

Accordion Style Webinar Tips & Tricks

Accordion style webinars provide the opportunity to contract and expand on learning points based on what learners want. Essentially, it provides learners with the opportunity to choose their own webinar adventure. For an example of an accordion style webinar, take a look at the CWW Troubleshooting webinar on the W-2 curriculum page.

Planning

- Decide which topics are “need to know” and which topics are “good to know”.
 - “Need to know” goes in every webinar.
 - “Good to know” are the topics learners get to choose from (i.e. the accordion section).
 - If doing an accordion within an accordion, decide what information is “need to know” and what is “good to know” for each topic.
- Guesstimate how long you want your webinar to be and how much time you want to spend on topics.
- Create a rough draft and/or outline of what you want the webinar to include.
 - Make sure the topics flow with each other and make sense together.
 - Make sure topics can be taught stand alone; meaning without other sections of the course being taught.
 - Make sure it will fit within your guesstimated run time.

Development

- Decide how much time you will spend in the accordion section and about how many topics you can cover in that timeframe.
- Choose how learners will pick the topics/subtopics (hot spot voting, send in preference beforehand, etc.)
- Write the accordion section topics completely independently of each other even if it means repeating some information
- Keep your Learning Objectives broad.
- Avoid using a PPT if possible as it requires specialized programming to work with option sections.
 - If one is necessary, you could consider having multiple PPTs to easily switch between sections or using keypad navigation rather than clicking.

TN/PG Considerations

- If doing an accordion within an accordion, use a different color for the “good to know” information within the topic

- Create a light PG with some structure of topics, but not much information. PGs need to fit for whatever accordion section is taught.
 - PG is more for notes than content.
- Include TN page numbers at the end of every accordion section so you can quickly move around within your curriculum.
 - Do this for sub-sections within the accordion as well.
- Don't bother writing transitions between accordion sections because you never know which section will follow.
 - Trainer will need to ad lib when live.

Training Tips

- No matter what you do, it's going to feel weird.
- Prep several times in different ways (i.e. learners pick different topics).
 - The webinar is going to feel different each time you train it.
 - Consider prepping with your co-trainer and practicing going between the topics.
- Set up your TN (hard copy) so it is easy to navigate between sections. You will be flipping back and forth often.
 - We recommend tabbing your binder.
- Have a producer/looker upper.
 - A learner is probably going to ask you a question you don't know the answer to and that may not even pertain to the webinar.
 - Plan to look up answers on the fly and walk through finding the information with learners.
 - This person should not be responsible for sharing a screen.
- Keep it casual and relax.
 - This gives you a little wiggle room if you stumble and helps with your ad libbing.
- Have each trainer jot down which sections the learners choose.
- Do not switch talking trainer within an accordion section.

Bonus Tips

- Recommend having "need to know" at the start and end of the webinar with the accordion section in the middle to create a nice little learning sandwich for folks.
- When ahead on time, go back and cover the topic with the most votes that wasn't covered. Do so as time allows.
 - If there is a tie, have a revote between the tied topics.
- Develop a universal back-up plan for if you run out of time during the accordion section and share it at the train the trainer.
 - Determine a set time within the webinar where you need to cut off the accordion section and move on to your wrap-up section/closing.
- Be selective with who trains the webinar as they need to train by the seat of their pants.