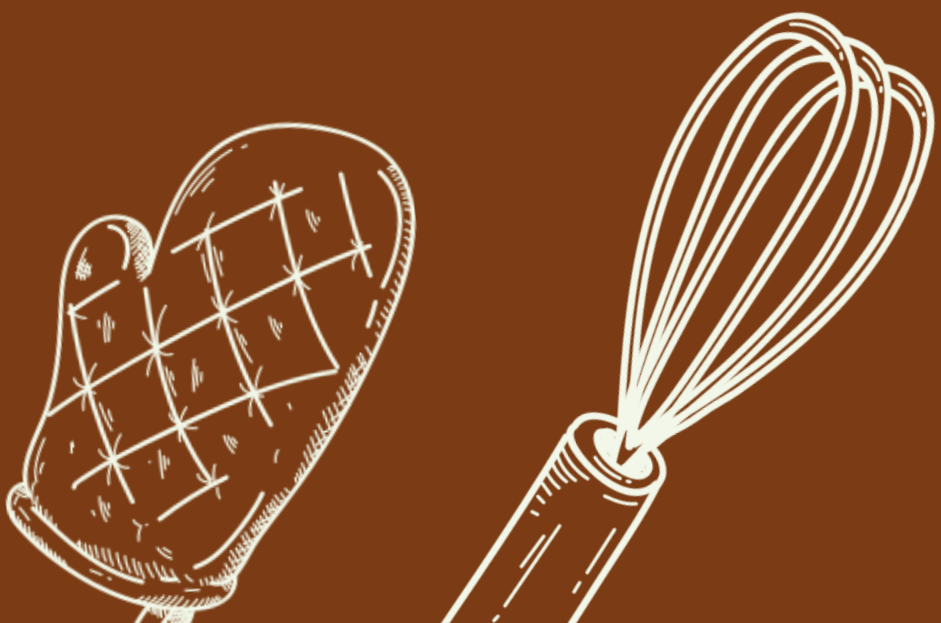


*The secret is
in the blend*

eLearning courses



What are eLearning courses?

For the IDI, eLearning courses are educational courses delivered online in a given timeframe. Typically, such courses are designed for an 8- to 10-week delivery by a group of mentors. IDI generally does not deliver standalone eLearning courses. They are mostly a part of IDI- supported cooperative audits, strategic planning exercises, needs assessment exercises, quality assurance reviews, etc.



What is the secret of a successful eLearning course?

Have you ever heard the phrase, “In cooking, the secret is in the blend”? In this online facilitation recipe, the way you blend the different ingredients to achieve a goal is very important. Once you define the learning objectives for your eLearning experience, you are ready to blend. You can take many decisions about the blend. You can blend different resources and activities, synchronous or asynchronous communication, mentor lead or self-directed interactions, etc. Always keep in mind the learning objectives: this will help you to make important decisions about the blend. In fact, a successful eLearning course is the result of a perfect blend of different synchronous and asynchronous elements, different learning techniques and different technological options.

Deciding on the blend: Choosing eLearning methodology and technology

At the IDI we have adapted the systematic approach to training, which we use for face-to-face training, to an eLearning format. We call it a systematic approach to eLearning. In this approach we use five stages to analyze needs and to design, develop, deliver and evaluate eLearning. Each stage of the process is carefully documented.

- **Analysis.** Define the target, delivery options, timeline, etc.
- **Design.** Define course structure, learning objectives, key learning points, learning plans, etc.
- **Development.** Build the eLearning modules or units (content, activities, etc.).
- **Delivery.** Facilitate (mentor lead) or deliver (self-learning) the eLearning course.
- **Monitoring and evaluation.** Evaluate the learning, reaction and results.

To learn more about IDI's mentor-led eLearning methodology, please browse through [IDI's eLearning specialists textbook](#).



The IDI delivers all its eLearning courses on its own Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS is the software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting and delivery of eLearning courses. LMS also provides some functionalities to set up resources (Webpages, URLs, files, etc.) and activities (discussion forums, quizzes, assignments, etc.). We also use authoring tools to develop packages of interactive and multimedia content, and video conference tools to promote synchronous interactions during the delivery of the eLearning course. We have good experience in blending open-source tools with other pay tools.



For a successful blend that leads to a meaningful, memorable learning experience, we recommend that you do the following:

- **Analyse audience needs.** What is the performance objective? what is the learning need that the eLearning course should address? what is the current level of participants? What is their profile in terms of digital accessibility and internet connectivity?

- **Design for different learning styles.** Your audience will generally have different learning styles. We recommend varying the design to suit different learners, using the experiential learning cycle and use of the nine-step model to design robust eLearning. Ask yourself if the course content is doable in terms of the time available to participants. Design to enable application of learning e.g. strategic planning course. A variety of facilitation methods can be designed. You can find many good facilitation techniques in [here](#).
- **Develop eLearning contents using most appropriate tools.** A variety of tools are available for developing eLearning contents. It is important to visualize the online interaction and stay true to the learning objective. Blend synchronous and asynchronous activities during the course. Use a combination of synchronous activities (like webinars and meetings) and asynchronous activities (prerecorded presentations, reading materials, quizzes, assignments. If connectivity is an issue – minimize number of live sessions, share presentation slides with notes and have an option to share audio recordings of live sessions only.



- **Deliver.** Inform participants about overall expectations from the course, including detailed expectations on key deliverables and timeframes. Allow them enough time to become familiar with the LMS. Plan enough time for regular group work and weekly meetings with mentors to ensure common group understanding and application based on individual learning. Plan specific interactive sessions where participants can share their progress. Plan time slots where mentors and facilitators are available for Q&A. Make sure that all participants or participating groups are progressing by regularly checking in with them. Differentiate between individual learning achievements, group work, and organizational progress.
- **Evaluate.** The reaction and learning can be evaluated through a survey, through the evaluation exercise in each session, or through a way forward webinar. However, it is important to evaluate application and overall impact. That can be done by blending eLearning courses with larger initiatives that require immediate application of the learning. For example, in our cooperative audit support model, SAI audit teams are trained through eLearning to prepare for the audit to be conducted. Training in strategic planning is conducted online to support SAIs in developing strategic plans.





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