GUIDELINES ON HOW TO INCREASE E-LEARNING USAGE

Guidelines

Compiled by: Suziana.Shukor
Nine Guidelines to Increase e-Learning Usage

1. Talk to your audience – and share the results

While it would be nice if there were a ‘magic bullet’ that would make hordes of users flock to online courses, there is no one right answer to the question of how to get users more involved with e-learning.

In fact, the most consistent point that came out of research was the importance of thoroughly understanding of users before figuring out how to ‘sell’ e-learning to them. We must know everything possibly about our target audience before designing e-learning courses that will appeal to them.

A simple way of finding out about users:
- Ask what type of computer equipment they have at home and at work
- Which topics are most important to them
- What time of day they prefer to learn
- How is their IT proficiency level

Case Study
ABC Ltd. (name has been changed)

A focus group of 60 people was conducted from multi departments to find out what people like and don’t like and what they were going to do to change e-learning courses.

The findings were as follows:
- Users wanted 30 – 45 instruction;
- Users liked online tutors
- PDF format available when there are bandwidth challenges

Do
Research your audience before launching an e-learning initiative. Give users what they need. Then advertise the fact that they are getting exactly what they asked for.

Don’t
Assume you what users what without asking them.

2. Pay attention to culture

Surveys and focus groups are a good way to find out what users need, but it’s equally important to understand something much less tangible: an organisation culture. And within a single culture, there are various subcultures, many of which develop around job titles. Project workers who are accustomed to competing in their jobs may respond well to games and contests – an approach that may fall flat with IT professionals.

Case Study
ABC Ltd. held a marketing campaign aimed at ABC Ltd.’s 150 sales professionals included a Valentine’s Day “give your brain a hug” promotion. Chocolates were sent out along with direct-mail
flyers, to tell learners about a team contest. The first team to complete two specific courses received $500 in American Express gift checks. “We do a lot of contests,” she says. “They’re inexpensive, and they’re a good way to capture people’s attention.”

At MOM (name has been changed) IT Learning Group, the campaign included sending e-mails that pique IT people curiosity. That does not mean coming up with themes or contests; instead, can have succinct and direct subject heads like “Challenge your knowledge.” IT professionals really pride themselves on their technical knowledge, so when you say something like, “How smart are you?” they’re more likely to open the message and read it.

**Do**
Think long and hard about what kind of culture your organisation has and what type of marketing approach might work with different groups of learners. Do users appreciate humour and whimsy, or do they want “just the facts”? Do contests and games motivate them, or are they more likely to respond to simple e-mail reminders?

**Don’t**
Market e-learning the same way to sale people the way in a command-and control environment as you would in a more team oriented culture.

3. **Be specific in your marketing**
One of the most common mistakes people make when marketing e-learning is that they promote the initiative as a whole, but they don’t talk to target groups about specific offerings — mass marketing delivers the strategic message; target marketing is for sending very specific messages.

Target groups based on more than just job titles. Other factors to think about: level within the organisation (e.g. entry level workers, middle managers or executives), location, the language they speak and the extent of their computer knowledge. For example, if you are offering a basic course on using the Windows interface, send an e-mail to a group of computer newbies across all job functions, not to everyone in the organisation.

Craft your messages to answer the “what’s in it for me?” question for each group. If you’re sending an update to upper-level management, include personal comments from other higher-level managers who have seen their employees’ productivity rise as a result of the e-learning initiatives. If you are targeting a group of IT people, include testimonials from IT workers who have received valuable certifications using e-learning – show how e-learning can give different values to different learners.

Of course, the targeted approach means more work for the person in charge of the e-learning initiative to make sure that learners aren’t facing an intimidating mountain of courses with no guidance on where to start.

**Do**
Make sure your marketing messages are directed at specific groups of people. Let each group know what’s in it for them.

**Don’t**
Put all your effort in to mass marketing, leaving learners overwhelmed by a mountain of courses.
4. **Find e-learning champions**

One of the keys to increasing e-learning usage is finding a few strong advocates who will talk up your initiative. Again, the identity of these champions depends on your organisation’s culture. But no matter who your champions are, they should have the following characteristics:

- A genuine, passionate belief in the value of e-learning. Don’t ask disinterested executive to say a few words at the organisation meeting simply because of his or her rank within the organisation. If your organisation dictates that you must have specific individuals speaking on behalf of the e-learning initiative, do everything you can to bring them on board before they begin promoting the programme.
- In some cases, your e-learning champions might simply be a talented entry-level employee who’s friendly, articulate and respected by his or her colleagues. If this individual takes an online course and spreads the word about his or her positive experience, it becomes a powerful incentive for the co-workers.

