

# THE ULTIMATE COURSE CREATOR

## COURSE BOOK

Design, Develop, and Run Your Own Wildly  
Profitable Online Training Program



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# Module 1: The Benefits of Creating an Online Course

*The Global E-Learning Market is poised to reach almost \$400 billion by 2026 - Statista*

The benefits of online courses are extraordinary, both for your business and for your clients. Online courses have revolutionized learning, and with all the amazing and affordable tools and technology available to us today, there's never been an easier and better time to create your own online training program.

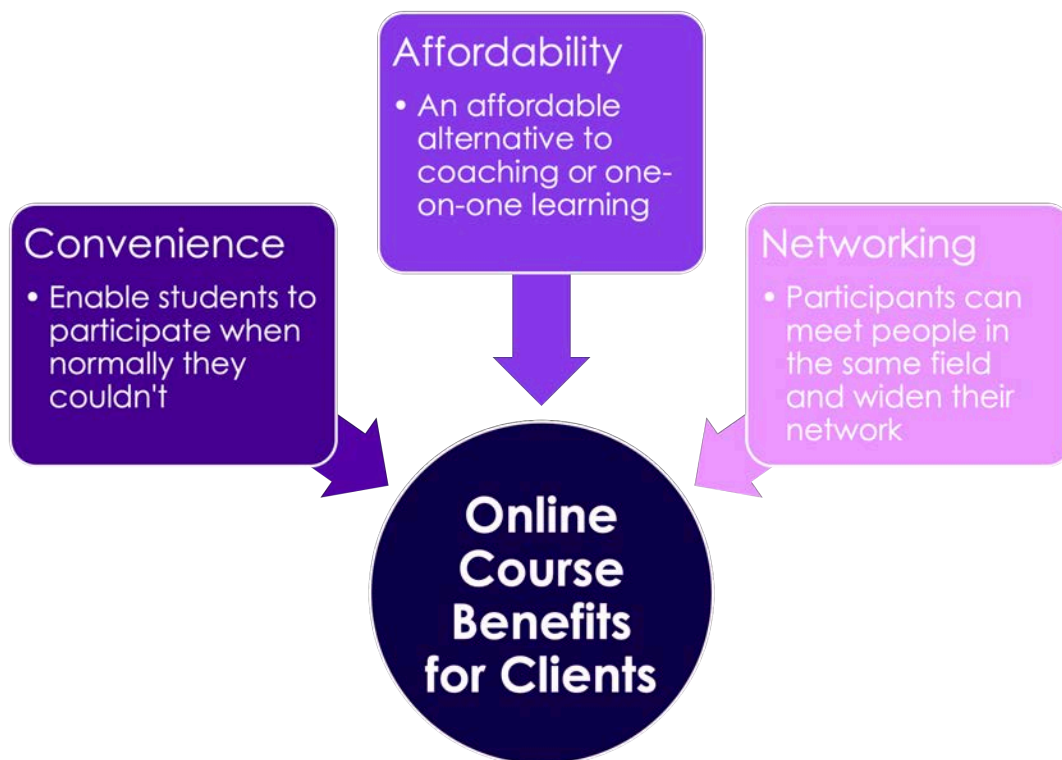
## The Benefits of Online Courses for Your Clients

**Convenience.** Online learning reaches more people and enables them to participate in courses when in normal circumstances they wouldn't be able to. For example, because work or family commitments keep them at home. They can study and learn new skills at their own pace and at convenient times that fit in with busy schedules and lives.

Online course content can be readily accessed, enabling students to repeat material or tests as many times as necessary to fully understand the course lessons.

**Affordability.** Online courses are an affordable alternative to coaching or one-on-one learning. Students can access the knowledge and experience of experts such as yourself at lower-priced or more affordable options than one-on-one work. And if your schedule prevents you from taking on additional one-on-one clients, your clients can still access you and your knowledge via your online course.

**Networking.** Course participants can meet people in the same field or circumstances, and widen their network. They can learn from other people's experience or knowledge, even if they never actually meet in person.



## The Benefits of Online Courses for You

Creating online courses offers you several key benefits:

**Reach a Wider Audience.** In addition to helping more of your current clients or employees learn new skills, an online course will enable you to reach a far wider audience of potential new customers with your knowledge, experience and teaching content, but without working twice as hard. This is especially important if you have reached a plateau with the number of clients you can reach.

If you're currently teaching a subject face-to-face, you can convert your knowledge and experience to an online course that reaches a potentially global audience. You can also adapt your one-on-one coaching content to an online course format.

**Flexibility.** Online courses offer great flexibility; your online course can stand alone, or be a valuable complement or supplement to your other teaching or coaching.

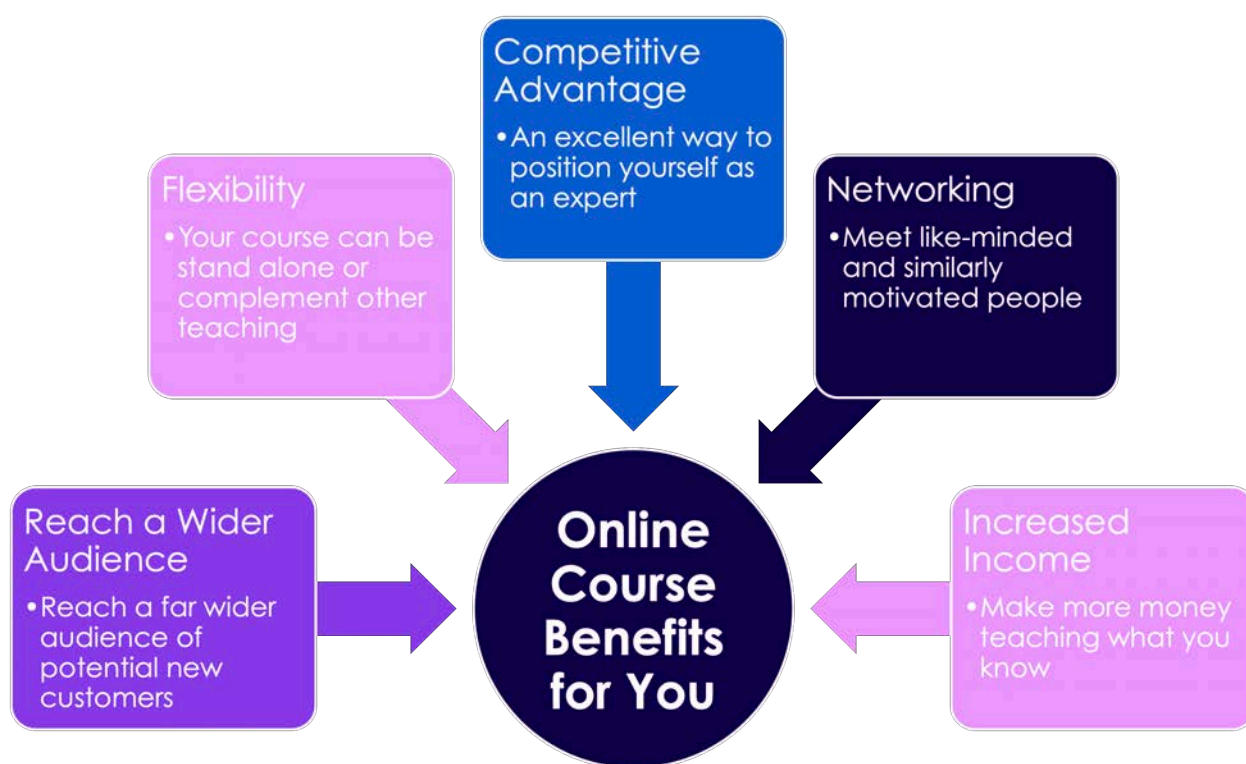
**Competitive Advantage.** Having your own online courses gives you a competitive advantage. They are an excellent way to position yourself as an expert and help you get well known for your topic

**Networking.** If you take an active role in the delivery of your course, it can be a good opportunity for networking as you will meet like-minded and similarly motivated people.

