

# e701

## LEARNING TIPS

produced by:

**The MASIE Center**

[www.masie.com](http://www.masie.com)

edited by: Elliott Masie

FREE Digital Book

Summer 2004

# Letter from Elliott

Dear Colleague,

## **This book is a simple and very different project:**

First, I sent a note to my colleagues in the learning and training field asking them for a quick tip on deploying e-Learning in organizations. The thought was that we would get a few dozen and would post a list of Tips on our website for everyone to use. Then:

- The tips started to come in and we evolved the target to a small file that we would call 101 Tips.
- The tips kept coming in and it evolved to 201 Tips, 301 Tips and then 401 Tips.
- The flow of tips didn't stop and the scope of the project expanded.
- Why not compile these and turn it into a Free Digital Pamphlet, with perhaps 501 Tips for e-Learning.
- As we started the editing process, the project expanded again. Let's produce this as a full Free Digital Book that we would distribute to the 60,000 colleagues on our TRENDS list.
- To offset the staff expenses, maintain the quality and disseminate it to an even wider audience for free, we decided to add a few e-Learning providers as sponsors, including a digital ad in the book.
- The final product is a 147 page Free Digital Book, formatted into a PDF file that can be read, searched, printed and redistributed without charge.
- And, it will be part of an on-going series of Free Digital Books that The MASIE Center will produce.

Here are a few pieces of CONTEXT for the CONTENT in 701 Tips for e-Learning:

- One person's major AHA tip may seem quite elementary to another person. We have included the widest range of advice and perspectives to address both new and very experienced e-Learning implementations.
- The e-Learning Tips were reproduced as submitted by the sender with a minimum of editing. Our goal was NOT to impose a singular style but to share the original thoughts of your colleagues from around the world. (For example, there are many ways in which the phrase "e-Learning" is spelled.)
- We were not able to include EVERY tip submitted, as we received thousands. If yours was not part of this book, please understand. We will be publishing another TIPS book in a few months, and feel free to send us additional ideas to [tips@masie.com](mailto:tips@masie.com).
- A number of TIPS were submitted by colleagues who asked to be anonymous and a few came in without a name in the FROM: field.
- While we funded this project through some low cost sponsorship, no tips were included because of this sponsorship. The MASIE Center continues a three decade commitment to being vendor/supplier neutral.

Now, the license wording. This book is produced as a Free Digital Book by The MASIE Center. Anyone can use, print, save, share or distribute this BOOK with these few conditions:

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- Anyone violating this license will have extremely bad luck in life.

We would love to have your comments, ideas and more tips for future books. Send them to [tips@masie.com](mailto:tips@masie.com)

Yours in Learning,



Elliott Masie



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## Chapter 1: Getting Started: The ABC's of "e"

*You are about to introduce a significant change into the workforce (or perhaps your initial venture into e-Learning was not as successful as you anticipated and you now need to step back and re-think/re-assess before beginning anew).*

### **#1: First Things First**

The "e" in e-Learning stands for education -- we too often forget that -- it is not about bandwidth, servers, and cables. It is about education - first and foremost.

*Ken Gaines  
East-West University*

### **#2: Find Your Roadmap**

Do your homework understanding the basics of e-Learning -- terminology, types of systems, resources available. The task seems daunting at first, but keep reading, asking questions and recognize that it is a cumulative process.

*Jean Avison  
Wells Fargo*

### **#3: The Times They Are-a-Changing**

Training organizations must rethink their mission, redesign their metrics, and retool their staff. From "We deliver classroom training that we think someone might need" to "We work with the entire company organization -- senior management to individual learners -- to provide whatever is needed at each stage of the learning lifecycle"; From "butts in seats" (or even "happy butts in seats") to "discovered gaps addressed and met effectively as shown by multiple levels of assessment"; From "stand-up trainer" to "multi-modal consultant" (or from "a cadre of stand-up trainers" to "a team of learning specialists: analysts, assessors, designers, builders, and deliverers.")

*Bruce Maples  
Humana, Inc.*

### **#4: There is a Place and a Time For Everything**

Be assured that e-Learning is not a silver bullet. Refrain yourself from using e-Learning for every training/learning opportunity. There is a place for e-Learning, but it is not appropriate in every circumstance.

*Ashok Malani  
TIMGC, Inc.*

### **#5: Know & Respect**

Know your team/role expectations and then communicate effectively with the entire team. I suggest brainstorming with the team to determine the most effective way and including IT resources. Respect all team members.

*Cynthia Eisel  
FedEx*

### **#6: Start Small, Grow Later**

If you're just starting out with e-Learning, target a course that is small but high visibility for your organization. After it is deployed successfully, developing future courses will become more easily acceptable.

*Rick Zanotti  
RELATE Corporation*

## **#7: Learning Is Learning Is Learning**

e-Learning is just a media, a small "e" in front of learning. Thus, everything fundamental about learning applies as well.

*Victoria Penacca  
Telefonica*

## **#8: e-Learning = Learning**

Be sure to wrap the e-Learning experience with pre-work and/or communication (motivation and preparation), real-time support (either on-line or a point of contact), and post-learning transfer activities (further coaching from manager, follow up communications, post-learning reading and activities, etc.) Just because it's e-Learning doesn't mean we should forget all the things we know about adult learning, moving new skills to performance, and enhancing memory.

*Bonnie Goren  
MSNBC*

## **#9: The e-Learner's Pledge**

Recognize the skills that serve e-Learners well: Self Advocacy : "I need to learn"; Self Sufficiency: "I am responsible for my learning"; Self Confidence : "I can Learn"; Learning Process: "I know how I learn" and Self Evaluation: "I know whether I am learning." Without this recognition, e-Learning is at best acknowledged as difficult.

*Robert Wilkins  
St. George Bank*

## **#10: Put Your Toe Slowly In The Water**

Be slow with the 'e' in e-Learning. It's always about learning first.

*Antoni van Dijk  
Triam*

## **#11: Don't Fix What Isn't Broken**

Sometimes the classroom is the best solution. Keep an open mind and don't create e-Learning just for the sake of having e-Learning.

*Lon Fiscus  
Corning, Inc.*

## **#12: The Rules Of The Game**

Focus on people, then on corporate needs, then on technology.

*Rodrigo Fernandez  
IN2*

## **#13: Those That Can, DO**

For e-Learning to be effective in business, it has to support "doing," not only learning. Go back to a fundamental concept in education: behavioral objectives. After an e-Learning session, the student must be able to DO something, not just know something. If you can't state a behavior that the student can do after the e-Learning session, you may have used the e-Learning tool as a hose to spray a thirsty student instead of as a glass.

*Harold Strawbridge*

## **#14: Unite, Don't Divide Your Workforce**

Before introducing e-Learning, find out more about the basic skills of the workforce. What proportion use a PC at work? What proportion have the required PC skills? What proportion are able to undertake e-Learning in the working day without prior clearance with a boss? The answers to these questions are critical in designing the overall strategy (and especially important at implementation time). If ignored, there is a possibility of creating or accentuating a digital divide in the workforce.

*Martyn Sloman  
Chartered Inst. of Personnel Development*

### **#15: Show Me The Way**

If the main reason you want to implement e-Learning is to save money ... stop and ask for directions.

*Alberto Duarte*

*InCharge® Education Foundation, Inc.*

### **#16: Do You e-Learn?**

Make sure you experience being an e-Learner yourself before you attempt to deliver a course online.

*Sophie di Corpo*

*University of New South Wales*

### **#17: Become an e-Learner**

Experience e-Learning first hand to understand the student's point of view in an e-Learning situation. What are the frustrations? What becomes easy? What do I, as the student, need to do differently? Do I have enough access to my instructor? Do I have access to the other learners? Do I feel connected to the class? Shut out and lonely? By putting oneself in this situation, trainers can begin to understand what they need to build into their design to assist the learners, who are also making the transition to e-Learning.

*Lela Rotondo*

*Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield*

### **#18: The "Hard Stuff" Is The "Soft Stuff"**

What's hardest about e-Learning isn't really the design, development, and technology. What's hardest about e-Learning is getting learners motivated and organizations energized. Spending time on the "people-side" of e-Learning will pay great dividends.

*Lance Dublin*

*Co-author, Implementing E-Learning*

### **#19: Bottom Line**

E-Learning is like any other benefit - staff will not use it if they (a) don't know about it, (b) don't understand it, or (c) don't get it free.

*Laura More*

*Care2Learn.com*

### **#20: First Time?**

Consider blending e-Learning with classroom learning as a short mandatory component. This may help people to become comfortable with e-Learning if they haven't tried it before.

*Adam Oosterhoff*

*Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu*

### **#21: Fill The Gap, Don't Patch It**

Do yourself, your organization, and/or your clients the favor of doing the preliminary footwork necessary to honestly determine whether the targeted reason for the proposed training will actually be affected by training. For example, is the "gap" something that can be narrowed via training, or does the underlying reason for the gap lie elsewhere (internal communication, company culture, management, tools, etc.)? Often times large efforts and budgets are expended building solutions to the wrong problems. Take a little time and money up front to properly analyze what should be done and why - it's a step that will undoubtedly pay for itself several times over (either by preventing unnecessary training from being developed, or by focusing the purpose of the training that is needed).

*Jon Revelos*

*Tata Interactive Systems*

## #22: One Step At A Time

First step: think about Learning. Second step: think about e-Learning.

*Geellis Winkel*

## #23: Begin By Connecting The Dots

Always always always start with the business need the e-Learning is intended to meet. If you can't draw a straight line from the course or Performance Support you are proposing to a bottom-line business result, then don't do it. The only valid way to "make a business case" for e-Learning is to start with the needs of the business.

*Karin Albert*

## #24: Training Is For Life

If you believe that your training is finished, you may be trained but you are finished.

*Anonymous*

## #25: Just Getting Started? Making It Required May Lead To Success

Often an e-Learning course is successful because it is required. Associating a test with the completion of the e-Learning effort could lead to success especially in an environment new to this method of learning.

*Janet Lowe*

*Sun Microsystems*

## #26: So Well Said!

On the road to e-Learning, make sure that Learning is in the driving seat, and Technology is in the passenger seat with the map. Learning decides the destination, Technology helps you get there.

*Ian Fyfe*

*Learndirect Scotland*

## #27: Start From Square One

Analyze if/when online learning makes sense in your organization. Perform a needs analysis. Is there management buy-in? Do learners have access to the right equipment and software? Analyze which e-Learning delivery method is best: Blended/Hybrid Courses (part classroom, part online); Synchronous (online course, with instruction taking place in real-time via the Internet); Asynchronous (courses taken independently with minimal instructor support).

*Kathy Lents*

*HouseHold International, Inc.*

## #28: Don't Get Myopic About e-Learning

E-Learning is only one of the many, many resources available to you to meet your organization's learning needs. Use it appropriately. I got caught up in the hype until I was forced to step back and gain perspective about all the available tools and resources. As a result, my toolbox is now equipped to handle each job in a more effective and efficient manner.

*Bob Huebner*

*Virginia Credit Union, Inc.*

## #29: e-Learning = Change

Treat e-Learning as a "Change Initiative," not just another training program. E-Learning will represent a behavior change for most employees so you and your trainers need to act as "change agents." If your organization has a Change Management discipline, use some of the techniques to guide you as you implement.

*Lela Rotondo*

*Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield*

### **#30: Look For Grants In All The Right Places**

For associations and other non-profits, look for grants and other funding sources to get started in distance learning. We identified three curriculum development projects of key importance to the conservation profession and I was able to find funding for at least portions of all three, including assistance for our initial venture into distance learning. Once we gain experience, expertise, a body of courses, and (happy) learners, we anticipate that future projects will be more time and cost-effective.

*Eric Pourchot, Ph.D.  
Am. Inst. For Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works*

### **#31: Practice Safe e-Learning**

For your first attempt to launch e-Learning in a slightly skeptical organization which has accepted the Business Case but is awaiting the outcome with interest, select a topic of enterprise wide significance which is needed by as many employees as possible and has to be delivered in a very short time. The message is to focus on an operational problem/challenge, see it as an opportunity to "sell" the e-Learning, produce something good but simple and practical, and go for it. Don't begin with management development topics where the immediate gain may prove more difficult to specify to everyone's satisfaction. Be safe, but effective.

*Graeme Fraser  
Cramond Frasers*

### **#32: Use e-Learning To Solve Specific "Pain Points"**

Don't go for an all-out Napoleonic attack with e-Learning, it might just result in your Waterloo. Rather, focus on a few pain points that can be best solved with e-Learning and just go after these.

*Maish Nichani  
eLearning Post*

### **#33: Use e-Learning To "Info-Include"**

e-Learning is a very good way to allow people to acquaint themselves with computers and the Internet. If you have "info-excluded" people that you want to involve and gain exposure to IT, try e-Learning with any content that helps this person to develop their competency on the job.

*Etelberto Costa*

### **#34: The Grandma Rule**

If you are just starting out with e-Learning in your company, assume that your people know as much about computers as your grandmother. Then you won't be too off base as you work towards changing their paradigms.

*Rodrigo Fernandez  
IN2*

### **#35: First Impressions Stick**

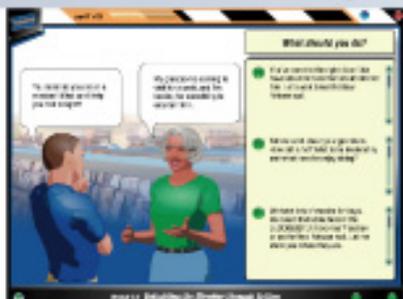
Make sure a learner's first experience of e-Learning is a good one or else they won't try again.

