How to Create a Training Course in PowerPoint

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eLearning with PowerPoint: Hot or Not?

We've all been there – trying to stay awake during tedious presentations awash with bullet points and stock images. No wonder some people think PPT is always boring. But think of a hammer, for instance. Does the fact that a hammer is a simple tool and everyone can use it make any less useful?

Like a hammer, PowerPoint is a tool. Whether your course will be useful depends not only on the software you use, but the degree to which your content is thought out and relevant to your learners. You might as well have been drawing pictures in the sand with a stick, as it doesn't really matter what tool you're going to use for authoring, at least, up to a certain point.

The important question is, why are you going to use PowerPoint? Some reasons could be:

- You want to develop content yourself, so you need a simple and familiar interface.

- You need to create content very quickly (again, with PPT, there's no need for most people to spend a lot of time learning its functions).

- You need a free authoring tool (the cost of a Microsoft license is super affordable, and you probably already have one).

Depending on your reasons, there can be two approaches to authoring with PowerPoint. One is longer and a bit hardcore, but free. The other one involves using iSpring Suite, an eLearning authoring toolkit for PowerPoint. It costs money but is easier and faster. Further, we'll compare both, so you can decide which is better for you.

5 Steps to Create a Training Course in PowerPoint

Course development is a complex process that starts way before you open PowerPoint to create slides. You should determine your training needs and goals, research your audience, and select an instructional design model that will work best for your case.

In this guide, we'll cover only practical steps where you actually create training content. If you want to delve deeper into the aspects mentioned above, check out this article, "Learning Goals and Objectives in Course Design – The Whats, Whys, and Hows."

Step 1: Make a course outline

After you've gathered all the necessary information for your online course, it's time to plot it, or in other words, create a general plan of the course that structures the information in a didactic order.

Divide your course into its respective topics (they will be training modules). If you're planning to create a lengthy course, break more general topics into subtopics and arrange them all in a logical order.

Example of structuring a topical outline:
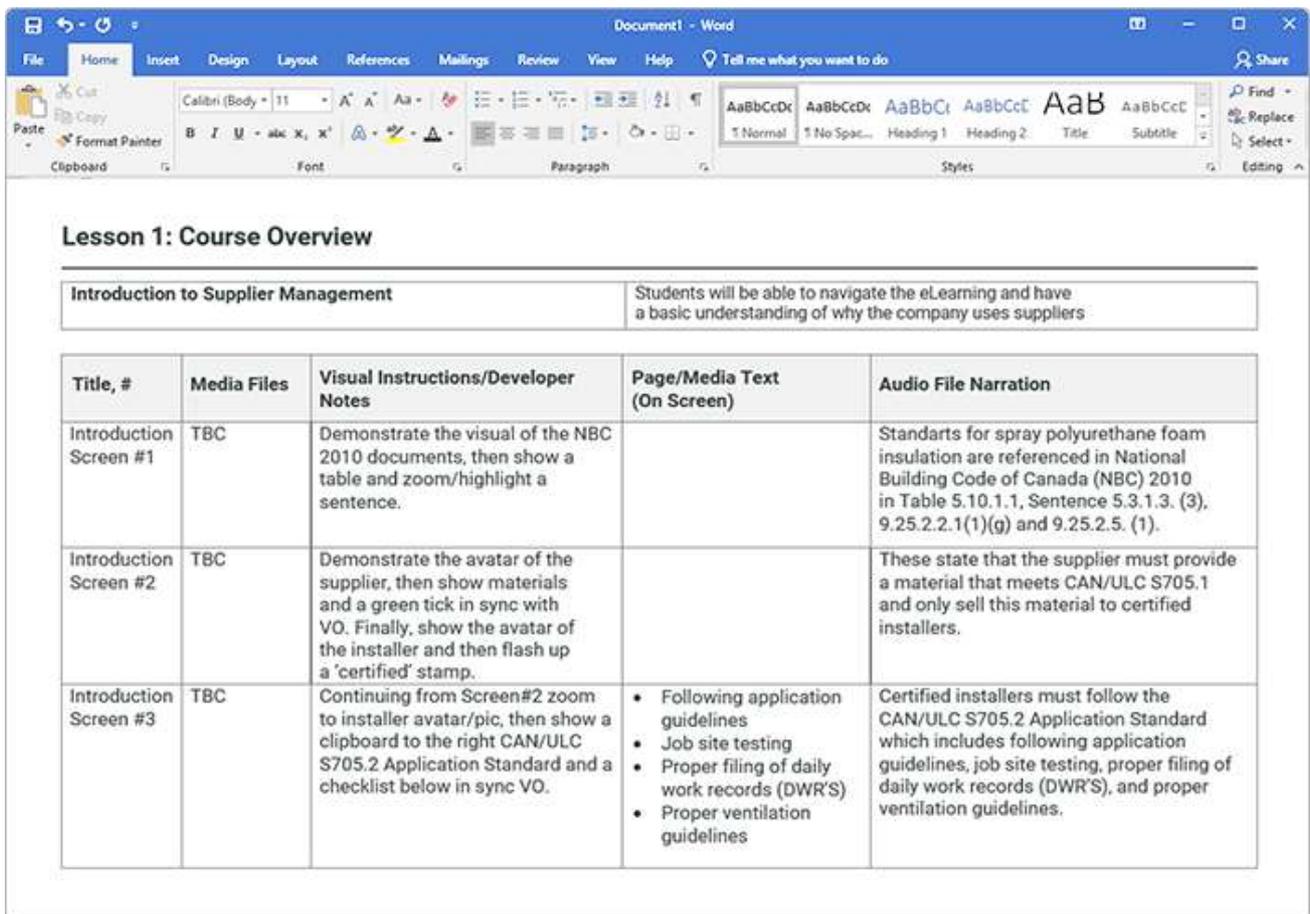
Module 1

