

Building Virtual Collaborative Workspaces

CLE

How to organize and share the overwhelming tide of data and virtually collaborate with your team



Photo courtesy of: [North Carolina Business Litigation Report](#)

Let's begin at the beginning....where's that file?

So, you've got all these files floating around the office on multiple desktops and in numerous virtual wiki spaces...what to do?

A content management system (CMS) is what you may be looking for - some place to store your organizational documents and resources for ease of shared access. A true CMS like Alfresco or Microsoft Sharepoint allows you to take advantage of meta tagging - something librarians have used for centuries and bloggers have lately capitalized on. Tagging eases searching, but

you just don't have the funds to go out and set up one of these CMS systems. What to do?

Look at what you have available to you, at no recharge, from our Library - the CLE. The CLE is a learning management system - but *not* just for academics.

The CLE can be used for your business unit needs. It's basically a content management system on steroids - with lots of interconnected tools at your fingertips. So why not capitalize on that? This new workshop will show you how to not only organize and share your files, but

also utilize some basic tools for project management, communication, and collaboration within your organizational unit in an online workspace.

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The Learning Technologies Group

The CLE is supported by the Learning Technologies Group of the UCSF Library and Center for Knowledge Management. We can be reached at citsupport@ucsf.edu. For more information on workshops offered, please visit our workshop descriptions and registration pages: [CLE Workshops: http://tiny.ucsf.edu/q7ntc9](http://tiny.ucsf.edu/q7ntc9)

The Plan	1 Identify	2 Select	3 Build	4 Engage	5 Train	6 Sustain
How to move your team to your virtual, collaborative workspace...	your business needs.	the best tools to meet your needs.	your workspace for vision and function.	your group and market it as an integral, routine workflow.	your users on how to collaborate in the space.	by adding projects and tasks to the space without a need to retrain on basics.

1 - Identify your needs

The first step is to figure out what you need from your virtual, collaborative workspace. We talked about the file sharing in our opener, but there is certainly more you can do with this space. Here are some suggestions:

Basics:

- a) **File sharing** from one space instead of many desktops.
- b) **Listing of frequently used links**, instead of nested in everyone's browser favorites - that can be organized by task or project.
- c) **Collaboration on projects** - one place to plan, coordinate, share, and discuss on a project.

Advanced:

- d) **Solicit feedback** - build custom surveys for your department to improve internal business processes. Or, set up a public space for your audience to take these

surveys and use them for reporting back on grants or Operational Excellence indicators.

- e) **Collect forms** - you can build tools to collect forms in one place rather than sorting through email to collate the results. (Internal UCSF users.)

2 - Select your tools

- a) **Create a portal** for all your projects and resources. The CLE is a great tool for organizing a virtual workspace into multiple, focused, mini-spaces for your unit - all on one page. You can create different topics in your space for various projects or routine tasks. In these topics, you can create directories of commonly used files and also link to other websites (like wiki pages or departmental pages) for ease of reference.
- b) **Discuss:** In a *mini-space*, called a *topic section* in the

CLE, you can set up a discussion forum (or two) for folks to communicate on the needs of a particular project rather than trying to track the project via email. Instead, set up the discussion forum, login, and communicate asynchronously online - and you can easily follow the threads of the conversation and even attach new files to the conversation, to be later moved into a *directory* for the project by the leader.



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3 - Build Your Space

Come to our training and then contact our group with your space name and school/location/department. We'll create your space and assign you as the Leader of it.

Visualize It:

- a) **Set up the title** for your space and add your logo if you have one.
- b) **Set up the news forum** - use it for posting quick announcements to your entire organization or divide it into workgroups for group-specific messages.
- c) **Divide the space** into workable sections. Keep the top for everyday stuff, like announcements and goto links/documents. Then set up topics for various working groups, projects, or major tasks. Title these topics in the summary fields.
- d) **Add an image** to each section to visually engage

your audience with the topic and easily reference it when they log in.

- e) **Upload the files** - upload files to your space and organize them into folders. No lonely files out there - stuff them in a folder for sustainability.

Organize It:

- f) **Link to directories of files** - link to a directory of files by project or task from within the topic space on the front page of your space. Keeping files in these *directories* (also known as folders) makes it really easy to swap out the files and update them from the course files area for your collaboration space. The current files will always appear to your users without having to link to an individual file or worry about breaking the link.
- g) **Create discussion forums** - go easy on these, and make them relevant to the business

need, but they are great for collaboration amongst your team(s).