**Case study**

A training manager at MOM Ltd. (name has been changed) found that a small group of champions could spread the word about e-learning initiative far better than she could herself. While the learners themselves were eager to receive training, convincing their busy managers to give them time to complete online classes on the job was a challenge.

The training manager made a point of attending corporate events and meetings where managers were present. She would casually ask them questions about their administrative assistants and hear things like “I’m going crazy I have a new person who doesn’t know what she’s doing.” That was her cue to explain how e-learning could help.

**Do**

Put some of the marketing onus on users and managers. If they believe in the programme, it’s to their advantage to tell others about it.

**Don’t**

Count on e-learning champions to come out of their own without any effort on your part. Instead, figure out which group or individuals are most likely to benefit and make sure they understand how online learning will help them.

5. **Get learners’ managers involved**

The most powerful champions or resistors of e-learning are often the learners’ own managers. E-learning may be supported at the highest levels within the organisation and employees may be clamouring for it, but your initiative will go nowhere if front-line managers don’t buy in.

**Case study**

How do you challenge those grim statistics? The most obvious way is to involve managers in what learners are doing. At DCA Ltd. (name has been changed), Michael Howard, who leads the distance learning development team found that e-mails sent to managers were a more powerful marketing tool than messages sent to individual learners.
To determine which managers should receive email announcements, Howard first went into their LMS and pulled out the names of the people who’d participated in self-paced training.

He used the company’s organisation chart to figure out who each person reported to. Those 1,866 managers and 724 senior managers began receiving weekly new course announcements. Howard still sends messages to individual learners, but they found that targeting managers has been a far more effective strategy.

At the ZED Technology Services (name has been changed), Cathy Lawson goes beyond e-mail messages in her efforts to help learners’ managers understand the importance of e-learning. Since part of her job involves teaching classroom, Lawson suggests that managers take the company’s online courses on coaching. The logic is that if they take online classes as part of their own development, they’ll be more likely to recommend similar courses to the people who report to them. In addition, give managers an outline that explains which business problems e-learning addresses in your organisation. Not only does this help remind them why e-learning is important to the company, but it also ensures that managers throughout the organisation are sending a consistent message.

**Do**

Make sure managers understand the benefits of e-learning so they recommend it to the people who report them.

**Don’t**

Direct your marketing efforts only at learners.

### 6. Brand your programme

Any company that’s launched a product or service knows that one of the keys to success is branding. When consumers have a positive experience with a certain brand, they’re likely to buy it again and again. A branded programme may look and feel more “official” than an uncoordinated effort, giving learners the impression that the learning is supported at the highest levels of the organisation.

**Case study**

When FED Ltd. (name has been changed) employees pull up the home page for the company’s technical training centre, they’re greeted not by dry text-based menu but by a real person – well, sort of. Jen D., an animated character whose job is to help learners find their way through the online training, was created by FED’s multimedia production team. The multi-talented character also appears in promotional pieces for FED’s instructor-led and television-based training, giving the company’s entire training effort a consistent look and feel.

At ABC Ltd., learning and development team developed a logo depicting a wide-eyed owl wearing a graduation cap. The owl appears on every communications piece the team produces, including the quick reference guide, the user guide and the learning centre’s web site so that people know where it’s coming from and they identify it with learning.
Do
Brand your e-learning effort – or your training programme as a whole with a logo/animated character and/or consistent typefaces. You’ll provide users with a visual trigger, reminding them that this new flyer or Web Page is related to the one they saw last week.

Don’t
Haphazardly send out communication pieces that look and feel different from each other.

7. Don’t stop with the launch; keep communicating
While a launch party or other kick-off even can help generate excitement for a new e-learning initiative, that’s only the beginning. Other types of communication methods include: newsletters, e-mails, events etc.

Case study
Lawson of ZED Technology Services has learned how important regular communication is. She sent out a series of pamphlets and e-mails to refresh users’ memories about what they’d learned at the launch party. To make sure people would pay attention to the flyers, Lawson included them with the payroll, figuring people would be more likely to read a pamphlet that came with their checks rather one that landed in their inbox.

