Quick Win

Online students are often less patient than classroom students, and they want to see results quickly. If a course takes too long to get students active, students tend to drop out. A quick win works against that by convincing students to stick with your course.

What is a quick win?

The quick win is an easy-to-do activity, or an aha-moment for students. When you add it, Udemy marketplace data shows course ratings and student course completion rise significantly. Since students make the decision to stay in your course or leave fairly early, you want the quick win to be within the first 15 minutes, or ideally within the first 3 lectures.

Why does the quick win work?

By learning actively, students feel a sense of accomplishment. Their time investment in the course is "already worth it." Once students are bought into your course and have had a small taste of success, they will be more willing to spend time and effort to complete it.

A quick win should be...

- In the first 3 lectures or 15 min of your course (before students drop out)
- Easy to do, so students feel a sense of accomplishment
- Not so easy that it bores students. Keep in mind that students want to feel a reward for having accomplished something early on in the course
- Not longer than 5–7 min to complete
- Easily accessible. Avoid activities that need installation or downloads, or lead to a different webpage

Quick win ideas:

A A reflection activity or activating question, so students start thinking about the topic and why it's relevant to them

B A short activity, e.g. a quiz, brainstorm or challenge. This is especially great if students already consumed a bit of content about the topic by this stage

C A community building activity, e.g. students introduce themselves on the Q&A board. A common prompt for this activity is: "Quickly share who you are, where you're from and why you chose to do this course".

D Personal goal setting, where students describe their personal goal for this course. This can increase motivation and perceived relevancy for the course

Quick win ideas:

HTML course: Asks students to go to their coding interface, type a simple code, and see how the color and font completely change into something magical

Certification course: Students look at 2 study plans and create their own study plan

Adobe Premiere course: Students add text to a video

Entrepreneurship course: Students write down their business idea in 3 sentences or less

Personal development course: Students fill out a worksheet about their strengths and weaknesses

Meditation course: Students try a quick breathing exercise and try to relax tense shoulder muscles

Unconscious bias course: Students do a quick pretest to identify own personal bias

Course on reducing stress: Students fill out a questionnaire to identify their current stress response and then come back to it at the end of the course

Healthy eating course: Make a list of things that you buy every time you're in the store even though you want to cut them out of your diet