4 - Engage Your Team

- a) **Organize a meet 'n greet for your new space** - set up a meeting with your members and invite the stakeholders. Explain to them your rationale for the space, but also make concrete links to how this will assist folks with *routine* tasks - all coordinated from one location rather than many. Folks will still need to check email, but they may be able to reduce some searching/ clicking from the new portal you've built in your virtual collaborative workspace.
- b) **Enroll your team** - go to your space, click on Assign Roles from the Administration block, and add your team members. Folks can then go to <http://cle.ucsf.edu> and login using either their My Access or UCSF Mail credentials to access your new space.

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- c) **Match routines to new, streamlined workflows** - emphasize that this won't add to existing duties, but rather will make completing those tasks more efficient due to the ability to organize and communicate from one portal.
- d) **Engage by modeling** - incorporate a bi-/weekly meeting time using the space into the organizational schedule or engage via using the news forum to send announcements so folks get used to logging in and checking into the space. If you lead by example, it will make adoption easier.

5 - Train

Once you've set up your bare bones structure in the course, and created a section you will routinely use, you can use your section as a template for others to model after. You'll find it's not so difficult to use the tools after the initial planning and setup.

- a) **Train-the-trainers** - have your project leaders attend

this *Building Virtual Collaborative Workspaces* workshop. We can train them in the basics for you.

- b) **Showcase a tool** - once you've figured out your own strategies for using the space, incorporate into your weekly/monthly team meeting a demonstration of one of the tools in the space and how the team members can build it for use and/or engage it in use. Make this an ongoing part of your staff meetings to spice it up. Rotate who is going to do the showcase.

6 - Sustain

Now that you've begun incorporating using the tool in your workflow, you can focus less on the tool and more on productivity.

- a) **Focus on the work** - beyond the *showcase a tool*, you can swap out demonstrations with focusing staff meetings on the project progress reports.
- b) **Add new projects** - the space doesn't have to

stagnate. As projects/tasks are added or completed, you can add new ones or hide old ones (but still retain them for archives!).

- c) **Learn new tools** - you can always investigate the other tools the CLE has to offer, such as the glossary, wiki, assignments, etc. Talk to us - we can setup a training specific to your group's needs if you can guarantee a minimum attendance, and we are pretty creative on adapting tools to meet concretely defined needs.

We do custom trainings for identified group needs if you can guarantee minimum attendance.

Contact us at:
citsupport@ucsf.edu

Check out our other
Workshops!



Additional Workshop Offerings by LTG

Introduction to Digital Video

This course covers the basics of using Learning Technologies' equipment and workstations to create digital video projects. In addition to discussing planning considerations and best practices, we will complete some hands-on exercises, including setting up and using video recording equipment, performing basic editing tasks, and preparing a finished project for distribution. Tools used in the course include Sanyo Xacti cameras, Quicktime, and iMovie. Open to UCSF faculty, staff, and students.

subject, capture clean audio, and add a few finishing touches during the editing process. Basic digital video experience is recommended (see our *Introduction to Digital Video* workshop), but not required. Open to UCSF faculty, staff, and students.

Introduction to Elluminate

Elluminate, a web conferencing platform now available at UCSF, allows users to present, collaborate, and broadcast live audio and video to participants located anywhere in the world. This two-hour, in-person workshop will provide information on creating your own Elluminate sessions, preparing your content and materials prior to your meetings, using the collaborative tools within Elluminate, and inviting participants (whether UCSF-affiliated or not) to attend. Open to UCSF faculty, staff, and students.

Digital Video: Interview Techniques



Shooting a video interview is something that anyone can do, but it takes practice to produce a quality product. In this workshop, we will discuss and practice techniques for planning and shooting an effective video interview. At the end of the workshop, participants will know how to set a scene, light their

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The Better Presenter

We have all fallen victim to presentations that leave us bored and confused. In this workshop, you will learn to become a better presenter and create slideshows that enhance your presentations, not detract from them. You will develop an understanding of why templates are bad, and stories are good. Other topics include proper use of images and basic design principles. Please bring an open mind and a presentation that you'd like to enhance. *Please note:* We will discuss techniques that you can apply to presentation tools such as PowerPoint, but this workshop will not teach you how to use PowerPoint. Open to UCSF faculty, staff, and students.



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