

A title card for 'Video Production' featuring a dark blue background. In the center, a hand holds a magnifying glass over a large, stylized, light blue word that appears to be 'video'. The word 'Production' is written in a white, sans-serif font over the magnifying glass and the word 'video'.

Video Production

Video can be a great way to communicate training content. When used correctly, it can engage learners by showing and telling new information.

However, not all courses need video. In fact, most will not. For many people, training = lecture. It may be tempting to simply record a lecture, upload it, and call it a “course.” But as we learned in Training for Results, true behavioral change requires more than simply passing on information.

Video can be useful, but it is time-consuming to shoot and edit. Many learners still do not have the bandwidth to access long videos. Most of the time, would-be video content is better delivered using text (and images to illustrate).

IMPORTANT NOTE!

A recent study shows that students who focus more on activities in online courses (assessments, projects, etc.) are more engaged and learn more than students who focus more on video content. So while video may seem to your students as the most important aspect of the course (it’s a key price perception influencer, for example), remember it isn’t as important as the social and application-based activities you build into your lessons.

If you still think it best to include video content in your course, here are a few tips to producing good video:

Step 1: Plan and practice your video content

The lesson should be viewed as a “flow” that takes the students through a sequence and delivers new information in chunks (usually through videos or readings) but also gives them opportunity to apply the new information immediately through application exercises (e.g., discussions, formative quizzes, journaling, exercises, etc.). Plan your content; write your script; practice, practice, practice; and record!

Step 2: Add visual notes

Now that you have a script, it’s time to add notes about what your students will see, not just hear. We recommend separating your script into two columns with notes about what will be on screen on the left and the script for what will be said over it on the right. We use Microsoft Teams to draft our scripts for easy access and collaboration.

A banner image with a dark blue background. In the center, the word "Video" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "Production" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The background features a faint, stylized graphic of a hand holding a magnifying glass over a blue, abstract shape that resembles the word "video" in a lowercase, rounded font.

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Step 3: Prepare visualizations

The next step is to record the visual part of the video. Visuals may include photos, texts, diagrams, animations, video clips, screencasts, and any other visualization helpful to illustrating and connecting the words being said. To prepare each visualization, you'll need to at least rough draft form before proceeding.

Now that you have your full audio track, the final piece is to record the visualizations. To do so, you'll need to use some form of presentation software where you can record on your screen. In a best case scenario, the lecturer will also be able to interact with the visualizations (drawing lines, circling, underlining, moving, etc.) while the student hears the lecturer's voice (see any video on Khan Academy, for example).

Once you have your visual canvases prepared in the software of your choice, use screen recording software to capture your interactions with the content while you listen to the audio track.

Step 4: Edit

Now it's time to put all the pieces together for a finished video (video bumpers, screen recordings, and audio track). We use Screenflow to do this (since it's also where we record visualizations) but any video editing software will do.