THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO HYBRID LEARNING

INTRODUCING THE NEXT GENERATION CLASSROOM
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WHY SHOULD I READ THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO HYBRID LEARNING?

Every training organization has one thing in common: the desire to improve the learning experience, reduce expenses and/or increase profits. But many training managers struggle on how to align their delivery methods, technology and content to achieve these goals. Enter hybrid learning—a new training modality that is helping to revitalize the classroom.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

This guide is designed to answer any question you have about how the hybrid learning delivery method can complement your classroom training. It will discuss what hybrid learning is, trends driving this delivery method, and how it can be used to improve the learning experience for both in-class and remote learners. We’ll talk about the business case for incorporating hybrid learning into the classroom, the benefits, how to implement it and what is required for success.

We will also cover:

1. How hybrid learning allows for the educational benefits of traditional instructor-led training, while still realizing the efficiencies and cost savings of virtual training

2. A case study of a company that has successfully implemented hybrid learning as part of their classroom training

3. Hybrid learning tips for success

4. Marketing your hybrid learning program

We’ve included tools and infographics that you can use to discern whether your training organization is ready for hybrid learning and how it will help you increase your revenue and attain your business goals.

We hope this guide will be your go-to resource to a more effective, efficient and enhanced classroom training model.
PART ONE

WHAT IS HYBRID LEARNING?
WHAT IS HYBRID LEARNING?

SOME PERSPECTIVE

Training programs are often devised around available resources, budget and student schedules, with the learning environment coming in a distant fourth. The increased use of on-demand, self-paced training has contributed to a significant savings, but student engagement has suffered and non-completion rates continue to rise. This is where hybrid learning comes in.

THE HYBRID LEARNING CLASSROOM

Synchronous instructor-led training (ILT) has long been considered the gold standard in training modalities. But as training managers have been tasked with making their training programs more efficient, better performing and more economical, many turn to the convenience and cost savings of virtual learning. This often comes at the expense of the learning experience and overall effectiveness of your training. With hybrid learning, you don’t have to choose between meeting your business objectives and the learner experience.

Hybrid learning is a synchronous, training event that incorporates both a live classroom and virtual components. It creates an equal learning experience for both in-class and remote learners—effectively expanding the classroom.

TWO MAIN COMPONENTS

The hybrid learning model includes two main components: a live classroom and a virtual training room.

The live classroom contains an instructor or facilitator and students and the virtual training room connected to the live classroom with additional students and/or instructors/facilitators.

In the physical classroom, students are able to see the instructor and training content. They also have the option to see and communicate with virtual participants.

In the virtual training room, participants are not physically present in the classroom, but they can see the classroom, instructor and course content. They also have the option to see and interact with individual, in-class participants.

What sets the hybrid learning environment apart from a traditional virtual learning event is dynamic, two-way audio and high-definition video, which allows learners to fully interact with the instructor and their classroom peers as if they were all in the same physical location.

A hybrid learning environment is extremely flexible with multiple configurations. For example, you may choose to have multiple classrooms connected together or a mixture of remote and in-class facilitators. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

Live Classroom + Virtual Training Room = Powerful Learning Environment
TRENDS DRIVING HYBRID LEARNING

With the prevalence of social media, video conferencing, mobile learning and BYOD, the training industry has a unique opportunity to harness today’s technological advances to create a powerful learning environment to complement the instructor-led classroom.

TREND #1:
Today’s workforce is more portable
The cultural paradigm for training is changing. With a more portable workforce, smaller companies are reaching larger audiences and larger companies are delivering content on a global scale.

In a recent study conducted by Training Industry, 37% of companies’ training portfolios are now being offered in either a pure virtual or hybrid delivery model, with 31% of total learners attending training remotely. This trend is up from 2010, where 27% of companies’ training portfolios were being offered virtually. This same study found the majority of virtual instructor-led training (VILT) occurring within organizations primarily for internal training (82%). VILT is primarily being used to complete certifications, increase product knowledge, increase leadership development and increase technical skills.

TREND #2:
Higher need for collaboration
With the prevalence of mobile computing and BYOD, collaboration is easier than ever. And, especially among millennials, face-to-face learning is an imperative. True collaboration requires a strong hybrid learning environment that transcends the physical classroom.

