Does Skype Training Work?

In recent years, the number and type of online options for language learning have grown, to the point where it's confusing to know what works and what doesn't. Learning a language in a virtual or online classroom, using Skype for Business or another virtual meeting room like Webex, Go to Meeting or Zoom DOES work, just as doing business via video conference works. Why?

- You are connected with a trainer in real time. Interacting with another person whilst learning a language is at the core of FOKUS' approach to communicative language training because it is effective. You gain confidence speaking in front of someone, something no self-learn programme can give you
- You can learn and practise all four skills -speaking, listening, reading and writing – or concentrate on what you need the most
- You can see and hear learning materials provided by your trainer and you can share whatever you choose from your computers: from work emails and reports to favourite photos
- You can access the internet together and research topics or issues that arise during the lesson
- You can share, annotate, save and print the documents you work on together
- You can use shared virtual whiteboards to write and draw
- Break-out rooms offer groups the chance to split into pairs or smaller groups
- You can record the whole lesson for future reference
- If you engage in virtual meetings at work, it makes sense to learn in the same environment, so that you build confidence and also learn the language needed, like "Where's the mute button?"

Who can benefit from a virtual classroom?

- All levels! It's suitable for beginners as well as advanced students
- Individual and groups
- People who find it hard to get to face to face class because of business travel, family commitments or where they live
- People who need specialised training: it opens up the opportunity to search internationally, if necessary, for the perfect trainer

Does Skype Training Work?

What should you expect from your virtual classroom trainer? Here are some of the key things to look for:

- Clear instructions about joining the classroom and what to do if you have problems
- Activities that teach you the way around the tools in the classroom
- If you're in a group, the chance to get to know other members
- Attention to "netiquette": what to do and not to do, copyright and confidentiality issues
- Technical know-how: he or she may not know all the answers, but does know how to get technical help!
- Learning and practice activities that fit the virtual classroom and make the most of what it has to offer, rather than feeling like a traditional classroom put online
- Encouragement to try new things
- Requests for your feedback about what does and doesn't work for you

Talk to us about learning in a virtual classroom. We speak YOUR language!