**Increased Income.** Online courses are an excellent way to reach more people and make more money teaching what you know.

They are also a valuable source of semi-passive income: once you've done the work for the topic, you don't have to do a great deal of extra work to make money from it. And, if you currently provide your services on a one-to-one basis, this less time-consuming income can free you up to be more selective about who you work with.

An online course is a terrific upsell opportunity. Through your course, your students will learn about other products and services you offer.



## Learning Objectives:

By the time you complete this course, you'll be able to:

- Research your market and identify a need, so you can pick the course topics that your target customers want to learn about most
- Create a clear and logical structure for your course with course goals, high priority modules, key steps, and key content
- Write results-focused learning objectives and learning activities that ensure your students will take action and implement what you're teaching
- Build engagement, interaction, and accountability into your course
- Select the best media formats for your course, so that you can create your content quickly AND give your students the most effective learning experience
- Identify and create the distinct types of content and resources you need for your course, including course book, worksheets, media scripts, text, video, and audio
- Set an appropriate price for your course and a system for accepting payments
- Choose your course delivery platform, and schedule your course for delivery
- Run an engaging, results-focused online course that leads to happy, successful students who sing your praises

- Measure your results and gather feedback from your students, so that you can continue to develop and improve your course

### **Action Steps:**

1. Why do you think your clients need you to create an online course?
2. What are the key benefits your course will bring to you and your business?



## Module 2 - Choose Your Course Niche or Topic

It's very tempting to create a course that teaches what *you* want to teach, and then try and market that course to your audience. You have a topic that you're excited about and you want to tell others all about it.

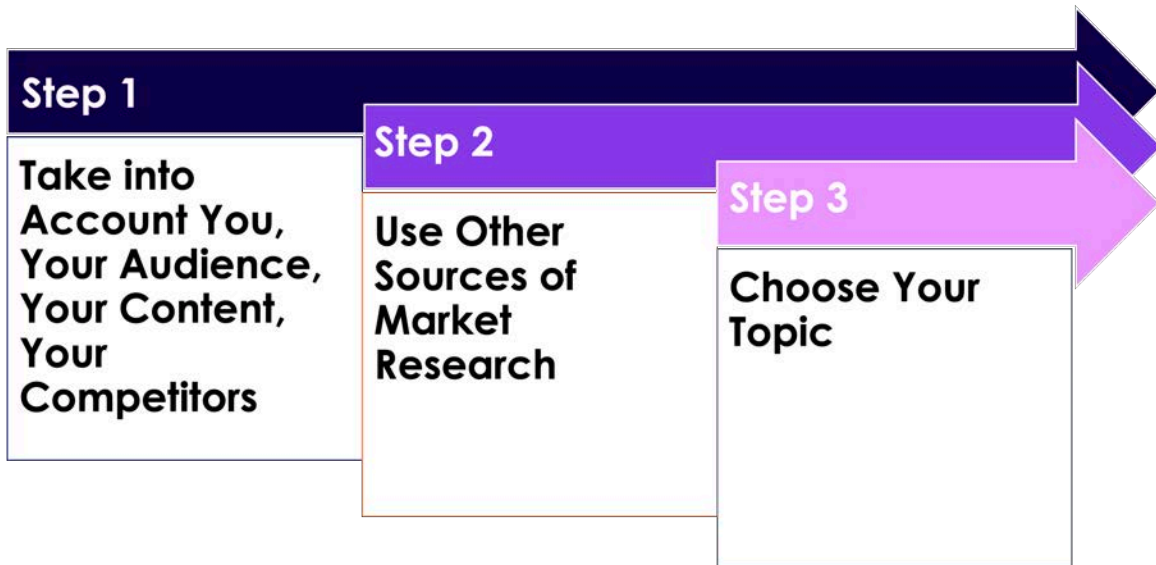
But the point of your online course is to enroll as many students as possible and make the biggest impact possible: you want to create a course that will sell. To do that you must choose a topic that is primarily focused on solving a very specific problem or need, and which also incorporates the expertise and skills you already have.

You must research your market and identify your audience's needs and the struggles they're facing first, and *then* take into account how your knowledge and expertise fits in with your findings. Once you have all that information, you can use it to choose the topic of your course.

It's not a quick process and it will involve some work. Nevertheless, don't miss out on this essential task in your process. It's a key step on the road to creating a course that's going to be valuable for your clients, and therefore as profitable as possible for you.

Online courses can be in any field, such as business, personal development, marketing, lifestyle, design, health, and fitness. They can cover almost any topic you can imagine: from pet care to language learning, social media marketing to natural makeup tips, and mindfulness to neuroscience.

But the key to remember is that courses can be on any subject that's *teachable*. In other words, they can be broken down into a step-by-step process that the client can follow, make progress on, and achieve the results they need.



## Step 1: Take into Account You, Your Audience, Your Content, Your Competitors

In this first step, you're going to take stock of possible topic ideas by considering yourself, your expertise, your audience, your content, and your competition.

**Your Areas of Expertise.** What do you already know about and enjoy talking about? You don't have to be a top expert in your field, but there are always things you know about that your customers or clients don't. If you're not a complete expert on a topic, remember that you can fill in any gaps with research. What are your areas of expertise? You can probably list a few subjects you know well.

**Commonly Asked Questions.** What questions do your clients commonly ask you? What problems do you solve for them? Even if they're questions you haven't got answers to, it's a good place to start because you can research the topic later. Can you start to see any obvious candidates for your course topic?

**Your Own Questions.** What about questions you've asked and found an answer to, or problems you've had that you've found a solution to? Try to think of problems you faced and needed the most help with when you were starting out. If your audience is in the same field or market as you, the chances are you've experienced the same challenges, and found solutions.

**Online Analytics.** Look at your website's analytics. If you see a great deal of engagement on certain pages, articles, or blog posts that address problems in your niche, this shows that you've covered a topic that's interesting and useful for your audience. Which pages on your site are the most visited, and which pages do people spend the most time on?

**Conduct a Survey.** You can conduct a survey on your email list or on your [Facebook Group](#) or [Page](#) using survey tools like [Google Forms](#) or [Survey Monkey](#). Survey your [LinkedIn](#) contacts and in [LinkedIn groups](#) related to your market (check whether you need to ask for permission first). Create a [Twitter](#) list of followers in your niche or market and survey them. Ask people what problems they face relevant to your market.

Make your survey short and focused on gathering information on topics they'd most like to see you cover. You can offer an incentive for participation, such as a free checklist or report, a discount voucher, or a random draw for an Amazon voucher. Tools for picking a random name or number from a list include *Random Result*, *Random Name Picker*.

**Use Facebook Ads.** You can use [Facebook Ads](#) to ask your target audience about the biggest problems they face. You could create an ad that says something open-ended like "What's your #1 challenge in ...?" Or you could give them a list of options to choose from if you already have some potential course topics in mind.

**Your Competitors.** What courses are your competitors offering? If a competitor is promoting a successful course, it means it's something worth teaching. What questions are they answering? You might find inspiration from the questions their Q&As solve.

What are your competitors not covering that you could cover? If you want to cover the same topic, can you give it a unique twist to make it different? It's OK to create a course around a topic even if someone else is already selling one – yours will have your unique perspective, knowledge, and experience.

#### Your Areas of Expertise

- What do you already know about that your customers don't?

#### Commonly asked questions

- What questions or problems do your clients commonly have?

