

Coloring Outside the Lines: Rethinking Blended Learning

eLearn 2004, Crystal City, VA

November 5, 2004

Blending Dimension +/Benefits, -/Challenges, and Best Uses

The following tables were produced by 100+ participants during my keynote, "Coloring Outside the Lines: Rethinking Blended Learning" at the AACE eLearn Conference on November 5, 2004, in Crystal City, Virginia. During the keynote, I presented ten potential blending dimensions (adapted with permission from Singh, H., & Reed, C. (2004). *Achieving success with blended learning: A white paper*. Navowave, Inc.) and began a dialog to expand the traditional definition of blended learning which commonly includes a mix of online and classroom instruction. Keynote participants built the following tables, describing the benefits, challenges, and best uses for each blending dimension.

Thanks to everyone who participated in this dialog! A few of the tables have not been started and most would benefit from additional work. If anyone would like to continue to collaborate on building and validating this work, I would love to be involved.

Regards,

Patti
patti@learningpeaks.com

	<i>Element: Physical space/f2f</i>	<i>Element: Virtual space/distance</i>
+		
-		

Best uses for physical space/f2f:

Best uses for virtual space/distance: non collocated learners

	<i>Element: Synchronous/live</i>	<i>Element: Asynchronous/not live</i>
+	Real time feedback Relationship building	Sufficient time to deliberate Time flexibility
-	Potential technology hurdles -firewalls -bandwidth -pc configuration Time zones/scheduling Keyboarding skills Aiming for perfection can be a hindrance Performance anxiety	Interaction delay Keeping track of discussion threads

Best uses for synchronous/live: live chat office hours

Best uses for asynchronous/not live:

Coloring Outside the Lines: Rethinking Blended Learning

eLearn 2004, Crystal City, VA

November 5, 2004

	<i>Element: Self-paced/content interactions</i>	<i>Element: Collaborative people interactions</i>
+	Just in time learning Multiple locations Busy learners Timed delivery of content More time to reflect Flexible Meets individual needs Learner can control time Move at own speed Time independent Learner controlled Easily packaged Bounded transportable Chunkable, reusable, adaptable Sleep friendly SCORMable	Social learning environment Discovery learning Sustained motivation Multiple perspectives Good for people who like social interaction Trust and sharing Unbounded, collective Synergistic, authentic Competency driven Different perspectives "Fuzzy friendly"
-	Lower motivation Less interaction Limited viewpoints Tendency to procrastinate Bounded Social isolation Some learners will want social interaction Need discipline and self direction	Messy Inequality Time consuming Hard to assess Conflicts Difficult to manage Less structured Need to provide rules of engagement Some learners will not want social interaction Need multitasking skills

Best uses for self-paced/content interactions: drill and practice

Best uses for collaborative/people interactions

Coloring Outside the Lines: Rethinking Blended Learning

eLearn 2004, Crystal City, VA

November 5, 2004

	<i>Element: Structured/formal</i>	<i>Element: Unstructured/informal</i>
+	Easier to design Efficient Controllable Repeatable Homogeneous Predictable Easy to Access Focused Task oriented Easier assessments (time)	Learning flexibility Creativity Critical thinking Learner centered Variable pace More thinking time More depth Heterogeneous
-	Teacher centric (not learner centric) Too controlled Boring Lock-step Superficial Short reply time	Unpredictable Inconsistent Risky Difficult to access Inefficient Procrastination Deviation from the learning objectives Student discomfort

Best uses for structured: behaviorist, when less interactive is desired, time constraints

Best uses for unstructured: cognitive, constructivist, when more interactivity desired, more time available

	<i>Element: Fixed time</i>	<i>Element: Open ended</i>
+	Easier for students to manage and plan Promotes interactivity Deadlines Focused Assessments can model reality Provides structure	Self-paced allows learner to enter and finish anytime Time for exploration outside specified curriculum Flexible Accommodates multiple learning styles Opportunity for greater feedback Better access
-	Less convenient Less flexible May limit access Artificial conditions F2F requires travel and funding Less time for exploration	Easy to get off track, distractions, difficult to keep up with learners (out of site out of mind) Lacks motivation Less support Lack of structure Requires more self-discipline/time management More difficult for instructor to manage Requires security for exams

