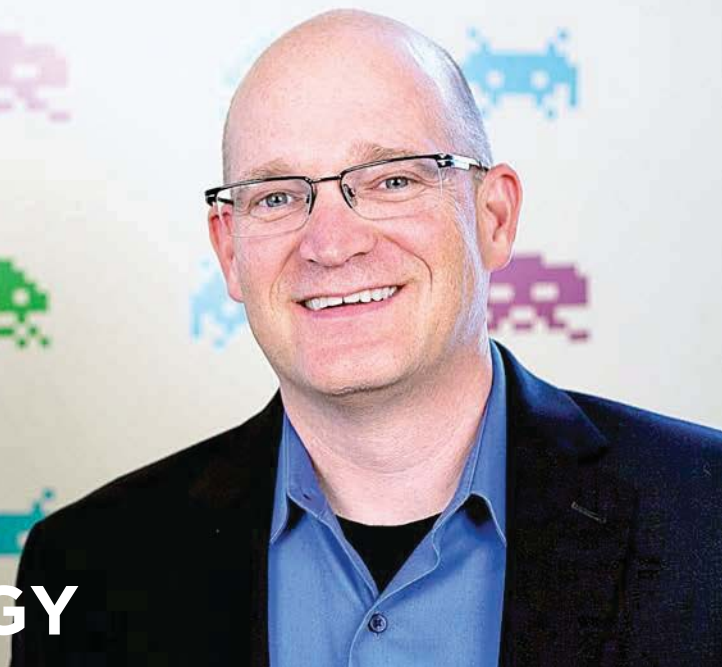


# USING A BLENDED approach WHEN CRAFTING A TRAINING DELIVERY STRATEGY

- KARL M. KAPP, Ed.D.



Technological advances in the past few decades have revolutionized how, when and where training, instruction and education can be delivered. As a learner, we are no longer tethered to a classroom or a particular instructor. We can learn wherever a cell phone has two or more bars. As an instructor, we are not limited to sharing our knowledge in the classroom; we can share across geographic boundaries by uploading videos, text and other valuable content.

This ability to deliver training via technology as well as via a classroom has led to the inevitable question: Which training delivery method is the best? The answer is “Yes.” All these delivery methods are the best, depending on the situation. So, I guess the “real” right answer is a blend of methods. Blending different instructional delivery methods is the intelligent approach to training delivery.

## CRAFTING A STRATEGY

Organizations should craft a delivery strategy that includes delivering instruction with multiple methods such as classroom, on-the-job instruction, e-learning and mobile learning. Think of it this way, most organizations would not, and should not deliver all training to employees via mobile learning. Yet, these same organizations currently deliver all training to employees via instructor-led or on-the-job training. No single training

delivery method is ideal for all types of training. Instead, what is needed is a mix of instructor-led, on-the-job training, mobile and e-learning matched to the content and audience.

**NO SINGLE TRAINING DELIVERY METHOD IS IDEAL FOR ALL TYPES OF TRAINING.**

A truly enterprise-wide approach to corporate education combines the best aspects of online education and mobile education with the best aspects of instructor-led training. The combination might be teaching basic fundamentals online and then teaching advanced skills in the classroom. Or, it might be providing on-the-job training for new employees and then giving veterans a mobile device to refresh their knowledge when needed.

A blended approach means that everyone in the organization can have an orientation training program with a class size of one, or that information required to keep skills up-to-date doesn't require time away from work. A blended approach with a strong e-learning component allows all new employees to receive the same information because it was presented consistently by an expert over the web. This then means

the face-to-face class can focus on higher-level skills since the basics are known and tested by the online software.

Blended learning is an effective delivery because there will always be questions that will not be answered by online training or by asking “Siri.” This is when a competent, qualified person can be made available to answer specific questions on the job, or a training class can be set up to answer questions and provide company-specific ideas and suggestions not available through the online means.

## MIXING IT UP

For these reasons and many others, a blended approach to training delivery is the preferred method for sophisticated organizations. The careful mixing of on-the-job training, instructor-led training with a supervisor or internal expert, and online and mobile learning support provides the best possible combination to ensure employee knowledge, skills and productivity. 🔄

*Karl M. Kapp, Ed.D., is a professor of instructional technology at Bloomsburg University and the author of six books and the Lynda.com course, “Gamification of Learning.” Email Karl.*