

Effective Instructional Strategies for Aviation Online Trainers

Sofema Online (SOL) www.sofemaonline.com Considers the best techniques for effective online delivery of aviation subject matter.

Introduction

Online Learning whether the student is working privately through material or whether he or she is led by an instructor is, without doubt, becoming the new normal, even to the point that it is expected to be the medium of choice in a post covid world.

Online training brings its own challenges including:

- The need for the instructor to assume a higher level of responsibility related to delegate engagement (managing passive delegates).
- Responsibility for delegate attendance including identification verification.
- Responsibility for the recording of the event (an important aspect as the completed MP4 file is promised to the delegate).
- Strive for Relevance
 - Engage with the Delegates – Understand why are they here?
 - Take the time to explain to the delegates how the course is relevant and how they will benefit (Motivation and willingness to engage improves when adult learners understand the value of the training).

Preparation

- Have a backup plan – the more prepared you are for contingencies the less likely you will need to call on them, however being able to cope during different disruptions is what makes you a professional.
 - Alternate Internet Source
 - Back up Computer (LAPTOP?)
 - Separate access to the training so you can monitor what is taking place in real-time (helps not to get lost when sharing screens) – I use my GSM to monitor the proceedings.

Can you Make your Training Experience Visually Stimulating?

An Online Instructor is lost Without Passion. It is most important to accept the need for “passion” Consider that if you are not passionate about the value the course will bring to your students then it is going to be difficult to keep them interested in your material.

By sharing our enthusiasm and motivation we have an opportunity to encourage the attention of the delegates.

- Good use of color graphics as well as pictures can add value to our message.
- Additionally, by using other medium (as we would in the classroom) we can maintain the flow and encourage a high level of engagement.
- Consider the Use of External Web Links and Other Resources it is easy to switch between different sites and pre-prepared material.
- Note - Prior to the delivery of the session, it is important to check all links etc. which you intend to use during the session
- Where possible download content to a desktop folder so you have it readily available it can help to improve the user experience (here is nothing worse than waiting for a slow website to load.)
- Make a separate note of any hyperlinks etc. that you intend to use and place on a word document that you can keep on the desktop – (You can also share this document with the students in advance as part of the general preparations)
- Add Value by creating and maintaining a strong presence
- Try to use video chat rather than basic instant message when interacting with students.
- Encourage the students to engage by beginning discussions in the group chat
- Ask regular questions and encourage full student involvement

Avoid Isolation - Driving Discussions and Conversations

Without a doubt, the potential for student Isolation is a major challenge that we face during online learning and for this reason (as well as the need to ensure attendance) It is important to maintain a video link to ensure visibility as well as promote interactive engagement.

- As the Instructor as well as the facilitator it is your responsibility to take full control and lead the learning experience, a few points to consider:
 - Engage the delegates in conversation by asking a particular person for the view (this is important as general questions tend to be answered by the same few with many students hiding in plain sight).
 - Avoid closed questions instead of going for questions like – where do you see the challenges related to xyz? Or how do you make xyz work in your organisation.

Online Training Breaks and Discipline

A student's typical attention span is around 20 to 25 minutes so it is important to break up the sessions so there is a change of pace or focus around this time span.

Prior to commencement agree on the timing of the breaks and the duration of the breaks – each hour it is good to take a short break – aim for 5 mins (note discipline is required to keep it below 10 mins)

Encourage Students to Ask Questions

It is very important for a teacher to set up a risk-free climate if you want true learning to happen. Especially with adults, who are too shy to ask questions worrying about how others will judge, you need to set up an environment that encourages students to ask questions. If you find your adult learners are too hesitant to ask questions, you can just answer the commonly asked questions by yourself that students tend to ask and later ask if someone has any similar questions in mind. Once a student asks a question, it is always a good gesture to appreciate the questioner and then answer it.

Encouragement is Required at Some Time or Another

When you are teaching adult learners, you need to understand that they are the ones who are managing many things simultaneously. And it is not difficult for them to shift focus from learning or even just feel discouraged when things are not falling at the right places. You need to encourage your students when they are feeling down. You can provide them with moral support. If they have issues grabbing the pace of learning, find creative ways of learning for them by unearthing their learning style. Make sure your learners practice what they learn, assess their own learning, and reflect on their learning.

