



Conversion to Distance Learning

Stepping back
before moving forward

Use REVERSE ENGINEERING to analyze the outcomes, design, and goals, of an existing course.

1. Examine the outcomes of the existing course

- Did the course have the expected impacts on the skills and abilities of participants in their jobs at their home service?
- If so, what enabled this success?
- If not, do you know what barriers prevented it from occurring?
- If you have not yet offered the course, what outcomes are expected? What should the participants be able to do in their home service after the training?
- How do you plan to ensure their success?

2. Examine the course implementation

- How was the course structured?
- How did the course components work together to achieve the outcomes?
- Were any components potentially missing, not well integrated toward the intended learning outcomes, or not given the correct proportional emphasis?
- Were any components unnecessary to meet the most important learning outcomes?

3. Examine the course activities and delivery modes

- What learning activities took place in the course? Could these activities be improved to meet outcomes?
- How can the activities take place in an online environment? Consider both asynchronous and synchronous distance learning. (See page 2)
- What were the drivers for the choice of delivery mode and training strategy? What assumptions made them the drivers?

4. Examine the original goals of the course

- What service delivery needs or gaps drove the development of the course? How were these articulated in terms of expected learning outcomes?
- Did any additional learning or organizational needs surface during or after the course offering? How can these be addressed in future courses?
- What constraints regarding the organizational context(s) were considered in the development of the course? Were these assumptions valid? Should they be altered?

5. Final Design Decisions: Based on the analysis, how can the course be offered in distance learning?

Consider the use of:

- A virtual learning environment – like Moodle – to coordinate activities, organize resources, and enable communication channels
- Interactive Webinars for live workshops and demonstrations
- Asynchronous discussions (via discussion forums)
- Exercises (via short lessons or presentations with accompanying quizzes)
- Projects or assignments to be submitted (either individual or small group practical work)
- Participant presentations (via discussion forum or Webinar)
- Case studies to explore or practice decision making (simulations)
- Experiential activities to conduct in the home office environment (local development, work application, case development, instrument maintenance practice, etc.)
- Peer assessment and collaborative learning to increase learning opportunities (with fewer facilitation needs)

Avoid assumptions

Also see <<[The Manifesto for Teaching Online](#)>>

That DL is only for reading text or viewing videos for background knowledge gain (DL can be rich in dialogue and feedback)

That DL cannot be used to teach and practice skills (Most critical skills involve decision making)

That a distant teacher is an absent teacher (Presence is more than proximity)

That learners cannot be inspired to be self-directed (Make learning relevant)