TREND #3:
The need for faster time to market/time to resources
Rapid time-to-market is a growing trend, as speed directly contributes to competitive success for many companies. Companies that make it first out of the gate typically get to enjoy setting premium prices early in their product life cycle, a faster break even on development investment and greater overall profits from a higher return on investment.

Training has a direct impact on how quickly companies can push products to market. A hybrid learning model supports a faster time to market by lifting the geographic barriers of the classroom to include more participants to be trained at once.

TREND #4
Purely virtual training modalities lead to lower engagement levels with decreased training effectiveness

According to Training Industry, studies have shown that higher levels of engagement directly correspond to higher retention and recall rates in students. One of the primary benefits of ILT and VILT training is the interactivity allowed to learners, while one of the primary criticisms of purely virtual learning is the lack of interactivity—this involves not just the interactivity of learner-to-instructor interaction, but also the learner-to-learner interactions.

The quest for a better way to learn will always return to the most fundamental element of success: the learner experience.

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PART TWO

BUSINESS CASE FOR HYBRID LEARNING
THE BENEFITS

The great thing about hybrid learning is that it doesn’t require significant investment in hardware, software or infrastructure making, it an equal-opportunity training delivery modality.

Beyond the flexibility and expansion of the learning environment, the hybrid classroom delivers many benefits to the learner, instructor and training manager.

FOR PARTICIPANTS
Enhanced learning experience for students
Both in-class and remote participants can benefit from a hybrid learning environment. The interactive nature of the hybrid class helps retain the social dynamic and connection among participants, while decreasing travel costs and time away from the office. According to surveys conducted with students taking hybrid classes, over 80% indicated a positive experience, indicating they would take another hybrid learning course in the future.

FOR INSTRUCTORS
Less podium time equals a more satisfying teaching experience
Instructors find the hybrid learning classroom refreshing as well. Because the hybrid class doesn’t require any special re-engineering of course design or content, the instructor is free to teach as usual, enjoying the benefits of a fuller class and a richer environment. Instructors report:
1. Less podium time, allowing them to work on improving course content or delivery
2. Better student engagement
3. More flexible schedule and ability to teach from different locations
4. Opportunity to improve their skills using technology to deliver a course

FOR MANAGERS
Higher satisfaction and ROI from training programs
The manager in charge of the production, management and ROI of training programs will find the hybrid learning methodology a refreshing alternative to traditional ILT or blended approach. One of the advantages to hybrid is that it works for both internal and external training scenarios and provides multidimensionality and cost-effectiveness not found in traditional training delivery methods.

HYBRID TRAINING DELIVERY:
1. Is a cost-effective way to bring traditional classroom ILT to more learners
2. Leverages technology without sacrificing the learning experience
3. Decreases class cancellations by allowing for the expansion of training schedules

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FOUR CORE BENEFITS

1. Improved learning outcomes
2. Extended reach
3. Faster time to market/time to resources
4. Decreased training costs and improved ROI

BENEFIT #1
Improved learning outcomes
The goal of most instructional designers and training developers is to improve performance through learning. Recent studies at the University of Tennessee and Stanford provide evidence that hybrid learning strategies improve learning outcomes by providing a better match between how a learner wants to learn and the learning program that is offered. In the University of Tennessee example, the study found that a hybrid model reduced the time and cost of training by 50%, while actually improving the learning outcomes by 10%, effectively providing more learning for less cost.

BENEFIT #2
Extended reach
A single delivery mode limits the reach of any learning program or knowledge transfer. For example, a physical classroom limits access to only those who can participate at a fixed time and location. Since a hybrid classroom includes live, virtual participation, you can expand the walls of the classroom to include geographically dispersed participants, allowing you to train more students at one time.

BENEFIT #3
Faster time to market/time to resources
Combining classroom and face-to-face virtual training methods has the potential to balance and optimize learning program development and deployment cost and time. Organizations report exceptional results from their hybrid learning initiatives. Learning objectives can be obtained faster and by more participants, travel costs and time away from work may be reduced significantly.