#### Your Own Questions

- What questions have you asked and found solutions to?

#### Online Analytics

- Where do people spend the most time on your site?

#### Conduct a Survey

- What topics would your audience most like you to cover?

#### Use Facebook Ads

- What's your audiences' #1 challenge?

#### Your Competitors

- What courses are your competitors offering?

## Step 2: Use Other Sources of Market Research

#### Forums and online communities

- Identify common problems for which people are seeking solutions

#### Question and answer sites

- Look for questions related to your market

#### Google and Bing search

- Conduct a search for the biggest problems in your field

#### eBooks

- Look for information products in your niche

#### Reddit

- Search by topic for niche problems

#### Feedly

- Subscribe to blogs and see what they're writing about

**Forums and Online Communities.** Look in forums and online communities in your niche and identify common problems for which people are seeking solutions. Make a list of topics you see here that you could cover.

**Question and Answer Sites.** Q&A sites like [Quora](#) are specifically designed for asking and answering questions. Look for questions and problems related to your market.

[Here is a comprehensive list of Q&A sites.](#)

**Google and Bing Search.** Conduct a simple internet search for the biggest problems in your field. For example, the 'biggest problems in language learning'. From the resulting list of websites, blog posts and articles addressing those problems, identify which ones are the most popular. How many comments or shares do they have? A high number of social shares could be an indication of how much the topic has resonated with readers. This information is also very useful for narrowing down and choosing key areas of content for your course.

**eBooks.** Look for information products in your niche and identify which specific problems they target.

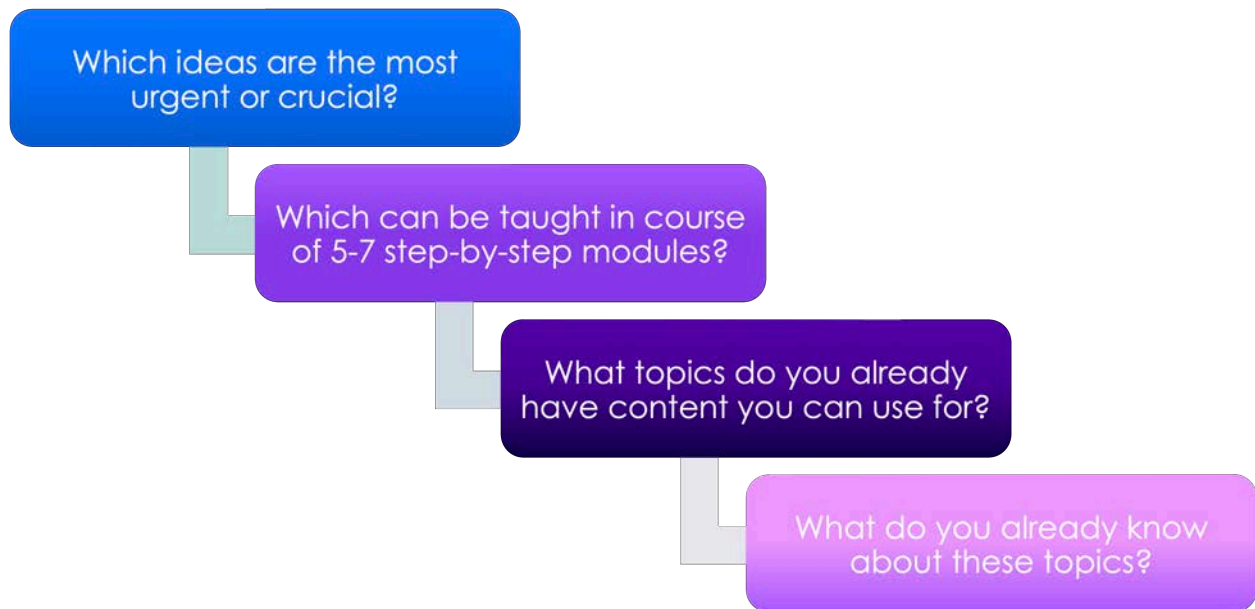
**Reddit.** [Reddit](#) is a very active online community and message board. You can search by topic, so search for questions or problems in your niche. You can also ask your own questions there.

**Feedly.** [Subscribe](#) to popular blogs in your niche and see what they're writing about. This will help you know what's trending and what's new in your industry.

## Step 3: Choose Your Topic

The research you've done so far should have yielded some promising ideas. Now, go over your list of ideas and create a shortlist of possible courses by asking yourself these questions:

- Which ideas are the most urgent or crucial? What is causing your audience the most pain? Is there anything your audience is going to be motivated to solve and pay you for solving it?
- Which of these topics can be taught in 5-7 step-by-step modules so as not to overload your participants with content? If you can't separate a topic into 5-7 modules you might need to create separate courses.
- What content do you already have that you could use to quickly create a course related to these topics?
- What do you already know about these topics? How well could you teach each one without further research? Which do you know best?



**Put it all together.** Now look for overlap between the solutions your audience is desperate for, the topics that can be taught in 5-7 modules, the things you do best, the content you already have, and the course you'll most enjoy teaching.

Considering all of this, which is the most obvious course for you to create?





### Action Steps:

1. Choose your research methods, conduct your research, and note your results.
2. Based on your research, create a shortlist of courses your audience most needs, list the content you already have on these topics, and note what you already know about each topic.
3. Choose your topic for your course. Keep a note of your other shortlisted courses to come back to later.

## Module 3 – Create a Course Outline

Today, people have a wealth of free information quite literally at their fingertips on [over a billion websites](#). So how can you expect people to pay to take your online course when they can access all this information for free?

Put simply, easy access to this information doesn't necessarily equate to an effective way to learn new things.

The value of your online course is that it will be designed so that it presents the precise information your students need to solve their problem. It will be conveniently packaged and logically presented in a coherent step-by-step format, with a clear pathway of learning from beginning to end. And, it will include all the key elements needed for an effective and engaging online course. Your course will be one that ensures your students get the results they want and which you promise.

Rather than sifting through information and attempting to find the solution to their problem themselves, your students can just work through your course and learn exactly what they need to learn.

There isn't a standard format for any online course. There will be different combinations of learning technologies and resources according to the specific course goals and audience needs of each course. However, although there is no standard model, there are some key elements that are essential for any online course. These include the following:

### A Clear Pathway

- The course should progress logically from beginning to end

### High-Quality Content

- Offer great value to the student

### Multiple Learning Modalities

- Present your course in diverse ways to engage as much as possible

### Interaction and Engagement

- Interacting and engaged students understand and remember better

**A Clear Pathway.** A good course progresses logically from beginning to end. It has a clear pathway of learning that starts with the students knowing little or nothing about the topic and builds on the information as the student completes each module. Your content and learning activities must be sequential and cumulative. Everything in the course must be directly related to achieving its goal. The content should be presented in "chunks" or units that are easy to digest.

**High-Quality Content.** Of course, your online course content must be high quality and highly-focused. It should offer great value to the student.