▶ Subtopic

▶ Subtopic

▶ Subtopic

Module 2

▶ Subtopic

▶ Subtopic

▶ Subtopic

Step 2: Create a course storyboard

Now that you've divided your course into training modules and subtopics, you need to lay out the framework of the course in a visual manner. This is called storyboarding. A course storyboard can be created in a document, slide deck, prototype, or whichever way you prefer.

In addition to the written content (we'll discuss that in detail in the next step), it includes all the information in terms of photos, icons, charts, infographics, animations, or videos that will be used in the course. By the way, at this stage, it's important not only to think of what media you'll use but also to prepare all the necessary assets.

Example of a storyboard in Word:

Lesson 1: Course Overview

Introduction to Supplier Management	Students will be able to navigate the eLearning and have a basic understanding of why the company uses suppliers

Title, #	Media Files	Visual Instructions/Developer Notes	Page/Media Text (On Screen)	Audio File Narration
Introduction Screen #1	TBC	Demonstrate the visual of the NBC 2010 documents, then show a table and zoom/highlight a sentence.		Standarts for spray polyurethane foam insulation are referenced in National Building Code of Canada (NBC) 2010 in Table 5.10.1.1, Sentence 5.3.1.3. (3), 9.25.2.2.1(1)(g) and 9.25.2.5. (1).
Introduction Screen #2	TBC	Demonstrate the avatar of the supplier, then show materials and a green tick in sync with VO. Finally, show the avatar of the installer and then flash up a 'certified' stamp.		These state that the supplier must provide a material that meets CAN/ULC S705.1 and only sell this material to certified installers.
Introduction Screen #3	TBC	Continuing from Screen#2 zoom to installer avatar/pic, then show a clipboard to the right CAN/ULC S705.2 Application Standard and a checklist below in sync VO.	• Following application guidelines • Job site testing • Proper filing of daily work records (DWR'S) • Proper ventilation guidelines	Certified installers must follow the CAN/ULC S705.2 Application Standard which includes following application guidelines, job site testing, proper filing of daily work records (DWR'S), and proper ventilation guidelines.

This is what can be included in an eLearning storyboard:

- Slide title/name
- Screen text and elements (see next step)
- Graphics and animation
- Navigation
- Branching
- Audio narration script

There's no one-size-fits-all solution, but there are some industry-standard methods for storyboarding that you can use as your foundation and adapt as required. To streamline the process, you can download the ready-made PowerPoint or Word storyboard template and customize them as desired.

