Workplace Training

Why e-Learning is so effective
...and saves time and money!

By James Muskett

Organisations with an eye to increased productivity and retention are constantly seeking ways to improve the skills and knowledge of their work force. With its capacity to provide flexible, targeted and cost effective solutions, increasingly e-learning is filling this gap. Follow our FOUR step guide to implementing an **e-Learning** program in your organisation.

What is e-Learning?

At a glance, e-Learning is defined as 'the use of electronic technology to aid in the acquisition and development of knowledge'. It has been in use for over 20 years and is an umbrella term that covers a wide set of electronic educational applications and processes, such as:

- Web-based learning
- Computer-based learning
- Virtual classrooms and digital collaboration

e-Learning includes the delivery of content via:

- Online forums
- Communication technologies such as Skype and instant messaging
- Audio and video recordings
- Satellite broadcast and interactive TV

e-Learning can occur anywhere and usually at any time; all you need is a computer, tablet or smartphone

Success factors for e-Learning students

A huge benefit of e-Learning is its flexibility to allow learning to occur anywhere and usually at any time. All you need is a computer, tablet or smartphone. Students are often less reluctant to commit to a course of study and have greater probability of completing an online course. They:

- are a rewarding learning experience that for many people surpasses the level of understanding gained in a crowded classroom
- are a flexible, self-paced alternative well suited to busy, working adults
- have unique strategies for enhancing retention of information gained
- are a natural solution to distance learning, with the obvious benefits of accessibility and convenience
- enable people to learn anytime and anywhere; on business trips, holidays or from the comfort of home.

Professional development programs incorporating e-Learning

More frequently employers are turning to e-Learning as part of their professional development strategies. The struggle to remain competitive both in the marketplace and to attract high calibre staff is putting more pressure on HR teams to develop professional development strategies within the bounds of often tight budgets. Increasingly e-Learning is the answer to this dilemma.

- **Time savings:** Independent studies have shown that e-Learning has yielded time savings of 35–45% over traditional classroom instruction while obtaining equivalent or better gains in education.
- **Financial savings:** e-Learning provides savings in wages spent on training and can cut the travel and entertainment costs associated with training by at least 50%.
- **Flexibility:** e-Learning is self-paced and can occur any time and any place. Study can be fitted around work and can easily accommodate business trips, location problems and shift workers.
- **Adaptability:** e-Learning is easily modified, especially web-delivered content, thus it is more adaptable for translation and change of content for different cultures and languages.

Increasingly, e-Learning is the answer to the dilemma of providing cost effective, flexible Professional Development

FOUR steps to implementing an e-Learning program in your organisation

Technology can overcome the limitations of time, distance and resources and significantly enhance the options available to you. Follow these steps to get your e-Learning program up and running.

1. Identify the area of development required. There is now a vast range of e-Learning courses which include Finance and Accounting, HR, IT, communications, marketing, etc.
2. Research the organisations offering this format. There are many major Universities and Professional associations that offer this format, so investigate the options to find the best solutions for you.
3. Remember that the location of the Institution is not so important; this is a key benefit of e-Learning.
4. Investigate the level of support offered, students still need to feel they have access to personal support in an interactive environment.

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