

Securities Industry CE Council | October 2026

CE Connections brought together continuing education (CE) professionals from across the securities industry. Participants joined one of 10 breakout groups to discuss the most valuable resources from the presentations, their approaches to Regulatory Element (RE) and Firm Element (FE) planning, and what has made their FE programs effective. This summary highlights what was discussed across all groups. Comments have been anonymized.

Executive Summary

Participants responded positively to the event and to the CE Council's efforts to communicate broadly with the industry, and many asked for more opportunities to compare practices with peers. The RE Learning Plan tool, advance publication of RE topics, and the needs analysis template were cited as the most valuable resources, helping firms plan FE that reinforces rather than repeats RE. Groups agreed that effective FE is short, tailored by role, and built on realistic scenarios. Shared challenges included driving timely completion and managing the cumulative burden of CE across regulators, designations, and platforms.

Key Themes

1. **Advance visibility into RE content drives planning.** Knowing which RE courses will be assigned, and to whom, helps firms plan FE, complete their needs analysis, and explain why courses apply.
2. **FE complements, rather than repeats, RE.** Firms revisit RE topics from a firm-specific angle: RE covers the regulatory foundation, while FE explains how the firm applies those requirements.
3. **Tailored, role-based training is more effective.** Firms segment training by role, registration, and line of business; one large firm reduced training time by 30–40% through risk-based targeting.
4. **Shorter, scenario-based content drives engagement.** Several firms aim for 10- to 15-minute courses built on realistic, day-to-day scenarios.
5. **Driving timely completion takes planning and persistence.** Firms use earlier internal deadlines, staggered due dates, escalating reminders, and a mix of FINRA and firm notifications.
6. **Technology, FLEX, and AI are reshaping CE programs.** Firms using FLEX described it as a significant time-saver, and several use artificial intelligence (AI) to monitor industry news, identify topics, and make content more engaging.
7. **The cumulative CE burden is a growing concern.** Learners managing FINRA, investment adviser representative (IAR), state, and designation requirements across different platforms can become confused and fatigued.
8. **Timely regulatory information keeps training current.** Participants suggested releasing rule changes in predictable windows and identifying the registrations affected, so firms can plan accordingly.

Practical Ideas to Consider

- Reviewing the RE Learning Plan tool during FE planning and the annual needs analysis.
- Framing FE as "how our firm applies the rules" when a topic also appears in RE.
- Keeping courses to roughly 10–15 minutes and building scenarios around day-to-day situations.
- Setting earlier internal deadlines and staggering RE, FE, and Annual Compliance Meeting due dates.
- Exploring how AI can help identify topics and make content more engaging.

Thank you to everyone who participated and shared their experiences!