In a study by Stanford University, the introduction of virtual instructor-led training increased the completion rate of courses up to 94%. Acceleration of mission-critical knowledge to channels and customers can also have a profound impact on the organization’s top line.

BENEFIT #4
Decreased training costs and improved ROI
Producing learning content is time consuming—whether it’s online or delivered live in the classroom. With hybrid learning, each time a course is delivered a company’s ROI improves because of the ability to expand the walls of the classroom to include more students that might otherwise be constricted by time and travel. Companies save money through decreased travel, reduced resources and lost productivity.

ROI Improves because of the ability to expand the walls of the classroom to include more students that might otherwise not attend class due to limited resources.
When discussing hybrid learning, nothing is more convincing than cold, hard data. Here is some evidence that incorporating hybrid learning into the classroom is highly effective.

**STUDY #1**
Hybrid learning was sited most effective with an ROI of 1599%
A training supplier case study/evaluative research study that examined the impact of three training modalities on learners at American Express sited that hybrid learning was the most effective with an ROI of 1599%, followed by pure classroom-based (972%) and pure online (923%).

**STUDY #2**
Hybrid learning outperforms both online and in-person classes
Over half of millennials prefer talking face-to-face, due to failures of communication in written contact, according to Bentley University. True collaboration requires a strong hybrid learning environment that transcends the physical classroom.

**STUDY #3**
Virtual instructor-led training leads to faster time to market
IBM reported a $70,000 annual savings and 22% faster roll-out of products and processes after the introduction of virtual instructor-led training.

**STUDY #4**
Virtual instructor-led training saves on overall training budgets
According to a study by Citrix, virtual instructor-led training reduces or eliminates the need for travel, sometimes saving up to 40% of a training budget, while simplifying logistics and providing the same learning experience.

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CASE STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Couchbase approached MicroTek looking for a solution to increase the size of their computer training classes while decreasing the number of classes they were running per year. They were also looking for a way to bring hands-on training to geographically dispersed customers in a more economical fashion.

By implementing MicroTek Virtual Training Room, Couchbase was able to:
1. Increase their average class size by 28%
2. Offer courses simultaneously in 11 cities plus virtual, across all U.S. time zones—allowing them to train more customers
3. Decrease podium time for instructors, allowing trainers to spend more time on developmental activities
4. Increase attendee satisfaction scores to 100%, with many noting that the new hybrid training program was a better experience than the classroom

CHALLENGE
Couchbase, a software company that develops high performance NoSQL data management platforms, delivers training that involves highly interactive, hands-on labs that provide actual “flight time” to developers and system administrators at Fortune 500 companies. NoSQL is a very specialized data management platform. Consequently, Couchbase’s customers are geographically dispersed. Filling live, instructor-led classes was challenging, particularly in less populated areas.

In an effort to reach more customers with their training, Couchbase researched virtual instructor-led training options to supplement their classroom delivery. However, their most experienced instructors told of less-than-favorable experiences using tools such as Webex or GoToMeeting. The main complaint was that these popular...
off-the-shelf tools do not work well for interactive, hands-on computer labs and are inadequate to deliver learning programs longer than 45 minutes, let alone multi-day, hands-on training.

**SOLUTION**

Peter Childers, Vice-President of Learning and Strategic Development at Couchbase, engaged MicroTek to develop a solution to help the company effectively reach more customers, reduce cancellations and increase the satisfaction of their customers. MicroTek’s Virtual Training Room proved to be a highly effective solution to not only reach more customers, but provide a platform that delivered an equal learning environment to both in-class and remote participants.

Virtual Training Room is a hybrid learning platform that employs two-way, high-definition video conferencing, and rich teaching and collaboration tools. Virtual Training Room originates in a MicroTek classroom and then provides the ability for remote participants to engage in the same classroom experience—with two-way communication access to the instructor, peers, course content and training.

Couchbase piloted Virtual Training Room and within one month of the pilot, the company converted their entire North American training schedule to Virtual Training Room.