*Gail Smillie  
Scottish Enterprise Grampian*

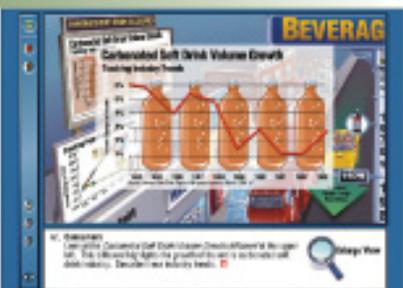


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## Chapter 2: Strategic Planning vs. Leading Willy Nilly

*You've heard it before and you will hear it again (and again) in this chapter: you need to actively involve your stakeholders, get buy-in at all levels, know your organization's culture and needs, and have a realistic business plan and strategy.*

### **#36: From Small to Big - One Success At A Time**

Create a small success and then, with each iteration, expand your expertise and audience until you've developed an inter/intra enterprise system driven by the learner's needs.

*Christie Mason  
Managers Forum*

### **#37: New Frontiers? Prototype It**

If you have a wonderful new idea that can revolutionize your training, prototype it first, then ask for budget to develop it further. Your chances of receiving budget dollars for something executives can see is much greater than for something they have to imagine.

*Eli Munzer  
Verizon*

### **#38: Buy-in From All**

Ensure "buy-in" from management and staff who will be utilizing e-Learning. Make certain that they approve of the format/content/delivery method and feel that it is beneficial for the organization. Without buy-in, the best e-Learning system in the world will sit underutilized and ineffective.

*Robert Barrett  
Dillards*

### **#39: E-Learning In A Box**

E-Learning is as much a culture change as it is a tool change. Most organizations are blindsided by the degree to which organizations need to understand how this modality will compliment or replace their existing approach. Learners are often the last to understand the reason for these changes. Extensive Marketing and Communications programs and campaigns need to be developed. An analysis of the existing learning culture or profile needs to be done, then a plan needs to be created mapping that profile to the new strategy. All the appropriate stakeholders need to be identified and served. A stakeholder is NOT only those taking the training, BUT also those affected by the training.

*Bob Mosher  
Microsoft*

### **#40: Getting Management On Board**

You MUST have management buy in and support throughout the entire training process. If you can get the upper management on board to "push" your training program, your attendance and success rate is much higher. Trying to manage training from the training department doesn't (always) work.

*Donald Humphreys  
Bank One*

### **#41: Maintenance, Anyone?**

Ensure you have a plan for updates or maintenance of the software.

*Scott Sutker  
Wachovia Corporation*

## #42: Top 10 Best Practices for "Change" In A Learning Organization

1. Find senior support
2. Hitchhike: Leverage new or existing leadership initiatives
3. Follow the money: Seek/understand funding and why projects are being funded
4. Seek "pull" not "push": Understand incentives and demand, and sell towards them
5. Leverage Account Manager model: Aligns business unit processes with learning center
6. "Grade" each other: Provides joint visibility to senior executives
7. First local, then global: Establishes tangible value propositions for stakeholders "day job"
8. Use the Middle: Real change occurs through the people that do the work
9. Hide the Bits/Bytes: Sell business value, not technology (it's a facilitator)
10. "High touch": Leverage relationships, meetings.."beyond the memo"

*Saba Customer Advisory Board  
Saba*

## #43: Get There

One of my mentors once shared a valuable lesson when trying to design and implement an electronic system/solution into a busy work life full of inspired (and self-confident) professionals:

- Build it and they will come
- Build it right and they may use it correctly
- Let them build it and they will already be there

*Anonymous*

## #44: Leading The Way

Actively engage company leadership in e-Learning vision and strategy.

*Bob Dean  
Grant Thornton*

## #45: Turn Dreams Into Reality

Develop a personal vision of what practice would look like in an ideal state (with no constraints) and deliberately work towards that vision.

*Sondra Hack  
Highmark, Inc.*

## #46: Managers: Respect Employee Training Time

Respect the time that employees have scheduled to complete the Web-based training. Do not disturb them while they are learning, unless it is for a critical business need. Before you interrupt an employee, ask yourself "Would I pull them out of a classroom training for this issue or concern?"

*Jim R. Phelan  
Merck & Co.*

## #47: Link Training To Core Needs

Well executed e-Learning targeted to a specific, core business need works well -- lots of success stories. General libraries of e-Learning courses work well in some environments, but are more vulnerable to expense reduction and cultural impacts. Link e-Learning to a core business need -- I can't emphasize this enough.

*Sally Heinz  
St. Paul Travelers*

## #48: Meet Me In The Middle

Don't work "Top Down" or "Bottom Up" -- let them twist together in "The Middle."

*Jan Cromwijk  
Universiteit Twente*



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### **#49: A New Mindset For A New Opportunity**

Constantly challenge your self/team/clients/organization to push the balance between what's easy and what's best. Too often designs fall into familiar patterns from past experiences that are automatically (and often awkwardly) grafted on to new situations. Without upsetting the practical realities of time, cost, and quality requirements, we can often come up with innovative approaches that provide more effective learning experiences simply by entering new projects with a fresh and open mindset. Sure, it's easier/faster/cheaper to "do what we did last time", but (in nearly every case) "this time" isn't "last time". Not recognizing this fact handicaps your efforts before they even begin.

*Jon Revelos  
Tata Interactive Systems*

### **#50: One-on-One Assistance**

Consider establishing a Learning Consultant position for each department so that users have a person to help them become aware of, locate, use, and benefit from the e-Learning experiences available to them.

*Pat Golden  
Freddie Mac*

### **#51: Learning + Business + Technology = Value**

I found that by focusing on "learning solutions" that have business value, and then building in technology to achieve the advantages we all know about, e-Learning can become much more relevant in the business world.

*Willie Maritz  
Kalleo Learning*

### **#52: More Buy-In**

Be sure you have User and Management 'Buy In' to e-Learning. Many times, e-Learning is made available to users without anyone considering the users themselves. The fact that you develop e-Learning and make it accessible to users doesn't mean that your e-Learning initiative will be successful. Involving users in the process can make e-Learning a more positive experience. Managers can also be resistant to users taking the time away from their workloads. Reinforcing the benefits of the e-Learning initiative and communicating with managers are very important factors.

*Susan B. Pysher  
Penn State University*

### **#53: Think Big, Start Small, Grow Fast!**

Think about the Big Picture - the long-term roadmap for transforming the way learning works in your organization. Then figure out a set of intermediate tactical goals along the way. Make sure that each of these intermediate steps will provide demonstrable organizational benefit, preferably in hard financial terms. Try to make each goal add incrementally to the overall benefit being achieved. This way you can always answer the question: "What did e-Learning do for me THIS quarter?"

*Andy Sadler  
IBM*

### **#54: Just Do It**

With the current economy, you may need to be realistic, not idealistic. Planning is the best way to build e-Learning but just doing it, honestly, has worked well for some.

*Ahden Busch  
Sun Microsystems*

### **#55: Absolutes, Musts And Maybes**

Think about your project from a low, medium and high point of effort/investment. Define what you can live without, what you would like and what is absolute needed.

*Dave Goodman  
SoftAssist*

## #56: Get Everyone On The Same Page

Organizations with instructional designers/developers who create proprietary e-Learning courseware may want to consider establishing an "e-Learning Charter." In the charter I created and which was eventually approved by my organization, we've described the process for program administrators to request an e-Learning project, the development process that is used, a roles definition description, and an approval process description. The Charter has been invaluable for me as I work with program representatives to develop e-Learning courseware for them.

*Donna Maier  
Idaho Dept. of Labor*

## #57: Business Issues Need Only Apply

Make sure there is a clear business issue that e-Learning will address. Too many projects are started that do not have executive sponsorship or clearly address a business issue that needs to be resolved. The result is failure to continue once the budget comes into question.

*Ed Chang  
Microsoft*

## #58: It Can Be Done

Measure twice, cut once. It's all about the plan and not the technology, products, or terminology. Figure out the goal and then back into it using what is currently available to you. Most organizations have a decent IT infrastructure in place, like an Intranet. Use internal resources to build a preliminary e-Learning program and pilot it. Do this and get a feel for what it might take to fully implement BEFORE looking at a single vendor or product. This way, you can articulate your true needs, determine the current training organization's ability to move forward in the new world, and "bait and hook" your internal clients.

*Scott Davis  
Bose Corporation*

## #59: Becoming Mainstream Is Still Some Time Away

Prepare for at least a two year change curve when implementing Virtual Classrooms and content. It will take this long for the delivery medium to blend into the woodwork.

*Charles D. Hunter  
Williams Scotsman*

## #60: What Worked, What Didn't

Failures? Doing too much with too short a time frame; Doing too much with too little resources; Too many hands in the "cookie jar"; Over promising and under delivering. Successes? Since first impressions are everything, bringing in new opinions as new delivery mediums rolled out; Employing numerous content delivery methods; Telling them, showing them, telling them again, then giving them something to take away.

*Albert Lilly  
360 Training*

## #61: Bridges Connect The Two Sides

When turning existing learning into online learning, be prepared to supply a "bridge" between Subject Matter Experts and developers to span the crevice of "Oh, I thought that was your area."

*Ian Fyfe  
Learndirect Scotland*

## #62: Before Taking The Plunge

Develop an e-Learning strategy that addresses the needs, culture, objectives, etc., of your organization ... then implement based on your strategy.

*Jean Lowry  
Energen Corporation*

### **#63: Building a Risk Managed Foundation**

Highly recommended to support your strategy is a well-constructed research project to define the needs of your audience and to later provide a risk management foundation to support decisions. The research should be comprised of at least one survey supported by telephone and/or focus group interviews and designed to capture the following information:

1. demographics 2. educational history 3. educational preferences in content area, delivery, evaluation, support, interaction and recognition 4. technological capabilities 5. internet habits and history 6. communications and marketing. A strong business plan can now be developed to support your initiative with real data points from the research project and supporting documentation that relates to the industry and educational needs of your audience.

*Sabine Steinbrecher  
The Learning Library*

### **#64: Banker, Lawyer or Indian Chief?**

Try to understand the culture of the audience. Law enforcement, social workers, bankers, and construction workers come at the world from different viewpoints. Many times "good enough" does a very good job of accomplishing the training goal. A lot of training these days is required by new rules for certain industries. Many places just want the quickest and easiest path to reaching the minimum standard certification so they can go about their real business.

*Paul L. Nenninger  
PLN Consulting*

### **#65: How Can The Learner's Manager Help The Learning?**

The user's manager should always take an active role in discussing online training and measuring effect by correlating data from ERP and CRM systems. Making sure a "practical" follow-up is completed immediately after the lesson indicates that the user can "apply" rather than "recount" the lesson. Consider building training into a person's quarterly review cycle as a continuous stream. Courses are started and finished, this implies an ending. Learning online is continual and should be fed according to needs. Try to deliver training to individuals at times when it can be readily applied but never leave it as completely optional, it'll never happen.

*Martin Cannard  
Symantec Corporation*

### **#66: Open The Door By Using Certification**

One success for us has been bundling our e-Learning as part of a larger curriculum. The curriculum defines a series of courses, both Instructor Led and web based, that lead to certification as a "supervisor." If they want the certificate, they've got to do our courses. What we hope is that after they try it once, they'll come back for more.

*Donna Lumia  
Untied Technologies*

### **#67: Save Work & Rework**

The most important thing is to clearly understand and confirm what a client has in his mind when he says you need to create an e-Learning module. Doing it in the beginning saves rework later.

*Vinod Joshi  
SQL Star*

### **#68: Some Things Never Change (And Shouldn't)**

Critical success factors include: lots of communication and Change Management; Having a skilled e-Facilitator; Good content, not too bandwidth intensive and excellent Project Management.

*Lou-Anne Lubbe  
IBM*

### **#69: Not Optional, Sometimes**

If we build it, we may need to (as managers) require them to come.

*Dieter Stöbel*

### **#70: Support Your Local Management**

Educational change (regarding the implementation of e-Learning) requires a combination of vision, policy, and management based on knowledge and ambitions regarding the primary process - teaching and learning. So, to go beyond the project level of implementation of e-Learning, management should be supported to ask the right questions, weigh the answers, and formulate sound implementation strategies.

*Peter J. Dekker  
Universiteit van Amsterdam*

### **#71: Graduate With Good e-Learning Habits**

Consider making e-Learning an integral feature of graduate programmes. Have graduates complete e-Learning pre, during and post programme - the aim is to instill a culture of e-Learning before any negativity sets in.

*Gary Duffield  
Xpertise Training Limited*

### **#72: Project Health Warning**

Having the CEO on board is not enough. Having the CEO as sponsor is not enough. Having the executive directors say they are on board is not enough. What is? Challenging and validating all levels of ownership at each and every stage.

*Dennis Colley  
CORGI Group*

### **#73: 15 Minutes A Day Keeps The Doctor Away**

Develop a culture that supports - at all levels - 15 minutes of professional development every day. Not an average, but a minimum of 15 minutes every single working day.

*Will Fleshman  
MindLeaders*

### **#74: Eliminate Any Barriers To Providing Support**

e-Learning must be supported by an e-Learning culture. Sounds simple but very few companies think about enablers that they can put in place to support the learner and the barriers they can help overcome.

*Bernadine Reynolds  
Deloitte*

### **#75: Work Backwards**

From the end result to how to get to that result. This will allow for you to look at how best to get there and how to convey the required information.

*Jessica Berner  
Meeting More Minds*

### **#76: It's All About Culture**

When building an e-Learning strategy, give particular focus to how you will imbed this strategy into the culture of your business. No matter how strategic your plan, without cultural acceptance it'll never be successful.

*Nancy J. Williams  
Booz Allen Hamilton*

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Booz Allen works with clients to deliver results that endure.

### **#77: IT Will Make or Break You**

Involve IT as soon as it is determined the training/learning will occur online. They are critical stakeholders for all online learning activities.

