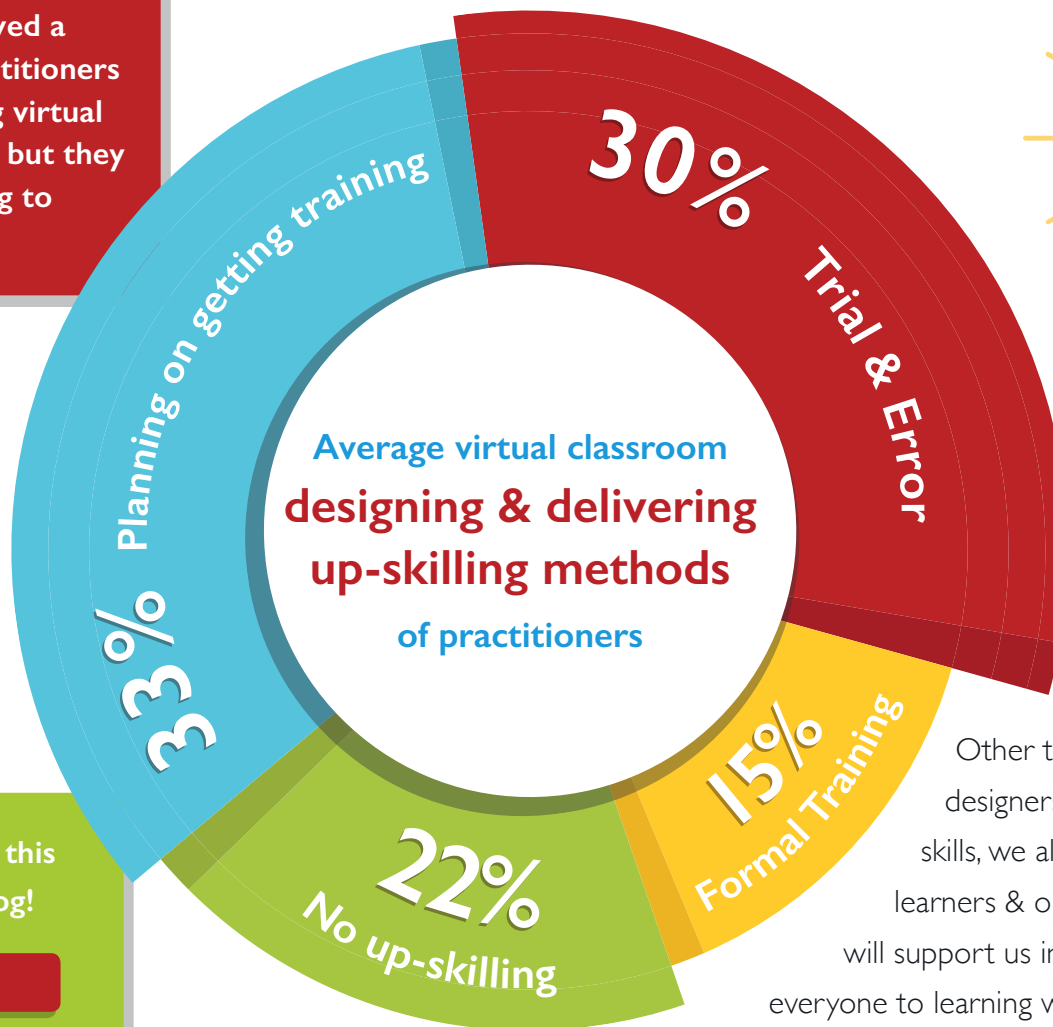
Take the time to leverage the tools you have!

In a recent webinar, we surveyed a group of several hundred practitioners who admitted they were using virtual classrooms to deliver learning but they had varying levels of up-skilling to truly leverage the medium:



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Other than us as instructional designers & facilitators adapting our skills, we also need to adapt content, learners & our organizations – 6 key steps will support us in doing just that – adapting everyone to learning with virtual classrooms.

A Way to Navigate Through the Maze

How do we start to move our content from face-to-face to online?

One of the biggest challenges for us is duration. Typically we invite learners to a full day experience – maybe two or three days in the face-to-face classroom, and now we need to provide the same learning but in a shorter format.

But if we are to try and re-purpose an existing 3-day face-to-face course it cannot fit into a 3-hour virtual classroom – the maths does not work! Something has to give.

