Building an On-line
Volunteer Training Curriculum

Delivering training on-line is not as simple as just recording in-person training sessions and posting them online. Effective training requires planning to fully leverage technology, encourage participation, and ensure that volunteers who complete training are ready to serve.

On-line or Not?
When determining whether to go virtual, consider:

Audience
Who is your target audience for the training? (Note, you may have more than one.)
- ☐ Prospective volunteers
- ☐ New volunteers
- ☐ Current volunteers
- ☐ Other?

Training Needs and Content
What are the training needs?
Can the content logically be broken into 60-90 minute segments?
Would successful completion of the training rely on volunteers collaborating, interacting, role playing, or presenting a mock session of sorts?
Is the organization willing to invest the support (financially and otherwise) in delivering on-line training?

Technology
What technology does the organization already have?
What equipment is available and what might be needed?
Do volunteers have access to the necessary equipment to watch, participate in, and complete the training? Do they have the skills to use that technology or is additional training needed?

People
Does the organization have trainers who are experienced in (or able to be trained in) virtual facilitation?
In addition to trainers, are there additional skills needed to ensure success, including, for example, technology or graphic design, and, if so, are those individuals available?
Who needs to buy into and support an on-line training delivery? (Consider volunteer councils or auxiliaries, legal counsel, partner organizations, etc.)

Training Goals
What are your training goals? (Note, you may have more than one.)
- ☐ Information sharing
- ☐ Learning
- ☐ Skills acquisition
- ☐ Teambuilding
- ☐ Other?

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As recommended by Darlene Christopher in *The Successful Virtual Classroom,* follow these four steps to build, implement, and evaluate your on-line training curriculum.

Plan → Rehearse → Execute → Post-session Review

Planning Checklist

- ☐ Use the planning template on pages 3 and 4 to plan your content, platform, methods, and materials.
- ☐ Develop a training team, including:
  - o Producer/host _____
  - o Presenter/facilitator/panelist _____
  - o Graphic designer, if needed _____
  - o Other support, if needed _____
- ☐ Develop and share a timeline with the team
- ☐ Identify milestones and communications plan
- ☐ Confirm budget resources needed

Rehearsal Checklist

- ☐ Schedule a practice session with your facilitation team
- ☐ Consider practicing with a mock audience
- ☐ Use the practice session to refine timing and flow
- ☐ Use your practice session to check technology for the facilitation team
- ☐ Make sure participants know which platform(s) you are using and have an opportunity to check their technology prior to the session

Execution Checklist

- ☐ Show up early
- ☐ Provide tech tips to the participants while in the "waiting room" or in opening slides
- ☐ Establish learning norms and remind participants of them as part of opening rituals
- ☐ Set expectations for participation and engagement
- ☐ Present with high energy, using voice, tone, volume, and interactions to engage audience
- ☐ Be prepared with the curriculum, yet willing to pivot or adjust if the audience needs it

Post-session Checklist

- ☐ Use surveys and/or check-in calls to gather feedback and assess learning
- ☐ Refine curriculum as needed

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Volunteer Training Plan

Use the following charts to consider content and methodology and then develop a plan for the blended or on-line training curriculum.

Content

What are the discrete elements of content that need to be learned through the training? Consider both the skills/abilities volunteers should master as well as the knowledge/information with which they should be familiar.

Skills/Abilities	Knowledge/Information

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Methodology

For each of the skills, knowledge, or abilities generated above, consider the following.

Skill/Ability Knowledge/Information	How can this information or skill be effectively imparted?	How long will it take?	Notes and Requirements
	Readings Videos Self-paced e-Learning Webcast Webinar Meeting Micro-learning Conference call Blended	How long to present? How long for participant to learn and be able to apply?	Specialized software? Experts? Equipment?

Putting It All Together

Use the chart below to design an effective training plan. (Chart continued on next page.)

Training Module	Delivery Method	Developer(s)	Facilitator(s)	Key Content	Timeline	Assessment
Name and Primary Topic	Reading Video Self-paced e-Learning Webcast Webinar Meeting Micro-learning Activity/Exercise Workbook Conference call	Those who will develop, write, and design the module	Those who will present	Primary messages and topics to be addressed	Deadline for having module ready to deliver	How you will ensure participants have learned the information and are ready to move on

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Training Module	Delivery Method	Developer(s)	Facilitator(s)	Key Content	Timeline	Assessment

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