*Robert T. Guardi  
CNA Insurance*

### **#78: I Exist, Therefore I Can Be Converted - NO!**

Just because a course exists does not mean that the content is in shape for e-Learning conversion - even if the customer says so. No matter what, the content will need great elaboration, if not total re-working, for the interactive format. Understand that as managers you need to allow time and budget for this.

*Deborah E. Blank, Ph.D.  
SI International*

### **#79: Effectiveness, Anyone?**

At the beginning of a project, push hard for the development of a project effectiveness strategy.

*Jim Lombardo  
Quilogy, Inc.*

### **#80: Business Talk Is In, Training Speak Is Out**

If you are seeking funding from the business rather than from a training budget, ensure that you speak "business language" rather than training jargon. For example, when considering ROI on a project think about what your sponsor is going to want to see as results rather than what the training department may need.

*Sarah Lindsell  
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP*

### **#81: Rock Solid Learning**

If you do not have expert level technical staff in your department, partner with an IT group in your organization and ensure availability through budget transfer if necessary. Without a solid "e", there is no e-Learning.

*Eli Munzer  
Verizon*

### **#82: Getting It Right The First Time**

"Swift trust" is a term that implies the quick formation of bonds of mutual acceptance, trust and respect in certain social situations. In Emergency Response situations, for example, emergency personnel immediately afford each other complete trust, assuming everyone knows what they are doing. In other cases, trust must be earned. Preliminary research in e-Learning indicates that the formation of "swift trust" bonds between providers and recipients is critical. If you have a bad beginning, things don't work, preparation is weak, participants don't know what is expected of them, etc. -- it is very hard to dig out of the hole even if subsequent events go very smoothly. If you have an excellent first experience, swift trust is afforded and it is much easier to keep the learners with you, tolerantly weathering the occasional glitch. Moral of the story? Don't underestimate the importance of planning, testing and sound organizational structures for all e-Learning events, with particular emphasis on forming "swift trust" in the initial events. (Note: Based on research by Starr-Roxanne Hiltz at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.)

*Susan Bray  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and New Vistas*

### **#83: You Can't Teach What Isn't Teachable**

Before developing e-Learning to teach a system or process, make sure the system/process is as intuitive, self-explanatory, and usable as it can be. Better to assist with usability testing and streamlining the system/process first than to develop the world's "best" e-Learning to teach an unnecessarily confusing system. A truly usable system will require much less training, documentation, and user time to learn.

*Claudia Towne  
Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation*

## #84: Form Partnerships

Training cannot be developed or delivered in a vacuum. Making sure all the stakeholders in your e-Learning rollout stay informed is crucial. I see too often that IT is excluded from formative meetings where their input could have been crucial for eliminating roadblocks. Additionally, managers and supervisors need to remain aware of new initiatives affecting the employees that report to them. If everyone is on the same page and clearly understands what is expected of them, you've paved the way for a successful implementation.

*Duncan Welder  
RISC, Inc.*

## #85: Risk (Assess) Your Project

It's worthwhile to spend some time doing a risk assessment and stakeholder assessment as part of the up-front planning for an e-Learning project. Ask "What are the risks and opportunities?" and "What can I do to prevent or minimize the impact of risks materializing and to maximize the benefits of opportunities that may present themselves?" Also ask "Who will have an influence over the success of the process and the end product?" and think about how to best communicate with these people to maximize their support and buy-in.

*Kerron Lamb  
Public Works & Gov't Services Canada*

## #86: Train Faculty Before They Train Students

Conduct "hybrid or blended" faculty workshops on e-Learning so that they get to experience e-Learning first hand. We've implemented a two track blended "eWorkshop" program in which faculty attend a 2-hour face-to-face hands-on training session to learn the technical skills associated with using our Course Management System. This face-to-face session is then followed by an online "eWorkshop" that spans a 2-week period during which we discuss the pedagogical and instructional design issues that relate to teaching and learning in online courses. Faculty have found the experience very beneficial and have even asked us to expand the online portion.

*Josh Baron  
Marist College*

## #87: Capacity Planning Lets You Sleep At Night

We recently launched a Code of Conduct course which was mandatory for our entire company of about 6,000 people to take within a two week period. We've never had these problems in the past, but we had three server meltdowns in two weeks, which caused sleepless nights for the e-Learning manager and many frustrated users. Some vendors provide very good scalability information, others make you rely on your own internal processes. My tip for the day is to make sure you have a proven capacity planning methodology in place in order to sleep well at night when your courses are rolled out!

*Ken Steinman  
The Regence Group*

## #88: Can't Do It Without You

Senior management has to understand the staffing requirements for an e-Learning development team.

*Tricia Franke  
Fidelity Investments*

## #89: Never Underestimate

... the cultural impact and the required changes that e-Learning brings. Or the impact that successful e-Learning has on displacing other training providers and the possible impact on the internal friendships.

*Dave Sanderson  
General Mills*

### **#90: Rolls Royce or Transportation?**

Don't create a full-blown online training course when a simple-to-use online reference guide will do the trick. Often, when managers think "We need training on this!". we really only need a simplified version of the complicated policy or procedures online so that the information is available at their fingertips.

*Debbie Vogel*

### **#91: Cancelled Project, Anyone?**

From my experience -- know your audience, clearly define your project at the beginning and don't change your team in midstream (unless absolutely necessary). Else, it may lead to your e-Learning project being cancelled.

*Daniel Rosen  
GMAC Educational Services*

### **#92: Add Training To Your Staff Meeting's Agenda**

Schedule time in a staff meeting to review the material that you and your employees have learned from the Web-based training. Provide context, assignments and work samples to help transfer the learning to the reality of the workplace.

*Jim R. Phelan  
Merck & Co.*

### **#93: Time Saved Is Time (& Money) Earned**

Define the environment of the target audience and know their restrictions before you start planning your e-Learning project. This will enhance the usability and avoid technical issues that they might encounter in advance. This will also save the developer's time when planning the strategy or designing e-Learning application.

*Ikuko Kawasaki  
Randstad North America*

### **#94: Dear Manager**

Teachers need the support of their manager if e-Learning is to be successful.

*Madeleine Pitt  
Chisholm Institute*

### **#95: Know Your Audience & "Bloom" Your Objectives**

Know who they are, where they are, what their preferences for e-Learning might be, know the culture they operate in, know what type of technological or infrastructure constraints the user may be dealing with. Know what you can do for your audience and what the value of your course is, through their eyes. Then consider objectives. Know why you are creating the e-Learning solution and know what you expect your audience to do when they have participated in your solution. Think of how the learner will be changed as a result of the experience. Use Bloom's Taxonomy for more than just a thesaurus. The rule of thumb is that typically solutions which meet knowledge or comprehension objectives are more able to be provided to general audiences for a lower cost than those courses which have to meet Synthesis or Evaluation objectives. Typically those courses which address higher order objectives are more expensive to produce and are for more targeted audiences than those courses which meet lower order objectives.

*Mary Bollash  
United Technologies*

### **#96: Investigate Before You Leap**

Get the management buy-in and the cultural issues dealt with first. Then create your budget/resources. But is that really enough? Maybe not - do find out before you go any further.

*Sue Cohen  
Grant Thornton*



*“Navigating the perplexing issues related to emerging learning technology is always a challenge but the open knowledge sharing of the e-learning Consortium has made the journey easier!”*  
- Rovy Branon, Eli Lilly

## 180 Major Organizations Work Together To Benchmark Best Practices In The Learning Arena

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- Regular Research Studies
- Annual Learning Retreat at The MASIE Center
- Regional Meetings
- e-Conferences
- Industry Conference Reporting
- Easy access to other members for help with critical issues and questions
- Special Guest Speakers on monthly Jawbone Conference Calls
- Plus! 2 Free Seats at Annual MASIE Center Conference (TechLearn in 2004)

### #97: Don't Re-Invent The Wheel

Use vendors' expertise and challenge them with your specific business needs. They have probably seen this before with another client.

*Elaine Wilson  
British Airways*

### #98: See The Big Picture

Don't think of it as e-Learning - think of it as Performance Support and take a broader picture of helping people accomplish their goals.

*Clark Quinn  
OtterSurf Laboratories*

### #99: Budget Out Several Years To Stay In

Make sure you know where your e-Learning budget will come from three years down the road. Have a business model that is built to last for your e-Learning initiative.

*Dr. Herwig Rollett  
Assn. For Computing Machinery*

### #100: Find The Answer To The Right Question

Industry statistics consistently suggest that 80% of the time, training is NOT the most appropriate way to solve a performance gap. If training isn't the answer, e-Learning won't be either. And there are lots of ways to use electronic tools (EPSS, synchronous and asynchronous collaboration, knowledge repositories, etc.) to address that 80%, if we can just get away from the training model.

*Karin Albert*

### **#101: Cross Your I's & Dot Your T's ... Later**

During the design phase (especially early high-level design), opt to iterate on imperfect ideas early, often, and quickly with the client, rather than toiling long and hard to deliver a single brilliant and polished idea. It's a much more effective way to satisfy and involve the client, and it reduces the risk that you will end up spending effort pursuing a dead-end. It requires that you swallow a bit of ego that you don't have "the best answer" right out of the chute, but if you properly prepare the client that this is your approach (lest they be surprised), it'll deliver big dividends on both sides of the relationship.

*Jon Revelos  
Tata Interactive Systems*

### **#102: Let's Practice What We Preach**

Develop intelligence on e-Learning within YOUR learning function.

*Bob Dean  
Grant Thornton*

### **#103: "Competensize" Your Courses**

Map your online course offerings to competencies. This helps users select the appropriate courses that address their development requirements.

*Linda Al Ansari  
Emirates*

### **#104: In The First Go-Around, Forget The "e" Of e-Learning**

Ask yourself instead: What are you trying to achieve? What is the size and characteristic of the target audience? By when does the course need to be ready? How often does it have to be updated? Other issues to consider? Then once you are very clear about where you are going, it is now the time to ask the question about the appropriate media: Is this a case for e-Learning and why? Am I able to find generic courses? Synchronous versus asynchronous e-Learning? What are the infrastructure restraints within your environment? Any prior e-Learning experiences within the company?, etc.

*Antoine Gerschel*

### **#105: It's Like Building A House**

Instructional design and review time is usually about 25% more than planned. Watch your planning schedule!

*Dave Goodman  
SoftAssist*

### **#106: Go Forward Or Step Back And Reassess?**

Never invest in e-Learning unless you have had: Buy-in from the top, dedicated authors, pilot schemes to the departments that have shown interest, word of mouth for proven successes, and modules that have proven to be useful to the learners. If so, then keeping the momentum going!

*Fae Longman  
CMS Cameron McKenna*

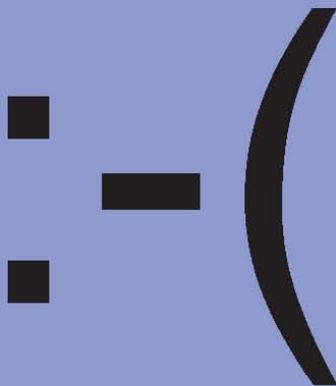
### **#107: Checklist, Ready, Plan!**

Read industry articles that describe e-Learning checklists for e-Learning readiness. Using these ideas, customize your checklist. Then place the checklist in a prominent place on your website and embed it in any training, promotional material (etc.) give credit to the original suggestions to the authors/publications. And of course, use it yourself to make sure you are ready!

*M. Miles Gray  
Mentoring Solutions Inc.*

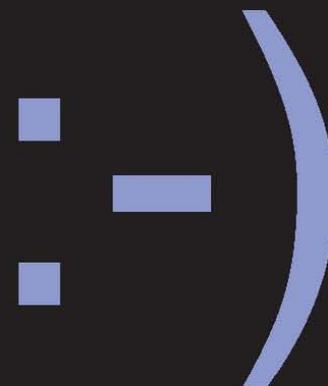
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### **#108: Do You LMS? Not At The Start You Don't**

Never start your project by deciding which LMS you will use. At first, concentrate on the educational structure and needs of your organization. After completing this phase and having a complete analysis of your e-Learning needs, then begin evaluating different LMSs. In this way, you can ensure that you will make a more effective decision.

*Aysenur T. Akman  
Oyak Technology*

### **#109: All On Board?**

Work to get anyone who might possibly be involved on board with the project before beginning implementation. It may take more up-front time, but helps avoid some of those last minute surprises.

*Diane Wren  
Kaiser Permanente*

### **#110: Strategy Tidbits To Live By**

Be sure that middle management is involved; make use of e-Learning ambassadors; see e-Learning as a part of a major change and be sure that everything is of high quality (technical, content, system, communication plan, etc.).

*Joke de Laaf  
Syntegra Learning Solutions*

### **#111: "Free" Training - Come And Get It!**

In a corporate setting, employees should not get e-Learning for free (they won't appreciate it). They also don't need to pay for it. This conundrum can be solved by awarding notional training dollars to every employee at the beginning of the year (say US 2,000). Then as they take courses, the LMS deducts the courses cost from their notional account. This leads to accountability fast. At the end of the year, the employees who still have 2,000 dollars in their account have some explaining to do.

*Anonymous*

### **#112: Cultural Change Doesn't Happen At Once**

Even though your measurement will show the success of your e-Learning endeavor, cultural change will always lag. Make sure that management will support your future e-Learning and blended classes. A one time, 20 minute e-Learning session is swiftly embraced compared to the multiple engagement blended approach that seems to cause time management and planning headaches. Balancing several employees engaged in different blended learning events can drive your most supportive managers away.

*Mark Wagner  
Progressive*

### **#113: Build the Foundation**

Make sure the appropriate individuals are contacted at the inception of an e-Learning project to ensure there are no obstacles later. Identify the roles of all involved in the project so that each person has a clear understanding of the expectations and responsibilities.