Step 3: Write texts for each slide

Now that you understand how your online course will be structured, you need to write a script. When prepared correctly, a script serves as the backbone of your eLearning course design and transforms the subject matter into engaging content.

Very often, an eLearning developer has to deal with two types of texts: an on-screen text and a narration script. Since there are different practices for writing them, let's have a look at each of these types separately.

On-screen text

Here, we mean all the text a learner will see on the slides. To make it really helpful, you need to consider the following things:

- **Add only core concepts to the slides.** If you want to provide some additional information, you might record a voice-over or support the text with images, infographics, and videos.

- **Minimize the text on a slide.** Eyes glaze over when they see large blocks of text, so try to make it as short as possible. Remove unnecessary words and break long sentences down into shorter ones; a line should have a maximum of 40 characters. The main rule here is one screen, one idea.
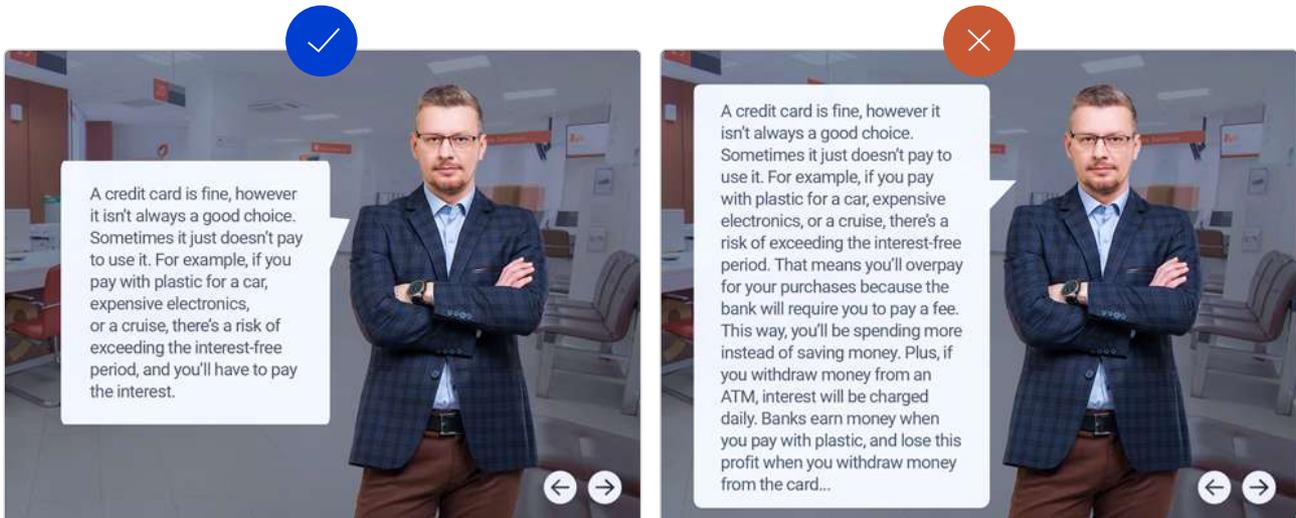
- **Make sure the content looks good on small screens.** The text, as well as other content items, must be visible, whether a course is viewed on a tablet or a smartphone. Keep this in mind when creating a course and check to see how it looks on a smartphone at the end of the eLearning development process.

Narration script

Creating a narration script is about writing a text for learners to hear, not read. You may skip this step if you're not going to include a voice-over in your course.

If you're planning to add narration, your primary task is to make a script that is listener friendly. To do this, you need to turn it into a conversation. Your learners should feel like they're dealing with an actual person. So write a script that has a conversational tone, without complex sentences or a lot of acronyms and jargon.

You can use contractions, transitional phrases like "now that we…", "let's examine…", or "let's shift gears…", and even slang.

After your script is ready, read it aloud. You may find that you need to replace or remove some phrases to make the speech smooth and clear. If so, make any necessary touch-ups.

You can also check the text for readability in the free Hemingway App. It will help you find lengthy complex sentences, passive voice constructions, and phrases that have simpler alternatives.

Step 4: Build slides

Now that you have prepared all the resources, it's time to assemble them and build your training course. The slides you need to create can be divided into three main categories:

- Informative slides
- Knowledge checks
- Engaging content

Let's delve deeper into each of these categories and see how you can create the necessary slides using PowerPoint and iSpring Suite.

