

# Glossary of Professional Development Terms

## Delivery Formats

Professional development learning opportunities are delivered in three basic formats:

**Blended Learning:** Combines face-to-face and synchronous Web-based, instructor-led classroom experiences with asynchronous computer- and Web-based activities. Also called "hybrid learning," "technology-mediated instruction," "Web-enhanced instruction," and "mixed-mode instruction."

- **Computer-based Training (CBT):** A packaged learning product, often on CD-ROM, used to teach most of the content. CBT is a good option in places where users have a limited access to broadband Internet.
- **Web-based Training (WBT):** A self-paced, online learning opportunity. It is generally presented in modular fashion where users can spend a few minutes or a few hours working through the selected material and can revisit the course as often as necessary.
  - **Asynchronous Tools:** Provide instant access to Web-based resources, day or night and year-round. They enable communication and collaboration over a period of time through a "different time, different place" mode. These tools allow people to connect at their own convenience and are useful for sustaining dialogue and collaboration over time. They provide resources and information that are instantly accessible in multiple time zones.
  - **Synchronous Tools:** Enable real-time communication and collaboration in a "same time, different place" mode. These tools have the advantage of being able to engage people instantly and at the same point in time. They allow for live discussions and exchanges of ideas similar to a face-to-face environment.

**Distance Learning (DL):** Delivered using the World Wide Web and other computer technologies, like WBT and CBT. It may be provided using asynchronous and synchronous tools. **Face-to-Face Training (FTF):** Traditional classroom-based approach offered in large or small groups. The trainer and trainees are in same place at the same time. Instructor-led delivery may include information sharing, exercise, discussion, problem-solving, and application of learning. FTF offers a great chance for networking and relationship building between and among instructors and participants. According to researchers, face-to-face communication is the most effective way to deliver instruction because it allows the participants to provide visual cues and verbal feedback, as well as communicate via body language.

## Types of Resources to Support Professional Development

The following terms are related to the different types of resources used to support teaching and learning:

**Archived Resources:** Audio or video recordings of live events that are posted online for future reference.

**Audiocast:** Audio presentations that are broadcast via the Internet. Also called "broadcast calls" and "audio conferences."

**Directory:** Includes listings of resources, policies, standards, and procedures. May also be referred to as a "resource catalog" or "guide."

**e-Training:** Self-paced, interactive multimedia presentations available on the Internet for individual or group instruction.

**Job Aid:** Teaching devices intended to be self-explanatory and self-instructional. They may include a formalized set of devices or tools, such as instruction cards, memory joggers, or wall charts, that allow users to quickly access the information needed to perform a task.

**Multimedia Instructor-led Presentations:** Recorded learning events where the instructor delivers the training in real time. It requires participants to attend at the scheduled time. Such trainings may be interactive if the delivery platforms permits.

**Podcast:** A series of digital media files that are often released episodically. They may be downloaded through Web syndication (e.g., iTunes, RSS feed). These audio or video files are played back on a mobile device or personal computer.

**Question and Answer (Q&A):** Provides answers to questions in the context of content, policy, and procedures.

**Reports:** Documents which present focused, relevant content to a specific audience. They often are used to display the result of an experiment, investigation, or inquiry. The audience may be public or private, an individual or the general public. Reports are used in government, business, education, science, and other fields. Examples include research report, surveys, and policy reports.

**Self-paced Multimedia Learning (MML) Resources:** Self-paced, interactive trainings available on demand at any time and place.

**Simulation:** Exercises designed to mimic the processes, events, and circumstances of the real work environment. In-basket exercises, case studies, role playing, and behavior modeling are all types of simulations.

**Tip Sheet:** Documents containing the latest information and strategies for job-related functions.

**Toolkit:** Instructions and guidance developed to help users perform specific activities and functions.

**Training Guide:** Instructions for trainers or end users designed to improve the quality of the job function or performance of the user. Such manuals are widely used as introductions to subject matter prior to training, outlines to be followed during training, and as a general reference document.

**Tutorial:** Provides focused, specific individual instruction in particular area (i.e., a program that provides instruction for the use of a system or of software).

**Web Application Page:** Data-driven pages that allow for a two-way transfer of information between a user and the computer, such as filling out a form, taking a poll, and using interactive maps.

**Webcast:** A live video or audio broadcast used to disseminate information. It is frequently accompanied by a visual presentation with charts and graphs, and may include interactive capabilities. It is delivered electronically with an instructor or facilitator who sets the pace and offers instruction. When these events are recorded and posted online, they are referred to as archived resources.

**Webinar:** A virtual, Web-based meeting, conference, or seminar that allows interactive communication (text, chat, video, etc.) with the hosts.

**White Paper:** An authoritative report or guide that helps users to understand an issue, solve a problem, or make a decision.