

## E-Learning Teaching Strategy for Entrepreneurial Growth

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Many companies have already transferred training registration to learners by allowing them to use the Web to sign up. Now, some organizations are placing diagnostic tools on the Web to allow users to determine for themselves what learning programs are best for their needs. Decision-making passes to learners, giving them more control and adding value to the e-learning interface. Some companies create e-learning programs in order to support the entrepreneurial growth of the firm through training their employees with new innovating educational techniques *Preparing a business for a shift to e-learning requires that you built a new learning culture and create sound, value based communications. But these efforts cannot be accomplished very easily. The best way to approach these important issues is through a systematic change teaching strategy. Our presentation would be based exactly on this particular matter, which is of major concern for all the competitive companies nowadays.*

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### 1. Introduction

Nowadays, the basic conception of education is that the today person must be secured to the access of learning in various manners, to have equal opportunities for learning and training and to be released from time and bindings. The kind of lesson and the starting point of training is to be his own matter. E-learning is the procedure of learning where the training technique is operated through modern technologies, for example, computer programs. Usually, the trainee has full control of the training order and moreover there is a simultaneous support from the teacher or the special tutor on the lesson. This support is essential otherwise, we would discuss the alternative of self-education which may be done at home with the help of books or CD-ROM.

The E-learning virtually contains collaborative education and mutual influence among trainees and teachers and among students as well. It happens to the classic education namely in the traditional classroom. However, the electronic seminars are also held in "classroom" in spite of the fact that, tutor and students are in different places.

The meaning of the classroom is fictitiously created e.g by the computer. In this way the education through e-learning may be asynchronous collaboration, synchronous collaboration or a specific order.

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A lot of companies implement e-learning methodology in order to train employees. More specifically a training program for employees could:

1. Improve their cognitive level,
2. Specialize their knowledge regarding informatics, business administration, internet knowledge
3. Obtain new qualifications and skills that they will use into their job inside the company, in order to preserve their professional edge, and to
4. Increase their effectiveness

A distance learning training programme may be directed to learners of different degrees of educational level, minors or adults. In the case of teachers in secondary education, the special circumstances of their profession impose special requirements, as well as special demands, on a distance-learning environment. **(Anastasiades 2002)**

As a result, it is extremely necessary to pinpoint their individual needs, so as to prepare measures for satisfying them to the greatest extent. According to **Knowles (1978)**, some of the most important 'Countermeasures' are:

- Introduction of cooperative learning climate
- Establishment of mechanisms for teachers and learners mutual planning
- Identification of learner needs and interests
- Identification of learning objectives based on the diagnosed needs and interests
- Preparation of sequential activities for achieving the objectives
- Execution of planning via careful choice of methods, educational material and required resources.
- Evaluation of the quality of the learning experience while reediagnosing needs for further learning

As far as realization of a distance-learning environment is concerned, one can assume a model with respect to the actual teaching space and the pace of training. For example, in some models learners possess complete control and responsibility over their progress, while other models are based on stricter control enforced by the teacher or another central party **(Moore M. and Kearsley G. 1996, Massicotte G. 1997, Maglogiannis et al 2005)**.

More specifically, the educational model is summarized in the following points:

- An adapted curriculum was formed using a combination of synchronous and asynchronous distance learning.
- The asynchronous part comprised of fifteen educational units
- The synchronous part included five lectures and presentations. Some of them were reviews of the course material, while others dealt with broader subjects in the greater scientific area of the curriculum.
- The teaching material that supported the programme was produced with the basic principles of open distance learning for adults in mind. This material was user friendly, included a multitude of self-evaluation exercises, as well as a study guide for each teaching unit, besides a printed book that was shipped to the learners.
- Specific educational objectives were identified so as to promote the cooperative learning climate. A fundamental objective was to familiarize the teachers with the exploitation of a computer and the Internet as an educational medium. Thus, the staff was not merely trained in Teaching Entrepreneurship issues, but also in self-training and evaluation using computers.

## 2. Educational Principles for a Successful e-Learning Strategy & Culture Inside the company

The main problem that companies and private organizations face, when run training programs is that employees are adults with very limited time for training. Research has demonstrated that adults are concerned with real-life problems. Also adults learn differently than children who are concerned with subject matter and play. Therefore, care should be taken to avoid materials that are developed specifically for children when teaching adults. Some key findings (**Knowles, 1978**) are:

1) Adults need to know why they should learn something. They learn best when they understand how the new knowledge will be immediately useful in their work or personal lives. They want to learn what they need and they want to set the limits on what they need to know. Moreover, they want the information to apply to real world tasks, not be make-believe or just creating additional make-work activities for them.