1. Informative slides

Informative slides are the backbone of your training course. After all, this is what people open your course for – to gain new knowledge.

With PowerPoint:

PowerPoint is quite flexible when creating informative slides. You can select a slide layout that best suits your topic, fill it with text and images, add narration (if you convert your presentation into a video), a web page, a YouTube video, etc. You only need to determine which way to present new knowledge will be most effective for your audience.

With iSpring Suite:

iSpring Suite takes informative slides further and makes them interactive. There are 14 ready-made interaction templates, such as timelines, diagrams, graphics, catalogs, and FAQs. They'll help you make the training experience much more dynamic, illustrative, and effective.

For example, instead of creating multiple slides that describe various parts of a vacuum cleaner, you can create a single interaction where your learners click on each part to see its description.

2. Knowledge checks

Tests and quizzes are integral parts of any learning content. Unfortunately, there's no feature in PowerPoint that allows you to create an assessment. But whether this fact creates a problem or not depends on your goal.

With PowerPoint:

If you want to add a knowledge check simply for the additional engagement of learners and a self-check, then a combo of triggered animations and hyperlinks can be a workaround (a bit tricky and time-consuming, though). Check out these examples:

- A quiz
- A hidden-object game
- Interactive flashcards
- A Jeopardy game

With iSpring Suite:

iSpring Suite offers a specialized quiz making tool that allows you to create interactive assessments with multimedia, drag-and-drops, branching, automatic scoring, and feedback.

You don't have to make tweaks manually, as when creating complex triggered animations – you just need to choose a question type, write the text, and add media if necessary.
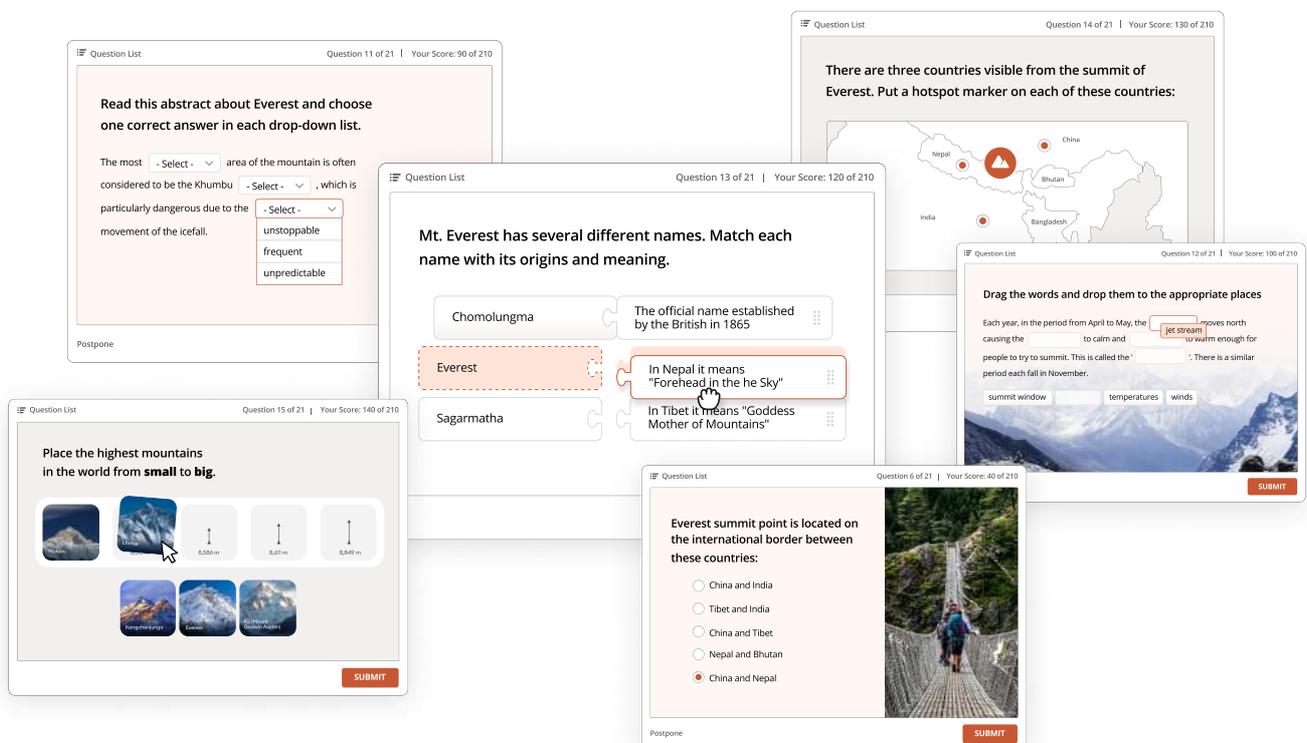
There are 14 question types to choose from, so your knowledge check won't be monotonous.

