

Tips to use Blended Learning in Corporate Training (Nov 14)

In this article, I'll explore how to use blended learning in corporate training in order to create an immersive and engaging blended learning experience for your learners. Also you'll find out about the 4 blended learning models and the 4 sub-models, as well as, how to apply each one of them in your corporate training course.



Wednesday 19 November 2014

Blended learning offers the best of both worlds. Not only do you benefit from the implementation of [synchronous learning](#), but also you have the chance to benefit from “go at your own pace” techniques that are part of [asynchronous learning](#). However, if you want to take full advantage of blended learning, it's a good idea to learn about the various blended learning models and how to utilize them.

Michael B. Horn the Co-Founder and Executive Director of [Clayton Christensen Institute](#), has divided blended learning into 4 models and 4 sub-models that you may want to consider when creating your next blended learning corporate training course.

How to Use the Blended Learning Models In Corporate Training

1. The Rotation Blended Learning Model.

The Rotation Blended Learning Model involves both face-to-face instruction time and online study time. For example, a learner may complete a module online and then participate in a group activity with other colleagues offline. This blended learning model is extremely versatile and flexible. As such, it can apply to virtually any subject matter or audience. To integrate this model, you can [create eLearning games](#) or [eLearning scenarios](#) that give learners the opportunity to explore the topic online, and then develop face-to-face activities that delve deeper into the subject matter. This face-to-face time can also be used to address questions or concerns that the learner may have, or to give instructors the chance to assess the learner's knowledge acquisition and retention. The Rotation Blended Learning Model includes four different sub-models, which are:

1. **Station Rotation**
A rotation model training that takes place solely in a physical classroom environment, wherein a learner will rotate between stations that involve different topics or skill sets.
 2. **Individual Rotation**
This is a personalized spin on the station rotation model, where learners have a customized list of stations that they experience, which may or may not involve all of the stations, or the order in which they visit the stations may be different.
 3. **Lab Rotation**
Learners rotate to a computer lab for the online aspect of their training, at which time they can participate in online scenarios, simulations, and assessments that supplement their training.
 4. **Flipped Classroom**
Learners are required to complete group projects, or assessments online, and then come in for periodic face-to-face instruction. To use this approach, you may want to develop a self study course that requires learners to learn autonomously, and create a calendar of dates upon which learners must attend a lecture or presentation in a physical classroom. This is often ideal for tasks that require face-to-face group collaboration or complex subject matters that can be more effectively explored by in-person demonstrations or discussions.
2. **The Flex Blended Learning Model.**
The Flex Blended Learning Model is somewhat similar to the rotation blended learning model, save for the fact that it primarily focuses on online instruction, while only small groups or specific learners will have access to the face-to-face instruction. In some cases, the online training courses will be offered within the classroom itself, so that learners will be able to receive one-on-one support from the instructors. However, learners can also form groups that meet in person from time to time to explore a topic at length, or to offer peer based support. To integrate this approach, you can offer face-to-face support for learners who may need more support, or regularly schedule group sessions wherein instructors can meet with learners who require additional assistance. You can also encourage learners to collaborate with each other so that they can benefit from the experience and expertise of their colleagues.
 3. **The A La Carte Blended Learning Model.**
The A La Carte Blended Learning Model involves only online instruction, but the training may take place in a physical classroom or lab, or may supplement the instruction that the learner will receive in a brick-and-mortar classroom environment. The instructors can [record videos](#) or audio lectures, and offer online support to their learners via forums, email, or instant messages. This often cuts down on instruction costs, given that the instructor does not need to be physically present. To use this model, you can develop self study courses that include everything an online training module would, such as [multimedia](#), but offer virtual support from an instructor. For example, learners may have the opportunity to Skype chat with the instructor at predetermined dates and times, or learners can ask questions and discuss about their concerns on an online forum that you have set up, and then complete their training experience by attending a class or workshop.
 4. **The Enriched Virtual Blended Learning Model.**
The Enriched Virtual Blended Learning Model is centered around face-to-face instruction, which is supplemented by online tools and resources after the instructor-led sessions have been completed. To incorporate the face-to-face driver model, you may offer online material to your learners, such as links to informative videos or sites that they may find helpful. They can use these resources to learn more about the topic on their own, even when they step away from the physical classroom. For example, you can ask them to participate in [an online scenario](#) or simulation after a lecture, so that they can put their newly acquired knowledge to use. Games, scenarios, and [slide show presentations](#) are also ideal online resources if you are opting for the enriched virtual model.

Keep these blended learning models' characteristics and tips in mind to determine which model will better serve your [corporate training needs](#), so that your learners can reap the many rewards that blended learning has to offer.