

When to call on CAI

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An examination of the literature reporting use of computer assisted instruction (CAI) in the business world indicates that this medium has been used to advantage in training situations with some or all of the following characteristics:

1. When large numbers of people need to be trained in the same skills quickly and/or on a continuing basis
2. When the workplaces are geographically dispersed
3. When absolute mastery of procedures or factual data is critical because of the high cost of error
4. When drill is required to achieve mastery
5. When trainees have widely varied backgrounds in terms of education or skills
6. When the trainees are already comfortable with computers
7. When the job to be taught involves use of computers
8. When scheduling of training is difficult because of personal schedules or fluctuating demand
9. When the same material must be taught to employees at different levels in the organization
10. When judgement is required to deal with dynamic situations
11. When training equipment is expensive
12. When procedural knowledge must be retained unused for long periods and brought back into focus quickly.

The paper discusses the particular advantages of CAI in each of these situations, and illustrates them with examples from the literature.