But what's even more important is that iSpring Suite collects and processes results and can send them to an email address, an LMS, or a server.

Not only can you create quizzes for fun, but you can also conduct serious assessments and track learners' progress.

3. Engaging content

Finally, you need to make sure that your training course is engaging, since it's your best shot to ensure high completion and knowledge retention rates.
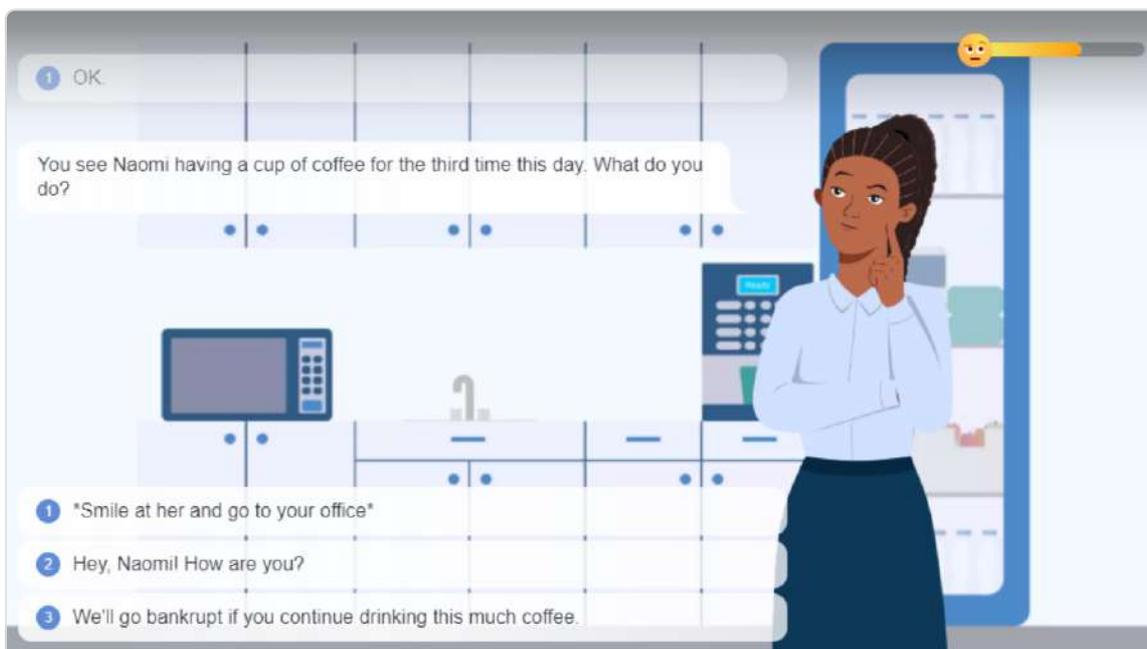
With PowerPoint:

When it comes to creating engaging content, the top choice feature of PowerPoint is animations. They make it possible for you to create almost anything, even interactive cartoons. It's not an easy task, but it's possible. See this ultimate step-by-step guide to creating animations in PowerPoint.

With iSpring Suite:

iSpring Suite empowers you to create not only interactions and quizzes but also scenarios and YouTube-like training videos. Plus, you can build custom characters that resonate with your learners and tailor the course player to make the overall learning experience more immersive.

Here's an example of what your training course can look like (it literally takes only a few minutes to create):

Check out this expert article on role-play training to learn what scenarios are and how to build them from scratch.

