

Tips for Better CLE Presentations

1. Begin with a relevant story, case study, difficult question, cartoon, quote, short scripted role-play, or having the learners recall a past experience that pulls your learners in both cognitively and affectively. Neuroscience studies show that our brains are hardwired for narrative storytelling and learning begins with this emotion-laden, “here and now” type experience.

2. Build time for learners to engage in reflection. Be comfortable with a few moments of silence for your learners to reflect upon their experience. Create opportunities for learners to share their ideas with others in small groups.

3. Use activities and techniques that involve the learners. We retain only 10-20% of what we hear during a lecture. But when we apply the new knowledge or skills in an active way, we retain up to 80%. Learning requires active participation.

4. Create a conducive learning community by connecting with your learners, by having your learners connect with each other through discussion and interactive exercises, and by showing respect at all times for your learners and your subject matter. An environment that fosters learning is relaxed but stimulating, collaborative rather than competitive, and free from fear, ridicule, and excessive stress. Greeting attendees at the door, nametags, room setup, physical comfort, refreshments, etc., help to create this environment.

5. Provide handouts that are useful, practical guides such as checklists, flowcharts, top ten lists, “attorney’s toolbox,” etc. Don’t confuse PowerPoint slides with a handout. Think **FORC**: forms, outlines (annotated), resources, and charts.

6. End every session with an application exercise that involves the learners.

- Role play (unscripted this time)
- Individual or group mini-projects
- Video practice session
- "What if" situations
- Plans of action
- Problem-solving
- Debates by the learners

7. Use the evaluation as part of the learning process. Ask questions that require the learner to reflect upon and apply the material. Examples include: What is the most important thing you learned at this session? What will you do differently as a result of this session?

8. Divide your agenda into 20-30 minute modules. Then change the activity every 10 minutes as research since the 1960’s shows that our attention span is only 9 minutes.

9. Use Learning Objectives to focus your attention on the learners. What will the learners be able? What are your learners change of attitude, knowledge, and skills?

10. Never read your paper or PowerPoint slides. Be confident enough in your material to present it in a conversational way.

11. Don’t confuse your slides with your handout. There are four parts to a presentation: what you’re going say, what the learners will be doing, your handout, and your PowerPoint slides, if you decide to use PowerPoint. Outline your presentation off-line, prepare your handouts, and then think about your slides.

Using Faculty Wisely:

Consider the following in choosing someone to ...

- 1. give a lecture:** subject matter expert, understands the interests and skill level of the learners, good presentation skills, comfortably engages the audience in dialogue.
- 2. moderate a panel discussion :** sufficiently knowledgeable to ask good questions, tactful but not shy about interrupting to clarify or move discussion; listens well enough to draw contracts and comparisons and connections among panel perspectives.
- 3. facilitate discussion among learners:** very good listener, knowledgeable but won't impose "right" answer, skilled at asking questions that make people think.
- 4. teach a skill:** models the skill well, breaks skill into component parts and teaches sub-skills, good coaching skills, gives constructive feedback.

Online teaching:

Determine that your learning objectives (how you want the learners to change in terms of knowledge, attitude, behavior), are appropriate for online teaching.

Web-based instruction is appropriate for:

- Memorizing terms and concepts
- Applying rules
- Analyzing or synthesizing data
- Evaluating information
- Solving a problem

Web-based instruction is problematic for:

- Changing attitudes
- Reflection on values
- Exploring alternative perspectives

Web-based instruction is not appropriate for:

- Practicing most skills
- Engaging in physical activity

References

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