

Tailoring a Hybridized, Online Course to a Paraprofessional Audience

The Focus

**Audience: Community Nutrition Educators (CNEs)
U of MN Extension Simply Good Eating Program**

- Newly hired - under one year of employment
- Various levels of nutrition knowledge, training
- Paraprofessionals with at least a high school education or GED; some have Master's Degrees
- Varying experience and comfort with technology
- Varied learning and language abilities

Content: Basic nutrition, 2010 Dietary Guidelines

- Applicability of basic nutrition concepts to real-life work situations
- Additional focus on applicability to personal nutrition habits



The Features

"Invisible" Technology"

- "1-click" entry into all learning presentations and activities within the modules using Moodle platform
- Minimal reference to technical terminology
- Clear and obvious navigation directions

Hybridized format - 8 asynchronous online modules, with 3 UMConnect sessions designed to:

- Create a learning community
- Reinforce online modules and give opportunity for application of learned concepts

Modeling effective teaching techniques

- Interactive presentations, activities to reinforce learning
- Opportunities for goal-setting and reflection
- Physical activity breaks built into each module



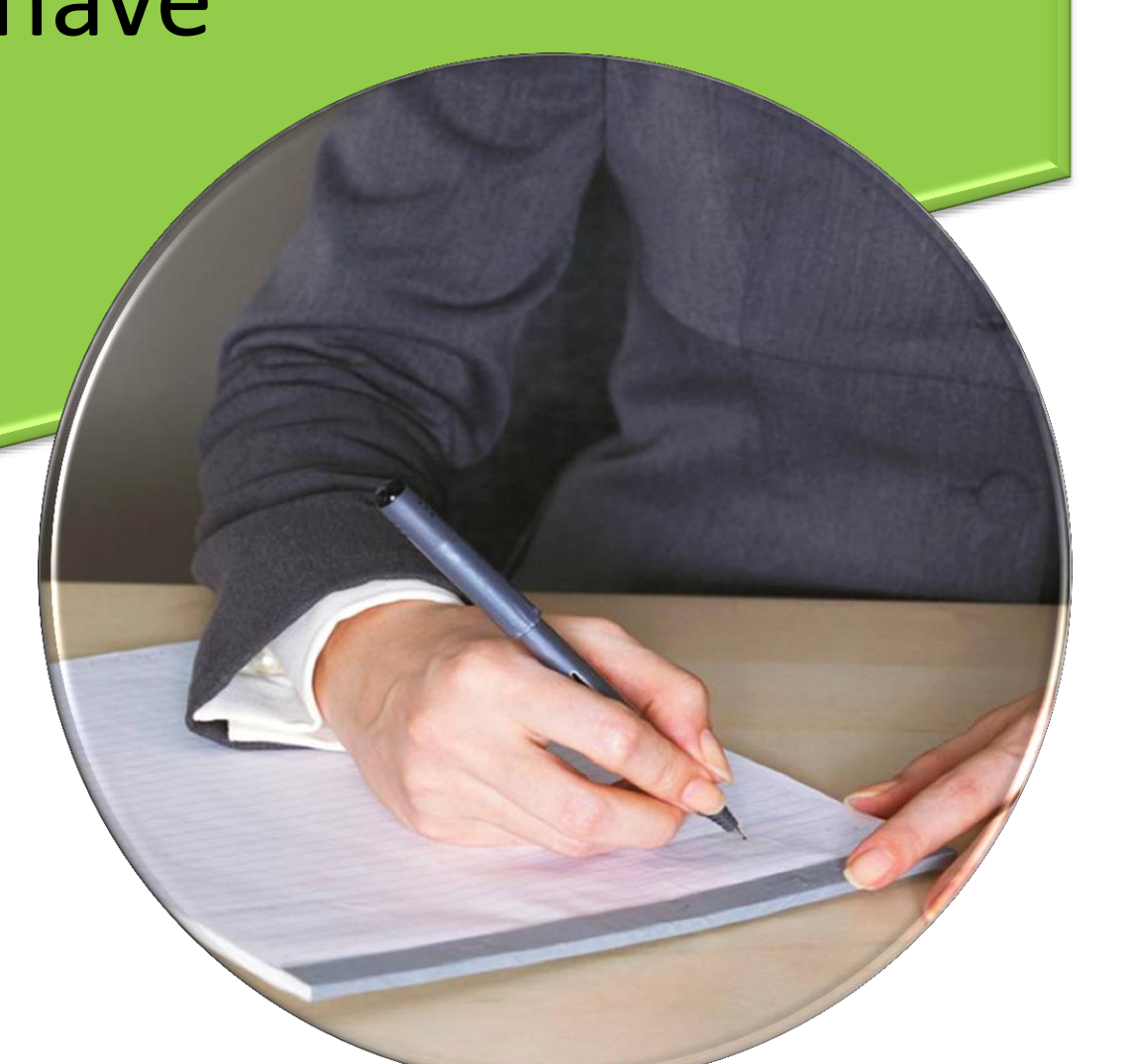
The Feedback

Comments from systematic review of 3 pilot modules by stakeholders, educators and target audience members were used to revise final product. Revisions suggested were:

- Create consistencies within all modules, including the look, the navigation methods, the order of activities, and the format for the pre-test
- Work out navigation bugs
- Add more reinforcing activities
- Enable participants to print out slide presentations so they can follow along

Additional Comments:

- "It kept my attention and made learning interesting"
- "I liked all 3 modules and wish I would have had them in place when I started"
- "Will be a very good training piece for CNEs"



The Future

- Modules may be re-packaged and re-purposed for other audiences: professionals, teens, employment and training clients, etc.
- The course will be regularly updated to remain a required training component for all newly hired CNEs.