



## E-LEARNING? E-LEARNING?

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### Abstract

The purpose of this article is to examine the meaning and implications of e-learning and to assist individuals and organizations, whether they are colleges or workplaces, with implementing e-learning. The author explains his broad definition of e-learning, levels of e-learning and discusses benefits of e-learning- the revolutionary approach. The article contains information for leaders in education and training—instructional designers, developers, consultants, instructors and administrators.

Way back in 1998, it was always e-learning, with the hyphen. Smart Force is the “e-learning Company”, and Cisco’s John Chambers evangelizes e-learning. As e-learning matures, some of us are dropping the hyphen. Microsoft uses eLearn, as do SRI and Internet Time Group.

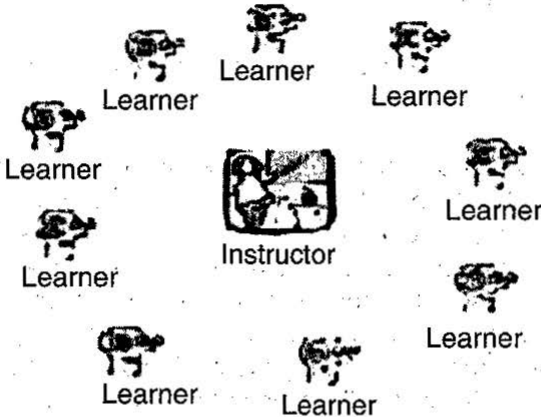
### What is e-learning?

“e-learning is to classroom learning as cell phones are to a pay phone at the bus station” e-learning is revolutionary. Elliott Masie, one of the leaders in the e-learning field, tells us that the ‘e’ stands for experience. The resources section on the SmartForce Web site explains that e-learning is dynamic, happens in real time, collaborative, individual, comprehensive, and it enables the enterprise. Cisco tells us that e-learning is Internet-enabled learning. Click2learn.com takes a wide view suggesting that e-learning refers to the creation, delivery, and management of training.

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e-learning provides a new set of tools that can add value to all the traditional learning modes-classroom experiences, textbook study, CD-ROM, and traditional computer based training. e-learning can be CD-ROM-based, network-based, intranet-based or internet-based. It can include text, video, audio, animation and virtual environments. It can be a very rich learning experience that can even surpass the level of training you might experience in a crowded classroom. It is self-paced, hands-on learning.

e-learning focuses on the individual learner. For years, training has organized itself for the convenience and needs of instructors, institutions, and bureaucracies.



Think of learners as customers. Compete for their time and interests. Give them choices. e-learning is collaborative, because people learn from one another. e-learning connects learners with experts, colleagues, and professional peers, both in and outside the organization. This facility provides faster learning at reduced costs, increased access to learning, and clear accountability for all participants in the learning process. In today's fast-paced culture, organizations that implement e-learning provide their work force with the ability to turn change into an advantage. With e-learning you can empower learners, and the learner, as well as the mentoring system, is held accountable.

A study found that online students had more peer contact with others in the class, enjoyed it more, spent more time on class work, understood the material better, and performed, on average, 20% better than students who were taught in the traditional classroom.

e-learning is the convergence of learning and the Internet. The term e-learning groups together education, training and structured information delivered by computers, through the Internet, WWW or an organization's network. e-learning allows you to learn anywhere and usually at any

time, as long as you have a properly configured computer. e-learning is a vision of what corporate training can become. e-learning is internet-enabled learning. Components can include content delivery in multiple formats, management of the learning experience, and a networked community of learners, content developers and experts. e-learning is the online delivery of information, communication, education, and training. e-learning can suffer from many of the same pitfalls as classroom training, such as boring slides, monotonous speech, and little opportunity for interaction. The beauty of e-learning, however, is that new software allows the creation of very effective learning environments that can overwhelm you in the material.

## Levels of e-learning

e-learning falls into four categories, from the very basic to the very advanced. The categories are:

- Knowledge Databases — Retention for a learner varies, based on content type and the delivery vehicle. The better the match of content and delivery vehicle to a learner's style, the greater the retention, and therefore the greater the results. While not necessarily seen as actual training, these databases are the most basic form of e-learning. It is knowledge databases on software sites offering indexed explanations along with step-by-step instructions for performing specific tasks. These are usually moderately interactive, meaning that you can either feed in a key word or phrase to search the database, or make a selection from an alphabetical list. This allows students to select learning materials, or to be directed to content that meets their level of knowledge, interest and what they need to know to perform more effectively in their particular activity.