2) Adults need to be self-directed in their learning. They want to be in charge of their lives and responsible for the decisions they make. They need to be quickly shown that being a 'learner' and being 'independent' are synonymous. They need to participate in choosing and planning their own learning activities. They also want to control the pace, direction, flow and appearance of their learning environment.

3) Adults need to have their experience respected and considered a resource in the learning process. There should be emphasis on hands-on techniques that draw on the learner's accumulated skills and knowledge or on techniques that provide learners with experiences from which they can learn.

4) Adults employees make a voluntary commitment to learn when they need to know or need to be able to do something. They do not respond to an authority figure saying that it will be good for them. Adult learners want concrete, real-world examples of the value of the learned task. Therefore, scenarios should be realistic and require learners to accomplish tasks relevant to their world and easily applicable to their job tasks.

5) Adults workers have a task-centered or problem-centered approach to learning. Adults are very time conscious. They feel that they need this information now and they do not have much time to acquire it. Additionally, they are task focused - they don't want to learn everything there is to know but just what they need to know to do their job. For children, learning is organized around subject matter. For adults, learning should be organized around real tasks. For example, 'Composition' would become 'How to Write Effective Business Letters.'

6) Adults are motivated to learn. They respond well to extrinsic motivation like higher wages and promotional possibilities, but they respond even better to intrinsic motivation like the need for self-esteem, recognition, broader responsibilities and achievement.

7) Adults need to be able to carefully consider the process of learning. The focus is not on the instructor transmitting the content but on the learner acquiring it. Adult learners want to control their learning environment. This includes controlling modalities within the course whenever possible.

8) Adults workers need to have feedback regarding their learning. They want clear learning objectives, and they want to know regularly the extent to which their objectives have been achieved.

The educational model that we would like to follow is **ARCS Model**, (**Keller, 1983 and 1987 at Florida State University, Bourletidis & Samitas 2003**), which was developed primarily to provide guidance for

designing motivational interventions in training. It is an affective model in that it deals with feelings, emotions and beliefs.

ARCS is an acronym that stands for Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction

### 3.E-Learning Advantages For Business Training Purposes

E-learning requires high technology standards, management of instructional and information design processes and tools, portal deployment and functionality, knowledge management system administration, professional development and strategy. However, informational and instructional content for e learning can be distributed to wherever the company is located.

New instructional design techniques add additional value for the learners-employees and for the company. The concrete advantages that offered by the E-learning as a distance educational method for companies and organizations are:

- The educational material is always available, namely at every moment of the day, everybody can enter the electrical classroom provided he is connected with Internet.
- It is available everywhere namely wherever we are.
- It is available to all persons possessing simple electronic means like a PC, and is connected with Internet.
- It is rich in contents and comprehensive. It does not tire the trainee.
- It is very effective especially when it is presented by modern means as multimedia, video, sound, text performances, speeches, dialogical collaboration.
- It is tough by different ways so that the trainee may easily satisfy his preference viz.: by self-tough, by unsynchronized collaboration by communication with tutor and his co-trainee as well.
- Continual improvement of the contents and effectiveness.
- Learning based on participation with active trainees instead of inactive recipients.
- The educational material and its presentation may be separated into small units. These units may be used again and a common basis for many subjects may be created.
- Management of the progress and exchange of views between tutors and trainees.
- Calculation of the effectiveness of the education and consequently the yield of the investment.
- New chances for increasing the activities of Academic institutions and often colleges.
- New education changes for staff, citizens and pupils who hold no possibility to accomplish them (because of high cost, lack of time and space).
- Practically, unlimited number of trainee, drastic decrease of the necessity for programming teachers, classrooms trainers.
- Possibility of the trainee to chose the subject of his interest, among similar others, before starting his lessons.
- Creation of personal educational program,
- Certification of knowledge and dexterity.
- Saving of time and money by the firms that use e-learning education. **(Koumpouros Y., Maglogiannis I., Koutsouris D 2000)**

### 4. Conclusions

The E-Learning architecture of the distance-learning environment provides to companies a number of advantages, such as low deployment cost, exploitation of existing ISP infrastructure and inexpensive access for the learners. However, this open architecture imposes a number of security measures during data transfer.

But in order to achieve the target business firms should respect employees as adults' learners

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