*Kathy Lents  
HouseHold International, Inc.*

## #114: Align Learning With Business Units

Regardless of politics and reporting structures, the most successful models to emerge employ cross-functional Account Management teams to continually plan and manage learning strategy and development with Business Unit leadership and key process owners. In these environments, "engagement becomes marketing" as teams partner to define key business metrics and success factors, and then how and what training programs will support and enhance them. A best practice emerging from this engagement model is that they "grade" one another on their results and report this up the food chain. The picture of two different business executives, both of whom are close to "achieving their numbers," is vastly different if one is getting a "B+" on people development and the other is getting a "C-."

*Grant Ricketts  
Saba*

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## Chapter 3: So Many Choices, So Little Time - Contract\$, Procurement & Negotiation\$

*Today more than ever before costs and budgets are being closely scrutinized. But that is OK -- that is the way it should be. Now that you know what you (really) need and your strategy and support is in place, let's begin looking more closely at products, services, technology and costs.*

### **#115: The Best Is Yet To Come**

Signing a contract with a content provider is not the end; it is only the beginning.

*Bruce Maples  
Humana, Inc.*

### **#116: Rights and Re-Use**

For outsourced custom developed e-Learning, be sure your contract gives your ownership over the deliverables and that the supplier hands over the corresponding source files.

*Gregory S. Richardson  
Bank of America*

### **#117: Test Drive To Reality Check**

Road test your company's computer system with the e-Learning supplier's system to ensure compatibility before you commit to a contract. Don't believe the talk that they are compatible. This is particularly important if your company users are geographically dispersed over a large expanse of land like we are in British Columbia (three times the size of Texas) and your company uses computers extensively for communications and business.

*Lindsay McCracken  
BC Hydro*

### **#118: High Maintenance Can Be Costly**

If your organization relies heavily on distributed computer based training and the system is old and very difficult to upgrade, perhaps you should think about investing in a new one to reduce maintenance, increase profits, and not risk the safety of the data.

*Carol D. Whisnant  
APS*

### **#119: Optimum Choice**

Prior to signing into a contract with an e-Learning provider, make sure that you have reviewed at least 10 other products from other vendors so that you have a clearer understanding of capabilities. Also observe the program being delivered at least three times to identify any glitches that are not apparent in a demo. Evaluate the history of an e-Learning provider as this will give some indication as to whether they will be around in the future to offer the technical assistance.

*Kathy Lents  
HouseHold International, Inc.*

### **#120: Show Me!**

Buy stuff that works ... seeing is believing.

*Richard Berg*

### **#121: Cheaper By The Dozen?**

Never purchase a library model e-Learning portfolio unless you have a firm handle on the forecast demand since the library model may not be cheaper in the end than paying per use at your forecast. Know and compare!

*Sonya Davis  
Dow*

### **#122: Onsite Demos Means At YOUR Site**

Determine your wants and needs for an LMS/LCMS or any other e-Learning product prior to meeting with a vendor. This should be a long needs analysis on what makes sense now and into the future. You should be listing current needs, future needs and nice-to-haves. Then you will be prepared to talk with vendors. And once you know your needs, make sure demos and testing of their product are done in YOUR environment and within your architecture.

*Anonymous*

### **#123: Cheaper ... Or Not?**

The cost of developing effective asynchronous content can vary widely. Thus, asynchronous e-Learning may or may not be as cost-effective as synchronous. Find and apply the specifics of your situation.

*Bruce Maples  
Humana, Inc.*

### **#124: See & Test For Yourself Before You Buy**

Test all software for compatibility and compliance to standards. Many vendors say that they are compliant (e.g., AICC, etc.), yet there are problems with implementing their software and training. So make sure YOU do testing before signing any contracts. And make sure you test it with your internal systems including your LMS. This can help reduce issues when going to implement a program.

*Sara S Jacobson  
BP p.l.c.*

### **#125: Buyer Beware**

When dealing with vendors who are selling e-Learning courses that you intend to integrate with your LMS, remember that the AICC-compliant courseware they're selling may not always integrate with your AICC-compliant LMS system without costly and time-consuming re-work.

*Doug Kendig  
Office Depot*

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## Chapter 4: Content, Content (Not To Mention Content) ...How To Best Design & Deliver It

*Ah, instructional design – the heart of it all. This is probably why we were not surprised when this category received the highest number of tips from our readers. What did they have to say?*

### **#126: Keep It Small**

If it is longer than 15 minutes, cut it up into 15 minute chunks.

*Jack Odom  
Cadence*

### **#127: Experience Before Design**

Don't design a class until you have taken at least three.

*Jerry Monti  
Common Sense Publishing, Inc.*

### **#128: Design Nuts-n-Bolts Considerations**

My biggest tips for anyone developing e-Learning content is to consider the following BEFORE you begin production:

1. How are you going to deliver the content experience? Web, intranet, wireless, LAN, CD, DVD or other ... this often influences or dictates platform, plug-ins and devices used.
2. Do you need learner tracking and/or database connectivity? AICC, SCORM or your own home brewed measurements may be required and that often influences or dictates authoring tools, protocols and platforms.
3. Do you need to update the application over time? If you are striving to make more reusable learning objects or content, then you have to look at the authoring tool, the enterprise and your team's own skill set to create and manage such e-Learning experiences and remember that as your content evolves, the context can change and evolve too.
4. How much interactivity, media support or control does your e-Learning content need? This really impacts your team of SME's, IDE's or authors as they will need to have a broad range of skills in producing audio, video, scripting, metadata, bandwidth, hardware and software; and issues of accessibility (section 508), cross platform playback and efficiency will also need to be addressed.
5. It is about the experience (authoring and content) not the money you spend. Okay the money is important and impacts the final results, but the e-Learning content you produce is the ultimate measure of success. Great e-Learning content, resulting from an authoring tool experience that integrates with other e-Learning systems in a reusable way, saves any organization lots of money and delivers a better overall ROI & product.

*Tom Person  
Macromedia*

### **#129: Been There, Done That Scenarios**

Use scenarios familiar to your audience to capture their attention when creating content.

*Carol Barnett  
PeaceHealth*

### **#130: K.I.S.S.**

Keep it simple stupid. Too many bells and whistles may cloud the message you are trying to convey, not to mention lengthen the development and testing timeline.

*Brian Lauer  
Freddie Mac*

### **#131: Content Follows Process**

Designers must address the notion of designing to a PROCESS rather than CONTENT. Too many view the training as being content driven when in fact it is process driven. So many designers believe that without first putting the content together, there is nothing to begin to develop. Rather, if the process is in place, one that takes into account the characteristics of the multimedia that they have access to, the characteristics of the target audience, and the characteristics of the task being learned, then the content can be introduced into the process once the instructional outcomes have been established. Realize the constraints placed if content drives the design.

*Jonathan Dell  
Aetna*

### **#132: The Network Is The Application**

Design your media and interactivity for delivery over the smallest bandwidth your customers have.

*Mike Davis  
IBM*

### **#133: Design & Re-Purpose To The Technology**

Design EVERYTHING for the technology selected. When complete, your design should be so powerful, so engaging, and so robustly integrated to the selected technology that you couldn't deliver it using another technology even if you wanted to. The same goes for re-purposing. Use the original design as reference, and start over! Even a slide format for a classroom needs to be tweaked to work in a webinar.

*Ken Seemann  
Nextel Communications*

### **#134: At The Heart Of It**

It's not enough to engage learners' minds. You must engage their hearts as well.

*Carter Andrews  
Little Planet Learning*

### **#135: Don't Kidnap The Page Design**

Details such as use of white space and the design of the text on the page are important. Keep the font simple - no ransom notes with different fonts and caps.

*Janet Lowe  
Sun Microsystems*

### **#136: Big Objectives, Small Modules**

Separate learning objectives into small enough modules such that each module is deliverable in no more than 3-5 web pages.

*Perry E. D'Antonio  
Sandia National Laboratories*

### **#137: Earlier = Cheaper/Better/Faster**

Get detailed input from the SMEs during the storyboarding phase. Don't wait until you've programmed the module as changes at this phase are much costlier and more time-consuming.

*Mark Hetrick  
Aetna, Inc.*

### **#138: Can't Be Stressed Enough**

Keep the end user in mind.

*Ross Vierra*

### **#139: Adapt, Don't Just Copy**

Put thought into the creation of the e-Learning module. Follow instructional design principles. E-learning is NOT just a conversion of Word or PowerPoint documents. E-Learning is a different medium - adapt your content accordingly.

*Ashok Malani  
TIMGC, Inc.*

### **#140: Appeal To 2 or More Learning Styles**

Take a moment to think about different learning styles when you approach the storyboarding and Instructional Design. Try to incorporate information in a way that would appeal to at least two different styles. Engaging your learner is key, no matter what the venue.

*Mike Cormier  
Vital Knowledge SoftWare*

### **#141: Word Smithing**

Avoid corporate-ese ... speak the language of your audience and use the least amount of words possible to make the point. Write in an active voice and explain any jargon as it comes up. Consider using a glossary if possible so if the learner already knows the definition, they don't have to waste time reading it again. Like authors, it's our job to "suspend the reader/learner's disbelief" and make them feel like they're in a classroom. Distractions such as poor grammar, choppy page transitions, misspelled words, etc. break a learner's concentration.

*Nancy Heiser  
Kimberly-Clark*

### **#142: Develop An e-Content Project Plan**

Write down your communication objectives and refer to them often throughout the development process. When you've settled on your objectives, begin developing a storyboard or schematic layout of your e-communication. A great way to do this is with a pad of large Post-It Notes and an empty wall. Using one note per page, map out your website or communication, keeping in mind the navigation your viewers will need. If you're creating a website, you have endless options. But, you basically have two top line choices for your design: wide and shallow like a portal or narrow and deep like an e-learning course.

*Jeff Harris  
Trivantis Corporation*

### **#143: More Design Considerations**

When I am designing materials I try to follow these characteristics: 1. Keep it simple and use a delivery technology known and understood by the intended users 2. Break materials into logical modules that can stand alone or build upon one another to produce a complete package 3. Incorporate case studies and examples that are related to the learners environment and that support in class workshop style trainings. Always link to problem solving in real world terms, give users something they can apply right now and 4. Update the materials to keep them fresh and to give the user a reason to continue to come back.

*Robert Schram  
Dow*

### **#144: Don't Confuse Your Learner**

The e-Learning program must be easy to access and navigate or you will lose the learner before they can even start.

*Don Eppert  
Sara Lee*

### **#145: Keep Things Simple**

Don't try to get too fancy, too fast. The more complex your solution, the more things can go wrong.

*John Brisbin  
Scotiabank*

## #146: Don't Be Seduced By Aesthetics

Use visual elements wisely to enhance the student's learning experience. Any visual element in e-Learning should be informative but decorative. Each visual element needs to have a specific role in the e-Learning. If you are not able to explain why the graphic/photo is used for the page, reconsider using the image. Use a table or flowchart if applicable. The segmented information is easier for the user to comprehend than the written text on the computer screen.

*Ikuko Kawasaki  
Randstad North America*

## #147: Section 508: The Road to Accessibility

If the e-Learning product is intended to be sold to federal agencies, then it is essential that the stakeholders understand their Section 508 accessibility requirements. Specifically you should know which 508 provisions apply to the different e-Learning products and exactly which features of the products support the 508 requirements.

*David Baquis  
The Access Board*

## #148: The Golden Design Rule

Listen primarily to what the learner wants to know about the subject and cater to that exact want in the e-Learning courseware design and not (only) how/what we think the learner wants to know.

*Anonymous*

## #149: The More The Merrier

When designing and developing synchronous training, include more interactions (student-to-instructor, student-to-material, and student-to-student) than you do in traditional classroom training. Also change events or activities more frequently than in traditional Instructor Led courses.

*Bruce Deviller  
Lucent Technologies*

## #150: Appeal To Learners

Know your audience. What are they interested in? Design your online course around their interests so that the course will be more appealing to them. For example, if your audience are travel agents and they are interested in taking cruises, incorporate a cruise theme to the e-Learning.

*Nancy Thompson  
Bank One*

## #151: Team Development is Best

Having a team-based approach to course development (comprised of content experts, technology experts, marketing experts, HR personnel etc.) will allow you to better assess how the course fits into the overall training program for a specific job category, how it meets a stated business goal, how to market the completed course, how to develop the course with the most accurate content so as to meet the learning styles of the potential participants, and how to take into consideration the technology capacity of those participants.

