**MAKING SOUND TECHNOLOGY CHOICES WHEN DESIGNING YOUR INSTRUCTION**

As an NCDA Instructor candidate, you may have significant experience with online learning or none at all. Likewise, you may have researched and chosen an online learning platform or had no choice. Perhaps, while you have taken an online course, you have never designed or taught one.

In a similar manner, you may have little experience in choosing a video conferencing system.

Some of our training will involve how to set up an online learning course and understanding time spent in developing and managing a course.

This resource is designed to provide some beginning materials and suggestions for getting a person ready to select, design and implement e-Learning.

Researching an online course platform/learning management system

A learning management system is a  [software application](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Software_application) for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting and delivery of [educational](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational) courses or training. It helps the instructor deliver material to the students, administer tests and other assignments, track student progress, and manage record-keeping Before selecting an online learning management system (LMS), consider how you plan to use the system:

1. What features do you consider necessary (self-hosted vs. cloud-based, amount of storage space, your control of users, personalized branding of the site, tools available, security, access to support, length of contract, and pricing model)? For example, will you be using discussion format frequently? Will you share resources with your students from the site? Will students post assignments to the site? Will you include assessments/quizzes as part of your course? Is this supported by the platform?
2. In general, what is the technology knowledge of your learners? For example, it might be easier to upload access, providing learners with their user name and password, rather than requiring learners to navigate the registration process themselves? The technology level of your learners may range from no experience to advanced levels. How comfortable are you in guiding them through various steps that need to be accomplished? Are there tools included in the system that will help your student?
3. What level of control of the software do you desire? For example, do you want to have “administrator” level? How many “teachers” (a different level of access) will there be?

Reasons to consider using free e-learning templates to create content

1. Save time**.** Templates can be freeing and save you loads of time so you can focus your attention on your best skills, Need to make a lot of high-quality quizzes in a hurry? Why not download a sleek, free quiz template? Without the design or HTML to worry about, you can devote your time to creating excellent quiz questions with challenging answers.

## **Encourage creativity**.**** Templates make a great jumping off point to encourage creativity. Templates take care of the basics for you. The internet has massive libraries full of various types of templates that you can use for multiple purposes

## Games. Not a game designer but want some gamification in your content? Templates are a great way to hop on the gamification train without going back to school for web design.

## **Use free eLearning templates to stay consistent.**You want your content to match and look like it all goes together

Researching a video conferencing system

If you will be conducting training sessions remotely using technology there are a couple of considerations you need to think through.

1. What is your level of comfort and knowledge when it comes to video conferencing? Have you used this feature previously? What was your role (presenter or participant)? What equipment is needed to use this feature? While it is not always necessary, a headset (at the minimum earbuds) can improve audio immensely.
2. In general, students may not be familiar with this feature so you will have to be prepared to instruct them in its use. They may use the technology on a variety of types of devices (computer, tablet or mobile device) so you need to be familiar with them or instruct them on which devices are best for your particular system. what is the technology knowledge of learners with respect to video conferencing? How will they plan to access the video conferencing sessions (computer, tablet, mobile device)?
3. Consider also your intended uses of video conferencing: Is a chat feature helpful? Will you use share screen frequently? How many people will meet each time? Would a chat and attendee list be helpful? Will you want the interaction to be recorded? Is the system available as an app? These factors will help determine which system is best for your needs.

There are several resources that may be helpful as you begin creating your course

* E-Learning Industry - https://elearningindustry.com/
* E-Learning Guild - https://www.elearningguild.com/

LinkedIn groups

* Career Counselor Technology Forum
* E-Learning 2.0

Examples of Learning Management Systems that you may want to explore

* Moodle
* [Eliademy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eliademy)
* Haiku LMS
* Canvas CV by Instructure
* Luminosity
* CourseSites by Blackboard

Examples of Video Conferencing systems

* Zoom
* JoinMe
* [Cisco WebEx Meetings](http://www.reviews.com/go/r9554/?tid=ZjQwMDlmYjMtNzYwMy00YzhkLTk4NzUtMWU3NjAwMTUxMTgy)
* [GoToMeeting](http://www.reviews.com/go/r7572/?tid=ZWQyOWZhZDMtZjQyMC00MDc4LTkyMzItNGRkMzI3MWY2NDhm)
* FreeConferenceCall.com
* Skype