Step 5: Turn PPT into eLearning

So, we now have a great-looking PowerPoint presentation. What's next? How can we turn a presentation into an actual eLearning lesson?

The answer to this question depends on how you plan to distribute the content. You can leave your PPT file as it is if you:

- Didn't use complex animations and interactions.
- Don't need to track statistics.
- Don't plan to publish the presentation to an LMS.

Simply upload it to a file-sharing service such as Google Drive, Dropbox, or SlideShare and send the link to your learners.

Otherwise, you'll need to publish the content in one of two eLearning formats: HTML5 (if you want your content to display equally well on desktops and mobile devices) or SCORM (if you're going to upload it to a learning management system).

You can convert your PPT presentation to one of these formats (and others, like xAPI and MP4) using iSpring Suite. Simply open your presentation in iSpring Suite, click Publish, select the destination (your computer, an LMS, YouTube, or iSpring Space), select the format you want and that's it – your presentation is now an online training course!

ispring suite

Same PowerPoint, but tailored to eLearning

Create pro-level interactive courses, assessments, role-plays, and video lessons quickly and easily.

Explore iSpring Suite

Design courses like a pro

Make PPT presentations into interactive courses or create fascinating courses from scratch. Use all kinds of professionally designed templates and assets to deliver projects as fast as experienced instructional designers – preserving the same highest quality.

Build engaging assessments with automatic feedback

Select from 14 ready-made question types, from simple multiple-choice and matching to more advanced questions like word bank, sequence, drag-and-drop, and hotspot. Fill them with texts, images, and audio. Set time limits, the number of attempts allowed, and add feedback to let learners reflect on their answers – both correct and incorrect.
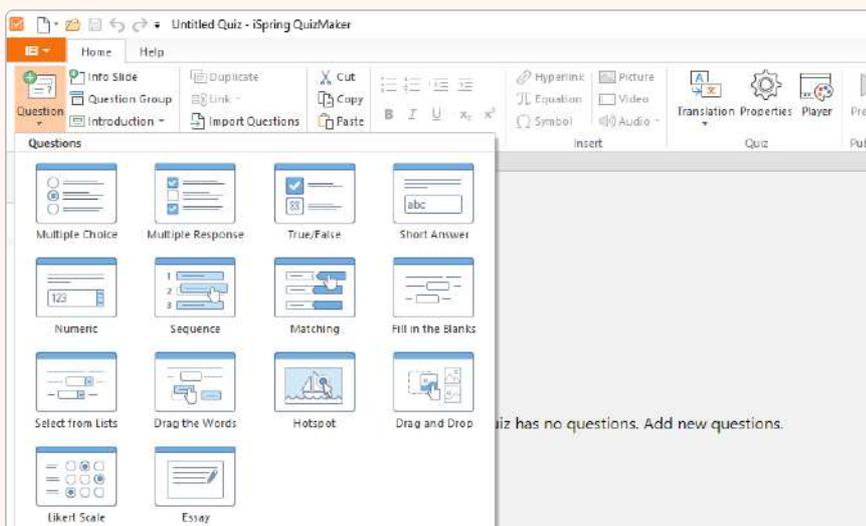

Record and edit video lessons of any kind

This includes screencasts, talking head videos, and video lectures. Record any kind of video and add annotations and special effects – all with a single tool. You don't have to be a professional video operator and editor – the tool offers only those features that you truly need for instructional design.