*David Mark  
Maryland Dept. Health & Mental Hygiene*

## #152: Easy Does It

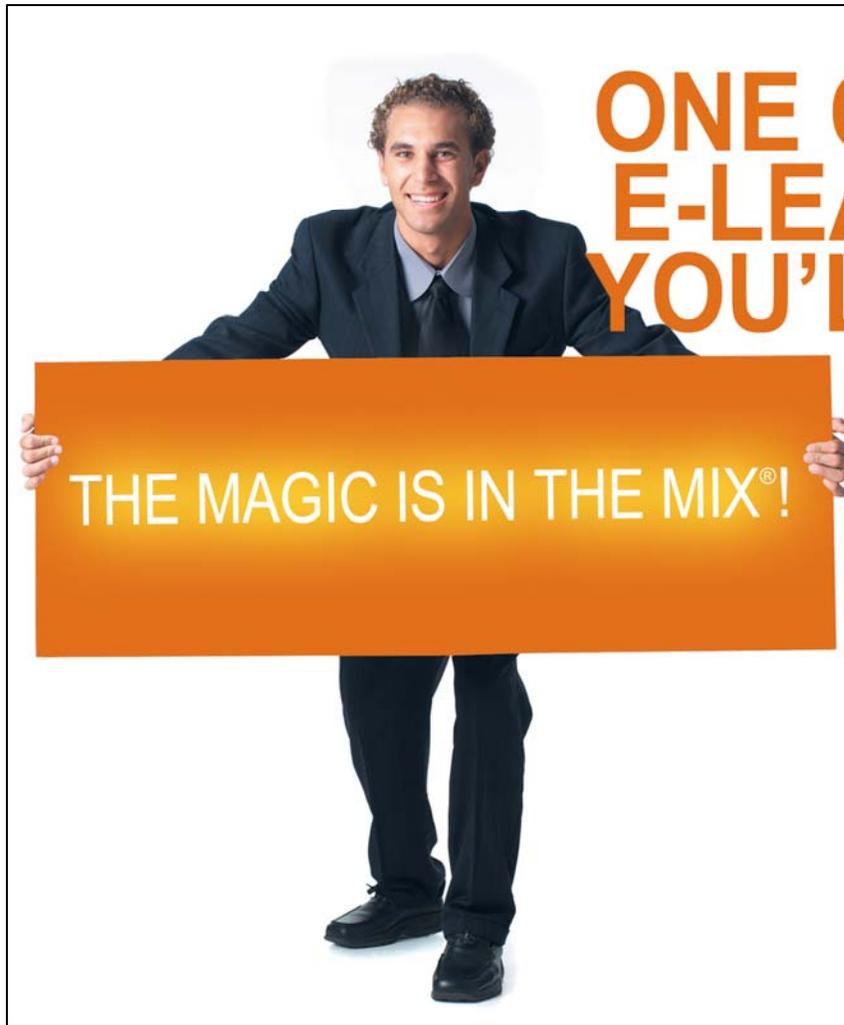
Ease of use is critical -- intuitive, no downloads, etc.

*Margie Schulte  
SSM Health Care*

## #153: Visually Engaging

The most profound words will remain unread unless you can keep the learner engaged. You can't see their eyes to know if they got it so ... say it, show it, write it, demo it and link it to an activity.

*James P. Bates  
Boeing*



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### **#154: Learn Over Coffee**

A success in course development was to take an 18 hour total training time and break it into 15 minute learning segments. This allowed a very busy work group to complete a segment in brief periods before starting work, lunch hour, or coffee breaks. Our unofficial theme was, "Improve your skills with a cup of coffee."

*Dan Castro  
Retired, GE Company*

### **#155: Do You Need Custom Content?**

One of the most important steps a company can take when designing an e-Learning or blended learning program is to make sure that the subject matter or content is RELEVANT to the trainees' jobs. This is one of the most powerful attributes of a successful program and why custom-development of content may sometimes be essential. Custom content also can reinforce the corporate look and key messages.

*Jennifer Gehrt  
Knowledge Anywhere*

### **#156: Right On**

Keep it simple! And, no, you're not stupid.

*Amy Rogers*

### #157: Keep Them Active

Always think of the learner having thousands of things to do that are more enjoyable and definitely more urgent than your training program. As soon as your learning offering puts them in a passive reading/listening/watching mode, you'll lose them. So most of your storyboarding efforts will have to deal with designing learning environments that make people do something (reasonable). It is less a question of a fashionable multi-media show, than it is to think of real interactivity and authentic tasks.

*Philipp Starkloff  
b-educated! GmbH*

### #158: Build Only What Is Needed

Many times, a virtual or online Q&A session hosted by a very knowledgeable facilitator is a better fit for a given situation than a complete course. Don't build them a Rolls-Royce if a Honda Civic is really what they need to boost their productivity or to bring them confidence. Much money and time can be saved this way. Total flexibility in the delivery is key.

*Matthew McClellan  
Wachovia Corporation*

### #159: Help Out The Help Desk

A good place to start when deciding what content to provide in an e-Learning format is to identify the Top 10 questions that are received by the Help Desk. These questions (such as "How do I change the toner cartridge in my printer?" and "How do I print to a different printer?") can often be addressed by short and effective e-Learning modules. The Help Desk staff and senior management love this because it reduces calls to the Help Desk and employees love it because their queries are answered quickly. It's a great way to introduce e-Learning into a firm.

*Jo Pearson*

### #160: Be Lean and Mean To Engage

Learner engagement drives success, whether asynchronous or synchronous. The more the learner responds to questions on the screen, engages in chats with instructors or better yet with other students, the greater the chance of success. No more than 4-5 brief, content lean pages should go by without an activity of some kind.

*Sally Heinz  
St. Paul Travelers*

### #161: Improving Usability

Using scroll bars is difficult for students with low level PC skills. Try to keep all data to one "page" and advance to a new frame instead of having the user move the image/text.

*Lynne Bamber  
TransAlta Corporation*

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## #162: Get It Right The First Time

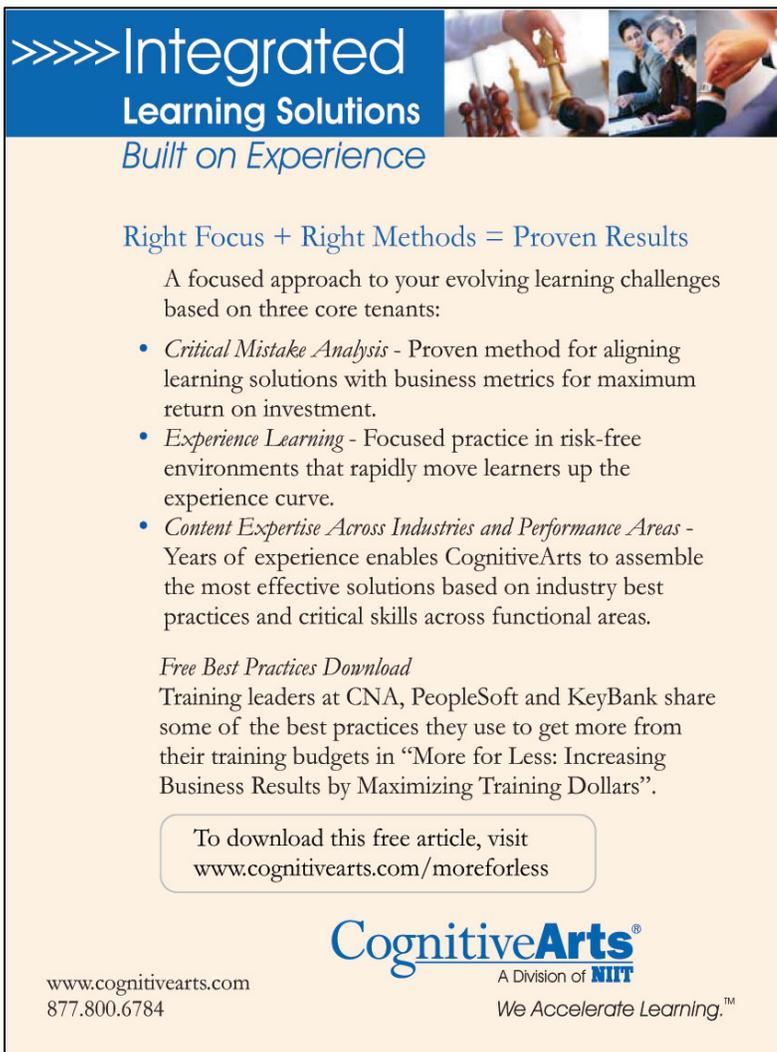
For voice-overs: Script ! Script ! Script ! This helps avoid many re-recordings.

*Patricia Nicholson  
Sun Life Financial*

## #163: e-Learning is More Than Just Electronic

Educating non-educators as to exactly what is considered e-Learning has been, and continues to be an interesting experience. E-learning is more than delivering content via a web mechanism -- there has to be built in objectives and outcomes assessment (measures of learning) prior to the construction and delivery of learning content.

*Maria C. Smeykal  
Merck & Co.*



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## #164: One and One

Success: Developing rich media content.  
Failure: Simply copying and pasting contents from the traditional media to the digital media.

*Gian Zelada  
Mamute Midia*

## #165: Don't Be The Last To Find Out

For custom content, be sure that your internal clients are not only aware of the content creation process, but that they are aware of the technical installation, troubleshooting, and piloting process as well.

*Michael Kwidzinski  
Goldman, Sachs & Co.*

## #166: Are We There Yet?

In designing an asynchronous module, be sure to use page numbers to help manage the student's time expectations for that module. For example, page 8 of 17.

*John M Opron  
Johnson Controls, Inc.*

## #167: Don't Hog The Bandwidth

When developing e-Learning content, be sensitive to your enterprise bandwidth limitations. Compress your graphics and use proper streaming media to increase performance and reduce bandwidth consumption.

*Rick Zanotti  
RELATE Corporation*

### **#168: Lights, Camera, Interaction!**

Strive to have the interactivity on every screen to reinforce the content, not just to have the interactivity. And remember to provide a wide variety of interactivity types to avoid the multiple choice rut.

*Tom Crawford  
Root Learning, Inc.*

### **#169: Where Am I? Where Am I Going?**

During formative evaluation with pilot users, develop an approximate average time period for completing the entire course (if brief) or for units or chapters of a longer course. Include these approximate times in the course introduction, along with instructions for exiting and re-entering the course, especially if any test results will be saved on exit. Throughout the course, provide information about user progress relative to the course contents, if possible. At the minimum, provide easy access to the entire course map. Users need to know how they can fit course usage into their daily routine.

*Judith McMullen  
State of Pennsylvania*

### **#170: Sticky Stories**

Engage your learner. No matter how technical we get in deploying learning, a good story is still a good story and helps the learner remember. Also be sure to give the learner an opportunity to put what they have learned into action. The sooner you get them to do this, the more likely the learning is going to stick.

*Christel Block  
Convergys*

### **#171: Don't Confuse With Too Many Options**

Do not flood the learner with too many options. Although "power-users" of computer applications do enjoy a wide variety of options and configurations, in learning very often an overdose of options leaves the learner confused. Most learners prefer a minimum number of options. In fact, the "Next" and "Previous" buttons would do just fine.

*Adi Gilboa*

### **#172: Visualize Where You Are**

Always provide a visual indicator of the student's progress through the lesson or course. For example, % of pages completed and remaining to be completed.

*Ricardo Allen  
Pepco*

### **#173: After Completing This Module You Will Be Able To ...**

Be sure to express the learning outcomes in behavioral terms.

*Mike Daniels  
Mike Daniel's Consultancy LTD*

### **#174: E-Page Turners Not Wanted**

Not a novel or original idea, but some level of interactivity and scenario/problem-based elements greatly enhance the e-Learning experience for learners. Can't tell you how many "e-page turners" I've seen that are marketed as e-Learning. We might as well just give the learner a book because all they are doing is reading information, not interacting with instruction to allow for real transfer of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

*Jacob Aplanalp  
Naval Education & Training Command*

### **#175: Do YOU Get It?**

When designing the navigation of an online course or offering, stop and rethink what you are doing if you find yourself thinking some version of this statement: "Oh, they'll understand that," because that means it isn't even clear to you and you designed it.

*Frank Hughes  
Option One Mortgage*

### **#176: Naming Conventions**

Get your content model settled before starting ANY development. No one will ever take the time to go back and "clean-up" the server.

*Scott Davis  
Bose Corporation*

### **#177: Relevance Essential**

Know your audience well, I mean really well, so your message is relevant to them. Get them involved.

*Jol Hunter  
Grant Thornton*

### **#178: Development Minded**

When developing e-Learning courses, keep these guidelines in mind: Perform a thorough task analysis so that you ensure the validity and relevance of your course's content; Make sure to establish solid lines of communication with developers and other key players so that you're aware of any changes in the application's functionality or look-and-feel; Make sure to include the appropriate levels of presentation, application, and feedback in EACH segment of the course.

*Darren W. Hood  
Galaxy Plus Credit Union System*

### **#179: Keep 'em Engaged**

Give the learners something to do every few screens. It doesn't have to be anything major, just an activity to keep them engaged.

*Valerie Andruss  
Assurant*

### **#180: Let Learners Choose**

Give them choices of how, when, and where they will do the learning. Make sure each component is bite size and escapable.

*Chris Ballinger  
Palo Alto Medical Foundation*

### **#181: Words Don't Always Cut It**

Keep the social part of people in e-Learning. If possible, insert a small graphic that will quickly explain or reinforce a concept. Use understandable and common emoticons wisely to express feelings.

*Jim Wheeler  
Johnson County Community College*

### **#182: More Is Not Better**

Design and program for the lowest common denominator in skill sets as well as technology within your organization.

*Cynthia Eisel  
FedEx*

### **#183: Less Is More**

One screen, one thought.

*Emiliano De Laurentiis  
Knowledge Enviroments, Inc.*

### **#184: The Power Of Influence**

While top management may fully endorse e-Learning and encourage its use, many top-level officers may lack technical prowess and inadvertently send mixed signals to employees about their commitment to e-Learning. Thus, consider designing e-Learning modules that show top-level officers engaged in the process via a simulated scenario so that learners receive a visual endorsement from top management that drives an e-Learning culture and reinforces the likelihood that employees will embrace e-Learning. For example: an orientation course that was developed for a global non-profit organization presented a simulated video teleconference hosted by a technical "savvy" CEO. The CEO, however, was unfamiliar with many technical skills but recognized the importance of an e-Learning culture. The module helped to solidify top-management commitment and encouraged learners toward adopting e-Learning.

*Joyce Power  
Power Performance Consulting*

### **#185: "E"(ssence) Marks The Spot**

Not everything will translate to e-Learning but that which does, needs to capture the "essence" of the topic through engaging and interactive methods such as audio, video, Flash, etc.

