E-Learning Modes

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|  | **Formats** | **Features** | **Advantages** | **Challenges** |
| **Overview** | Live onlineAsynchronous Instructor-led | *(features common to all types of e-learning)** Information/training is delivered through information technologies and electronic media
* Instructors & learners are not in the same physical location
 | *(advantages common to all types of e-learning)** Potential for one presenter/instructor to reach many geographically distributed learners
* Eliminates time and cost for travel
* Convenience of training and learning at your desk
 | *(challenges common to all types of e-learning)** Lacks non-verbal cues and expressions of in-person interactions
* Difficult for instructor to gauge learner response/commitment
* More challenging to teach “soft skills”
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|  | **Formats** | **Features** | **Advantages** | **Challenges** |
| **Live online** (synchronous) | Instructor-led webinar, videoconference, Google Hangout | * Instructor & learners meet at same time in a virtual ‘room’
* Slides, application sharing, whiteboard, polls, breakout rooms
* Communication through:
	+ one or two-way audio
	+ text chat
	+ video
* Sessions may be recorded for later viewing
 | *Creators*:* Most like a f2f classroom – easier transition
* Shorter time to develop than other e-modes
* Instructor/presenter can respond to questions & comments in real time
* Live interactions with learners
* Reusable presentation materials

 *Learners*:* Most like a f2f classroom
* Ability to ask questions in real time
* Peer social interaction in real time
* Connections with people virtually when not able to meet in person
 | *Creators*:* In-person facilitation skills not the same as online facilitation skills
* Prone to technical issues, Internet connection difficulties
* Need to prepare learners for online environment
* Short learner attention span

*Learners*:* Prone to technical issues
* Learning curve to get comfortable with technology
* Short sessions
* Distractions; hard to pay attention
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|  | **Formats** | **Features** | **Advantages** | **Challenges** |
| **Asynchronous Instructor-led** | MOOC, recorded lectures, discussion forums, blogs, email | * Instructor & learners not online at same time
* Instruction = written, audio, video, etc.
* Threaded discussions, email, assignments
* Scheduled – usually start and end dates
* Usually longer (multi-week)
 | *Creators*:* Instructor’s time flexible
* Good for in-depth topics, In-depth discussions
* Variety of activity options
* Potentially large number of participants

*Learners*: * Convenience: flexible time, individual pace of learning
* Time-bound: start/end dates and deadlines
* Good for in-depth topics
* Possibility of interaction with instructor
* Peer learner interaction through online channels
 | *Creators:** Front-loaded effort
* Lack of live interaction; harder to give feedback
* Effort of following learner activities
* Lower completion rates

*Learners:** No live interaction
* Response time to questions & discussions
* Variable availability of instructors
* Requires more learner self-motivation
* Peer interaction requires more effort
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|  | **Formats** | **Features** | **Advantages** | **Challenges** |
| **Self-Paced** | Online courses, tutorials, job aids, how-to videos, articles | * No instructor (instructional design team instead)
* Learner works at any time, usually alone
* No schedule – maybe no due date
* Computer graded learning assessment
* Cost/effort almost all up front
 | *Creators*:* Create/design learning once, use many times
* Standardized content and delivery
* Scales endlessly

*Learners*:* Fit learning options to individual needs
* Learn at own pace
* Learn at any time
* Revisit; use as a reference
 | *Creators*:* Skill-sets needed: subject matter expert, instructional design, technical skills
* Time/effort/cost required up front
* Difficulty of updating topics
* Need LMS for tracking
* Low completion rates

*Learners*:* No human/social interaction; boring
* No deadlines
* Requires self-motivation, discipline
* Limited effective length
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