In fact in a recent event we asked what the common duration of a live online event would be – the overwhelming response was 97% were running segmented or continuous sessions of 90 minutes or less.

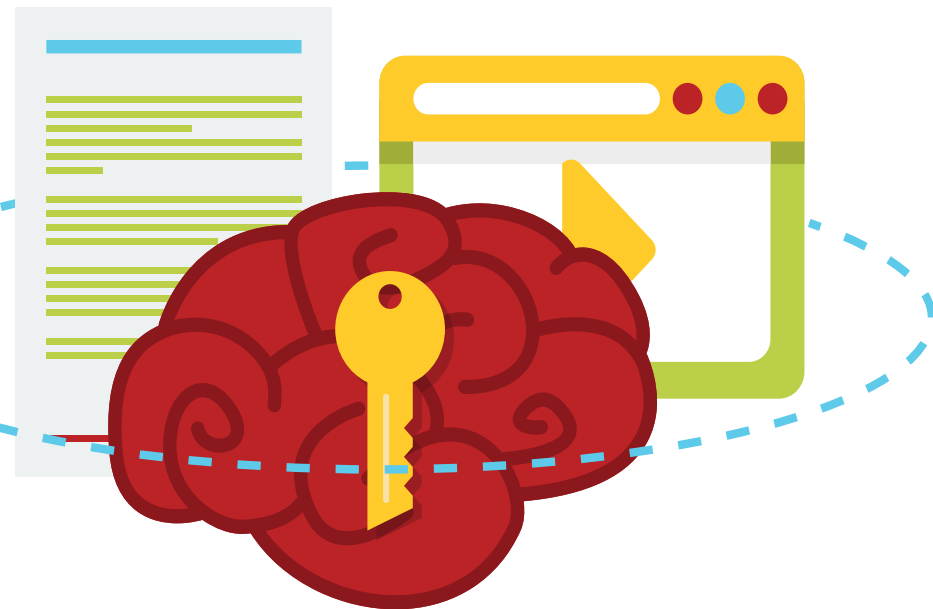
So if we have shortened durations, we need to rethink the learning that needs to take place - the six steps help us with approaching this challenge!

The key is how we provide the knowledge

One of the key parts is to rethink how we provide the knowledge component of learning to the learner audience. Then we can work more on bringing learners together to process and apply the knowledge – **becoming a more fulfilling learning experience.**

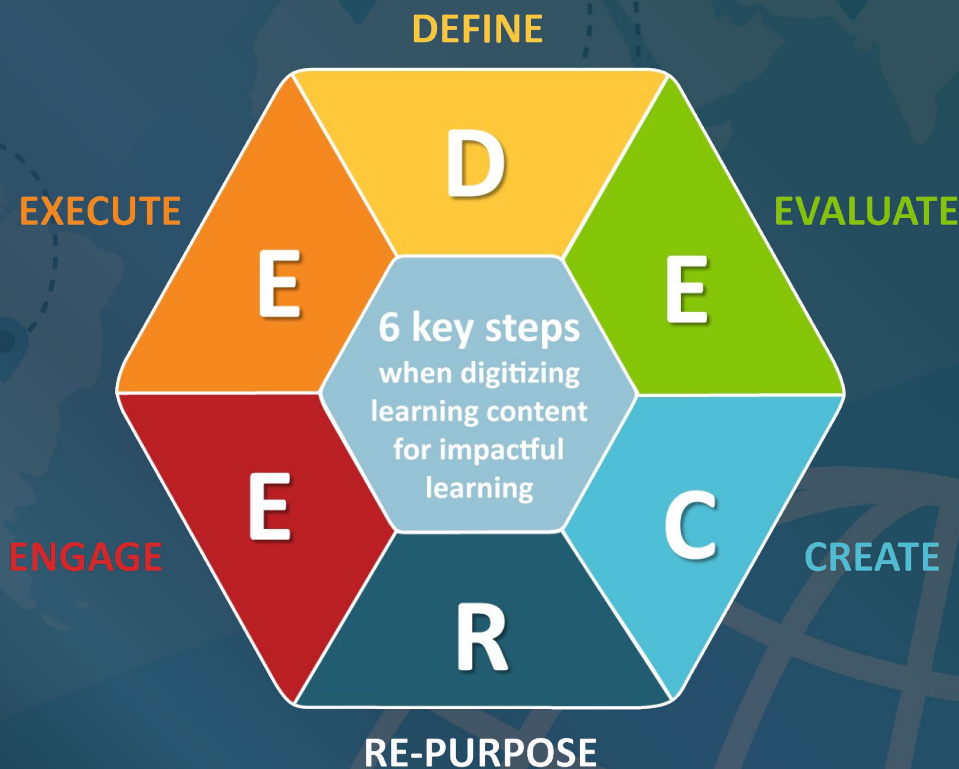
Consider this...