In addition, she sends out personalised email messages every three weeks to specific groups. She admits, however, that using e-mail can be tricky. You want people to know about new offerings that will help them develop key skills, but you also have to be aware that some employees receive hundreds of emails each day. Thus we need to be careful about frequency and content because if it is too much, users may stop reading it.

Do
Keep people engaged long after the kick-off party by regularly informing them of new courses, certifications and services. Also, communicate in a variety of ways: e-mails, pamphlets, posters, and lunch-and-learn sessions, for example.

Don’t
Overwhelm people with too much e-mail. Weekly or biweekly messages give just enough information without being perceived as junk.

8. Tie e-learning to consequences
Research shows that most companies are using a variety of incentives to encourage employees to learn online. However, it usually takes more than a gift or certificates to turn employees into repeat e-learners. Some ways to add accountability include:

- Talking about training expectations during performance appraisals. Many managers already require their employees to complete classroom-based courses as part of their professional development plans. When e-learning is built into this education plan, employees see it as part of the overall training requirement and are more likely to use it.
- Making e-learning a prerequisite to classroom learning. If your online library includes a course that complements an instructor-led class, require people to take the online class before signing up for the in-person event. Not only does this increase e-learning usage, but it also brings
everyone up to speed on the basics before they come into the classroom. That way, you can make the most effective use of the instructor’s and learners’ time.

- Requiring certifications. Another way to make sure people use online courses is to require certain certifications in order for them to be promoted, then offer online courses to help them attain those certifications. If they’re motivated to advance in the company, they’ll also be motivated to do e-learning.

Case study
At GEG Ltd (name has been changed), as part of staff professional development plan they complete each year, employees are required to take online courses on topics such as change management and project management as part of a way of pushing e-learning through the system.

At MOM Ltd., project managers Brower and Posner have a different way of looking at carrots and sticks. They have no mandatory course requirements, nor do they use incentive programmes to lure the company’s 2,000 IT professionals towards online courses. The carrot, they say, is employees’ own desire to learn skills that will help them do their jobs better. And the stick is simply the need to stay employed in a competitive environment.

Do
Let learners know how important e-learning is by tying courses usage or completion to performance reviews.

Don’t
Assume people will take online courses without a “push” from managers.

Give learners enough time and space to do e-learning
In a classroom session, it would be unusual (not to mention rude) for a learner’s manager or co-worker to barge in and ask a quick question or borrow a pen. But when an employee is sitting at his or her desk, quietly staring at the computer screen while typing or clicking, the person’s co-workers don’t know – and, in some cases, don’t care – that he or she may be in the middle of a class. These constant interruptions, as well as, the resulting perception that e-learning is somehow less important and therefore easier to disrupt than classroom learning may discourage people from taking or completing online courses.

One of the best ways to increase e-learning usage is actually one of the simplest. Make sure learners are able to concentrate while they’re taking an online course. There are several ways of doing that, including:

- Setting up a separate area for e-learning. Ideally, this would be a designated room for quiet learning. If there is none in your organisation, give some time e.g. afternoon session to enable your staff to learn;
- Posting visual reminders that someone is “in class”. If your organisation isn’t able to set aside separate e-learning areas away from learners’ desks, make sure people have some way of communicating that they’re taking a course and should not be interrupted. For example: put on “Learning in Progress”
- Forwarding e-mails and calls. If someone is taking an instructor-led course off-site, they wouldn’t be expected to check their e-mail every five minutes, nor would they be required to take phone calls during class. The expectations for e-learning should be no different.
Case study

It’s clear that productive learning can’t take place unless people have enough time and space to focus on what they’re doing – whether it’s in the classroom or online. But should companies expect employees to do their e-learning at home?

In one camp are the managers who see free e-learning as a way for employees to develop essential career skills, and therefore expect them to take advantage of this benefit outside of work hours. Learners may agree.

According to Corporate University Xchange’s study of more than 4,000 e-learners, 66 per cent of people who took online courses at a company training centre or learning lab said they would have preferred to take those courses at home. And 53 per cent of those who did e-learning at their desks said they would have rather taken the courses outside the workplace.

One the other side of the issue are managers who set aside time for employees to take online courses during office hours, in the same way they allow people to miss a day of work to attend classroom training.

Findings from the Masie/ASTD study of more than 700 learners supports this viewpoint: 76 per cent said they prefer to take online courses during work hours, and 86 per cent of learners enrolled in mandatory courses said they currently do their e-learning at their desks, in a shared workplace or at a company training centre.