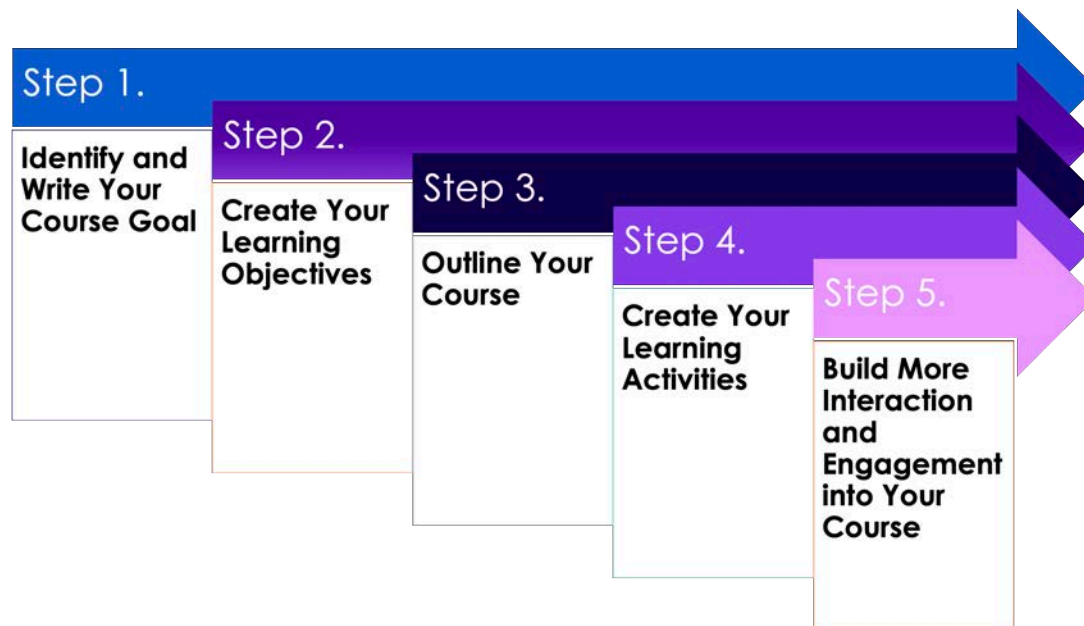
**Multiple Learning Modalities.** Using multiple learning modalities means presenting your course content in diverse ways, so that your students experience the content using different senses and skills. As a result, your

students will engage as fully as possible with your course. In practical terms, this means offering auditory, visual, and kinesthetic content to supplement what you're teaching. Naturally, you should only use the formats that are most appropriate for your course and target market, but try to include a variety where possible.

**Interaction and Engagement.** A good course offers multiple forms of interaction and engagement. If your course is engaging and interactive as well as informative, your students will not only understand the content better, but they will also remember and apply what they learn.

We'll be covering suggestions for adding interaction and engagement into your course later in this module. For now, this could mean enabling your students to interact with you or with each other. For example, you could create and moderate an online community or forum.

## Create Your Course Outline



## **Step 1: Identify and Write Your Course Goal**

Start your course outline by defining your overall course goal, since this is the decision that will guide the rest of your course design. Your course goal helps you determine your choice of key content, your learning activities, and your choice of learning technology.

Start with the destination in mind. When the course is finished, what knowledge or skills will your students have acquired or mastered?

A clearly defined course goal gives your target audience a clear understanding of exactly what they will know or be able to do when the course is over. They will have a specific reason to take your course and can easily make the connections between the key content covered in your course, and the learning activities they will be asked to complete.

## **Step 2: Create Your Learning Objectives**

Now that you've clearly defined your course goal, it's time to show your students what they will learn in order to reach that goal. We do this by writing specific learning objectives.

Learning objectives are motivating for learners, because they reassure them they will be acquiring the knowledge or skills they need to achieve the overall goal of the course.

Your learning objectives define the design and development of your online course and the different learning modules. They state what the learner will know or be able to do by the time they have successfully completed your course.

Learning objectives must be measurable and specific, and describe an outcome that can be quantitatively assessed.

They should have clear and precise wording and should be written using action verbs that show what the learner will be able to *do* when they successfully complete the course. For example:

By the time you complete this course, you will be able to:

- Create...
- List...
- Customize...
- Outline...
- Identify...
- Compare...
- Summarize...

Words or phrases such as 'learn', 'understand', 'comprehend', 'appreciate', 'demonstrate a knowledge of', and so on, should be avoided as they're not measurable and specific.

Good learning objectives are always firmly tied to course goals.

And each written learning objective should have one single primary purpose: one sentence for one learning objective.

## Examples of Good and Bad Learning Objectives:



### Good:

- 'By the end of this module you will be able to write learning objectives that are specific, measurable, and tied to course goals.'
- 'By the end of this module you will be able to list the 5 key benefits of online courses.'
- 'Students will be able to list and explain 3 examples of significant trends and developments in online learning.'

### Bad:

- 'By the end of this module students will understand what learning objectives are.'
- 'By the end of this module you will know the value of online courses.'
- 'Students should be able to understand significant trends and developments in online learning.'

- **Bad:** 'By the end of this module students will understand what learning objectives are.' This is not specific or actionable, it doesn't specify the knowledge required.

**Good:** 'By the end of this module you will be able to write learning objectives that are specific, measurable, and tied to course goals.'

- **Bad:** 'By the end of this module you will know the value of online courses.' This is vague, and not measurable.

**Good:** 'By the end of this module you will be able to list the 5 key benefits of online courses.'

- **Bad:** 'Students should be able to understand significant trends and developments in online learning.' Again, this is not actionable or measurable.

**Good:** *'Students will be able to list and explain 3 examples of significant trends and developments in online learning.'*

## Step 3: Outline Your Course

Four to five main modules or chapters in your course is usually enough to provide plenty of valuable information that your students will understand and use. But this is short enough to be manageable and not overwhelming for them.

People are often 'time poor' and presenting your course in chunks in this way also means they can study one or more chunks or modules at a time according to the time they have available.

Select the four or five highest priority areas of content for your course. What are the key areas of knowledge or skills the student needs to learn to achieve the course objectives and goal at the end? You can think of each of these modules as its own mini-goal or milestone on the way to reaching the big course goal. Remember, your modules must *always* support your course goal and be directly related to your learning objectives.

Select three to five steps or key points for each main module. Anything more than that will be difficult for your students to retain and remember.

If you find you have more than seven modules, consider breaking them up into more than one course. If a module has more than five steps, consider whether the content might be better presented as two separate modules.



## **Step 4: Create Your Learning Activities**

Learning activities come at the end of the modules. They support your learning objectives and enable course participants to accomplish these learning objectives and the overall course goal. By completing the activities you set, students apply what they learn as they move through the course.

Firmly keeping your learning objectives as your guide, write your learning activities to include at the end of each module. Tell your students exactly what you want them to do.

As far as possible, and again keeping your learning objectives as your guide, vary the types of activity you set to maintain your student's interest and engagement.

Make your learning activities directly relevant to your students' real-world situations. Wherever possible, design the activity to involve applying what they've learned directly to their own situation.

You can see examples of learning activities at the end of each module of this course. Like the activities you will write for your own course, these activities enable you to apply what you've learned in each module. This helps you achieve the learning outcomes for each module, and your assignments will bring you closer to achieving the course goal.

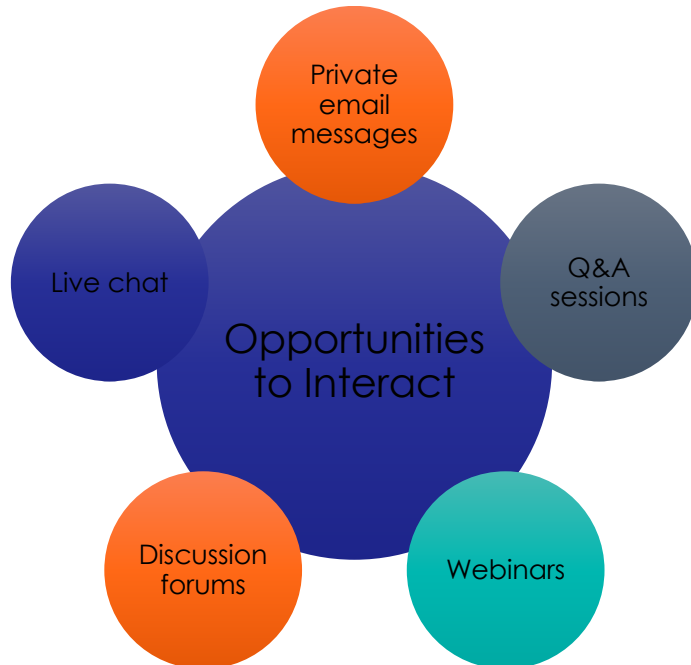
## **Step 5: Build More Interaction and Engagement into Your Course**

Interaction and engagement have a powerful effect on learning. Students learn more effectively and feel more motivated when they're engaged with a course and its contents.

