



## How to use this workbook

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The Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism's Train the Trainer Workbook is designed to walk you through the initial stages of course design and development. It is a working document, and we encourage you to write down ideas for your course in the space provided.

Each section is supported by a short online module that can be found on the Commission on Professionalism's website ([www.2Civility.org](http://www.2Civility.org)), under the CLE Resources tab.

**The workbook is divided into the following sections:**

1. Getting to know adult learners
2. Understanding your learners, understanding the problem
3. Presenting online
4. Facilitating adult learning
5. Evaluating your course
6. Course outline template

Each section can be used alone or in conjunction with the others.



Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism

# Getting to know adult learners

Adults respond best to learning experiences that meet certain needs. Researchers have identified several conditions that meet those needs and play a role in successful adult learning. While every condition doesn't have to be present in every course, courses should be designed with at least one or two in mind.

## Components of successful adult learning

- **The learning is self-directed.** Adults like to have some autonomy over their learning. A lecture may not provide a sense of autonomy and can be ineffective in making an impact. However, adding interactive elements such as polls, discussions and group projects can allow learners to direct some of the content.
- **The learning is experiential and utilizes background knowledge.** Adults bring a wealth of experiences to the table. They prefer learning that allows them to connect to the content and make sense of it in their own context.
- **The learning is relevant to current roles.** Adults must balance learning alongside a multitude of other responsibilities. The more they see the direct benefits of learning in their own lives, the more eager and engaged they become.
- **The instruction is problem-centered.** Our lives are often framed up as a series of problems that need solving. By tying the course's goal to a problem — then helping the learners solve it — adults will find greater value in the learning experience.
- **The students are motivated and interested in the topic.** Sitting through a CLE can be motivating if the learners are engaged in the process. By determining how the issue you're addressing impacts the lives of the learners, you can increase engagement and have a more significant impact.

## THINK ABOUT YOUR COURSE

**How could learners contribute to the course using their existing knowledge and experience?**

**Are there opportunities for learners to connect the content to their current role?**

**How could the content be reinforced in a real-world problem to solve?**

# Understanding your learners,

## Understanding the problem

Although there are commonalities between adult learners, it's important to understand your unique audience and the problem you're trying to solve or the impact you're hoping to have.

The simplest way of thinking about it is this: Would you expect a firm's senior partners and first-year associates to have the same learning needs? It's unlikely, so customizing your course to the audience and the specific challenges they face can significantly improve the experience.

### Why is this important?

Understanding the learner's context equals more relevant content. Learner-focused content will increase:

- Engagement
- Retention
- Implementation

### Know your audience

You can learn a lot about your audience through a simple survey. This can be a formal online survey or an informal straw poll of colleagues. The respondents don't need to be the actual attendees, just a representative group.

*Examples of information that might be helpful include: 1) what the learner wants and/or needs to learn; 2) reasons for attending the program; and 3) knowledge about the topic.*

### Understanding the problem

Identifying the underlying problem is one of the most challenging parts of course design. It requires a change in mindset from "I'm going to talk about..." to "We're going to tackle the issue of..."

The issue or problem discussed should be relevant to your audience. For example, topics that resonate with senior firm partners may fall flat with newer attorneys.

The course goals should be clearly developed and aimed at solving the challenge. Reviewing the goals at the beginning and end of the course is desirable.

### THINK ABOUT YOUR COURSE

**Write down what you know about the intended audience (e.g., location, demographics, practice area, years in practice, type of practice, firm size). Ask the provider to share a survey with the prospective audience.**

**How can you adjust your course to account for the characteristics identified?**

**What are some of the day-to-day challenges your audience faces within in your topic area? Why is this happening? What changes in knowledge, skills, or attitudes could solve these issues?**

# Keeping the audience's attention

Presenting online is quite different than presenting in person. It brings with it its own set of challenges, techniques, and tools. The most effective online presenters don't just digitize their in-person presentations. Rather, they take a distinct approach to developing impactful virtual courses.

## Setting the stage

- Ensure a stable internet connection
- Use a high-quality webcam and microphone
- Ensure proper lighting; the lighting source (e.g., a window or a lamp) should be in front of you, NOT behind you
- Use a simple backdrop that represents you and presents as uncluttered and organized
- Ensure proper camera position (i.e., eye height, straight-on shot)
- Engage a “producer” (or colleague) to manage the technical aspects of the session

## Presenting online

- Project volume to convey energy and confidence. Talk “through” the microphone just like you talk to the back wall when presenting in a room.
- Dial down your speed. Speaking slowly and deliberately demonstrates confidence.
- Dial up your enunciation. Speaking clearly and sharply helps the audience understand.
- Smile! Build rapport with your audience.

