



How to Bring Your CompTIA Class Online (10 Useful Tips for Managing COVID-19-Related Changes to Your Teaching Environment)

As the world reels from the effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, educators are busily searching for resources to help move their teaching and learning into the online space. The online shift isn't just smart; it's essential for all of our safety. As you move your CompTIA classes online, we want you to feel confident that, with a little help and the right tools, you can do so quickly, effectively, and without sacrificing student engagement. Here are our top tips for getting up and running online:

- 1. Make a real plan.** Establish a basic learning plan that both students and instructors can access. Your plan doesn't have to be extremely detailed, but you should outline what topics will be covered, and the expectations and requirements for students. (For example, do they need to attend an online webinar? Complete labs or practice questions?) Realistic goal-setting at the start will prevent confusion and help both you and your students feel confident making the shift.
Zeshan recommends: [Planboard](#)
- 2. Pick a strong eLearning platform.** An eLearning platform will serve as the backbone of your teaching and learning environment. Use the platform's built-in tracking features, but be sure to be transparent with students about how they will be tracked and also communicate any important deadlines...
Zeshan recommends: [CompTIA CertMaster Learn](#)
- 3. ...and pick a strong webinar platform.** Webinars will soon become a critical part of your teaching environment, so having a platform that is easy to use for both instructors and students is critical. Look for one that installs seamlessly without the need for too many plug-ins or add-ons.
Zeshan recommends: [Zoom](#), [Adobe Connect](#)
- 4. Keep it short.** Longer lessons aren't better lessons. Brevity is as important online as it is with face-to-face learning. Keep your training webinars to 50 minutes or less, and offer regular breaks for everyone involved.
Zeshan recommends: A time-tracking app like [Focus Keeper](#)
- 5. Use tools to keep students engaged.** Overuse of slides and PowerPoint will quickly cause burnout. Keep your slides simple (remember, they are just guides for your teaching). Annotate your slides, use the white board feature, and keep students engaged with the occasional interactive poll.
Zeshan recommends: An interactive polling tool like [Poll Everywhere](#), and [ZoomIt](#),

which lets you annotate just about anything

- 6. Be strategic with your questions.** There's a difference between asking a question, and asking a question that will get students thinking and speaking up. Use a mix of overhead, directed and redirected questions. If you're not already using it, the "Pose, Pause, Pounce" questioning technique can be just as effective online as it is in person.

Zeshan recommends: [Learn more about the Pose, Pause Pounce" method](#), and use [Kahoot](#) to create awesome quizzes

- 7. Get that camera on!** Many people will be feeling rather isolated right now, and seeing a friendly face can go a long way to building community. If you're able to, and if it's appropriate for your class, turn on your camera. At the very least do this at the beginning of your session. Make sure your students feel free to speak up, and be sure to ask for their feedback regularly. Don't worry about a messy background, most webinar tools allow you to either blur your background or use a virtual background!

Zeshan recommends: [Zoom](#) for group sessions, [FaceTime](#) or [Google Hangouts](#) for one-on-one tutoring or extra help sessions

- 8. Set time for specific activities.** Be sure to set a realistic amount of time for specific activities (synchronous vs. asynchronous, for example), and be available to help as and when students need it. CompTIA Labs for instructor-led training includes a useful feature that lets you watch what all students are doing in real time and assist where necessary.

Zeshan recommends: [CompTIA Labs](#) monitoring/assistance tools

- 9. Build real community.** For some people the online teaching and learning environment is a foreign place, but it doesn't have to be. As veteran online educators will tell you, it is absolutely possible to replicate a deep sense of community in the online space. This will be particularly important during a stressful crisis like COVID-19. Keep casual communication flowing freely in order to keep engagement up, and stress down.

Zeshan recommends: [Slack](#), [Microsoft Teams](#)

- 10. Be real.** Students will appreciate your humour, your candour and your ability to relate to their challenges and triumphs. (Did your toddler just walk into the room on camera? Go with the flow and laugh about it...we're all in this together!) Keep class light-hearted and fun, and don't be afraid to bring in the odd pop culture reference to connect with students on a deeper level. With social media and Netflix just a click away, you don't want to be competing for mental bandwidth, so make your community a place they want to be.

Zeshan recommends: [Educause](#) online teaching strategies

Making the shift from an instructor, to an instructor who is delivering education online comes with its own unique set of challenges. While many educators find themselves in an unprecedented situation, it's important to make time for learning and upskilling yourself. If you're interested in further building your skills as a trainer, check out our [CompTIA Certified Technical Trainer \(CTT+\)](#) - Virtual Classroom Trainer certification.

Remember that as a CompTIA partner you receive preferential pricing on Official CompTIA Content and Certification Voucher. Log in to receive it.

To learn more about how CompTIA can support you during these difficult times check out our [Partner Business Readiness Page](#).

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Systems infrastructure, networking, software development and cybersecurity are the skills that are driving the digital world. Through a series of fortunate events, Zeshan has worked in these verticals around the world.

In 2007, Zeshan fell into the Apprenticeships with the desire to help the next generation and he's never looked back. With a passion to raise the skills level, he is often called upon to help shape new programmes, provide technical expertise, or baking innovation into learning from day zero.

Zeshan's current role as the Director of Learning & Skills Certification at CompTIA UK involves guiding organisations on best practice for delivery and aligning to global standards. Zeshan spearheaded the creation of the Cyber Ready programme which is delivered using a range of online learning technologies.