*Todd Stephens  
Booz Allen Hamilton*

### **#186: Reality Bytes**

Make sure to always (or at least whenever possible) incorporate real life business examples and exercises in all e-Learning sessions. This keeps the students interested, helps retention, and eases frustrations of learning in a distant environment. All examples should tie directly to the business goals of the organization.

*Pam Weining  
AIG Agency Auto*

### **#187: No Such Thing As Fool Proof Navigation**

There will always be some who are totally new to the Internet to whom traditional ways of navigating are meaningless. Visual thinkers who can read but tend to skim over any and all text no matter how self explanatory it seems, and verbal thinkers who will look at an arrow and never even wonder if that image has any meaning, or people whose English skills are not up to what seems so obvious to you. So you should construct your navigation to have multiple ways of getting to the same thing, or at least your arrows and buttons should have meaningful text built into them, add more meaningful text in the mouseover commands, and consider making new learners go through an orientation training before the real class.

*Forrest Washburn  
Texas Commission of Environmental Quality*

### **#188: A Design Primer**

Have hands-on practice sessions available to supplement each topic (particularly in the more technical courses); Make sure your basic template for CBT or WBT includes a glossary of information provided for new terminology (embed linked words in the courseware to the glossary for easy access); Provide bookmarking to allow a student to pick up where they left off; Make sure the course is more than just a page turner -- add interactivity and simulations etc.; Sample test a design of your graphical user interface -- Is it easy to understand and use by the average user in the audience?; Make interactive case studies simulating situations in which the learner applies previously acquired knowledge; Make sure evaluations are more than true/false and multiple choice - allow for simulations or interactive questions where appropriate.

*Michael Tucker  
Compuware Corporation*

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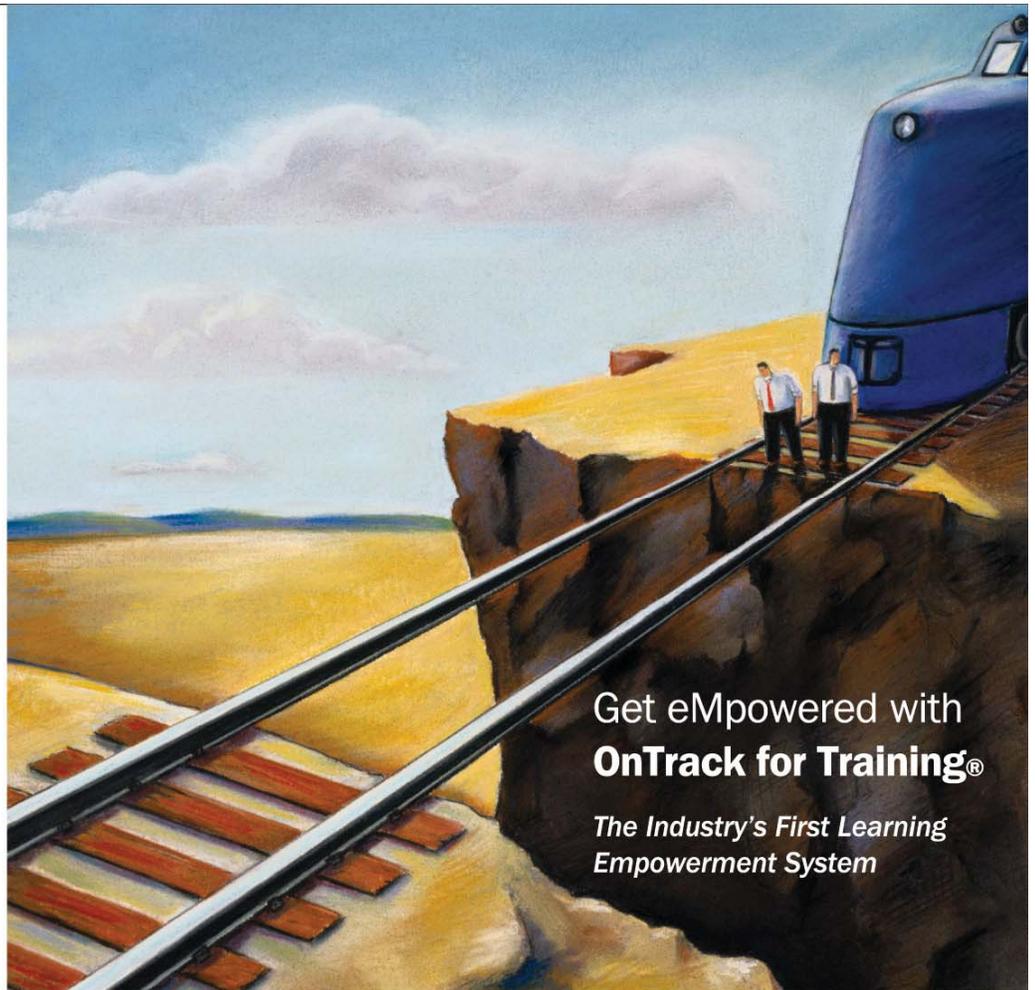
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## #189: Know Thy User

Keep the user in mind during the design. Give them what they need to know, not what you think they need to know.

*Brian Lauer  
Freddie Mac*

## #190: Is Your Design As Clean As It Should Be?

Think like a learner and keep it simple. Clean design and speed of access is important.

*Carol Watson  
Indiana University*

## #191: Best: Focused, Relevant, Storyline Content

Content is most compelling when it is packaged into focused, single thread topics; The best topics are ones that people relate to NOW - market relevancy and required skills to clients for success; The content must be presented in a storyline (with a beginning, middle and end) so participants can understand without facilitation.

*Lynne G. White  
Accenture*

## #192: Don't Be Like A Badly Dubbed Film

If your voiceover is saying something different than the text on the screen, chances are neither one is being well understood as learners try to make sense of both. Use voiceovers with relevant graphics or transcripts to reinforce key points.

*Dennis MacQuilken*

## #193: Fun Challenges

Make e-Learning fun with games and interactivity. For many, you will need to "undo" all the negative thinking towards e-Learning. Fun and games -- with a learning component -- will do wonders for "negative attitudes!" If the sponsoring organization has issues with the word "game," change it to "challenge."

*Carolyn Ulander*  
*ADP National Account Services*

## #194: Familiarity Breeds Learning

Include real world examples, sample documents, charts, photos, and interviews in your content. It helps the learner to relate more to the content.

*Rick Anderson*  
*Bricker & Eckler LLP*

## #195: DON'T Just Convert

Instructor Led classes cannot be simply turned into narrated PowerPoint slides and be considered e-Learning. Many of the design and development considerations in e-Learning are not used in classroom Instructional Design. For example: multimedia, graphic arts, IT infrastructure, user-savvyness with PC's.

*Mike Berta*  
*The Berta Group*

## #196: Keeping Others In Mind As You Design

PowerPoint content usually has too much info on each slide - remember that white space is an element of layout and design. Pictures and graphs add to variety and learning retention - but can be very distracting if they slide in or move about, particularly for the large number of employees who have attention deficit disorder. Fluorescent lights make reading e-Learning information from a screen difficult for those with tri-focals, dual prescription contacts, or glaucoma.

*Karen Bullock*  
*Golden Valley Memorial Hospital*

## #197: Build Encouragement In

Having the words "Well done" "Good on ya!" or similar phrases appropriate to your audience appear on screen may look a little corny, but they offer positive feedback for learners who have achieved something.

*Kelly Manning*  
*Government of New Zealand*

## #198: Graphics Wanted: Appropriate and Fast

When developing web-based e-Learning, make sure to optimize all graphics to ensure fast download times. Also make sure that any graphics used are not distracting or offensive.

*Darren W. Hood*  
*Galaxy Plus Credit Union System*

## #199: When To Say No To Video

Forget video if your learners are using 56K modems.

*Elizabeth Brock*  
*Siemens*

## #200: Keep It Short

Online classes should be short, no longer than 25 pages (screenshot) each. We have experienced that longer classes make students give up and they might not rejoin the course after a while. In other words, it's preferable to have some 300 pages along a 15-class course rather than packed up in just 8 classes.

*Ricardo Devai  
Gennari & Peartree*

## #201: Exploiting The Untraditional Resources

The door of the left cerebral hemisphere is the right hemisphere. Let us stimulate reflexive thoughts through creative thoughts and take advantage of the creative possibilities this medium has to offer us vs. more traditional methods of learning. Let's make this the goal of e-Learning.

*Eduardo Atencio*

## #202: Make it Personal & Informal

Use names, stories, personal accounts or case histories to reveal the living organization. Use naturally occurring language, actions and other traits to reveal the informal organization.

*Maish Nichani  
eLearning Post*

## #203: Context Is King

As a project manager and instructional designer, I think context is one of the most important things to keep in mind when designing e-Learning. It can be difficult for learners to sustain their undivided focus throughout a lesson (because of phone calls, email, and other distractions), or to refer to material in different parts of a lesson. Therefore, part of the designer's job is to ensure that learners always understand where they are; how any given screen relates to the screen before and the screen that follows, and how the content of each screen relates to the lesson as a whole. In other words, e-Learning should flow from one page to another, creating a seamless whole, instead of consisting of a series of self-contained screens. If it does, learners have a much better chance of absorbing and retaining the instruction, and of applying it to improve their performance on the job.

*John Lane  
Intellinex*

## #204: Faster The 2nd, 3rd, 4th ... Time

Design everything to be repurposed - from text content to graphics.

*John Fallon*

## #205: Don't Bite Off More Than You Can Chew

Ensure learning is in "bite size pieces" so it can be easily consumed when needed.

*Danielle Colton  
MICROS Systems, Inc.*

## #206: Mandatory As Per This Reader

A navigation panel that ALWAYS shows you where you are in the course so if you have to drop everything, you can come back and not be confused about where you left off; what you've covered and what's left to cover; In the introduction: an estimate of the total time required to complete the course. Also needed is a method of quickening or slowing the pace of narration or a transcript that can be read instead of listened to.

*Jane Maduke*

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## #207: Know Your Audience

Are they "just the facts" type students or do they need bells, whistles and entertainment to go along with the training? Are you building the e-Learning for the world or just a really small and more homogenous part of the world? If the customer does not want it or need it, then do not build it.

*Paul L. Nenninger  
PLN Consulting*

## #208: Focus On The Message

Provide content and contextual information that people can use. Learning comes from being able to apply the concepts, so guidance must include how to apply the knowledge to particular situations and circumstances. A good learning designer anticipates these and provides the framework for the "aha" experience.

*Derek Stockley*

## #209: Stay In The Driver's Seat - Outsource Only What You Need

If you have invested in a course-building tool, and have a team of instructional designers but fall short of graphic designers, try to outsource only the graphics development to a vendor, instead of the entire course. This helps speed up the development process and you have control of the build/ edit.

*Linda Al Ansari  
Emirates*

## #210: Use And Use Again

Make sure your development strategy supports reuse, even if it is only with your screen templates. It will save you effort and money.

*Mike Davis  
IBM*

## #211: Use Google As Your Model

Construct an e-Learning environment that is able to respond to quick search-engine-like queries. Nobody had to go out of their way to promote Google, people can be very self-motivated in their search for knowledge, much success can be attributed to a clean uncluttered interface that does one thing - take a few keywords and deliver fast, accurate data. Less can be more - one need, one field, relevant results.

*Martin Cannard  
Symantec Corporation*

## #212: Story Time

High-impact e-Learning needs to engage learners with something that rewards them for their time. One of the best ways to do this is to drive learning with a story or a case study that is relevant and interesting. When users are immersed in a powerful storyline, learning becomes an enjoyable experience, not a chore. Also, users are more likely to set specific time aside for learning and are less likely to drop out.

*Shon Bayer  
Enspire Learning*

## #213: Talk To Me

When writing online materials, speak in an informal style to develop a conversation with the learner.

*Joan Schepke  
Student, George Mason University*

## #214: You Heard It Before, Now Hear It Again

Concise instructions in the e-content are important to effective e-Learning. As is interactive e-content.

*Lee Siew Lie  
Nanyang Polytechnic*

### **#215: Learn, Don't Read**

Putting existing material onto the web is not e-Learning, but e-Reading. The most successful interventions are those that include a fair amount of planning, innovation and active user involvement.

*Natalie Santos  
Liberty Life*

### **#216: Get To The Point**

Edit what you write - even more carefully when you write for online vs. print. Be concise and clear. Re-read and remove any extra words or phrases that add no value to what you are trying to say. A good idea is to play your text through the robotic text reader you may have installed on your computer and listen with your eyes closed. Any "mistakes" show up well this way.

*Noel Chidwick  
The New Curiosity Shop*

### **#217: Don't Just PowerPoint**

Do not transform your existing PowerPoint slide into e-Learning content. Create the content from scratch based on multi-sensorial learning techniques.

*Mustafa Bartin  
Hewlett-Packard*

### **#218: Real Users, Real Scenarios**

Involve a selection of end users in the design process and create real business scenarios. This ensures the exercises and assessments are business related and helps get e-Learning buy-in.

*Lucy Cameron  
Arcadia Group Limited*

### **#219: Chunk Your Training**

Keep your lessons at 30 minutes or less but if training on a new application, 60 minutes or less is best. Online recordings? 20 minutes or less.

*Ginger Jones  
Siemens Energy & Automation*

### **#220: Curriculum is not a Four-Letter Word**

Clearly identify the objectives of the course and then focus all material, information and activities on those objectives.

*Susan Donar  
USM Muskie School*

### **#221: Cover All Your Bases**

Design e-Learning to reflect all adult learning styles: visual, auditory and tactile.

*Janet Clarey  
Utica National Insurance Group*

### **#222: A Graphic Is Worth A Thousand Words**

Graphics are great to back up what it is that one wants to put forward. Text and pictures are not always enough.

