

Learning formats most commonly used in CME activities

Learning Format	Definition	Most appropriate for
Small-group discussion	An exchange (oral or written) of opinions, observations, ideas, or experiences in a small group (12 or fewer participants), usually to analyze, clarify, or reach conclusions about issues, questions, or problems. Typically includes a debrief where small groups report to the larger group and the facilitator provides feedback.	Transfer of factual and conceptual information to change knowledge and change competence in the application of that knowledge.
Case-based learning	Use of patient cases (actual or theoretical) to stimulate discussion, questioning, problem solving, and reasoning on issues pertaining to the basic sciences and clinical disciplines. <i>Synonym:</i> case study.	Applying knowledge to change competence.
Panel	A live or virtual discussion about a specific topic amongst a selected group of panelists who share differing perspectives in front of a large audience; panelists may field questions provided by audience members.	Transfer of factual and conceptual information to change knowledge.
Demonstration	A performance, observable action, display of specimens, etc., along with an explanation.	Transfer of factual and conceptual information to change knowledge and, potentially (albeit uncommonly), competence in the application of that knowledge.
Role play/dramatization	A learning approach where learners adopt or perform the role or activities of another individual. <i>Synonym:</i> skills practice.	Practicing skills in a safe, low-stakes learning space to develop competence.
Lecture	An instruction or verbal discourse by a speaker before a group of learners. <i>Synonyms:</i> didactic; recorded lecture.	Transfer of factual and conceptual information to change knowledge and potentially (albeit uncommonly), competence in the application of that knowledge.
Virtual learning - synchronous	Online learning in real time with concurrent exchanges between participants. Interaction is simultaneous without a meaningful time delay between sending a message and receiving or responding to it.	Transfer of factual and conceptual information to change knowledge, and potentially competence in the application of that knowledge.
Virtual learning - asynchronous	Online learning <u>not</u> in real time with delayed exchanges between participants. Interaction is asynchronous with a time delay between sending a message and receiving or responding to it.	Transfer of factual and conceptual information to change knowledge and potentially competence in the application of that knowledge.
Simulation	A learning approach used to replace or amplify real patient encounters with scenarios designed to replicate real healthcare situations, using lifelike mannequins, physical models, standardized patients, or computers; must include feedback from instructor(s) to individual learners. <i>Synonym:</i> skill-based training.	Applying knowledge to change competence.

Independent learning	Learning activities guided by an instructor or mentor to be performed by the learner outside of formal educational settings (classroom, lab, clinic) and may include preparation for classroom or synchronous online learning. <i>Synonyms:</i> independent study; homework; prework.	Transfer of factual and conceptual information to change knowledge; preparation for other formats where knowledge is applied with the intention to change competence or performance.
Reflection	Examination by the learner of his/her personal experiences of an event (possibly the present learning event), including the cognitive, emotional, and affective aspects; the use of these experiences in combination with objective information to inform present clinical and/or educational decision-making and problem-solving. <i>Synonyms:</i> journaling; narrative; story-telling.	Transfer of factual and conceptual information to change knowledge; can be used as a form of assessment when including commitment to changes in practice.
Self-directed learning	Learners taking the initiative for their own learning: diagnosing needs, formulating goals, identifying resources, implementing appropriate activities, and evaluating outcomes; mentors or coaches are commonly provided or made available.	Noneducational intervention in parallel with educational activity to change competence or performance.
Audit and feedback	An individual's professional practice or performance is measured and then compared to professional standards or targets with accompanying expert feedback for improvement.	Improving performance outside of formal educational settings.
Peer observation	Individuals observe each other's teaching or clinical practice and debrief to learn from one another. Usually done in parallel with a supporting educational activity. <i>Synonym:</i> peer coaching.	Improving performance in conjunction with a formal educational activity.
*Mostly adapted from: MedBiquitous Curriculum Inventory Working Group Standardized Vocabulary Subcommittee. (2016). <i>Curriculum Inventory standardized instructional and assessment methods and resource types</i> (March 2016 version). Washington, DC: Association of American Medical Colleges.		