In the face of conflicting research and opposing viewpoints, what’s the best way to decide whether people are more likely use e-learning at home or at work? Again, it comes back to your company culture and the type of courses people are taking.

Do

Minimise distractions to learners as much as possible, either by creating a separate learning section or by posting visual symbols in e-learners’ offices to let their colleagues know they’re busy.

Don’t

Expect e-learning usage to increase in situations where learners are constantly interrupted by phone calls, e-mail messages and colleagues.

CASE STUDIES

Case Study #1 - Keeping connected

How do you “sell” e-learning to a group of far-flung employees who have never received formal training?

Company name: ABC Ltd. (real company but name has been changed)

Reason for using e-learning: To provide cost effective training for remote employees on topics such as company processes and procedures, in-house computer systems, customer service skills and government insurance regulations; also to improve employee retention by helping employees feel more connected to the company.
Type of users: About 200 part-time administrative professionals and 50 fulltime business managers, all of whom worked in small sales offices or out of their homes and 80 percent of who were new hires.

Biggest obstacle to increasing usage: Helping managers see e-learning as a way to increase their own productivity by producing better-trained administrative workers.

When Laura Carroll began putting together a training plan for her company’s administrative assistants and business managers, she was literally starting from scratch. Carroll, who is the training manager at ABC Ltd., faced a daunting task: to train 250 people who work in small sales offices — and even, in some cases, their homes—across the country.

Learning and Development department had already created an extensive training program for the approximately 600 employees who work in the main service centre. But support staff at the regional offices received spotty training, at best. “Many agencies had procedure booklets and hand-written notes, and you’d hope one person didn’t leave before the next one came so they could pass on some of their knowledge,” Carroll says.

What is the problem with this type of informal on-the-job training? In an industry that relies on regional sales people to be the face of the company, poorly trained administrative assistants can make the difference between a big sale and a missed opportunity.

To make sure ABC Ltd. remote employees were receiving the same attention as those at headquarters, Carroll first thought about hiring a team of trainers to travel across the country and bring distant workers up to speed on company processes and procedures, in-house computer systems, customer service skills and government insurance regulations. But the cost of such a program was daunting, especially since three to five new employees join the company’s regional sales offices each week. E-learning, Carroll realized, would be a less expensive and more effective way to deliver the essential training. In early 2001, the company rolled out a combination of synchronous and asynchronous courses. At first, says Carroll, her team was tempted to put its entire budget of about $250,000 into building and buying the best technology possible. “We thought if we built something wonderful, the learners would come, just like in the movies,” she admits.

As Carroll puts it, she then “woke up” and realized a marketing plan would be an essential part of the e-learning initiative. She put her money where her mouth was, dedicating 20 percent of the budget to communications. (That amount was reduced to 5 percent in the second year.) Those funds went toward virtual kick-off meetings for field managers, postcards and course manuals for users, travel to corporate meetings to promote the program and intranet maintenance. The most important part of the plan, she says, was making the program personal. To do that, she sent handwritten notes to participants, posted pictures of her team online, and allowed time at the beginning of synchronous sessions for people to get to know each other. Carroll found that this approach was especially effective with new staff. “They’re not in a big office where they have peers, so they feel very isolated,” she says. “The virtual community pulls them in 26 and makes them feel like, ‘I’m not all alone out here.’”

While feedback from users was overwhelmingly positive, getting support from their managers was another story. Because 80 percent of the group was made up of hourly employees, asking them to do e-learning at home was impractical. And at work, an administrative assistant is often the only person answering the phone for two or three salespeople. Getting those salespeople to allow time for their support staff to do e-learning – time when phones would go unanswered and customer requests would be delayed – was a tough sell, Carroll says.
To gain their support, she made a point of attending the same corporate events they did. While there, she would casually ask them questions about their administrative assistants and hear things like, “I’m going crazy. I have a new person who doesn’t know what she’s doing.” That was her cue to explain how e-learning could help.

“When a salesperson has a new administrative person, every hour they have to spend in the office helping that person or fixing their mistakes is an hour they’re not out selling,” she says. “It really comes down to dollars and cents.” Local salespeople weren’t the only ones who had to support the e-learning program in order for it to be successful. Carroll was somewhat surprised to find that the most vocal advocates were the company’s 50 business managers—the people who are in charge of all agencies in a specific region of the country. In one territory, a business manager may supervise 15 to 20 administrative assistants in three or four states. These managers were part of the user group slated to receive e-learning, but Carroll never expected that they’d also become her biggest champions.

