# Skills for Online Training

1) Skills critical to the **synchronous** online environment  
(Excerpted from [Trainers Reach for E-Skills](http://www.shrm.org/publications/hrmagazine/editorialcontent/pages/0506srtyler.aspx) by Kathryn Tyler, SHRM (Society for Human Resources Management)

A good classroom trainer and a good synchronous trainer share many qualities, experts say, such as enthusiasm, the ability to engage learners, thorough knowledge of the subject and good communication skills. The live-online environment requires some special adaptations for effective training.

* Somebody who is not afraid of technology, loves talking to people and has a flair for entertaining.
* You have to have people who want to be online and are good on their feet. You have to love it and have fun with it. That comes out in your voice.
* The ability to multitask: be able to speak well, listen intensely, show visuals, read and respond to chat messages, take and interpret polls of participants, and manage the virtual classroom all while making sure no period of silence lasts more than 15 seconds.
* Being a good listener: Without the facial expression and body language, You can't be distracted, thinking about the next point you want to make.
* Trainers must embrace technology and be prepared for the technical surprises you may meet in your broadcast.

2) Skills for facilitating in the **asynchronous** online environment  
(Excerpted from [Mind-set and Skills: Role of Online Trainers as Facilitators](http://www.vignettestraining.com/galleries/trainers/download/OL_3s.pdf) and [Top Ten Moderator Skills](http://www.emoderationskills.com/?p=66))

Stimulating learning and discussion in asynchronous instructor-led training may involve more sustained engagement with learners than in the face-to-face setting.

* Establish trust and goodwill; help participants feel that the ideas and information they share are heard and accepted.
* Be open enough and flexible enough to accommodate the varied mind-sets of participants in the learning experience; be sensitive to cultural differences.
* Be objective and sensitive to the nature of online discussion; give careful consideration to tone and content of each posting, the author and his or her skills, knowledge and attitudes.
* Develop meaningful discussion topics that explore ideas and develop arguments.
* Know when to intervene and when to hold back, providing enough support, but not eliminating challenge.
* Recognize the importance of socializing online; begin with a “get-acquainted” thread to let participants learn something about each other.

See also: [14 Things Online Trainers Need to Stop Doing](http://www.skillagents.com/blog/14-things-online-trainers/): a list of behaviors that online trainers need to avoid if they do not want to derail the learning.