Do we all need to be together to gain the knowledge?
Can it be self-paced or do we get more by learning together?



The 6 Steps to Moving Your Training Online

Let's explore each of the areas in turn, giving you a good understanding of what we should do in each of these key areas, getting you to think 'what may you be missing' and improve the success of your virtual classroom offerings.

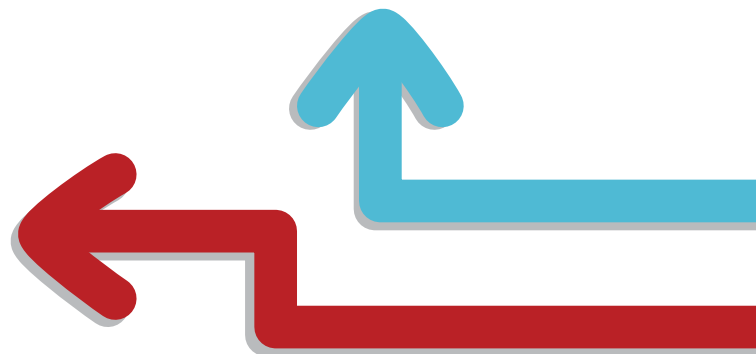


Step 1: Define

In Define, we are ensuring that the learning goal has not changed and that it can be replicated and achieved live & online.

Consider what the business need is – Clearly whenever we respond to a training need, it's because the business needs that individual(s) to change behavior or develop a skill to improve results. A business need could be for our salespeople to negotiate better; our managers to lead virtual teams more effectively or our people to develop their presentation skills to win more bids; all skills we need to help our learners to gain, develop and refine to satisfy the business need.

Can we address the skills gap online? – We need to identify if the skills gap can be closed by bringing the learning online. No point in delivering learning where the learners need to deploy that skill in a face-to-face environment unless we are going to look to have learners on webcam and have them role play the scenario.



Analyze the effectiveness
of your training course inside
Adobe Connect in 3 simple steps!

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Can our objectives be met online? – Can we achieve the learning objectives in the online environment? Can we measure, test, assess during the online event whether learners are achieving the objective we set out? If we can, great! It can go online – if we cannot, then the environment is not optimum.



Step 2: Evaluate

Evaluating the content is important if we are taking an existing face-to-face program and virtualizing the learning.

Revisit & review the existing content – What content do we have, what does it look like, what hand-outs do we use, what do we use in the face-to-face course – tools, when looking to re-purpose existing content explore what currently exists – slides, facilitator guide, hand-outs, learning assets such as videos or eLearning. We need to bring it all together to ensure we identify any gaps that may exist – perhaps the facilitator notes are in someone’s head rather than captured on paper – how can we begin to convert an existing program if we do not know how it is currently run?

Audit the learners’ location – Because of the plug and play nature of the virtual classroom platform, organizations take for granted that all the learners will be able to access the session. All learners need is an internet connection and telephone line – right? Many global virtual classroom initiatives have stalled because they are beset with technical issues such as learners’ locations, experience, varying broadband speeds, challenging office environments, computer firewall and IT challenges – they all need to be audited to ensure all learners can access the virtual classroom.

Check learners’ technological comfort – Are your learners familiar with technology? Is it something they use frequently or are you bringing virtual learning to an audience that are not very computer savvy? Consider how to make them comfortable – invite them to an orientation session before you start delivering the learning or right at the beginning of your event itself. Prepare troubleshooting guides that can be sent out ahead of time. Share audience expectations of what they should expect from the new learning environment.