Create interactive role-plays

No coding required. Simply select characters and locations from the built-in library (photos and hand-drawn images), add questions and replies, set branching scenarios, and voila – your role-play is ready to go.
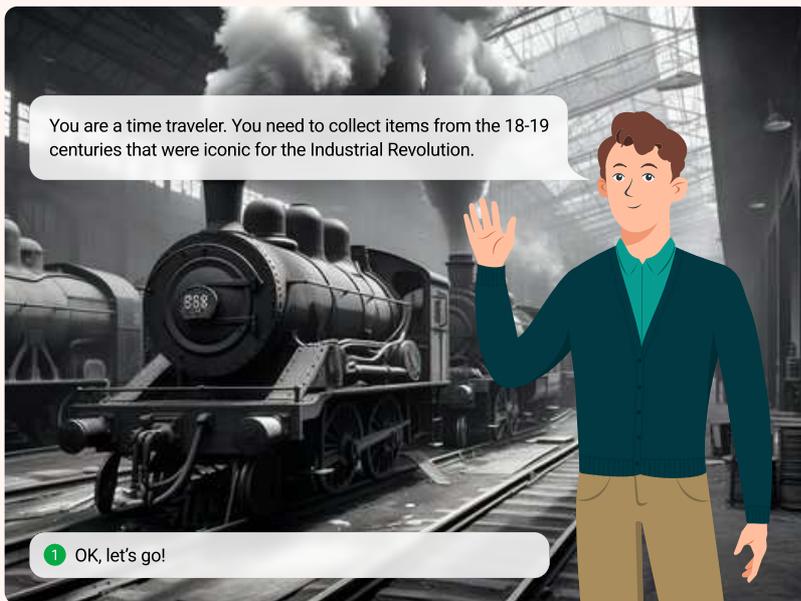

Make your courses unique

Customize the look of your course player to make it align with the brand identity of your company and clients or to facilitate training needs. Create presets for a particular client or project to save time and energy by setting parameters that otherwise need to be set manually each time.
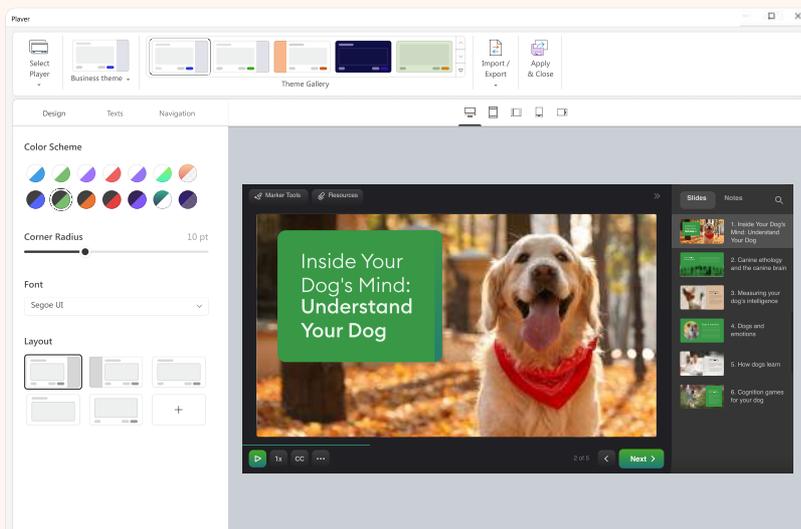
Get your projects approved faster

Make the review phase more convenient and effective. Upload your project to a secure online storage space and share it with stakeholders by simply sending them a link. They can leave their comments and approve the revised version online – it's easy and professional.
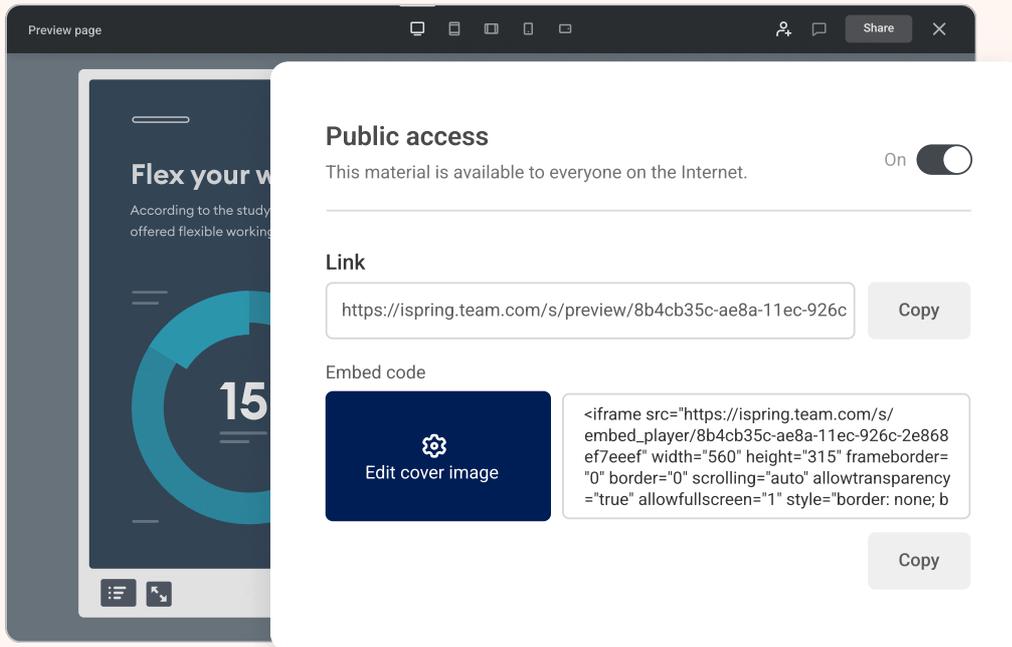
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Tips and Tricks