Best uses for fixed time: online + F2F, interactivity needed, peer learning

Best uses for open ended: just in time, not tied to instruction

Coloring Outside the Lines: Rethinking Blended Learning

eLearn 2004, Crystal City, VA

November 5, 2004

	<i>Element: Instruction</i>	<i>Element: Performance Support</i>
+		
-		

Best uses for instruction:

Best uses for performance support:

	<i>Element: Off-the-shelf/generic content</i>	<i>Element: Proprietary/internal content</i>
+	Save time and money Best practices Just in time Reviewed for value Consistent Meets standards	Customized, fits needs exactly Can tailor to gap More control Flexibility Short term expensive but saves money with increasing use Adaptive Can be changed Tailored Branded Can choose tools and technologies
-	Rigid Doesn't quite fit Not easily updatable Doesn't meet all needs Limits content Difficult to change May be a false economy Decisions implicit Stifles imagination	Time consuming to design/develop Only reflect your point of view Lack of QA Time consuming to develop Resource intensive – dependent on personnel Less synergistic

Best uses for off-the-shelf/generic content: immediate training need, introductory training/review, standardized training, respond to variety of needs in a short time

Best uses for proprietary/internal content: higher order skills, environmentally specific- local context or culturally sensitive, respond to specific needs in depth

Coloring Outside the Lines: Rethinking Blended Learning

eLearn 2004, Crystal City, VA

November 5, 2004

	<i>Element: Instructional context</i>	<i>Element: Work context</i>
+	Instructor authored Controlled focus	Just in time Relevant Student authored Authentic
-	Can't use immediately Lack of transfer Could be perceived as irrelevant Not in context	Possible disconnect or time loss Possibly less structured Quality and quantity Cognitive interference (email, phone, duties)

Best uses for instructional context: Establish a theory, teaching foundation

Best uses for work context: Authentic environment, applied with real practice

	<i>Element: Fixed content</i>	<i>Element: Content open, changing</i>
+	Lower cost? Reusable Easy to teach Ensures foundational learning Easier assessments Lots of reference materials Standardized content Easier to provide to student	More relevant Adaptive Creative Discovery Allows creative thought and innovation Appeals to more learning styles and unique instructional strategies Real world Dynamic Learner control Enhanced motivation
-	Tends to not be creative teaching Take for granted that students understand the basics Outdated information Static Narrow focus Stiff Little flexibility	Student frustration Harder to assess Learner goes outside instructor's expertise Difficult to predict students' needs Challenges role of instructor

Best uses for fixed content: synchronous, history, specific skills or procedures, testing for competence, hygiene, safety

Best uses for open content: asynchronous, IT, technology, multimedia, civics, current events, science

Coloring Outside the Lines: Rethinking Blended Learning

eLearn 2004, Crystal City, VA

November 5, 2004

	<i>Element: Directed</i>	<i>Element: Exploratory</i>
+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content completely "covered" Instructor directed/control Closed Clear expectations Easier to assess Ease of delivery Structured Faster orientation Provides context Easily recognizable goals and expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated Wider coverage of content More real world Negotiated (student and instructor) Student empowerment and motivation Faculty as coach Fosters interaction Collaborative Constructivist Active Encourages HOT (hands-on?) Challenging to instructor and learner Higher quality outcome Self-directed More student interest driven Flexibility Active engagement
-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linear Not higher order Boring Passive learner Rote memorization rather than critical thinking Less emphasis on different experience levels and learning styles Passive May not build on prior knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Difficult to assess Requires highly defined learning outcomes Instructor dealing with change Loss of instructor control Can be overwhelming Confusion, frustration Time consuming May lack adequate learner resources Easy to get lost Must be self-directed learner

Best uses for directed: well defined content novice learners, skill based, sequential, performance learning (skill/task performance), shorter time frame

Best uses for exploratory: choose own topic, experienced learners, longer time frame, higher order learning (synthesis and analysis), collateral learning skills, creativity, discussion, transferable, self-directed learners