**RESULTS, ROI AND FUTURE PLANS**

Since rolling out MicroTek’s Virtual Training Room, Couchbase and its instructors have experienced impressive results:

1. By combining remote and in-class students, Couchbase average class size is up 28%.
2. Couchbase courses are now offered in every U.S. timezone each month—allowing the company to train more students while decreasing the number of events.
3. Because of decreased podium time, Couchbase instructors are able to spend more time outside of the classroom to work on upgrading curriculum, train-the-trainer programs, partner support activities and professional development.

The overall experience for both trainers and customers has been overwhelmingly positive. In fact, many of Couchbase’s instructors and customers report that the hybrid learning experience is better than the traditional instructor-led class.

According to Childers, “Virtual Training Room allows me to guarantee all of our customers receive the same level of hands-on training, interaction with the instructor and collaboration with other peers, whether they are in the physical classroom or remote.”

Couchbase’s customers have reported a 100% satisfaction rate with Virtual Training Room. They have also reported faster time to market and sales cycles.
PART THREE

IS HYBRID LEARNING FOR YOU?
WORKSHEET

Is your training program ready for hybrid learning?

DIRECTIONS

Use this worksheet to determine if your training program could benefit from a hybrid delivery model.

For each statement/question, select the appropriate number. If you strongly disagree, choose 1. If you strongly agree, choose 5. The numbers in between 1 and 5 correspond to your level of agreement, neutrality or disagreement. Tally your score when you’re finished and follow the instructions at the end.

HOW TO INTERPRET RESULTS

• If you scored >28, you’re ready to move to a hybrid learning model.
• If you scored between 18-28, you’re moving in that direction. You should consider learning more about it and how it might work with your current training program.
• If you scored under 18, you may not be ready for hybrid learning quite yet. That doesn’t mean you can’t keep learning about it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our training processes are complex. It involves the coordination of multiple locations and coordination and support of many individuals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We train on sophisticated software/technology that requires close monitoring and coaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our student base is geographically dispersed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have issues with class cancellations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have a well designed classroom curriculum that we would like to provide to a larger number of learners.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our course portfolio requires lots of updates and/or needs to be changed frequently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinating many people into a single classroom setting can be difficult or a hassle</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
SIX SIGNS...

Six signs you need to graduate to a hybrid learning classroom.

YOU HAVE A
 GEOGRAPHICALLY DISPERSED
 TRAINING AUDIENCE

YOU NEED MORE
 ACCOUNTABILITY
 AND ENGAGEMENT
 FROM YOUR STUDENTS

YOU ARE WASTING MONEY
 ON INEFFECTIVE METHODS

YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH
 CLASS CANCELLATIONS

YOUR TRAINING
 DELIVERY METHODS
 ARE STALE

YOU REQUIRE FASTER
 TIME TO MARKET
 OR FASTER
 TIME TO RESOURCES
PART FOUR

IMPLEMENTING HYBRID LEARNING

You’ve decided that your classroom training program can benefit from hybrid learning and you have the organizational buy-in. Now what?
Successful implementation of hybrid learning goes beyond simply choosing an off-the-shelf video conferencing solution. You should look for a provider that is an expert on hybrid learning and can help guide you through the entire hybrid classroom event.

1. Is the provider an expert in hybrid classrooms?
While it may be tempting to choose an off-the-shelf video conferencing tool and simply add it to your classroom, this approach will generally not provide an optimal hybrid classroom environment. Traditional online collaboration tools were designed primarily for corporate communication—with use for training provided as an afterthought. They weren’t designed for live classrooms combined with remote participants. An effective hybrid learning platform allows for natural communication between both the instructor and remote participants as well as learner-to-learner.

You should look for a provider that focuses on hybrid training in order to ensure that the classroom is best setup to provide the optimal environment for both in-class and remote learners. Both the physical and virtual elements of the classroom should be optimized to allow the instructor to teach rather than focus on technology or logistics.

2. Does the provider offer comprehensive/flexible solutions?
Ideally, you want to work with one provider that offers everything you will need for a successful hybrid training. This not only saves you time and money, but helps ensure that all of the elements of your training work together.

Does your provider offer everything you will need? Room rental? Virtual learning platform? Cloud-based learning lab?

