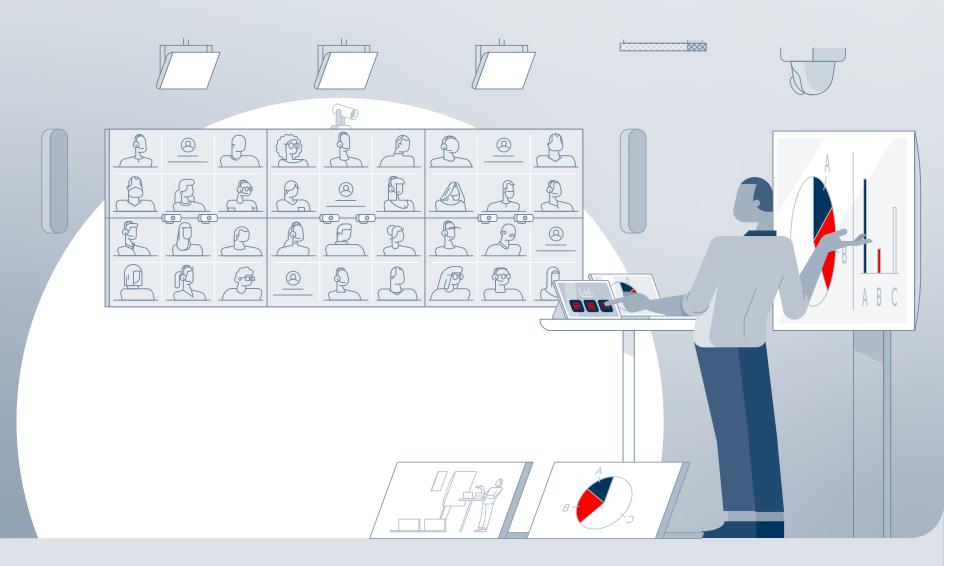# 9 tips for choosing the right virtual classroom solution

Distance learning solutions can boost the results of your learning and development activities or become a drain on productivity and resources. Before taking a decision, consider these important tips we drafted together with veteran trainer Anke Smolders-Aidam!

1. Pedagogy

Before talking specs, talk pedagogy first. Determine your training needs and goals. For example, who needs to be trained in what subject and in what timeframe? Not all virtual classrooms will be able to meet your needs.

2. Size

Determine roughly how many participants will attend your sessions. Training 10 people requires a completely different solution to training 80.

3. Place

Where will the trainer be working from? On-site, at home or on the road? Be sure that the solution offers the required flexibility. Ask the same question on the participant side: will they all be remote or mixed with in-class participants in a hybrid virtual classroom?

4. Feedback

Feedback from learners is important for 2 reasons: first of all, it brings a trainer energy and motivation; secondly, it shows if the training is getting through or needs to be optimized. Oral feedback is a given in a virtual classroom, but digital feedback tools (e.g. virtual hand raising) and session analytics can bring huge added value.

5. Interaction

To ensure continued engagement, to keep everybody involved and to change the pace of the class, interactive tools such as questions, polls, quizzes and screen sharing can be very helpful. If these are important for you, be sure to ask for the right tools.

6. Collaboration

Beside feedback and 2-way communication between the trainer and learners, collaboration between learners in virtual subgroups can be an important training need. If so, be sure that breakout rooms are a possibility.

7. User-friendliness

Very often the trainer is a team member with specialized knowledge, rather than an online training expert. To offer the best online training experience, go for an intuitive solution that makes him/her feel comfortable in front of the virtual class, comparable to a normal class.

8. Test

Test-run any solutions you consider. Most suppliers allow test-runs of one sort or another. Cross-check which solution meets all your training needs.

9. Think it through

Last but not least... Take your time. This decision is important and has a long-term impact on the effectiveness of your future trainings and ultimately your contribution to the company's strategy.

To experience an engaging and interactive virtual classroom yourself, join one of our free sessions on 'The Future of Learning': www.barco.com/discoverweconnect

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