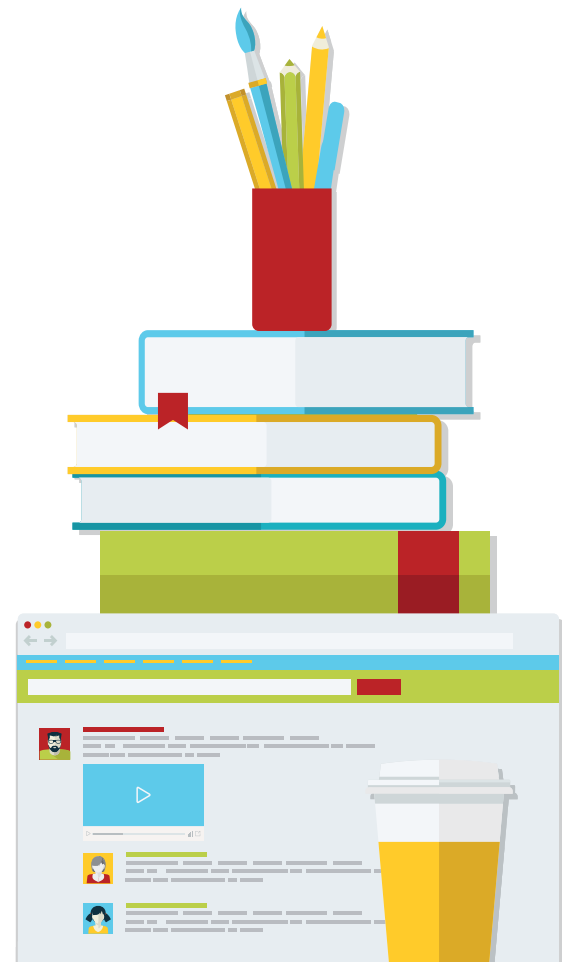
Step 3: Create

This is not so much about creating the actual content but more mapping out and creating the learner journey, identifying the steps, and the work-flow that we may have to undertake to create the optimal learning journey.

Consider all mediums we can utilize – We have a lot of different mediums that we can leverage when we are putting together a learning journey – we have video, pod-cast, audio-visual presentations, reading materials, job aids, quizzes and assessments and we need to harness the collection of mediums to generate a very strong learning experience.

A strong blend supports the learner – Over the years many may have seen blended learning as being the combination of a face-to-face workshop and some eLearning, we owe it to our learners and organizations to create a strong blend that leverages multimedia, appealing to all learners, and all ways of learning.

Provide learners access to content – Many organizations have been using LMS (Learning Management Systems) to not only track and record the learner journey but also to provide access to the various components that are needed to support the learner through the journey we have designed – providing simple access to the content is key.



Did you know that Adobe Connect integrates as a virtual classroom with many LMS services?

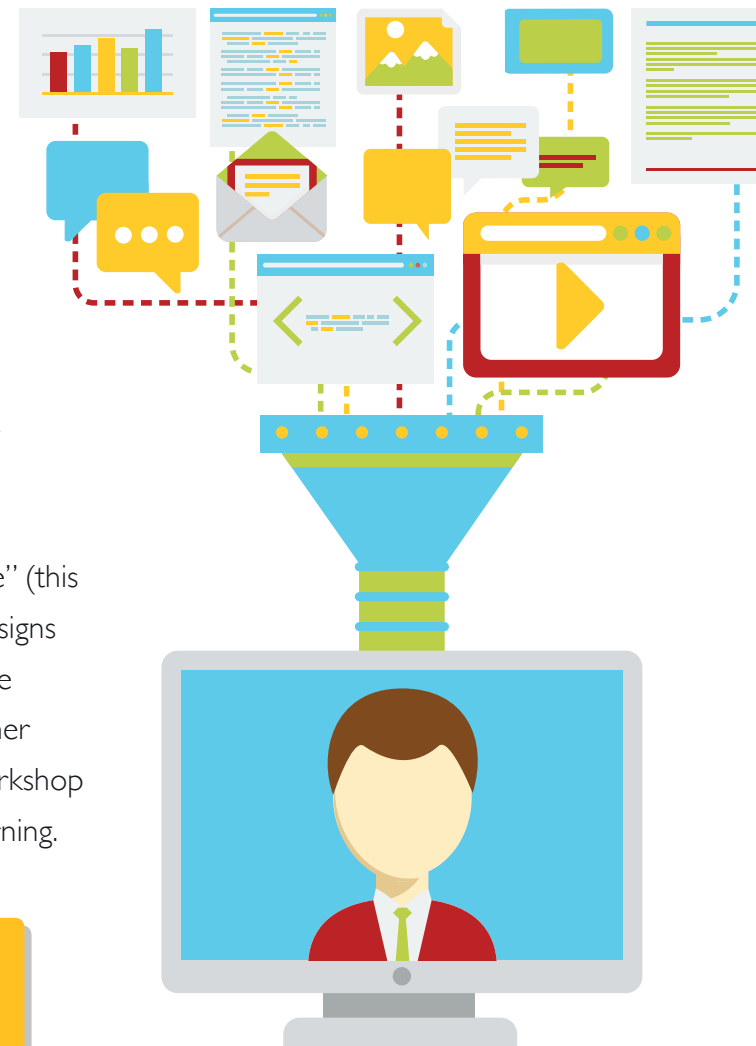
[Learn more!](#)