3. What sort of support does the provider offer?
You should look for a provider that will make the setup and delivery of a hybrid classroom as stress-free as possible. Your instructor should be able to focus on teaching rather than worrying about the technology or classroom setup. Look for a provider that will assist before, during and after the event to ensure success.

Ideally, your provider will provide technical support for both the instructor and participants before and during the event.
In order to take advantage of the two-way interaction of hybrid learning, there are some general equipment requirements.

**CLASSROOM SETUP**
Instructors will need access to high-definition audio and video equipment to communicate with students. Ideally, instructors would have access to high quality cameras, microphones and speakers. Additionally, instructors should have access to large monitors so that the instructor is able to easily see the remote participants—providing the non-verbal and visual cues that help foster effective interaction and provide an equal learning experience.

**REMOTE STUDENT EQUIPMENT**
1. Desktop computer or laptop (PC or Mac) connected to the internet—a hard-wired connection is strongly recommended to ensure a stable connection
2. USB headset (recommended) or speaker, microphone or USB speakerphone
3. USB webcam (recommended) or laptop-integrated webcam
4. Video conference application installed on the computer or laptop
5. Dual monitors (recommended)—with dual monitors, learners are able to view the classroom on one screen while content can be accessed on the second

**VIRTUAL LEARNING LAB**
Utilizing a virtual learning lab will not create any additional hardware or software requirements. In fact, because the virtual lab is accessed via a secure URL, the only thing learners will need (whether remote or in class) is a computer with internet access.
HYBRID LEARNING ESSENTIALS

CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT

**MONITOR(S)**
Large monitors will allow the instructor to see remote students as though they were in class.

**CAMERA(S)**
The classroom should be equipped with an easy-to-control high-definition camera that will allow virtual students to see the instructor as he/she moves throughout the classroom. In-class participants may also use individual webcams for face-to-face interaction with remote participants.

**AUDIO**
Ideally, instructors would be equipped with a lapel microphone and the classroom would be equipped with an omni-directional microphone so that remote participants can clearly hear the instructor as well as in-class participants. The classroom also needs to be equipped with speakers allowing the instructor and in-class participants to hear remote students.

**BANDWIDTH**
Classrooms will require a reliable wired internet connection with the necessary dedicated bandwidth.

REMOTE PARTICIPANT EQUIPMENT

**COMPUTER**
Remote participants will need an up-to-date computer with internet access. We recommend the use of a wired connection, if possible, to limit disruptions.

**CAMERA**
The ability of the instructor to see the participant is key to the equal learning experience. Students will need to have and use a camera — either a USB (recommended) or laptop-integrated webcam.

**AUDIO**
In order to hear and speak with the instructor and other class participants, remote participants need to have a microphone and speakers/headphones or a headset.
Cloud-Based Learning Labs

How to enhance the hybrid learning environment

Virtual learning labs are often used within the hybrid environment to enhance the learning experience and provide remote access to lab materials for virtual learners. Virtual learning labs are cloud-based computing environments that provide learners hands-on or hands-in experience with development software, applications or other, non-technical content.

Virtual learning labs are a great way to provide engaging, online curriculum to participants. Courses delivered through a virtual learning lab may be used for all types of training such as:

- Hands-in technical training
- Application training
- Product launches or demos
- Proof of concept or customer trials

Virtual learning labs fully integrate within the virtual training room and the physical classroom providing:

1. Simplified lab set up and delivery
2. No need to worry about the operating system or capabilities of remote learner computers—all they need is a reliable internet connection and standard web browser
3. Instructor controls to monitor and manage participants’ computers
4. Students the ability to engage in experiential learning using real equipment
MARKETING YOUR HYBRID TRAINING CLASSROOM

You’ve decided to launch your hybrid training program. Great! So how do you get trainers and students on board? Whether you’re promoting your hybrid training program to internal employees, channel partners or customers, there are strategies to make your program more widely visible and accepted.