Tip 1: Set navigation

Unlike presentations, eLearning is a self-paced activity. Offer your employees some user control when engaging with your content. Not only does this give them a sense of agency, but it also suits their learning styles better when they have unfettered access to the material.

With PowerPoint:

Employ a few main slides and then allow the learner to choose where to go next by providing them with hyperlinks to various sections of the course. For example, in this how-to on making a Jeopardy game in PowerPoint, the main slide is a game board where each cell is a hyperlink to the respective clue.

With iSpring Suite:

There's a special menu where you can set up properties for each slide and create advanced nonlinear navigation for the course. With its help, you'll be able to develop a branched scenario course in a couple of clicks and, for example, offer learners different levels of difficulty within a course or just let them choose the order in which they'd like to study topics.

Tip 2: Avoid clip art

You know that white 3D clip art guy that appears in, like, every PowerPoint presentation ever? Sometimes, he has punctuation marks over his head. An exclamation point, perhaps? Maybe a question mark if he's confused? Yeah, him. Do not use him.

With PowerPoint:

If you want your employees to use your e-course to learn, you should not signal to them that they can skim, and that is exactly what horrible clip art does: it triggers a yawn.

Use only meaningful and professional-looking images in your courses. There are many templates on the web that can be used in your projects free of charge. Have a look at these clip art alternatives and explore some of these resources:

- Dribbble

- Behance

- You can also find plenty of templates for PowerPoint on Slide Hunter, PPTTemplate, Smile Templates, PoweredTemplate, and the official Microsoft website.

With iSpring Suite:

iSpring Suite has an extensive content library, a collection of ready-made graphic assets that includes characters, backgrounds, templates, icons, and buttons. This allows you to focus on course development without spending time in graphic editors or searching the web.

Tip 3: Consider alternatives for bullets

What do you associate bullet points with? College lectures, business meetings, stuff you don't want to learn but have to anyway because somebody said so? Bullet points rarely present information in the most engaging format, and are likely to be scanned.

With PowerPoint:

Try another format for sharing quick facts. Simply putting fewer words on a slide would work, as would a chart or an infographic that conveys the same message.

With iSpring Suite:

iSpring Suite offers 14 built-in interaction templates that visual learners will definitely appreciate. Timelines, catalogs, steps, and tabs – these interactions help you present ideas in the most engaging format, make

your course design look professional, and they also don't require any programming skills.

Tip 4: Show, don't tell

With PowerPoint:

In the basic version of PowerPoint, there are two options for adding a video: you can either add a pre-recorded video from your PC or the web, or record a screencast. Not the best range of capabilities, yet it's better than none.

With iSpring Suite:

iSpring Suite empowers you to record and edit video lectures, tutorials, and how-to screencasts right in PowerPoint. You can choose to create video narrations with annotations in YouTube style or record videos from your screen and webcam simultaneously to provide a screencast with live video comments.

CREATE YOUR TRAINING COURSE TODAY FOR FREE

Try iSpring Suite

Start out in your new career faster and easier

Our in-depth course "How to Create an Interactive Online Course" will help you master each stage of course development in 20 lessons – from identifying learning objectives and creating a storyboard to perfecting the graphics.

You will also put theory into practice after each module and create a course for your portfolio under the guidance of a senior instructional designer

Explore course contents

Welcome to the iSpring Community!

Feel free to join and become a valuable part of a community of instructional designers and eLearning professionals who are taking training to the next level with iSpring.

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