

How to...

Use video effectively in e-learning



Videos can be a great addition to e-learning packages - but only if they're used in the right way. Here are Saffron's top ten tips for making sure videos are adding value to your e-learning rather than just adding megabytes to your course.

1 **Keep videos short and to the point**

Unless you're making the video interactive, keep it short and focused so your learner doesn't switch off. This is especially true for monologues given by company executives: keep the learner engaged by keeping it short and sweet.

2 **Use videos for emphasis**

Don't overuse video. Always ask yourself 'is this the best way to illustrate the learning?' Video can be more memorable than text so use it for emphasising and reinforcing key learning points.

3 **Make videos interactive**

If you're considering including a longer video then make it interactive, for example by pausing it intermittently to ask the learner questions. This keeps them involved and focuses their attention on the learning points you want to emphasise.

4 **Follow up with questions or a summary**

If you don't make the video interactive in any way then make sure you follow it up with a brief summary of the key points covered. This should help to prevent any key learning points slipping through the net.

5 **Use videos to demonstrate how to, or how not to, do something**

A video can be a great way of illustrating how not to do something and then getting the learners to spot the mistakes. Depending on time, you can then follow up by showing them the correct way of completing the task.

6 **Use actors not real employees**

Your video will only be as good as the people in it and employees may be nervous or forget their lines. Use professional actors but make sure you send scripts through in advance, giving clear instructions on character and costume.

7 **Be creative**

Think about how television programmes are filmed and consider whether you can mimic their style. For example, try using different camera angles to break up long speeches or reinforcing key points by having text appear on screen.

8 **Include a transcript**

Providing a transcript makes a video accessible to everyone, such as learners with hearing difficulties or those without headphones or sound cards. It also enables learners to refer back to the content without watching it again.

9 **Be technically clever**

Compress video files as much as possible to avoid learner frustration whilst waiting for them to load. Consider creating a low bandwidth version for slower internet connections, perhaps using photos rather than video, or lower quality video.

10 **Make videos downloadable elsewhere**

Get the most out of your video by including it as a downloadable resource, either in the course or from an intranet site. That way, the learner can refresh their memory of the key learning points without completing the whole course again.