So far, your students are engaged because you are creating content that is relevant and valuable to them and because the learning activities are enabling them to achieve their goal in taking the course. Now, it's time to add more opportunities for engagement and interaction.

Create opportunities for your students to interact with you and other course participants. Some ideas for how to do this include:

- Private email messages
- Q&A sessions
- Webinars
- Discussion forums
- Live chat



Live chat tools include [Facebook groups](#), [Facebook live](#) video and live chats, [bbPress](#), [GoToWebinar](#), [WebinarJam](#), [Webinato](#), and more.

Choose the combination of methods most appropriate for your target audience and course goals. Using more than one method of communication and interaction will further enhance engagement.

**Mixing up Media.** Your course will be more engaging if you use different media formats. In addition to text, you should use image-based formats such as illustrations, infographics, graphs, charts, etc. Add audio and video wherever possible too, since many people prefer to listen and watch instead of read.

Select the best combination of media formats according to the expectations and characteristics of your target learners, your learning objectives, and your course goal.

**Polls and Quizzes.** An easy way to drive engagement is to include polls and quizzes. Polls are easy to set up. You can set them up within a webinar platform live, or by using a tool such as [Crowd Signal](#) or [Google Forms](#). They help you to get quick engagement when you are live online, and they help determine where a group's current knowledge is or how they feel about a topic.

Quizzes test knowledge, but also get engagement when group results are published. We'll cover quiz question types in more detail in the next module, *'Create Effective and Engaging Content for Your Course'*.

## **Step 6: Build Accountability into Your Course**

Your goal is that a person buys your course, completes it, and implements what they have learned. They learn new skills and knowledge, and they make valuable changes in their life. You get positive praise and reviews for your course, and they recommend your course to others and go on to buy more products or services from you.

You've created learning activities that will enable your students to apply their learning and accomplish the learning objectives and the overall course

goal. You've created opportunities for engagement and interaction that will help them learn the course content, and stay motivated.

Now you also need other ways to hold them accountable and help your students implement what they've learned.

During the course, you can send emails to students after the end of each module to check progress.

After your course has finished, your participants may need additional help staying accountable and putting into practice what they've learned. A few options for doing this include:

- Create accountability partners with other students. They can contact each other at regular intervals after the course to check on progress.
- Have a separate online group for those who have just completed the course where they can share ideas and continue to get support and accountability from each other and from you, and possibly previous students.
- Send emails to students after the course to follow up and get feedback on their progress implementing your course. You can send extra tips for helping them implement the course content, or expand on things that were covered in the course.

By building a mix of accountability features into your program, you'll have the greatest chances of ensuring your students all take action and achieve the goal of your course.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Write a concise statement that describes the goal of your course
2. Using the list of action verbs provided as inspiration, write your course's learning objectives
3. List the main modules of your course in the worksheet. Include a high-level outline of your steps or key points for each module, along with ideas for learning activities. Then use the separate Structure Mind Map to fill in more details on your key points and learning activities as needed.
4. How will you build interactivity and engagement into your course? List the ways, completing the worksheet provided
5. How will you build accountability into your course? List the ways you will help your participants to implement what they learn during and after the course.

## Module 4 – Create Engaging and Effective Course Content

In Module 3 you outlined your course design and selected the best combination of media formats for your target audience and learning outcomes.

Now it's time to actually create and present your content in a way that makes your online course as interesting and engaging as possible, so you maximize your students' learning and motivation.

### Create a Short Version or Mini Course

You don't have to write your course all at once or finish it before you start selling it. You can test the topic first by doing a short version of the course, or start with one distinct module from the course that solves one problem.

There are various benefits to this approach:

- It's more motivating for you AND for your students, since it takes less time to create and complete in order to see results.
- You can launch your course sooner
- You get early feedback and can write or rewrite future content accordingly, creating a better and more valuable course
- You generate revenue that can be used for marketing or advertising

your course further.

If you decide to create and present a short version of your course to test it, write a basic script outline for live delivery or webinar/hangout. You don't have to do a full-blown script. You can give a summary of key points as a handout instead of a big course book. Include worksheets as well, no matter how long or short they are.

Since the purpose of this short course is to get feedback, build in some way to get this feedback. For example, you could include a live Q&A. In addition, make sure there's a course follow-up at the end of the course so students can give you feedback on how helpful it was for them. A simple survey would be an easy way to enable students to give feedback.

## **General Guidelines on Creating the Full Version of Your Course:**

All your course content should be directly related to your learning objectives. Relevant content takes the student closer towards achieving the goal of your course.

While creating your course, always keep your course goal and learning objectives at the forefront of your mind and only include what is necessary for your students to achieve those outcomes.

You might think extra content and information is helpful for your students, but anything irrelevant to the course goal potentially overloads them with information and takes their focus away from achieving that goal.

Decide which media formats to use for each module, step, and chunk of content. Adding variety with different media is recommended, but don't over-complicate your content. Choose your media with the aim of aiding your students' learning and don't be tempted to add things just for decoration. Unnecessary media will only be distracting for your students.

Build in variation and engagement with different types of content. For example, you could have a chunk of text, followed by a video, followed by text, followed by another video, followed by a chunk of text, and so on. If it's appropriate for your content and learning objectives, mix up the order of the different types of media in your modules. You could have text, video, text, video, in one module. Then have video, text, infographic, quiz, in the next module, and so on. The variety and change of order will help keep your students engaged.

You'll update your content again after your first delivery, so don't worry about getting it perfect the first time around. However, make sure your content is up-to-date. Things do change over time so don't just rely on your own current knowledge.

Where it's possible, focus on including content that is evergreen. Your course is less likely to go out of date and you minimize the amount of updating and editing you have to go back and do. And make sure your content is as complete as you can make it, without overloading with unnecessary content. Do additional research where necessary.

## Create Your Main Content

Go through each of your modules, looking at the learning objectives and learning activities you've created for each. Write your course book that

