



Safety

5 Tips for Setting Up a Successful Microlearning Program in Your Facility

Better MRO Editors | Dec 09, 2021

In a world of mobile media technology and short attention spans, microlearning is emerging as a popular training model. It delivers information in small, highly focused pieces. Here are five tips for establishing a microlearning program.

With the ongoing pandemic having made on-site training challenging, new approaches to worker learning are gaining ground.

A new trend is microlearning, where employees learn in short bursts, requiring less time and effort from workers, thereby increasing overall business productivity.

Examples of microlearning include short videos, self-directed e-learning programs, podcasts, infographics, blog entries, and other types of media that can be consumed quickly. The media used will usually be appropriate for the specific situation, work environment or educational need, and may be accessed on-demand when an employee needs it.

The value of microlearning lies in its brevity and accessibility. Short, targeted chunks of information may be consumed quickly while a learner is performing his or her job, making it far more convenient and accessible than in-person or virtual forms of training, for which employees may need to block out time from their work schedules or in some cases travel to a training center.

Workers will generally access microlearning assets to get the information they need quickly, so it's important to establish a learning objective and to be sure it's attainable through microlearning, or whether another learning method will be more effective.

The microlearning market is expected to register **a growth rate of 14 percent** over the next five years. If you're considering setting up a microlearning program, here are five tips you should consider.

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No. 1: Microlearning Is Not a Shortened Learning Program

Microlearning is not just a shortened version of a longer training module. It should be thought of as a separate approach to learning that delivers information in a new way.

So simply scaling down an existing training program for a smaller screen may not be adequate, notes *a blog by Surge9*, a microlearning, training reinforcement and gamification platform.

While learning programs require employees to block time on their calendars for a training session completed in one sitting, microlearning allows employees to engage with your programs multiple times a day, a few minutes at a time.

“You have to adapt to this new pattern by structuring your learning experiences differently,” notes the blog. Companies should therefore think of microlearning as “a multitude of tiny pieces of training designed to fill countless moments that pepper each learner’s workday.”

No. 2: Think Mobile, Think Thumbs



Image caption: Our many brief interactions with mobile devices each day should be mirrored in a microlearning environment.

With the wide adoption of mobile technology, Americans are consuming more content on their mobile devices.

According to the latest *Ericsson Mobility Report*, total global mobile data traffic is projected to grow fourfold from 2021 to 2027. Smartphones continue to be “at the epicenter of this development as they generate most of the mobile data traffic today—about 97 percent—a share that is projected to increase throughout the forecast period,” notes Ericsson.

Video traffic is estimated to account for 69 percent of all mobile data traffic, a share that is forecast to increase to 79 percent in 2027.

Mobile technology users find it is an essential tool in their daily lives, using it for messages, checking email or watching videos. In the same way, our many brief interactions with mobile devices each day should be mirrored in a microlearning environment.

For example, microlearning lessons may be delivered as “bite-sized” units that can be completed quickly. Similarly, a microlearning module should be made up of a single lesson that focuses on one skill.

Designing for mobile devices also means designing for the “thumb zone,” which means ensuring that the on-screen controls for a mobile application are within reach of a user’s thumb, which is known as “reach navigation,” according to Surge9.

The company’s blog points to *research* done by mobile expert Steven Hooper of over 1,300 smartphone users that found 49 percent of smartphone users hold their phones with one hand, while 36 percent cradle their phones in one hand and use the other hand to navigate (72 percent of these phone users navigate with their free thumb).

As smartphones grow in size, so does the need to accommodate the scrolling habits of users. There are areas of a mobile device’s screen where the average thumb can reach without strain when holding the phone with the right hand. These easy-to-reach zones are good to keep in mind when designing microlearning programs that will primarily be used on mobile devices.

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No. 3: Consider the “Four Ps”

As you build a microlearning program, a first step should be to identify the goal the resource is intended to help people achieve.