Do Not Panic If Things Go Haywire

There are times when things don't just go the way you expected and sometimes without any solid reason. These are the times when you should not panic; instead, calm yourself. Just switch from the serious learning mode and have fun with the students. Allow debate, exchange of ideas, and activities that loosen up the atmosphere a bit. Think of various games and ideas that make it fun and enjoyable when you are feeling things are not going right. Always have a backup plan for every scenario. Or you can simply take a break as well.

Use Creativity

Use a variety of teaching strategies and creative ways to make the learning amazing. There are various learning styles such as visual, kinesthetic, aural, social, solitary, verbal and logical. Learn more about these learning styles and implement strategies that help you teach creatively.

1. Know the technology

This is new to everyone, so be prepared to troubleshoot and let your students know you are working on it. Take an hour to familiarize yourself with the technology. Most companies are offering additional training right now.

Be very clear to students about where they should go for technical support (good digital technologies will have support services). Make the contact information readily available, and be prepared to direct students there if they come to you.

2. Expect the unexpected and remain flexible

At some point, technology will fail, whether it is a video chat not connecting or an assignment and/or resource links not working properly.

Have a backup plan for all assignments and assessments that rely on technology.

Be transparent in your communication to students about technology failure. For example, put a policy in place that outlines the actions students should take if they are unable to submit assignments due to technical issues.

Don't be afraid to solve technical challenges in real-time, such as during synchronous discussions or collaborative real-time activities, to save time.

Complete your profile with professional and personal traits.

4. Set clear expectations for the course

Online learning is new to the students as well. Make it clear to students how their grade in the course will be determined now (participation often makes up a much larger portion of the grade than in face-to-face classes).

Set expectations for response time. For example, make it clear that you will respond to emails within one business day, otherwise, students may expect you to answer an email within a few hours, and disengage if you don't.

Share resources for students on how to be online learner. We have one from college students and from professors.

5. Establish a sense of comfort and develop a community of learners

Students are looking to you to set the tone. Demonstrate enthusiasm and excitement about teaching the course to alleviate fear, anxiety, and isolation.

Humanize yourself by posting a welcome video, a biography, photos that tell stories about what you are doing to keep busy during social isolation, links to news articles or video clips.

Encourage each student to personalize their homepage and spend time going around the class asking students to share information about what they have posted.

Incorporate instant messaging, web cameras, blogs, and vlogs.

Ask questions that empower participants to question each other, and elicit rich discussion.

Respond to the community as a whole rather than directing all responses to individual participants outside of the community.

6. Promote reflection and communication through quality asynchronous discussion

Return to posted topics that have not been fully discussed and promote contribution and reflection.

Monitor participation and contact students individually if they are either not participating, or are taking over conversations and not permitting contributions from other individuals.

7. Have a good balance of active leader and active observer

You will begin the course as the manager of the learning community. As the course progresses, slowly transfer the responsibility to the community of learners. The online community building steps in point 4 will help with this. You should also gradually retract further out of communal discussions.

8. Request regular feedback and be mindful of misinterpretation

Check-in with your students to see how things are going. You can do formal or informal surveys to assess attitudes, workload, and challenges. Make course corrections as necessary — we're all learning.

Use ad hoc quizzes to assess learner comprehension of the material.

9. Regularly check content resources and applications

Regularly check all links, resources, modules, and activities. Online content can move or change, which can lead to disengagement.

Assist students who are having difficulty navigating course links or managing the material spanning across various web pages.

Model the process of navigating to websites that are not embedded in the course, and demonstrate how to appropriately manage to keep track of navigation when jumping from site to site.

father helping children learn online

Working and learning online during a pandemic

Visit our website to find expert faculty, best practices, and other online learning resources for people who are studying, teaching or working remotely.

Teaching adult learners has many potential advantages over teaching younger students.