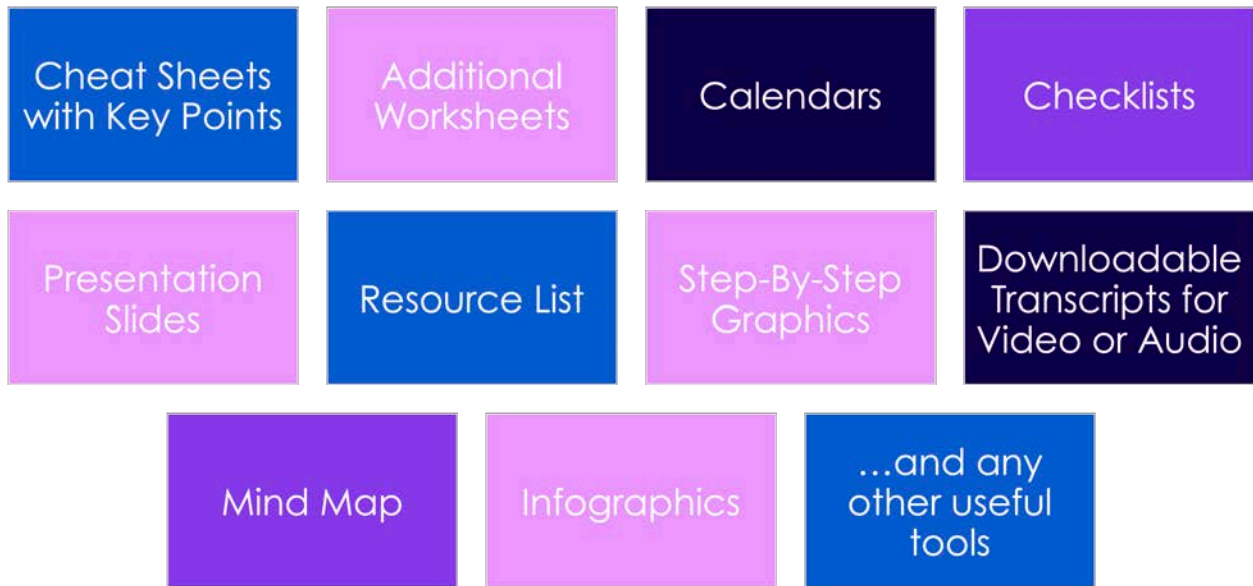


explains the key points of your course in more detail. This way your students have all information they need to know to successfully complete the learning activities, and they have a useful reference guide during and after your course.

Also, create your worksheets to accompany your learning activities. Make sure they follow the learning activities and give people a place to answer questions, fill in information, and record their ideas.

Write or create any additional resources that will help with understanding or implementation of the course, such as:

- Cheat Sheets with Key Points
- Additional Worksheets
- Calendars
- Checklists
- Presentation Slides
- Resource List
- Step-By-Step Graphics
- Downloadable Transcripts for Video or Audio
- Mind Map
- Infographics
- ...and any other useful tools



Visual elements such as infographics and mind maps should be clear and easy to read and understand. Useful tools for creating mind maps include [Freemind](#) and [Xmind](#). For infographics you might try [Canva](#), [Infogram](#), or [Visually](#).

Finally, for your main content, write the narration scripts for your audio clips, webinars, and videos.

## Create Interaction Content

Create any polls and quizzes you'll use to test your students' knowledge and/or create engagement in your course. As we mentioned in Module 3, good tools for polls include [Crowd Signal](#) or [Google Forms](#). Polls must be yes/no format, or just 2 to 3 options.

Tools for quizzes include [Thrive Quiz Builder](#), [Quizinator](#), [Class Marker](#), [Flexi Quiz](#), [Qzzr](#), and [Testmoz](#). Quizzes offer more complex question types than polls, which you can use to match learning objectives and/or encourage engagement. Here are some examples of more complex quiz question types:

**Open Ended Questions.** These pose a simple question that allows the student to write the answer with free text. For example, you might ask the student to say who is the target market for their online course, or ask for recommendations of good course-related books.

**Multiple Choice Questions.** Give your students a set number of answers to choose from. You can also let them add their own option if it's not on your list. Your quiz could be social: for example, 'What was your favorite topic at school?' Or topic-based to either gather information or to test knowledge of a module content.

**Ranking.** Give your students a list and ask them to rank the items in order of importance. For example, start your course by asking students to rank the benefits of a course-relevant skill or technology.

**Clickable Images.** Give your students a series of images and ask them to choose which they like, or don't like. One way you could use clickable images is to give your students a range of faces from very happy to very unhappy. You can then ask them, for example, to choose an image to express how they feel about their current ability to create an online course. Try one at the beginning of the course, and one at the end for what should be some fun or interesting results.

When you gather your poll or quiz answers, publish the results for all of your students to see, where appropriate. You could take all the answers and present statistics or a graph showing how other students responded. This is an engaging and interactive way for people to see where they stand in relation to others on the course.

## Create Remaining Content

Create any other course content that's connected to evaluating progress and encouraging accountability, as is appropriate to your course.

This would include things like a list of the activities that will be graded, clear assessment and scoring rubrics for assignments or group participation, clear instructions for submitting assignments for feedback, due dates, consequences of missed deadlines, and so on.

If you're offering an online group or forum, create it now and make sure it works.

Create whatever accountability content you'll be using, such as emails to check progress during the course (for example at the end of each module). Also, write and schedule post-course emails to get feedback on progress implementing your course. As we mentioned in Module 3, you may need extra tips to implement course content or to expand on things covered in the course.

Finally, put your lesson content into your media delivery formats. For example, create slides for your videos, webinars, and live chats. Convert Word documents to PDF. Use [Snagit](#) or another software program for screen capture and recording. Use [Camtasia](#) for video editing. Convert text content into emails and/or [WordPress](#) posts or pages. Record your audio using [Audacity](#) or other software.

Once you've created all your course content, you just have one last task – review and edit. Many course creators choose to give their written content to an editor to proofread and edit. That's entirely up to you and depends on your confidence in your content creation skills.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Decide if you will create and test a short course version first. If so, outline the content you need to create for this version
2. Decide which media formats to use for each module, step, or chunk of content. Build in variation and engagement wherever possible
3. Create the content for your course(s) and put it into its media delivery formats. Have a checklist – add items to be created, and tick off as they're done.
4. Get your work checked and edited.

## Module 5 – Plan & Prepare Your Course Delivery

**N**ow that your course content is written and edited, it's time to address the tricky question of how much to charge for your online course. You also need to choose an appropriate delivery platform, decide how you'll collect payments, and get your course scheduled and ready for delivery.

### Set Your Price

So, how do you come up with a fair price for your online course that gives you the income you want, and provides a good deal for your audience, and that your market is willing to pay?

There are several considerations.

Firstly, how much value does your course provide? Is it a profitable or popular topic and is there a need for it? You've already established (Module 2) that this is something your market really wants. If your online course is well-designed and will enable participants to achieve their goals, it offers great value.

Secondly, a higher or premium price will reflect the true value and quality of your course and attract the clients you want, whereas if you set your price too low, people may well assume this indicates low value and quality.

If people already know you as an authority and the subject expert, you can justify higher prices. People will pay more because they recognize your name and because they already know that you have an established reputation for quality.

Another reason not to set your price too low is that you'll have uncommitted students. You want a cohort of engaged and motivated learners from your target market, but if you set your price too low you risk people buying your course on impulse and then having little or no incentive to complete it. On the other hand, when people pay a premium price for a course, they're more likely to take it seriously.

Of course, a low price also limits your revenue potential, which in turn affects how much you can spend on marketing and advertising, and so on.

Finally, a good way to price your product is to look at your competitors and see how much they're charging. This can give you a good benchmark from which to start. You could then price yours slightly lower if you want it to be a very good deal. Or, you could price it higher and drive home the unique value your product offers.

[Here's a comprehensive guide to pricing an online course.](#)

## Choosing a Platform for Your Online Course

There are a few easy options for platforms for your delivering your course. One is to choose membership sites or plugins on WordPress that offer features such as support for payment gateways like [PayPal](#) or [Stripe](#) and can

connect to third-party tools like [ConstantContact](#), [Aweber](#), and [ConvertKit](#), sometimes via paid add-ons. These platforms include:

[MemberPress](#)

[PaidMembershipsPro](#)

[RestrictContentPro](#)

There are also online course delivery marketplaces that don't require much technical knowledge and offer a wide range of features, including learner enrollment, payment and shopping cart processing, webinars, live chat with learners, virtual classrooms, discussion forums, quizzes, drip content, integration with [MailChimp](#), and other services. They charge a monthly payment or a percentage of your revenue.

Here are some options for course delivery marketplaces, including links to their pages that help with setting up your course:

[Teachable](#)

[Teachable Knowledge Base](#)

[Thinkific](#)

[Thinkific Training](#)

[WizIQ](#)

[WizIQ Webinar Training](#)

[Coach](#) (With Coach)



## [Coach Help Center](#)

Other options are the [ZippyCourses](#) standalone platform and plugin, and [LearnDash](#) WordPress Learning Management System.

