

TYPES OF E-LEARNING

There are four categories of e-learning, and three 'types' of e-learning, which could apply to the four categories.

The four categories are:

1. New information – this is generally passive learning. The Learner will simply receive and read the information, which may be up-date from time to time.
2. Knowledge Transfer – this requires some participation by the Learner, who will read, listen (if there is an audio component), and answer questions.
3. New Skills – this will involve more participation. The Learner will read, listen and try out the new skills, and will then be assessed for progress made.
4. Certification – this is the highest level of e-learning, because there is an examination at the end of the course, and a certificate awarded.



The three 'types' of e-learning are:

A. Traditional: these courses have depth of content and preparation, and are usually produced by experts, and to give the Learner a real understanding of the subject.

B. Rapid Self-directed, also called Asynchronous. This is usually related to one specific aspect of the subject, and the courses are produced rapidly and liable to change. The Learner works at his or her own pace. It could be based on CDs, DVDs, Networks, Intranet or Internet and may include access to instructors through bulleting boards or discussion forums.

C. Rapid, controlled, also called Synchronous, because it is conducted at set times, for example in phone-ins or internet classrooms. It is conducted in real time, with a live instructor. All Learners log in at the prescribed time and can speak to the group under the control of the instructor, by raising a cyber hand. The course may last weeks or even much longer.

Some projects are well-served by the Rapid types of courses, especially when the budget is limited, or when new ideas need to be introduced quickly. Other projects, with longer lead times and higher budgets, need the Traditional e-learning approach, especially when it involves new, original content.