



Minimum Continuing Legal Education Board
of the Supreme Court of Illinois

Toolkit for Course Organizers **Steps to Planning the Content and Delivery of a CLE Course**

1. **Establish learning outcomes**

A solid starting point. The outcomes answer the question: what do we want the lawyers to know or be able to accomplish when the course ends? Establishes value for the learners.

- Enhance knowledge or understanding
- Teach or develop specific skills
- Change behaviors, attitudes or values

Illinois CLE requirements: significant intellectual, educational or practical content, deals primarily with matters related to the practice of law and course's primary objective must be to increase participant's competence as an attorney. Rules 795(a)(1) & (2), 795(d)(4).

2. **Know your audience**

Your learning objectives need to match your audience's needs:

- Practice area and practice setting?
- Years in practice?
- Novice or experienced in the course topic?
- Assess the attendees' motivation for attending: learning in general; learn a specific task or skill; required attendance; earn CLE credit?
- Will the attendees be receptive to this learning experience?

3. **Select content to teach**

- Given everything that you know about the topic, the learning objectives and the audience, what are the most important things to convey during this course?
 - Keep in mind instruction level: fundamental; intermediate; advanced; mixed
 - Identify concepts on the applicable law or principles
 - Identify, assemble and study primary sources as possible course materials--required for a course to eligible for Illinois MCLE accreditation
 - What content you include in course's written materials for later reference? Illinois MCLE requirement: written materials need to reflect course content and be made available to participants before or at the course. Rule 795(a)(5).
- Refine content. Will it present...
 - Introduction to topic?
 - Common or toughest issues and how to address them?
 - Common mistakes and how to avoid them? Tips for best practice?
 - New developments and changes?

4. **Select presentation method(s)—see Presentation Method Options (see reverse)**

Choose at least one method that helps learners connect with the content and apply it. Empower them to learn and get involved in the learning.

5. **Prepare your content. Practice presenting as you prepare. Seek feedback.**

(continued on reverse side)

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Presentation Method Options: Consider blending methods for best learning results

Learning by experience

Learners are involved in the experience, either physically or emotionally. Highly effective options to engage learners. Examples:

- Scripted role play
- Demonstration
- Stories
- Case studies
- Videos
- Simulation

Learning by reflecting

Learners consider their own experience, listen to others' perspectives and make connections to others' experiences. Examples:

- Structured small group discussions
- Rhetorical questions
- Ask learners how they react to certain information, such as a scripted role play
- Ask learners to make connections to other learning or their own experience
- Ask learners to develop questions individually or in small groups

Learning by applying

Learners can try out principles or theories in problem-solving scenarios. Examples:

- Role play (unscripted)
- Videotaping of a practice or "mock" exercise
- Devising action plans
- Discussion of problem-solving activities

Learning by thinking in abstractions or principles

Authoritative sources provide information. Examples:

- Statutes, regulations, rules, cases
- Forms, charts, documents, flowcharts
- Checklists and procedures

- Statistical analyses

Sources:

Kathy Story, *Story Consulting: Leadership and Learning for the Legal Professions*, adapted from Patricia H. Murrell, Leadership Institute in Judicial Education, University of Memphis. <https://www.in.gov/judiciary/cle/files/cle-edu-planning-checklist.pdf>

Kathy Story, MA, JD kestory@bellsouth.net 901.849.4680 *Story Consulting: Leadership and Learning for the Courts*
<https://www.in.gov/judiciary/cle/files/cle-edu-presentation-strategies.pdf>

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