Step 4: Re-Purpose

This is where we start to 'translate' the face-to-face content into the virtual classroom, focusing on what we want the learners to do in the virtual classroom & how we leverage the potential the medium provides us.

Design activities for virtual audiences – We need to think of the tools and techniques we use in the face-to-face classroom and translate them into the virtual classroom – identifying which tools we can use in the virtual classroom. Flip-charts become whiteboards; syndicate rooms become breakout rooms, hand raise and feedback icons help facilitators with the virtual body language.

More time for discussion and practice – We have all heard of the phrase “less is more” (this is so true in the virtual classroom). So often we hear of unsuccessful virtual classroom designs having far too much content in the session, activities crammed together to try and achieve so much, but so often failing to do so. Allow time for discussion and practice – if the learner journey is supported effectively, where they gain the knowledge outside of the virtual workshop – spend the very valuable workshop time helping the learner's process and apply the learning.

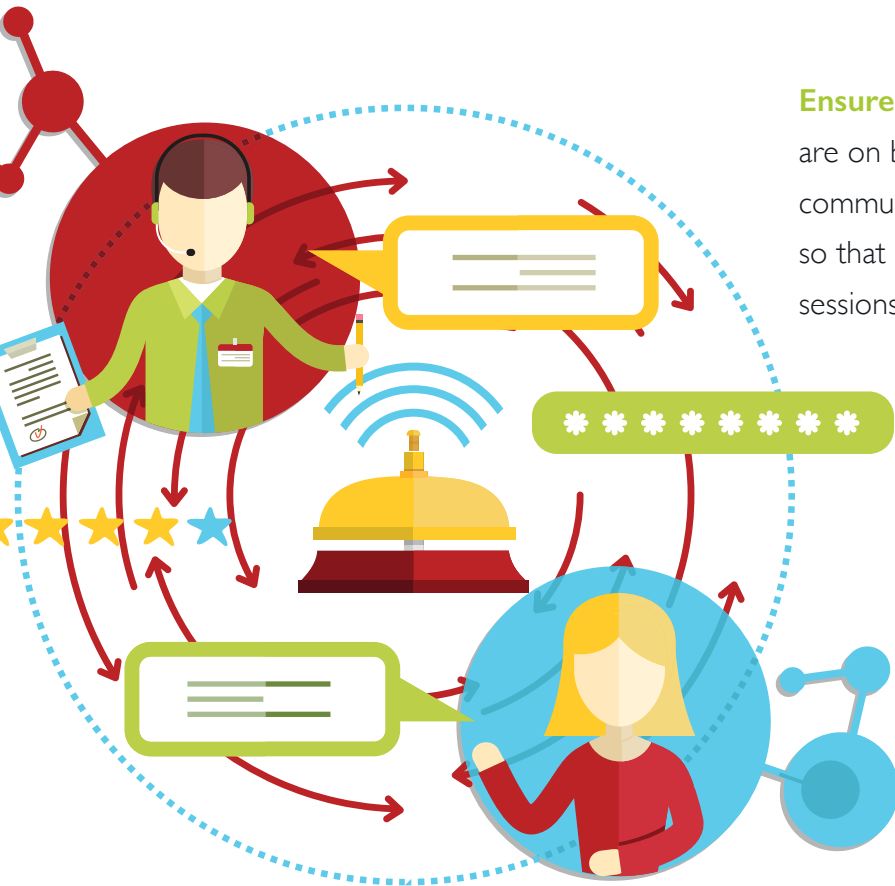


Learn how to re-purpose your content with interactive pods inside Adobe Connect!