*Jessica Berner  
Meeting More Minds*

### **#223: Deliver What They Want**

Know your audience. It's critical that they are comfortable with the method of delivery.

*Dominick DiGiacomo  
General Electric Company*

## #224: Tailor Your Content So It Fits Properly

Know your audience and create with them in mind.

*Kris Wilkerson  
Country Insurance and Financial Services*

## #225: Sample The Possibilities

Show customers many sample graphics (your work and others) before agreeing on price so that their taste and the eventual level of effort is determined.

*Deborah E. Blank, Ph.D.  
SI International*

## #226: Shall We Say It Again?

The three most important things about effective e-Learning are interactivity, interactivity, and interactivity.

*Ed Timmons  
AT&T*

## #227: Interesting, Fast Moving And Fun

To make our e-Learning program successful, we tighten content to just what is needed, insert interesting and interactive exercises in strategic places, and end with a comprehensive game with a timer. Our employees like to beat the clock in answering the game questions.

*Ann Busby*

## #228: Design The Activity In The Context Of The Learner

Simulate the task in the job setting, provide tools they would have available to them, have them walk through what they would actually be doing and provide online help or coaching to enable them to be successful performing the task. Look for technology to simulate as close to the real thing as possible. It seems simplistic, but how often do we put together e-Learning that only feeds information or provides online lecture? Many times, too often, which doesn't support interactive, meaningful learning experiences. I've seen both and as a learner myself, much prefer a place where I can practice and get feedback to actually improve my skill vs. reading and remembering.

*Linda S. Kellner  
John Deere*

## #229: Content Is King

Understand your target group's needs and create tailored content remembering that "one size does not fit all." Draw a value-chain for all critical value added activities and identify critical success variables. Then deliver the right content to the right persons in right time and in right format.

*Per Hegli  
Addisco AS*

## #230: Success Breeds More Success

One of the challenges in designing instruction for e-Learning delivery is how to draw learners quickly into the experience and get them hooked. A sure-fire way to do this is to build in a learning success for them as quickly as possible. Adult learners are afraid of failure so to get them over this hump, we designers need to present them, almost as soon as they begin the course or the program, with a task or learning activity that they cannot fail at. It has to be short, crystal-clear, and so easy that they can complete it successfully almost with their eyes closed. When we follow this up with immediate, positive feedback, the effect is amazing. Learners dig right into the learning experience with energy and commitment, and will then take on subsequent and more challenging tasks with optimism and determination.

*Lindy Williams  
The Learning Domain*

### **#231: Ease of Use & Consistency Before Platform**

Sometimes the available platform drives the instructional strategy, which may not be appropriate to the learning style of trainees or to the learning objectives. Don't let this happen. Also be sure to strive for a consistent look and feel as much as possible to enhance the ease of use by the learner.

*Ed Vaghini  
Aetna, Inc.*

### **#232: Learningtainment**

Increasingly, the key decision for e-Learning material developers is how to compete effectively with other, high quality images and deliver the "wow factor" in their programmes. If e-Learning is to continue to compete effectively for learners' attention, its materials must place quality and learner engagement above all. To be successful, e-Learning must promote learning through entertainment.

*Jonathan Drake  
BBC Worldwide*

### **#233: Design With The Instructor To Get Their Buy In**

When designing blended learning interventions, include the instructor(s) at the earliest possible stage. The instructor(s) will need to take on ownership and without their involvement, they may end up viewing your interventions as ivory tower mandates and do their best to fight you every inch of the way.

*Eli Munzer  
Verizon*

### **#234: A Five Step Design Process**

1. Always employ good adult learning principles (there are 13 of them!) when creating instructions; 2. Have an interaction every 4-5 screens to keep the learners engaged in the learning process; 3. Have a relevant graphic on every 1-2 screens to reinforce learning through the symbology and the visual learning channels; 4. Supplement with online learning audio that reinforces the visual message; 5. Create assessment items that are at the same level of Bloom's taxonomy as the performance objectives.

*Richard Cavagnol  
Deloitte*

### **#235: Don't Be A Cold Fish**

Remember to put as much "warmth" into your e-Learning interactivity as possible. This is harder to do with text only since the voice carries the emotion. The "you and I" approach should be kept in mind and getting in touch with your own feelings will help you work in a more personal way. We know that personalization increases engagement and retention.

*Janet Poley  
American Distance Education Consortium*

### **#236: What You See Is What You Get - Get It Right**

Use visualization and metaphors not just as decorations, but as learning aids to reinforce the learning and increase retention. Reduce the amount of text on any single screen. Integrate Usability and Interface Design concepts into the module.

*Tom Crawford  
Root Learning, Inc.*

### **#237: Do Unto others As You Would Like Them to Do Unto You**

Write text you'd like to read yourself. For example, use the active voice, eliminate unnecessary words, write for an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level – even Ph.D's prefer clear, simple sentences. And use graphics to encapsulate content, not to decorate.

*Christopher Lierle  
GreenPoint Mortgage*

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## #238: The Magic Number? 15!

E-learning modules should be designed so that learners can take chunks of content in no more than 15 minutes at a sitting.

*Eric Kugler  
Healthcare E-learning Collaborative*

## #239: The Real Scoop on Practical Design

The effectiveness and ultimate value – to both users and the organisation – of e-Learning will be determined by the quality of instructional design that underlies the training materials. To keep these as high as possible you should:

- Set technical standards for the whole project – including lists of the software required and how it is to be set up.
- Make sure that the instructional designer is fully briefed on the subject material by a subject matter expert. Making an effective multimedia programme requires – at least – a subject matter expert, an instructional designer who can translate the programme content into multimedia using your chosen interface, and a programmer who translates what the designer says into something you can see.
- Reduce the training material to "bite sized chunks" for online delivery. Anything larger will call for technical (bandwidth) capability that the system does not possess.
- Avoid a plethora of graphics, animations and "flashy bits." These can cause problems if plug-ins are needed at the delivery end to make these play. There are other, effective ways of making a programme visually interesting.
- Keep the format of the material simple.
- Ensure that part of the production process is to test the programme rigorously with groups of users with similar skills to your target audience. Note their responses and the way they use the programme. Was it relevant to their jobs? Could its content be easily assimilated into working practices? Did they find navigating through the programme easy? How long did it take them to complete the programme? Did the user control the programme or go through it linearly (from start to finish)? And, of course, did the users enjoy the learning experience?

*Vaughan Waller  
Technologies For Business & Learning*

## #240: Lights, Camera, Action!

When presenting soft skills, you can enhance the "uptake" of the information by providing scenarios that illustrate the application of the skills being presented. Tips for creating these scenarios include: 1. Use audio + stock photography for a lower tech/lower cost way to engage the learner in the scenario. 2. Gain awareness of your program or product by using employees within the company for the audio. Hold auditions! 3. Buy your own microphone & sound software and use your laptop to capture and edit the audio. 4. Don't forget diversity! Be sure the photos and voices reflect a diverse population.

*Allison Anderson  
Intel University*

## #241: Adapt, Adjust & Accommodate For The Specific Content Style

Be extremely aware of the differences in writing structure and style of presentation for the following three types of content: Reference, Performance Support and Education/Training. With much hype around "content conversion," there is a temptation to repurpose classroom or reference materials directly into e-Learning or Performance Support materials. Resist the temptation! While the information contained in the original material is invaluable and time-saving, it almost ALWAYS needs to be re-worked so that it's appropriate for the new purpose and audience. Examples? Reference writing needs to be feature, function, or topic-focused, requiring little context. Performance Support writing should be task or decision-focused with links or references to contextual information. And writing for an e-Learning course should be context-rich, conversational, and flowing along a logical progression, as though delivered by a caring, personal mentor.

*Rob Bohlen  
MaxUse LLC*

## #242: What Do Your Learners Say?

Our e-Learners love our 15-minute courses (business pieces). They dislike our 1-hour segments.

*Laura Mankowski*

*Mercury Insurance Group*

## #243: The Truth, The Whole Truth & Nothing But The Truth

Instructional design in the online arena must address all learning styles, meet all accessibility challenges, and map each activity directly to clearly articulated learning goal(s). Nothing you can do online will have more direct and lasting impact than the application of stellar instructional design principles to all of your online interactions. Bottom Line: Online learning turns up the resolution on even minor flaws in instructional design.

*Karen Goeller*

*Bucks County Community College*

## #244: A Professional Looking Interface Is Almost As Important As Content

There is power in simplicity. Courses do not need to be 8 hours long. Build with experience in mind. If you create a Word document, learners will have a Word document experience. If you build a multimedia, interactive e-Learning training, your learners will have that type of experience. The more senses you can involve the better. Retention of information grows when more senses are involved.

*J.R. Dansie*

*NuSkin Enterprises*

## #245: Define What You're Paying For ... & Help Your Successor Too

When using a vendor to design a virtual classroom course for you, clearly define what end products should be delivered from the vendor. A written virtual facilitator's leader's guide should include all the nuances of virtual facilitation as well as all of the givens of traditional Instructor Led sessions, such as a timed agenda, script and handouts. The course materials must be in file format to be able to upload course materials (e.g. PowerPoint presentation, image files, other documentation), estimate time for various segments and include a screen-by-screen verbatim script which includes generic interactivity notes which are applicable to any of the synchronous tools. This practice ensures that learners are not only receiving a consistent message, and also it makes it easier in case you need to replace your virtual facilitator at any point. Some vendors consider creating a PowerPoint presentation and "winging it" verbally as designing a session. While "winging it" can work for the adept virtual facilitator, it doesn't provide a structure for future facilitators. Clearly defining what is to be delivered will eliminate this miscommunication.

*Sandy Kupprat*

*Chase*

## #246: When Building Simulations ...

Design small, well-developed but complex problem solving scenarios ... then link or tie them all together later on with a "story" theme. The advantages: 1. Your learners will love it! All of a sudden e-Learning becomes interesting! 2. Meeting deadlines quickly so e-Learning can be known as a catalyst for meeting the needs of not only learners, but for organizational goals as well. 3. Getting buy-in from your senior management team. By developing quickly, people can see where you are going...and that it is worthwhile and far superior to other "page turner" e-Learning programs. 4. Excitement can be built by planned release of these scenarios. There is always something new ... a new part of the story ... that is coming. Makes learners want to go back to your site. Good for marketing e-Learning too. 5. If everyone likes the small simulations, then they'll probably give the approval for longer, game-based, open-ended simulations someday! Which is good for you because they're a lot more fun and challenging design wise to put together.

*Jo Appogast*

*EMCOR Facilities Services*

## #247: Design e-Learning To Coincide With Learner's Limitations

Remember the limitations that learners work under. For example, amount of time available to learn, workspace privacy, technology know-how, learning obstacles and preferences, and technology compatibility to name a few.

*Bob Huebner  
Virginia Credit Union, Inc.*

## #248: Design-O-Rama

Break e-Learning into "chunks" and increase retention with practical examples; Include interactive practice exercises to illustrate difficult or complex concepts; Provide frequent feedback to students by using interactive examples and/or online "mini tests" to build confidence and reinforce skills; Include quick reference guides that students can view online (or print) featuring step-by-step how-to illustrations; Provide students the ability to download practice files to refer to after e-classes.

*Joy Frederick  
American Electric Power*

## #249: Sometimes It Is Best To Just Start From Scratch

When should you consider setting aside the original design document when you are asked to convert or rewrite a course?

1. You can't understand the material yourself. If you can't learn the way the current material is organized, what makes you think others will?
2. There are no learning objectives stated or they are very vague. Learning objectives are, in my opinion, a little overwrought, but one thing they do often help with is organization and structure. If no learning objectives were stated by the original designer, it's possible the learning structure may not be organized well.
3. The subject is complex and the topics seem to run incoherently together. Sometimes people are tasked with designing training for a subject they know little to nothing about. If the deadline is too close for a thorough design, there is a tendency to cut corners to meet the timeline. This often means taking "content" and slapping it together into a "class" or "course." The old mish-mosh design theory. (The designer's thought processes run something like this, "Oh man! That class is due tomorrow. Well, here's the content the R&D department gave me. I'll just follow their tech manual's outline.")
4. The focus appears to be on the subject rather than the learner. Clues might be overly descriptive explanations such as technical specs, little to no interactivity, etc.

*Garin Hess  
Papid Intake*

## #250: Point, Click, Lost? Forget Them Coming Back!

The user-friendliness of the courseware - in terms of courseware navigation - is of paramount, paramount importance.

*Anonymous*

## #251: Grab Attention & Stimulate Curiosity Within The First Minute Of Instruction

If creating a fast-paced multimedia message without learner control, present verbal explanations in speech rather than writing. If creating a verbal explanation or description of a procedure, present corresponding graphics (e.g. animation, video, illustrations, pictures). If creating multimedia narrated explanations of how something works or descriptions of how to carry out a procedure, present narration using a human voice with a standard accent and organize the narration to include a preview summary outlining the main steps, section headings corresponding to the main steps, and pointer words such as first, second, third, and as a result.

*Rose M. Kimberley  
Soldier Support Institute*

### **#252: Simple, But Not Trivial**

Ask yourself as a designer whether you are not trivializing e-Learning events by presenting images as cartoons. There is a whole set of discourses around the use of cartoons.

*Elizabeth Henning, Ph.D.  
RAU University, South Africa*

### **#253: Production, Production, Production**

Spend more money on "producing" content, not only on "creating" it. Content on TV or films or even computer games take very detailed pre-production, production and post-production efforts precisely so they can test the impact on the public and give a really engaging experience. The content for e-Learning needs a more complex development process than preparing a class or writing a book – otherwise the outcome and user's impression will be poor.