Your choice of the platform depends on which features you need for your course, including the media formats options you chose in *Module 3 Outline Your Course Design*, and the content you created in *Module 4 Create Effective and Engaging Content for Your Course*.

## Decide How to Collect Payments

How you will collect payments depends on the delivery platform you've chosen. Online course marketplaces and platforms, such as [Teachable](#) and [Thinkific](#) process payments for you via payment gateways such as [PayPal](#) and [Stripe](#). Other options include:

- [Infusionsoft](#)
- [GoEmerchant](#)
- [CyberSource](#)
- [MerchantPlus](#)
- [Authorize.Net](#)
- [JVZoo](#)
- [ClickBank](#)

## Schedule and Set up Your Course for Delivery

Next, you'll need to decide when you'll run your course, and set your start dates. If you're running a short test version of your course, decide when this will start. And decide when the full version of your course will start.

Schedule dates for the webinars, your live chats, and anything else in your course that needs to be scheduled.

In the meantime, get all your content elements uploaded to your platform and ready for delivery. Set up and prepare your calendar for sign-ups for one-on-one elements if there are any in your course. Set up and prepare anything else you need for delivery of your course. Test everything to make sure it works.

### Action Steps:

1. Consider the various influencing factors outlined in the module and set your course price.
2. Research your options, consider pros and cons and choose your delivery platform based on the requirements of the course, including media formats. Refer to your work in Modules 3 and 4.
3. Finalize how you will collect payments based on the chosen delivery platform.
4. Schedule and plan your course launch dates and get everything ready. List all the course elements, tick off each when it is uploaded, set up, and ready for delivery.

## Module 6 – Conduct a Results-Focused, Engaging Course

Running an engaging, results-focused online course ensures your students get the most out of their learning and implement what they learn. This module shows you the key ways you can run your course to encourage engagement, create a supportive, student-centered learning environment, and ensure your students are getting the results they need from the course.

Make it as easy as possible for students to contact you and your team. During your course, you need to be available to answer questions, support students with any difficulties, and troubleshoot if there are problems.

It's vital to encourage discussions and engagement in your online course environment. You'll need to create a supportive environment that fosters this, and here are some suggestions for creating that environment:



- Welcome new members and invite them to join in and contribute whenever they feel comfortable.
- Create clear community or forum guidelines or rules on the types of behavior and input that is welcome, and that which isn't. Make it clear what will happen if they violate your rules, such as removal from the forum or course.
- Be consistently active and present, encourage people to participate, and respond quickly to questions and problems.

Now that you've created a supportive environment for your students, you need additional ways to encourage discussion and engagement in your course. Here are some key ways to do this:

**Structure Forum Content.** Provide structure in your online forum by organizing discussion areas into topics or modules, or both. Whichever is appropriate for your course.

Your online forum can have both topic-driven content and social content. Your students will need forum space for asking questions about and discussing a new subject or concept from the course. They'll need somewhere they can explore the subject, discuss it, and better understand it. If you provide your students with a forum space for social content, this will help build a community and enhance engagement with the course.

**Icebreakers.** Icebreaker activities encourage discussion from the start. They're easy to run, and give people a safe and fun way to get to know each other and become comfortable actively contributing rather than just 'lurking'. They also give everyone a chance to use and become familiar with the platform and technology you're using.

Students can share ideas, and discover mutual interests and even learning partners. This socialization helps establish your community and helps the later discussions based on your course content to go well. Icebreaker activities can include things such as:

Ask students to introduce themselves



Have students say 3 things about themselves



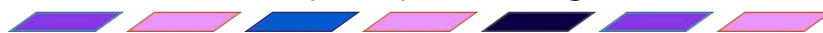
Self-introductions using 3 descriptive words



Brief bios of 150 words or less



Ask students why they're taking the course



Ask them what they're good at



Ask for favorites



- Ask students to introduce themselves to the group. You introduce yourself to the group as well. This is an effective way for teachers and students to get to know each other better. Plus, you can identify learners with similar interests for later collaborative work if appropriate.
- Say three things about yourself. These can be based on work or business, family, or hobbies.

- Introduce yourself using three descriptive words.
- Post a brief bio of no more than 150 words.
- Ask students why they are taking the course, and what they hope to get out of it.
- Ask them what are they're good at - what skills or knowledge they have which they can contribute to the course discussions.
- Ask for favorites, such as favorite food from childhood, favorite movie, favourite memory from childhood etc. You could put this into a desert island format: If you were stuck on a desert island with only one type of food, what would it be? Be creative and imaginative with your ideas.

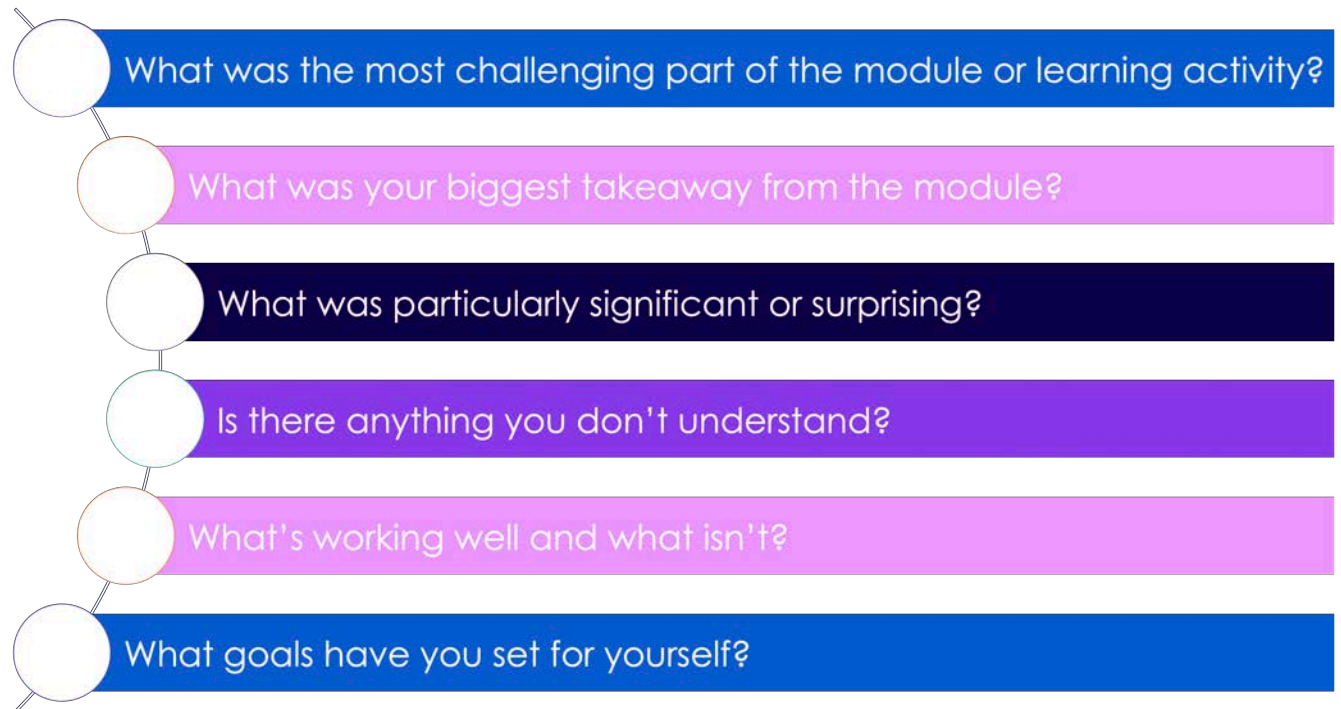
**Q&A Discussion.** Set up a Q&A discussion board where people can ask questions and everyone can help. This encourages community and a student-centered learning environment.