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Step 5: Engage

We know we need to make our virtual classroom content engaging otherwise our learners can tune out and multi-task, making the learning ineffective – but in ENGAGE we need to explore how we will engage our wider audience ahead of the virtual workshops.



Ensure stakeholders are on board – We need to ensure that all stakeholders are on board and supportive of the virtual classroom and the learners. It's about communicating to the line managers of the learners of the commitment of a program so that line manager can be aware and support the learner, run manager orientation sessions so they are aware of what their people will be going through.

Manage our audience expectations – Making sure our audience understands their role in attending the virtual workshop, what preparatory work is needed regarding getting connected to the virtual classroom, do they need headsets if we are using VoIP or using integrated audio? Providing support materials that allow them to understand how the platform will function, who should they reach out to if technical issues occur – if we do not address this, we are unlikely to have success at the start of our sessions.

Step 6: Execute

Having worked through the previous five areas, we are now at the EXECUTE step where we are looking to deploy our highly impactful virtual classroom learning experience.

Support the knowledge transfer – Having broken down the actual learning journey and providing the right vehicle to support the learner through the journey - before, during and after the workshop, what is key is to continue doing so with reviews and follow-ups.

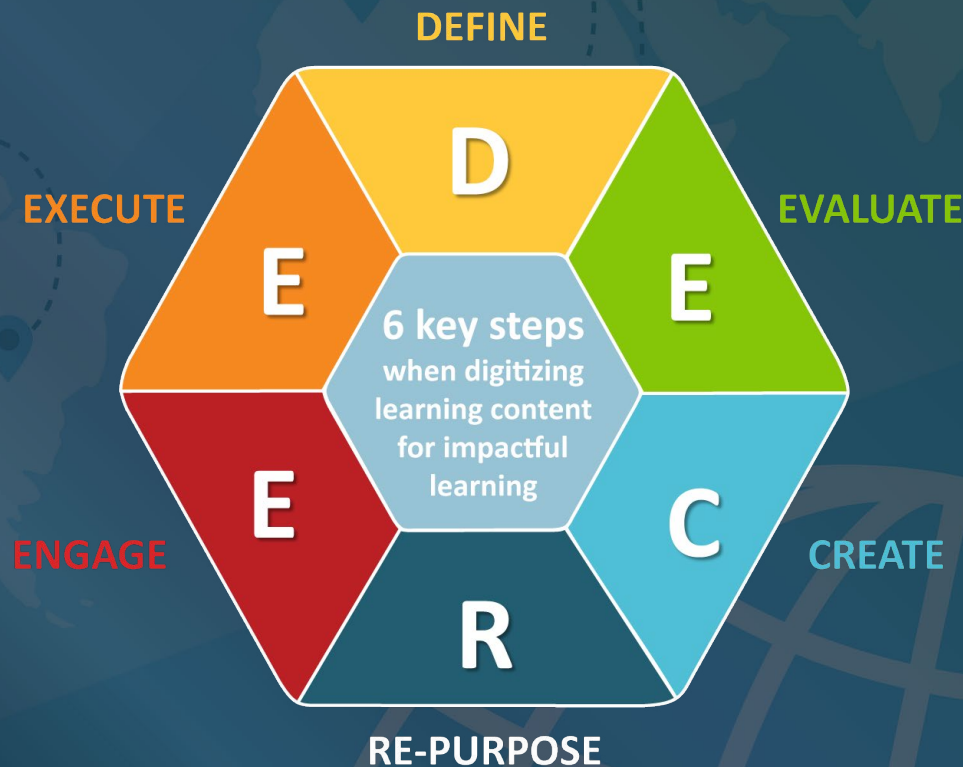


Deliver impactful learning experiences – Learning that is impactful changes learners' skill sets and behaviors – the key goal that we have in learning, after all if we fail to do either then we fail to make an impact of our business.

Measure more than just smiley faces – Begin to measure more than just the level 1 evaluations or smiley faces, we can start to demonstrate the return on the expectation that the business has for the learner – demonstrating to the business that the learning journey has been a successful and impactful one.

Summary

These are six key steps that if explored and followed can truly transform your virtual classrooms into highly engaging, impactful and successful learning events.



We appreciate your hunger for knowledge!



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