COMMUNICATE THE BENEFITS

As you develop your hybrid training program marketing plan, be sure to communicate the benefits of the learning approach compared to either live or on-demand training. That’s right, you may need to “make the case” for why someone would want to take a hybrid learning course. Some may be wary of change, particularly if this virtual component is new to your training program. Consider creating a wiki page, email, or short FAQ that highlights the benefits of this hybrid learning environment, such as:

1. A more enriched learning experience
2. Ability to experience the live classroom in the comfort of their own environment
3. Ability to see and interact with fellow students and the instructor

Cite industry research and other resources to get your audience excited about training in this environment and the value they’ll get from participating.

As you conduct your hybrid classes, be sure to survey your participants on their experience. Use these as testimonials in your email communications, on your website and in course materials to help add credibility to the power and value of the learning model. When sending updates about upcoming courses and new training content, always mention the option to take the class virtually and provide a link to your wiki, FAQ page, or other content that provides more information on your hybrid learning program.

ENGAGE EVANGELISTS AND ADVOCATES

Research shows that people are influenced most by peers that they trust, so finding champions to speak about your hybrid course is critical to successful promotion. Create a blog or develop articles that contain tips to making the most of a hybrid learning experience.
One of the main advantages of hybrid learning over traditional virtual learning is the two-way interaction that allows instructors to teach naturally. They aren’t teaching to a computer screen—they are interacting with their class who is able to interact with them. This collaborative environment leads to a very high satisfaction rate among instructors who use the hybrid training modality.

Some instructors may be hesitant to adopt hybrid learning because of a past experience that left them feeling like they were spending more time on tech support than teaching. Or maybe they’re hesitant to try new technology—fearing that if the technology fails, it reflects on their abilities as an instructor.

The good news is all objections can be easily addressed by utilizing a simple train-the-trainer program. Your hybrid learning provider should offer the ability for instructors to become familiar with the equipment and interactive features prior to the live training event. This training is brief and will allow your instructors to become comfortable in this environment.

Prior to the live event, instructors should know:
1. If/how they need to adapt their materials
2. How to navigate the virtual classroom
3. How to present material and allow others to present
4. How to use interactive features such as chat and electronic whiteboard
5. How to use classroom control features
6. How to interact with the remote learners and encourage interaction between students
7. How to keep remote participants engaged
8. Where to go for technical support if the need arises

If your instructor is effective and maintains an engaging and effective learning environment in the classroom, they will be successful with hybrid learning.
A major contributor to the success of your hybrid learning program is setting proper expectation with participants. Let students know that it will be an interactive class—both for in-class and remote participants. Set the expectation with remote participants before training begins that they are to be on camera and microphone throughout the event.

An optimal hybrid learning environment includes all attendees using a camera and microphone. When the instructor can both hear and see remote participants, they are able to teach to everyone as though they were physically present in the classroom. This benefits both the instructor and the participant. Remote learners are more accountable for their participation, knowing the instructor is able to see and hear them. Additionally, instructors are able to pick up on non-verbal cues allowing them to see if participants have questions or need help.

In-class participants should be aware that there will be remote learners and that they will be interacting with them.
Because hybrid learning is delivered in much the same way as traditional instructor-led training, it usually requires minimal adaptation of course content.

If content works well in the classroom environment, it will generally work well in a hybrid environment. There are only a few small adjustments needed to capitalize on the advantages of the virtual aspect of the environment and engage your remote participants.

**PLAN INTERACTIONS INTO THE CONTENT**

Many instructors report that by using a hybrid learning platform they are able to create a more engaging classroom experience than traditional instructor-led training. Before you begin to adapt your content, familiarize yourself with the interactive learning features offered by your hybrid learning platform. Then plan in advance where you can utilize these features to provide opportunities for engagement.

1. Use chat for informal polls
2. Ask learners to share their screens
3. Create an online scavenger hunt
4. Split up into smaller groups using virtual break out rooms

Think creatively and you will discover that the tools provide a plethora of opportunities to not only keep learners engaged, but add value to the overall learning experience.

**MAKE VISUALS INTERESTING**

Remote participants are primarily relating to the classroom through a screen. If the image on that screen is not moving and changing, learners will naturally become distracted and want to multi-task. To hold their attention, keep the images on the screen engaging and interesting.

1. Position your webcam so that you are visible at all times. Use movement to enhance your message and be mindful of repetitive movements that may be distracting
2. Consider including more slides than you would for a traditional in-class presentation
3. Use colorful and interesting images that tell a story
4. Use whiteboards and annotation to engage and create movement.