For one, your learners have much more life experience, and this experience can be leveraged as part of the knowledge that is shared among the participants in your class.

Also, leaving aside situations where workers are required to take mandatory training (e.g., to comply with industry regulations), adult learners typically choose to continue their education, and thus likely to value your teaching—and your time—far more than students who are required to be in your class.

Finally, if your aim is to make money teaching online, adults obviously tend to have much more direct control over the decision to spend money on an online learning experience.

However, while you may not need to put the same effort into engaging your class that a school teacher would, you still need to build a rapport with your learners and develop a teaching strategy that maximizes their learning outcomes. Understanding how adults

parse and retain new knowledge is critical to creating a learning experience that achieves its goals.

So, in this post, we'll take a look at what it takes to teach adults effectively.

Teaching Platforms

Looking for a platform to host your online courses and teach adult learners? Be sure to check out [The 19+ Best Online Course Platforms](#).

Keep your lessons relevant

The most significant way adult learners digest information is through real-world filters. As already noted, adults have far more life experience than children, and that comes with a stronger need to understand the how's and why's of your material. By making connections with their own experiences, they confirm for themselves the truth of your teaching, and your lessons will stick more strongly in their minds if you can make those connections for them.

Including real-world applications or outcomes of your lessons when teaching adult learners is important so your students can understand and visualize how to apply what you teach. Use examples of times when people should follow your teaching in their everyday lives, or of the pitfalls that can befall them if they fail to do so.

By putting your lessons in context, they become easier for adult learners to understand and retain.

Focus on your learners' life experience

If you're teaching a coding boot camp for beginners, don't overwhelm them with jargon.

Equally, if you're teaching business leaders a new recruiting strategy, don't talk down to them.

In general, when teaching adult learners, use familiar terms and address them at an appropriate level for their experience, background, and age. Sometimes using acronyms and buzzwords is the most appropriate way of teaching—it can quickly convey your experience and authority within your field, and reassure learners that you know what you’re talking about. However, with a novice audience, too many new terms will only be confusing. You want your learners to be able to follow what you’re saying without having to focus on deciphering the meaning of your words.

The average age of your learners is also an important consideration when you choose how to approach teaching your masterclass. Bear in mind that older learners might not be up to date with the latest online trends and fads, while young adult learners will be put off by edupreneurs who try to emulate their style of talking.

Most learners respond best when educators use established frames of reference and limit their use of slang and jargon.

Tell stories as you’re teaching

Stories have been used as mnemonics for centuries. From recalling the colors of the rainbow to the order of notes in music, children are taught a significant amount of information by converting it into stories. As adults, stories remain powerful memory devices. Adult learners are often more emotionally driven, and storytelling can harness their emotions and help them retain your lessons.

Tie storytelling into your real-world examples by talking about a time your lesson helped someone, or could have helped them. If you use slides or charts to illustrate your masterclass, choose powerful images, colors, and even fonts that are evocative of particular emotions.

Think about the educators who have most influenced you in the past, and the lessons that stand out most sharply. What methods did your teachers use to gain and keep your interest? What technique made one lesson stand out above the others? Chances are good that stories were a part of their effectiveness – and you may even be able to borrow from some of those stories.

Break up information to avoid cognitive overload

Adult learners can follow more, and more complex, information than children, but you should still aim to structure your masterclass into compartmentalized lessons that progress logically as you teach. By breaking down your masterclass, you can ensure that all learners follow your teaching, and build in time to recap each section and ensure everyone is keeping up.

Use notes or slides to highlight the key points of each lesson, and provide learners with these materials either before or after your masterclass so they can independently review what they learned. Make a list or bullet points of each step of your masterclass, and identify where individual sections begin and end. This style of teaching will help keep you on track, as well as improve your learners' outcomes. If you have to pause for any reason or find the class discussion wandered away from your original subject, it's easy to return to your lesson plan and continue from where you left off.

Engagement and Checking for Understanding (CFU)

Maintain Interest by keeping the material as stimulating as possible and boost the memorability of your masterclass.