## Keeping the audience's attention

- **Add variation to what's on the screen.** Look at your presentation; ask yourself where the audience's eyes are looking and for how long.
- **Pictures before words.** Keep your written content brief and use your spoken words to reaffirm the summary on the screen.
- **Include audience interaction.** This can include polls, quizzes, and even small breakout groups.
- **Call on people by name if the audience size allows.** This is where having a producer to field questions and watch the chat box helps greatly.
- **Take breaks.** In addition to peppering audience engagement throughout, don't forget to take short breaks.

## THINK ABOUT YOUR COURSE

What areas of your “stage” are ready? What areas/tools do you need to work on?

Record yourself practicing the presentation using the set up you intend to use. How would you rate your volume, pace, and enunciation?

What tools can you use to keep the audience engaged? How are you breaking up the presentation to maintain interest?

# Facilitating adult learning

Although the word “presenter” is often used in CLE courses, you’re ideally aiming to facilitate learning in the audience. You’re helping the learners establish connections between their knowledge, skills, and attitudes and what is being presented. This is the opposite of a lecture, in which a passive learner is required to listen as opposed to participating.

## What is facilitated learning?

In facilitated learning, students are encouraged to take more control of their learning process. The trainer’s role becomes that of a facilitator and organizer providing resources and support to learners.

## Simple facilitation techniques:

**Ask a question that encourages reflection, then pause.**

- “Tell me what that would look like in your practice?”
- “Can you think of a time that...”
- “What challenges would you face implementing these changes?”

**Use examples to illustrate your point and seek other examples.**

- “Something you may have experienced is...”
- “An example of this from my practice is...”
- “A common outcome of this change is...”

**Problem-solving case studies and real issue discussions connect the content to the learners’ experience.**

- Role play demonstrating learned behaviors
- Problem-solving challenge
- Real-world application to learners’ situations (“How would you...”)

**Use demonstrations to be discussed within the course either through groups or individual comments.**

- Procedural knowledge step-by-steps
- Passive unguided vs. passive guided demonstrations

## THINK ABOUT YOUR COURSE

**What questions can you ask the audience to draw in their experience? Can follow-up questions uncover additional content?**

**How much are you speaking during the course? Where can you add opportunities for the audience to be involved? What activities can be added?**

# Evaluating your course

One of the most important parts of course design is evaluating its effectiveness, yet it's something we rarely do. Typically, once a course has been presented we consider it finished. But the best courses and presenters are constantly being improved using objective feedback and review.

## What evaluation tools can you use?

There are many ways to evaluate a course, but these are some common methods:

### Feedback during your program

- Polling/survey questions
- Q&A via a chat box
- Provide a checklist and ask learners to select the things they will do after your presentation
- Breakout sessions with reports back to the full class

### Learning from your peers

Another way to learn how to evaluate your course is to learn from your fellow CLE presenters. What tools are they using to gain course feedback? How are they analyzing it?

### Self-evaluation

Record yourself delivering a section of the course, then ask:

- Was my delivery clear and simple?
- Did I use open-ended questions?
- How did I actively bring the learners into the experience?

### Learn from top presenters

Presenters are usually happy to pass along lessons they've learned, so don't be afraid to reach out to a presenter you were impressed with.

### Post-program evaluation

- Make sure you get the post-course evaluations
- Don't focus on individual comments
- Look for trends across areas

## THINK ABOUT YOUR COURSE

**What questions can you ask the audience to gauge how much they are engaged?**

**What metrics could you use to measure participation?**

**How do you come across when you record yourself? What areas of strength and opportunity do you see? Who could you share your recording with for honest feedback?**

**What presenters have you engaged with? Why did you engage with them? What trends have you seen in the feedback from your previous courses (if applicable)?**

Use this template as a starting point for developing your course. Consider the following questions as prompts when thinking about how to understand and engage the learners.

# Course outline template

**What is the issue I'm trying to solve?**

**What are some of the characteristics of the learners? What would they respond to? How does that impact my activity choices?**

**What are the key points I need to get across?**

**What will the audience bring regarding content and experience? How will I solicit this information?**

**What activities can I use to allow the audience to discuss and practice the key learning points?**

**How will they connect the content to their daily lives?**

**How will I know I'm being effective?**

**What simple tools or resources can the audience apply in their jobs?**

# Notes

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Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism

The Illinois Supreme Court established the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism under Supreme Court Rule 799(c) to foster increased civility, professionalism, and inclusiveness among lawyers and judges in Illinois. By advancing the highest standards of conduct among lawyers and judges, the Commission on Professionalism works to better serve clients and society alike. For more information, please visit [2Civility.org](http://2Civility.org) and follow us on Twitter @2CivilityOrg.