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To use the knowledgebase, enter a one word topic in the "Topic" field, and/or enter a brief description in the "Description" field.

Example Enter "video" in the Topic field to view all video related issues, or enter "MCI Device error" in the description field to view only MCI Device error records.

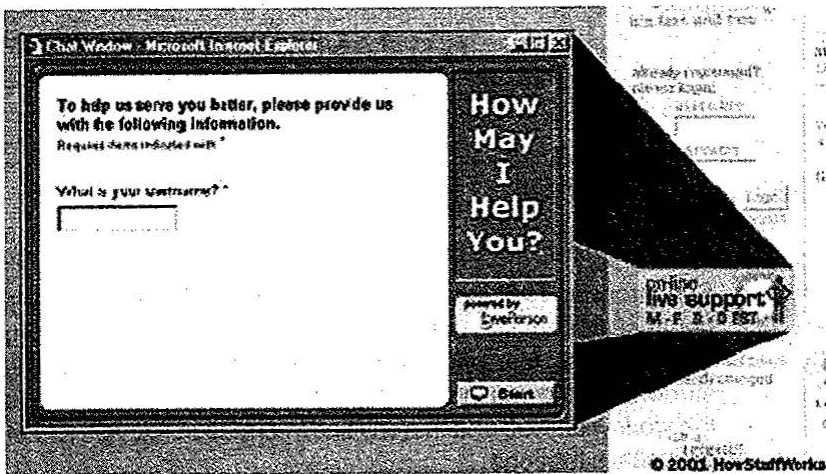
Topic

Miscellaneous

Description

Search Clear Form

- Online Support - Old-world learning models don't scale to meet the new world learning challenge. e-learning can provide the tools to meet that challenge. Online support is also a form of e-learning and functions in a similar manner to knowledge databases. Online support comes in the form of forums, chat rooms, online bulletin boards, e-mail, or live instant-messaging support. It is more interactive than knowledge databases, and offers the opportunity for more specific questions and answers, as well as more immediate answers. This allows instructors to communicate information in a more engaging fashion than in text-based distance education programs. Online support offers a wide-range of text, diagrams and images with video and sound, including virtual reality technology that in the future will improve the effectiveness of the approach even further.



- Asynchronous Training - e-learning will not replace the classroom setting, but enhance it, taking advantage of new content and delivery technologies to enable learning. It involves self-paced learning, CD-ROM-based, network-based, intranet-based or internet-based. It may include access to instructors through online bulletin boards, online discussion groups and e-mail. Or, it may be totally self-contained with links to reference materials in place of a live instructor.




HOME COURSE MAP HELP RESOURCES GLOSSARY EDIT

About the Introduction module Quick Start

WELCOME	
HOW TO USE THIS COURSE	
KICK OFF	
OBJECTIVES	

Topic 1: Welcome	Go: Started, Navigation + Extra Sample Course.
Topic 2: How to use this course	If you've never gone through an online course, this topic addresses the "extras" you will find here.
Topic 3: Kick Off	The issues are real, this topic sets the framework for why it matters and why you should care about HIPAA.
Topic 4: Objectives	Learning objectives help you understand what will be required of you during the course as well as what you should learn by taking it

Audio:  Pages with audio have headphone icon next to navigation controls. NOTE: If using dialup, files may take 60-90 seconds to download.

Next

- Synchronous Training - e-learning is attractive to corporations because it promises better use of time, accelerated learning, global reach, fast pace, and accountability. It encourages students to browse information through hyperlinks to sites on the worldwide web and thereby find information relevant to their personal situations.

Synchronous training is done in real-time with a live instructor facilitating the training. Everyone logs in at the set time and can communicate directly with the instructor and with each other. You can raise your cyber hand and even view the cyber whiteboard. It lasts for a set amount of time — from a single session to several weeks, months or even years. This type of training usually takes place via internet web sites, audio or video conferencing, internet telephony or even two-way live broadcasts to students in a classroom.