Be mindful of going too far with this tip—too much color, or too many images, also detracts from your lesson. If your slides and handouts are visually overwhelming, that can also turn learners off. Instead, aim to have one focal point on each page. It could be highlighting key words or phrases in a different color or font, including an amusing doodle that demonstrates the point of your lesson, or switching out boring bullet points for a subject-relevant icon.

Remember that whatever element you choose to stand out will be the thing your learners remember most clearly, so make it count.

An Essential Guide to Andragogy for Learning Businesses

Adult learning theory is referred to as “andragogy.” To go deeper, get the guide to andragogy from our sibling site, Leading Learning.

Encourage questions and discussion

Adult learners typically need to understand new material in the context of their own life experiences, and one of the best ways to make those connections is by talking. Allowing your learners time to ask you questions, and to discuss your lessons among each other, is a great way of helping cement your teaching in their minds. It's also a good time for you to spot any mistakes or incorrect assumptions your learners are

If it feels like the UK education system is going through an experiment right now, it's because it is. We've been forced to go from theory to real-world application fast when it comes to online education, and we're still learning. What we've learned so far is that online learning is much more complex than we imagined, and so many outside factors can have an influence. We're also learning the limitations of the format. However, we're also finding ways to circumvent these issues and rise above them. Here are some of the **biggest challenges in online learning and how to solve them.**

Socio Economic Disparities

Probably one of the last things that were envisaged when rolling out the remote learning initiative was the gap between students when it comes to learning environments. They may not come out and say it, but it's clear that the plan was sketched with the average UK household in mind. Not only do children have to live and study in varying environments, but about twice as many single parents complained about a lack of equipment when it came to online classes.

This problem, however, is not an easy one to solve. First, there would need to be assistance for single parents who want to be there to assist their children during the day. But one of the things schools should consider is how heavy their courses are from a technological standpoint. Even things like streaming have to be done in a way that accommodates the largest number of devices as possible.

Programs should also be tested across platforms to make sure that students can use a backup option in cases when the device is not compatible. Making courses available on tablets, for instance, could prove to be a good second option for whenever a computer isn't accessible.

Technical Difficulties

Passiveness Among Students

Students are too often turned into bystanders when it comes to online courses, and it's the educator's job to make sure that they engage them as much as possible. Students have no problem staying in front of a screen when it comes to games and videos, so all that needs to be done is to incorporate some of these elements into the coursework.

Making alternative entertainment-based content revolving around a subject can be a good idea. Turning to an objective-based approach to teaching is another. Letting students' progress at their own pace while they unlock 'levels' allows them to have more control over their learning, and make the whole experience more interactive. You could also help the most gifted and eager to learn to elaborate on their knowledge of a subject by making additional material and tests available to them.

Lack of Control and Discipline

A lot of the control teachers take for granted over students comes largely from the environment. Eliminating outside stimuli and being in a space dedicated to learning puts students in a much different frame of mind than at home close to all the creature comforts they're accustomed to.

The only solution here is to be equipped with tools that allow you or your staff to control activity online and eliminate distractions. Tools like classroom.cloud, for instance, make managing online learning much easier by allowing teachers to see how students are using their internet during classes. It allows teachers to lock certain apps completely or certain pages. It also allows for easy and direct communication between students and teachers and allows them to test the progress of students through small surveys, among other things.

Both for teachers and students. As a teacher, you don't want to be reduced to being a chatbot. You want your face to be visible, and you want to engage in face-to-face interactions as much as you can.

When given the chance, most students will choose a class setting instead of learning from home, and this is mainly because of the social element. However, you can keep this alive by using the various tools that are available to you.

Organising virtual group activities can be a great way to do so. Encouraging virtual group work is another great option to allow old and new friends to work together.

You should also try to schedule check-ins with your students if you have the chance. You want to pay special attention to those who are the most in need. This could be

done by email, but video would be a better option. This will allow you to get a sense of whether they're falling behind or feeling discouraged.

Next Steps

Sofema Online (www.Sofemaonline.com) and Sofema Aviation Services (www.sassofia.com) provide classroom, webinar and online regulatory compliant and vocational training. Please see the websites or email team@sassofia.com