**Encourage Engagement with Course Content.** Ideas for this include: ask them questions, post polls and quizzes, ask them to vote on a relevant course-related issue, ask for opinions about a topic from the course.

**Invite a Guest Speaker.** A great bonus to offer your students is to ask a guest speaker or expert to talk to your students and spark conversation and discussion around your course topic. Give them a part of the course to teach or have them share a learning point of their own. Discuss and arrange beforehand what you want them to do or talk about.

**Reflections and Debriefing.** After each learning activity or module, ask for reflections or feedback on the work just completed. Run a debrief after each activity where you check for knowledge transfer and comprehension to make sure your students understand the work. This gives your students the

opportunity to process and discuss what they've learned. Ask them questions to facilitate conversation or discussion. These questions could include:



- What was the most challenging part of the module or learning activity?
- What was your biggest takeaway from the module?
- What was particularly significant or surprising for you about what you've learned?
- Is there anything you still don't understand?
- What is working well and what isn't?

- What goals have you set for yourself based on what you've learned in the module?

Asking questions like these help students with their understanding of the module and related activities. It helps them retain and use what they've learned. And, it gives you the opportunity to review their learning, check for understanding, and for valuable teachable moments.

**Stimulate Participation if Things Get Quiet.** If you're not getting much participation or response from your students, there are various things you can do to encourage more participation.

Reach out through private email to individuals who are noticeably absent and see if there is any way you can help them. Remind everybody of the benefits of joining in and actively participating in the course. Remind the students that you're there to support them and tell them how to contact you. Create an activity that encourages easy interaction and engagement like a poll or quiz.

**Q&A sessions.** Run Q&A sessions to help people understand the course content and implement learning activities. A good time to do this is between module webinars, or after module activities.

### **Tips for running a Q&A session**

- Ask your students to send their questions in advance. They could send their questions to you by email, or add them to your announcement for the next Q&A session in your Facebook group or online discussion form.
- Make sure that you know your subject matter well so you're well prepared to answer questions.



- Pre-prepare answers to frequently asked questions.
- Keep your answers brief and direct. Try not to go off-topic.
- Don't be afraid to admit you don't know the answer to a question. When this happens, say you will find the answer for your students when the session is over.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Write your ice-breaker activities or questions.
2. Write your forum or discussion group guidelines or rules.
3. Write a list of topic-driven forum activities or questions related to each of your modules.
4. Write your debrief questions.
5. Create polls and/or quizzes based on course goals, using a mix of question types.
6. Plan when you will run Q&A sessions. Prepare answers to frequently asked questions.

## **Module 7 – Gather Feedback, Improve & Fine-Tune Your Course**

Once your course is running, you need to make sure it's meeting your target market's needs, and identify how and where it can be improved.

You need to measure your results and gather constructive feedback so that you can continue to develop and improve your course and make more sales. Your course isn't, and shouldn't be, static even when it's completed and up and running. It will evolve to best meet your students' needs as you learn what's working well, and what isn't.

Negative feedback on your course isn't necessarily a bad thing, so don't shy away from it. In fact, it's a very valuable type of feedback because any negative reviews and opinions you get will help you improve the less successful parts of your course. Constructive criticism will reveal any weak parts of your course and contents. You can also keep this useful information in mind when you create your next course.

The most valuable source of feedback is, of course, your students, and there are various ways they will help you measure how successful your course is. We'll go through some of these now.

The quantity and type of interaction in your group or discussion forum is a useful indicator of how engaged your participants are with the course. If your students are participating fully, this is a good indicator that things are going well. And if they're not participating fully, you'll be able to identify areas that need improvement. Based on this information, you'll also be able

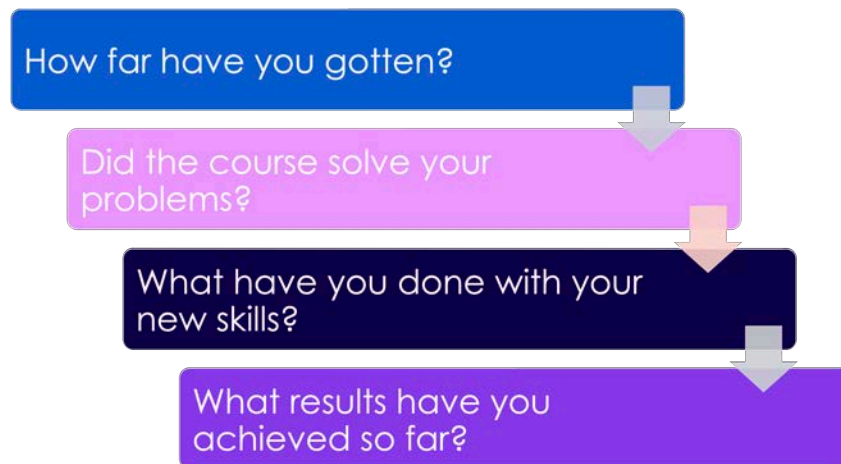
to make minor changes to future modules before your participants reach those parts of the course.

Emails or forum posts from participants with questions or problems are also useful sources of feedback on which elements of your course might be problematic.

Ask for honest feedback from your students during and after the course to assess its quality. Reach out via email to ask participants directly for individual feedback. You could also create an anonymous end-of-course survey or questionnaire to make it easier for your students to give feedback, using a software program like [SurveyMonkey](#).

[Here is a useful list of end-of-course questionnaire questions.](#)

Follow up again later to see how prior students have used what they learned from your course. This will help you see whether it has made an impact on them. You could do this via a series of post-course emails. Send one immediately after the course or perhaps two weeks after the course, whichever is most appropriate for the email content.



Ask them:

- How far have you gotten?
- Did the course solve your problems?
- What have you done with your new skills?
- What results have you achieved so far?

Allow past students to leave a public review of your course.

When you have your data from all your feedback, use it to assess and determine which areas of your course need improvement, make those changes, and run the course again. And repeat.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Create your end-of-course survey or questionnaire.
2. How else will you measure your results and gather feedback? Create your list, and create any content you need such as post-course emails.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

**N**ow it's time to review and finalize your course outline, your delivery and launch strategy, and determine your next steps and deadlines.

By the time you finish this module's Action Steps you should be able to run a well-designed, effective and engaging course that will strengthen your reputation as an expert in your field, earn you money, and teach your market how to overcome their most pressing problem.

Through this course you have learned how to:

- Research your market and identify a need so you can choose your course topic and course goal.
- Design a clear structure and learning path for your course, with the measurable and specific learning objectives and supporting learning activities your learners need to achieve the overall course goal.
- Build interaction and engagement into your course.
- Create content for your course, in a variety of formats and media.
- Define your strategy for delivery, launch and running of your course.
- Measure your results and gather feedback from your students, so that you can continue to develop and improve your course.

Remember, now that you've designed your course structure you'll be able to use it to create multiple future courses, and with each course, you'll produce something even better. It's good practice to use a similar structure for all your online courses, not only because it saves you time, but also because your participants will not have to relearn how to use your course each time they purchase a course from you - they will be able to focus fully on your content.

And because you've designed your course in clearly defined chunks or key areas of content, it will be easy for you to update your course or add to it, ensuring it's always up-to-date.

### **Action Steps:**

1. Review and finalize your course outline and content. Make sure your course flows logically from one main topic to another, all of your learning objectives and activities support your course goal, and all of your content is necessary for achieving that course goal.
2. Review and finalize your delivery and launch strategy and identify the key tasks you need to complete to have everything in place to launch and run your course. Set deadlines using the worksheet provided.