**Continued...**
KEEP CONTENT SHORT, RELEVANT AND ORGANIZED

While this is generally considered a best practice for all training modalities, the introduction of virtual students into the classroom makes organization and composition of material especially important. Due to the remote nature of their environment, virtual learners may become distracted more easily than in-class participants. To keep their attention, it’s important to provide content that is chunked into easy to digest segments, avoids unnecessary background information and is well organized.

VIRTUAL LEARNING LAB CONTENT

Utilizing a Virtual Learning Lab as part of your training will simplify the process of setting up and maintaining the lab environment and content.

Working with a lab provider to setup the cloud based lab makes it easy to include the lab’s operating systems, software and exercises. Because it is cloud based, the lab is set up once and participants access it with a secure URL. There is no need to install software or images onto individual machines. There is also no need to specify the operating system or capabilities of participants’ machines. The only thing participants need is a computer with a reliable internet connection.

Should you need to make changes to the lab, you are able to change the lab once and participants will log in to the new lab from the secure URL.
PRESENTING TO A HYBRID CLASSROOM

The instructor is prepped and familiar with the hybrid learning platform and now it’s time for the live training event. How should the instructor adapt their presentation for the hybrid classroom?

For the most part, instructors will not need to adjust much to the hybrid environment. Virtual participants are able to interact with the instructor just as though they were in the classroom. Likewise, the instructor can see remote students just as if they were in the back row of the room. A trainer does not have to alter their teaching style or movement while in a hybrid classroom.

There are just a few things an instructor should keep in mind to ensure virtual students receive an equal learning experience.

Setup interactions before class begins
1. Make sure remote participants know they will be expected to be on camera and microphone for the duration of the class
2. Welcome and recognize remote students as they enter the class
3. Create a pre-class activity that encourages learners to become familiar with the hybrid environment and interactive tools
4. Consider ice breaker activities that involve both remote and in-class participants

Remember your remote participants
During class discussion or Q/A, call out the remote students individually by name just as though they were in the class.

Keep track of your platform’s interactive tools
1. Encourage participants to use the chat panel to submit questions or make comments
2. Use the “raise hand” option (if available) to take questions from remote participants

Use your platform’s interactive tools
Hybrid learning offers opportunities to create engagement that a traditional instructor-led class does not. Digital whiteboarding and annotation tools, in particular, can provide a richer learning experience and opportunities for engagement for all learners—regardless of their location.
VIDEO CONFERENCING ETIQUETTE

Consider these tips for your next virtual meeting or training session

PLAN AHEAD TO AVOID DISTRACTIONS
Carefully choose where you will take part in the virtual session to avoid distractions for you and your colleagues.

CONSIDER LIGHTING
Eliminate background light from windows so that you don’t appear as a silhouette; Bright front lighting can be equally garish, causing bad shadowing. Lighting that works well during the day can be disastrous at night. Experiment and see what light source and positioning works best.

DEFAULT TO MUTE
By default, keep your microphone on mute and then unmute just before speaking, to avoid unwanted audio feedback. If you are going to step away from your meeting, be sure to mute your camera first, to avoid distracting others.

ELIMINATE BACKGROUND NOISE
If your system isn’t on mute, be aware that everyone can hear you moving around—including rustling through papers, typing on your keyboard, coughing or tapping on your desk.

PREPARE
Complete a test run before your meeting or training session to make sure all the equipment is working properly. This will ensure you can start and end the event on time and keep everyone engaged from the beginning.

BE AWARE OF LOCATION
Your surroundings are also on camera. Consider your decor. A messy space may reflect poorly on you.

THINK POSITION
Position your camera at the top rim of the monitor in the center, or slightly left or right. Distance yourself so the camera can see about halfway down your chest. By doing so, you will look the most natural.
WHAT’S NEXT?

Are you ready to integrate hybrid learning into your classroom training?

Visit www.mclabs.com to request a demo or learn how hybrid learning can work with your classroom training.

References

Saving the Classroom: The Complete Guide to Hybrid Learning - Issue 1