



# Three Hacks to Maximize Learner Engagement in the Virtual Classroom

Reflecting on the past year and a half, I've come to realize just how different facilitating in a virtual classroom environment is, from a traditional classroom setting. I've been delivering training in both formats since 2014, but due to the pandemic that reached North America in 2020, I've spent countless hours delivering training solely in a virtual environment. If you're like me, and most of the world, you've likely transitioned to virtual classroom training as well. And I bet you've encountered more than one disengaged attendee.

Even though I've created interactive virtual classroom training, here's the reality: interactivity doesn't automatically lead to engagement. Additionally, finding new and innovative ways to combine virtual platform tools with instructional activities can be challenging to do on the fly. But fear not fellow instructors. I'm happy to share my three favorite hacks to maximize learner engagement in the virtual classroom.

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## Combine active tools with passive tools.

Active tools require action on behalf of the learner while passive tools require little to no interaction. For example, the chat pod is considered active, as learners are required to do something. They are interacting with the virtual platform. Content sharing, on the other hand, whether it's showing a PowerPoint slide or streaming a video, is an example of a passive tool. The learners are simply viewing content on the platform. They're not interacting with it, with each other, or with the facilitator. Ideally, we should use as many active tools as possible, without disregarding passive tools. The key is to combine the two! Consider combining the chat pod or a poll with a streaming video. In other words, give the learners something to do, or something to look for, as they watch that video.



