

# The New Normal

## How Telework Impacts Training

COVID-19 has forced agencies to revise how they operate, with most now teleworking and slowly planning office returns. However, critical compliance and professional development training needs to continue.

But converting in-person programs to online doesn't always translate well. The right technology is needed for engaging, mobile friendly and secure learning. Telework has also exposed scores of critical skills gaps within government workforces.

Going forward, virtual learning and training could very likely become the new normal, especially as government employees look to learn new skills. Using digital tools, agencies can emphasize the "human" in "human capital" no matter where their employees are working to create engaging content.

GovLoop and Cornerstone surveyed 280 federal, state and local government employees and contractors in April 2020 to understand what they expect from their agencies' virtual initiatives in the years to come.

### Virtual Learning in the COVID-19 Era

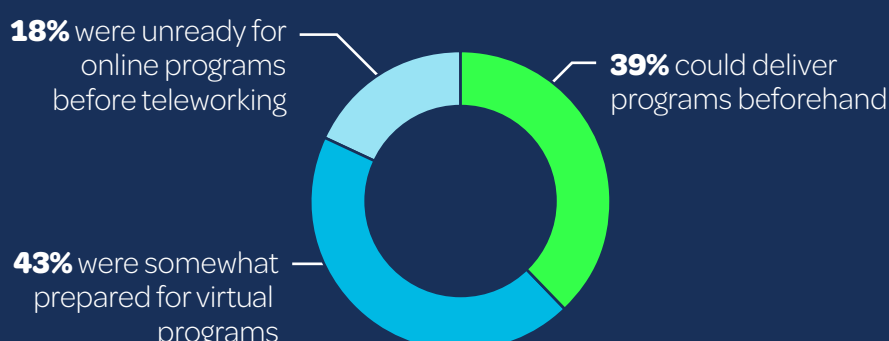
By May 2020, most agencies were teleworking to prevent COVID-19 from spreading:



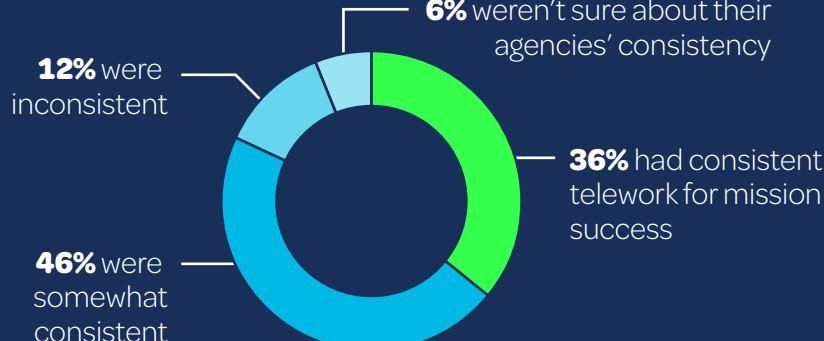
The following virtual learning programs were available at agencies once they started teleworking:



The feedback was mixed, however, on agencies' preparedness to offer virtual learning before they were forced to:

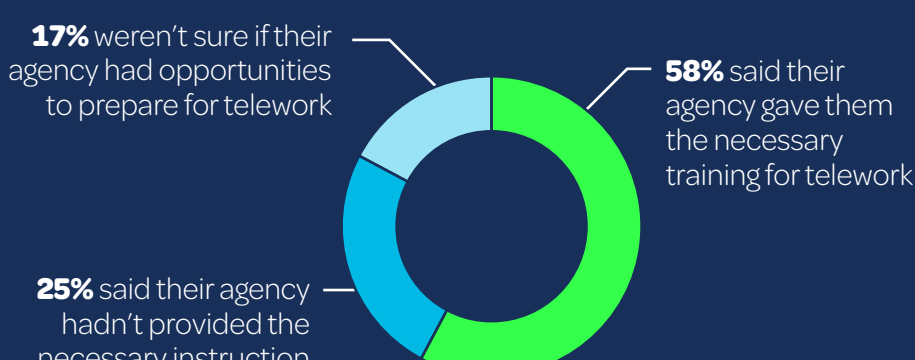


Opinions about telework's consistency for accomplishing agencies' missions were wide-ranging:

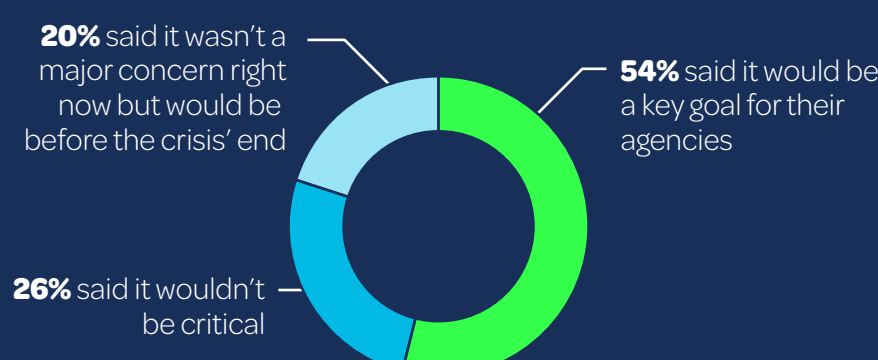


### The Rough Road to Virtual Learning and Training

Over half said their agencies gave them the necessary training to telework before doing so. But the transition hasn't been painless for every agency.



Respondents split on whether virtual training would be prioritized at their organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

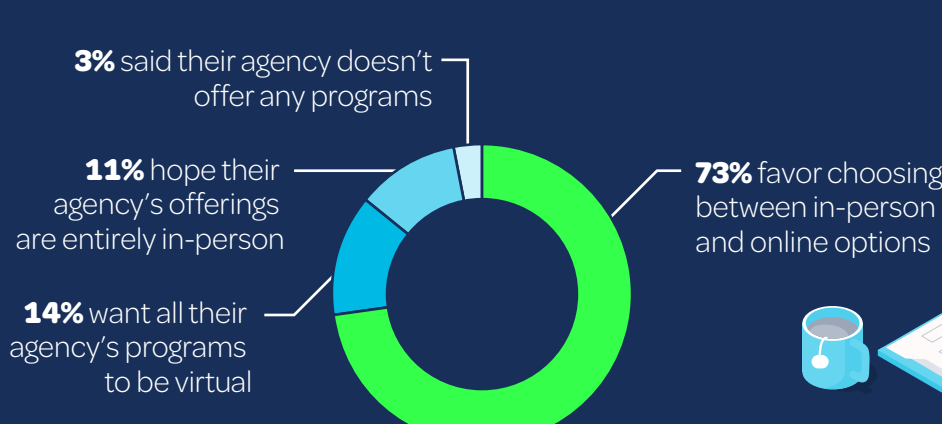


### Virtual Learning: What's to Come?

On a positive note, over half of respondents ranked their agency's ability to conduct virtual training as good to great. But the results showed more progress might be necessary:



The results also suggested employees prefer a combination of in-person and online programs from their agencies:



**Eighty-six percent expect their agency will provide more virtual courses in the future.**

Virtual training is often more budget friendly, and employees can determine their own pace. Many employees are eager to learn new skills and telework offers opportunities to do so.

Virtual learning is on the rise. In March 2020, [Cornerstone conducted a survey](#) and found a **40% increase** in Cornerstone Learning clients logging in for training and a **164% uptick** in the use of its mobile learning courses across the U.S.

### Leveraging Virtual Learning Long-Term

Understanding the need for virtual learning, agencies looking to implement long-term programs should consider these best practices:

#### 1. Embrace Cloud Computing

Using cloud, agencies can quickly, cheaply and efficiently deliver online programs to employees. Cloud's flexibility also means agencies can scale their offerings to meet their workforce demands. Gradually, cloud saves agencies energy, money and time on virtual learning.

#### 2. Adopt Automation

Automation involves machines performing processes with little to no human intervention. In terms of virtual learning, automation can boost the flexibility agencies have with offering lessons. Automation can deliver these programs at any time, and it can also do so faster and with fewer errors than humans.

#### 3. Remember Employee Experience

Virtual learning hinges on customer experience. Agencies that consider their employees' experiences will eventually deliver the best virtual learning to them. Even better, these workers will feel more connected, engaged, productive and creative after higher-quality experiences.

#### 4. Emphasize the Human Experience

First, "humanize" virtual learning by offering health, wellness and professional development programs online to make employees feel valued. Second, think about what knowledge each program conveys and whether it's best suited for in-person or online experiences. Third, determine how leaders behave in-person and online so executive presence exists across every medium.

#### How Cornerstone Helps

Cornerstone is a premier people development company. Featuring comprehensive recruiting, personalized learning, modern training content, development-driven performance management and holistic employee data management and insights, Cornerstone's people development solutions are used by approximately 7,000 clients of all sizes, spanning more than 75 million people across over 180 countries and 50+ languages. Using Cornerstone OnDemand's solutions, agencies can enrich their workforces with virtual learning wherever they are.

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