“Their jobs had really been unmanageable when they were travelling around and trying to do hands-on training,” she says. “Now they don’t have to travel as much. I don’t think I realized ahead of time how much it was going to benefit them.”

Case Study #2
Sneak attack
A financial services company rolls out e-learning so gradually that people don’t even realize it’s happening.
Company name: POP Ltd. (name has been changed)
Location: New Zealand
Industry: Financial services
Reason for using e-learning: To train partners and employees on the company’s new customer relationship management (CRM) system.

When initiative started: September 2001
Number of users: 300
Type of users: POP employees, few of whom were familiar with the Windows interface or the use of a mouse—skills they would need in order to use the new CRM system. (The CRM system eventually will be deployed to 1,200 additional users at banks that resell POP’s products, but only the POP employees received online training for it.)

Sometimes the best things in life happen by accident. That was certainly true for Graham Bunkall, Head of Human Resources at POP Ltd. in New Zealand, who introduced a successful e-learning initiative without even realizing he was doing it.

It all started in February 2000 with plans to roll out the company’s new customer relationship management (CRM) system, known as Quantum. The new Windows-based system would be a drastic change for people who were accustomed to using a green-screen mainframe system. Not only would they need to figure out how to navigate a Windows interface, but they’d also have to master tasks as basic as using a mouse. To learn this combination of Quantum-specific skills and computer skills, the company’s 300 employees were slated to spend four days in the classroom. Bunkall and his team knew they needed to keep people informed about the progress of the CRM roll-out, so they came up with a communications strategy. They sent regular updates and made sure most staff members were involved in focus groups about the new system.
But when September 2001 came around and the Quantum roll-out had been pushed back more than a year from its original launch date because of technical problems, Bunkall began to wonder how he could keep people involved and excited in the face of constant delays. “We wanted to re-enliven people’s hearts and minds because they were getting apathetic,” he says. “This thing had been going on forever, and it was getting a little bit boring.” To get some ideas on how to liven things up, he turned to The Learning Curve, a New Zealand training vendor that was already designing materials for the CRM classroom sessions. Bunkall had talked to the vendor about e-learning several weeks earlier, but the timing had been wrong—there simply wasn’t enough time to design and roll out online courses before Quantum was supposed to go live. The delays, however, gave him a chance to revisit the idea. Bunkall and the team at The Learning Curve decided to begin using e-learning to familiarize people with the basics of Windows. Instead of having a kick-off party and talking to people about the benefits of e-learning, they came at it in a more subtle manner. When people came back from their afternoon tea break one day in October 2001, there was an unusual e-mail waiting for them. “It was nothing more than a stylized letter Q,” recalls Bunkall. “He popped on the screen and jumped all over the place, then he disappeared.” Over the next week, the leaping letter appeared in people’s inboxes during each tea break. Day by day, the character became less clumsy and more confident as he moved around the screen. “We were trying to demonstrate that you can empathize with this character,” says Bunkall. “He’s suddenly been introduced to this new Tower Insurance environment, and he’s a little bit apprehensive.” At the end of the week, the letter Q told people he was there to introduce the new Quantum system and invited them to name him. The winner and runners-up would receive prizes based on the letter Q: The “quiet” package included a gift certificate for a bookstore, the “quick” package allowed the winner to rent a sports car for the weekend and the “cuisine” package was a free dinner. “Humour and fun are an important part of Kiwi culture, so building that into the strategy was critical,” says Deborah Dunleavy, senior instructional designer at The Learning Curve. Once the character had a name (Q-Tee), he began appearing less frequently but required more interaction on the part of the users. For example, he described how each department would use the new CRM system and benefit from it, then used a memory game to introduce users to basic Windows icons. By clicking on the correct icons, users were beginning to learn how to use a mouse. The next week, Q-Tee introduced the Quantum implementation team and encouraged people to e-mail members with questions. A related electronic jigsaw puzzle introduced people to the concept of dragging and dropping. “We wanted POP Ltd. employees to be comfortable using e-learning before they even knew they were doing it,” Dunleavy says.

The campaign continued, with overwhelmingly positive feedback from users. “I just love Q-Tee. He’s so cute and such fun,” e-mailed one area sales manager. “I can’t wait to see what he’s got for us every week.” In fact, any time Bunkall sent out the weekly Q-Tee e-mail slightly later than normal, he would get messages asking about the delay.