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The *Association for Talent Development (ATD)* has identified four distinct uses for microlearning, which it calls the “four Ps.” They are performance, persuasion, post-instruction and preparation. The ATD describes them in the following way:

1. **Performance**-based microlearning is learning used at the point of need, such as when a manager wants to review and understand company policy on a particular topic.
2. **Persuasive**-based microlearning is used to change a person’s behavior and is usually goal-oriented. For example, persuading workers to turn off lights in a facility when a room is not in use. The goal is to reduce electricity costs, tying the performance of employees to the organization’s strategic outcomes.
3. **Post-instruction** microlearning condenses the ideas learned in larger training courses into smaller pieces of information that can reinforce earlier learnings. For example, a worker may receive a small card that includes basic information for electrical safety. This card may be carried with the worker to review these procedures when needed.
4. **Preparation**-based microlearning may be used to set up “planned learning initiatives to prepare for a larger learning event,” which could be a way to refresh the individual on existing information or teach new content.

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No. 4: Use a Variety of Content Types

Figure 1:

Planned Delivery Methods

Which of the following delivery methods does your organization plan to use?
Select all that apply.

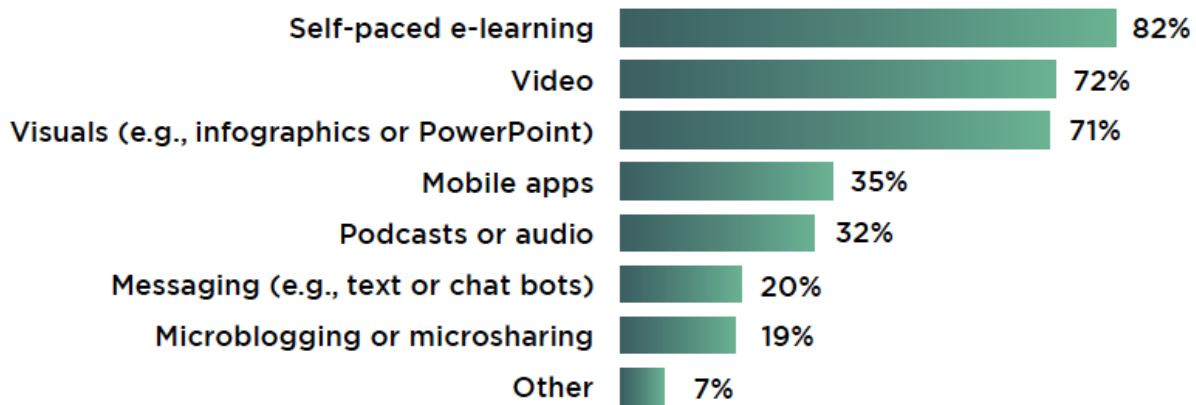


Image caption: Delivery methods for microlearning. (Image source: ATD report: Microlearning: Bite-Sized Content.)

Once you have determined the aim of a microlearning program, the format to deliver your information can be chosen. Common delivery methods include self-paced e-learning, videos or infographics.

The media format you choose should fit the content. For example, if the information you want to convey is highly visual (how to don and doff PPE, for example), you may decide to use a short video or an animated graphic.

Animated videos give you the flexibility to not only demonstrate a process, but also to include descriptions and concepts behind that process. Animated video could safely show the dangers of improper PPE use, for example.

An infographic may be used to communicate sometimes complicated information powerfully. An engaging graphic that is well designed and engaging can highlight essential points of a topic so that they can be clearly understood.

No. 5: Seek Support from Leadership



Image caption: Common delivery methods include self-paced e-learning, videos or infographics.

Making learning available at the point of need is an effective way to build a culture of continuous learning in your facility efficiently and cost-effectively.

To reinforce its effect on your business, company leaders should support microlearning initiatives, increasing the likelihood that they'll be seen as required learning for workers, and hold their teams accountable for completing microlearning programs.

To learn more about MSC's safety e-learning courses, [click here](#).

What steps are you taking to include microlearning programs in your facilities? What tips can you share? Share your thoughts and insights in the comments below.