At this point, it hit Bunkall that, almost by accident, a group of people who were initially nervous about the new technology had become completely comfortable navigating the Windows interface. Because of their comfort level, he decided to build online lessons covering each of Quantum’s major processes—sales, customer service and claims, for example. By rolling their mouse over interactive Quantum screen shots, users could learn how to perform common tasks such as processing insurance claims.

As of September 2002, the CRM roll-out had been pushed back yet again, and POP Ltd. employees were still using online modules to learn about key Quantum processes. Bunkall guesses that the use of e-learning has reduced the amount of time people will spend in the classroom by 25 percent.
More important, though, is the fact that they’ll walk into the classroom free of anxiety and ready to learn about Quantum in more detail. “People will be entering the classroom at a fairly similar knowledge level,” says Bunkall. “You won’t have to cater to people who may slow down the whole class because they are apprehensive.”

Case Study #3

A different question: Instead of increasing usage, MOM Ltd.’s IT Learning Group focused on decreasing wasted enrollment fees.

Reason for using e-learning: To allow the company’s IT professionals to take courses whenever they need to update their skills.

Biggest obstacle to increasing usage: Increasing usage is not a goal of MOM Ltd.’s IT Group; they firmly believe in self-directed learning. However, they don’t want to waste money on courses that aren’t being used. When Gregory Brower and David Posner realized that 30 percent of learners were dropping out of online courses provided by the MOM IT Learning Group, where they are both IT project managers, they knew they had to do something about it.

In six months, this drop-out rate had added up to a loss of $100,000 in courses that were purchased from the content vendor and not used. That was an unacceptable loss, especially in a tight economy in which every penny counts. “If you buy a shirt at the store and leave it on the counter and go home, that costs you something and it hasn’t gained you anything,” says Posner. One choice would have been to use some of the methods mentioned in this report – for instance, providing incentives for users to complete certain courses – to decrease the drop-out rate. But instead of going that route, Posner and Brower decided to survey their users to find out exactly why one out of three people was abandoning an online course without finishing it. What they found was that more than 80 percent of drop-outs left a course because something else was more important – a new project landed on their desk, for example, or they had to attend a last-minute meeting. About 20 percent said they’d dropped out because their jobs had changed after they enrolled and they no longer needed that particular course. The results of the survey showed Brower and Posner that learners were completing only the online courses that were important to their jobs and dropping out of classes that weren’t. And, they wondered, what’s wrong with that? “They’ve made a choice that we have to respect,” says Brower. “We have to trust that they’re making decisions for the betterment of themselves and the betterment of the company. They’re not little kids – you can’t hit them upside the head with a big mallet and say, ‘You’ll learn this Java even though it has no reference to your job.’”

Because they believe that learners are capable of making their own decisions about which courses to take, the two project managers decided not to try to increase usage. Instead, they focused on a more pressing problem: the $100,000 they were wasting every six months on non-completions. When they talked to their content vendor, the response they got about the 30 percent drop-out rate was, “This is the industry standard.” That answer wasn’t good enough for Brower and Posner. They negotiated a deal with their e-learning vendor – the first of its kind the vendor had ever considered – in which MOM doesn’t pay for drop-outs. If a student fails to complete more than 15 percent of a course 30 days after enrolling, that student is automatically un-enrolled and MOM gets its money back. (The student can choose to re-enroll later.) “We’re no longer flushing money down the toilet,” says Brower. “The vendor’s job is to get as much money out of us as possible, but our job is to make sure anything we buy helps reduce the knowledge gap at our company.” Another way Posner and Brower are helping reduce that knowledge gap is by guiding learners through the process of selecting courses. They’ve developed an open-source Web-based tool then provides course
suggestions. Where a learner needs only a snippet of information, says Posner, the tool might recommend only the second half of a course.

The two project managers hope that when employees use the tool to determine exactly what they need to learn and why they need to learn it, they’ll get more value from MOM’s online courses. “When people have a meaningful goal and a reason to use e-learning, that’s when they are most successful at it,” says Posner.

Most common reasons learners do not complete courses

- Learners get the information they need, then exit
- Learners get interrupted or distracted
- Learners are too busy
- Learners don’t have incentives to complete courses
- The online courses are boring or badly designed
- The technology doesn’t always work right or is confusing