*Angel Sancho  
Centro de Estudios Garrigues*

### **#254: What Tickles Your Audience's Fancy?**

Understand the demographics of your audience - as a marketer would do. Understand what motivates, inspires and captivates them. In a corporate environment it is unlikely that the "best" course in terms of learning pedagogy will be the truly effective one.

*Paul Allman  
The Edgeworks*

### **#255: Consistent To The Core**

When developing e-Learning in-house, use a consistent navigational path. This enables the learners to focus on the material and not spend time trying to figure out how to navigate through the content. Also, use a consistent template to help "brand" the overall look and feel of the modules.

*Mark Hetrick  
Aetna, Inc.*

### **#256: Fit For A Purpose**

Content is king. Whizzy and interesting AND not just whizzy where the content is lost.

*Sue Cohen  
Grant Thornton*

### **#257: Real Estate Is Extremely Valuable - Don't Waste It**

Make sure you focus on substance not flash. There are many "cool" things that can be done. Make sure that you are including them for learning reasons, not for entertainment. Interactions need to add value. Don't let the interface get in the way of the interaction. In a "simulation, don't waste the learners time by having them press buttons to go up and down - everything must have a purpose. That purpose should be related to the education and your objectives. You must always focus on the objectives and outcomes, not the interface.

*Faith Fuqua-Purvis  
Deloitte Consulting LLP*

### **#258: Don't Give The Answers Away**

Provide several different levels of feedback and avoid giving the participants too many hints as this gives them motivation to self-correct their errors.

*Ikuko Kawasaki  
Randstad North America*

### **#259: Navigation Without Guessing**

Keep it simple, simple, simple . . . Make it easy, easy, easy . . . Interactivity does not mean "Click Next!"

*Helen McGraw  
General Motors University*

## #260: Know Your Learner, Give Them Choice

Research learners' needs and attitudes in advance as much as possible, don't assume that "one size fits all." Design in bite-sized chunks that can be "driven by the learner". Build in interactivity (and no, pressing the "next" button doesn't count as interactivity!). Allow learners choice - choice of media, learning styles, and levels of learning. And build in fun!

*Ana Karakusevic  
BBC Training and Development*

## #261: Design Learning Like Magazines

Linear learning, while necessary in a standup classroom environment, needs to be avoided if at all possible in e-Learning. Consider the different ways individuals read a magazine. Some start reading at the front, some at the back, some in the middle. If they get into something they don't understand because they skipped around, they can go to the section which contains the information.

*Nancy Heiser  
Kimberly-Clark*

## #262: Anticipate The Questions

When using tools to create what is commonly known as "multimedia", try to get the person/character/whatever to ask the questions you always get in the real classroom environment. And of course supply the answer.

*Christer Carlsson  
LYSNNA & NJUT AB*

## #263: Clear Expectations = No Surprises

Always design your training to the lowest common denominator of your students. This applies to the technology they are able to access, the level of skill they possess and the ability they have. Make your expectations clear at the beginning, so that there are no surprises, and set the standard for the technology they will be required to have access to as well, so that if they are unable to get it, or use it, they will at least be aware that they need it. A course that I am taking used an assumption that everyone would be able to download freebies from the Internet. I'm doing the course from a work machine, as it relates to my job, but our firewall is so strict, that we are unable to download anything. Therefore, I am missing some audio pieces, and some animations. I was also unable to complete part of an assignment around building an animation. But there was no mention of needing the capability to do this or to be able to download in the course description.

*Peri Ziprick  
TransAlta Corporation*

## #264: ENHANCE RETENTION Of Text Reading

In course content text, many people already "bold" or "capitalize" the KEY WORDS or phrases. To IMPROVE RETENTION, however, what we do sometimes is to REPEAT these key words at the BOTTOM OF THE PAGE just before the "next page" button. It's quick, easy, and we have found it to be an effective method of driving key points into the reader's head.

*Geoff Falconar  
AEROSTUDIES Inc.*

## #265: Turn Up The Volume

Make your learning come alive - ramp up the engagement to make it game-like!

*Clark Quinn  
OtterSurf Laboratories*

## #266: Don't Get Carried Away - Use Appropriate Examples

Create a context for the learning by anchoring it in a real-world environment. Use authentic activities - don't create a bingo game for sales training.

*Phil Antonelli  
Intellinex*

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## #267: Design Components That Make Sense

When designing an online course, it is important to take into consideration performance aspects. One way of doing this is to analyze who the audience is, what resources are they likely to have, and then decide on the audio/video/multi-media kind of components.

*Vidya Nagaraj  
Oracle*

## #268: Be Search Minded

Create searchable databases as entry points to the training. This supports the learner's need for just-in-time training and allows designers and developers the ability to mine content and create courses with reduced cycle times.

*Phil Antonelli  
Intellinex*

## #269: Lean, Mean, And Real Target Questions

As with all training, remember your audience and keep the content relevant to them. For example, if you were training new sales people and wanted to include assessment questions, use questions that are relevant to what they'll find in the field. For example, consider including common questions (FAQ) customers ask, scenario-based questions such as which product best meets a specific need, benefits of clients working with your organization and/or different product lines, questions that integrate sales skills with product knowledge (where they would go to get help in different types of situations, product positioning questions, competitive advantages questions, etc.)

*Rebecca Koos  
RacePoint Consulting LLC*

## #270: Do The Math

We have found that a combination of highly structured, audio-driven tutorials coupled with flash-based simulations are a great way to engage the learner in understanding difficult mathematical concepts, such as that encountered in finance, economics and statistics. The tutorial explains the concept and presents the math. The simulation allows the learner to visually experience the impact of changing any independent variable, without having to actually do any math. This is a great tool for allowing the non-mathematically inclined individual to understand the intuition that drives the concept, without having to understand the underlying mathematics.

*Robert Ironside  
Learning Dividends Inc*

## #271: Respect Copyrights

It's easy to borrow content from other sites on the Internet. Most people are flattered if you want to borrow an image or some text, provided they receive appropriate credit. But if you're using someone else's materials, be sure to find out if the content is copyrighted. The Internet is filled with pirated images so even if it appears that something isn't marked, it could be stolen already.

*Jeff Harris  
Trivantis Corporation*

## #272: Think Movie, A Motivating Metaphor

Creating true e-Learning is equivalent to turning a novel into a movie -- the important parts are selected and acted out in simplified, recognizable scenes.

*Ulrik Ramsing  
LogiLearn, Inc.*

## #273: Our I/D Goal

Good instructional designers who are open minded and who understand business and people.

*Anna Soin  
LearningLab*

### **#274: Hmmm, How Did You Get 120% Correct?**

Randomize questions in all assessments. This is especially helpful when the user decides to re-do a course. Otherwise, the user will most probably get a 100% in his second attempt.

*Linda Al Ansari  
Emirates*

### **#275: ISO - A Blueprint For Usability**

When designing e-Learning, emanate from the standard of usability. Plan and design according to the "Guidance on Usability" (ISO9241-11) with adaptation to the learning context: "... to the extent to which a learning resource can be used by specified learner, to achieve the learning objectives with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified learning context."

*Ulf Söderberg  
Framehouse*

### **#276: Recording - Take 1 (& Hopefully The Last)**

Before you record the audio script for the e-Learning project, schedule a meeting with the SMEs and have someone read the script out loud. This will hopefully save time in the long run and avoid multiple recordings after the course has been built.

*Peggy Ferguson  
Veritude*

### **#277: Forecast: A Blurry & Gray Future, No Thanks**

Remember that the population is aging and ensure that the typefont is legible -- large and clear. Remember also that some folks have color blindness.

*Naomi Sussman  
Sussman Training Assoc.*

### **#278: Which Skills & Practices Are Needed When Teaching Online?**

You need to type fast when chatting and recording on the white board; use an energetic, strong voice and speak slowly; be able to multitask (e.g. reading personal chats to you at the same time you are presenting or continuing to read the script when trying to reboot your computer because it crashed!); be able to do basic troubleshooting and help participants with the virtual classroom; have the ability to manage time as everything online is tight on time; know your content inside and out (of course!); know what you can cut out if you get behind; stick to the script as you have little room for stories or unrelated musings; and take notes of which participants are involved so you can call on any that aren't speaking up. Pheew!

*Carmela Southers  
Ken Blanchard Companies*

### **#279: Communicate & Reward, Reward & Communicate**

A comprehensive communications plan should be in place to assist in the cultural change needed to move employees on-line. Incentives and rewards should be a part of this plan as encouragement to move to on-line learning.

*Bill Kurovch  
DaimlerChrysler Corporation*

### **#280: Dancing Bullets Can Be Distracting**

When animating bullet points, don't let learners get distracted wondering how many facts they'll have to absorb. Put all the blank bullets on the screen, then animate the text entry. This gives learners a framework in which to understand the information rather than asking them to decide between thinking about the current bullet and getting ready for the next one.

*Dennis MacQuilken*

## #281: Make It Easier On Yourself

Use Style Sheets when developing to make updates easier.

*Kathy Lents  
HouseHold International, Inc.*

## #282: From Incorrect to Correct, Show Me

In WBT or in simulations, consider how incorrect user actions are processed. Most products I've seen merely tell you you're wrong. Depending upon learner style and level of mastery needed, maybe the error isn't immediately detected and the WBT lets you continue but the error is discovered later. Maybe the WBT lets you know you made a mistake, and then asks you how to correct the error. The same information sets up a flag to present the points that were missed during the final summary.

*Tom Swider*

## #283: Avoiding The Graphics & Animation Trap

When preparing e-Learning content, graphics and animations are not the first things that you should think of. Study the content in a very detailed way to determine the concepts that should be given to the user. Then decide which concepts can be supported by which graphics and animations (or not). Graphics and animations that have no effect on the learning quality of the user experience add no value to the e-Learning content.

*Aysenur T. Akman  
Oyak Technology*

## #284: Activity, Not Passivity

Be clear on the distinction between education and entertainment and know your audience. So called "Edutainment" may be fine for children but is unlikely to satisfy adults. As the NY Times has reported, "TV isn't teaching" and this applies particularly to adults. Bottom line: Don't teach "down" to adults in an attempt to entertain them.

*Wendell Laidley  
New Media Learning LLC*

## #285: Test Placement Matters

For required training, include a "no fault" test immediately after the module and a graded test after completion of all modules.

*Perry E. D'Antonio  
Sandia National Laboratories*

## #286: Design Prescriptions

Develop to the lowest common denominator of your audience. This includes elements such as color choice ("web-safe" colors), text size, screen resolution, etc. Especially with text, try to use CSS stylesheets to more closely assure consistency and your desired output. And be sure to include some type of interactivity every few pages to avoid just a "page-turner," even if it is just having the user rollover an image or text to get more information or to move forward. Instant feedback "what do you think's" are great to insert throughout a module. These don't have to include scoring, they are just spot checks for the user.

*Mario Cruz  
John Hancock Financial Services, Inc.*

## #287: Think Small

Our e-Learners don't have a long attention span or much time for learning at their desks. Try to keep the learning modules below 20 minutes in length (usually 9-15 slides).

*Patricia Nicholson  
Sun Life Financial*

### **#288: Save Learner Time, Build In Help**

Build in a help system to allow the user to determine how the course works.

*Roger Steinhorst*

*Fireman's Fund Insurance Companies*

### **#289: Huh? Where Was That Covered?**

Make objectives of what you want to accomplish with the e-Learning. Make sure all training activities and test questions match the objectives. Next make sure the test questions are answerable based on the information presented in the e-Learning material. There is nothing more frustrating to a learner than being expected to pass an evaluation test based on presumed knowledge.

*Michael Tucker*

*Compuware Corporation*

### **#290: Can You Hear Me Now?**

E-Learning should have voice recognition so when a student has to reply, he/she can do so with normal discussion/feedback/brainstorming/idea generation -- as if replying face-to-face to a teacher. Words can be automatically typed as he/she speaks so the train of thought is not lost - then edited afterwards. This is especially effective if an individual cannot type fast enough.

*Dori Ottaviano*

### **#291: Practice "Hidden" Instructional Design**

Most heuristics in instructional design -- such as objectives and sequencing -- is for the instructional designer to better understand the task at hand and NOT for the learners. All the learners need is a seamless, meaningful and memorable experience.

*Maish Nichani*

*eLearning Post*

### **#292: "Elastic" Design**

When designing e-Learning, the "one size fits all" philosophy will not work. With the multitude of technologies out there, don't try to create THE BEST way to get your message out, instead create ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE to getting a message out.

*Brian Lauer*

*Freddie Mac*

### **#293: Use Standard Default Fonts When Publishing**

Despite the thousands of fonts that are available only a few have become regarded as standards for the Internet. A browser will select a font from the viewer's computer to create the content. Although a content developer may select one font, the viewer's browser will select another if the original font isn't available. This system has evolved so that now a handful of fonts are default fonts. They are: Arial, Arial Black, Times, Comic Sans, Courier, Courier New, Georgia, Helvetica, Times New Roman, Times, Trebuchet, and Verdana. If you specify these fonts for live text, your viewer will likely view them as you designed them. For other fonts, you should convert your text to a graphic in a program like Photoshop or Illustrator. If you specify a non-standard font, the browser will convert it to a default font. To insure your communications arrive as planned, stick to the short list

*Jeff Harris*

*Trivantis Corporation*

### **#294: Don't Overwhelm Your SME**

SMEs hate to review storyboards. Find ways to make it as easy for them as possible by using visuals and avoiding unnecessary details (file names, notes to programmers, etc.).

*Deborah E. Blank, Ph.D.*

*SI International*



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## #295: Learners Must Always Be In Control

Watch for "hot areas" under pop-ups. This can cause data to change on the screen - when the user has not initiated the action. Do not have things appear or change on the screen without the learner clearly understanding what is going on. The cause and effect must be clear. If it's not critical, LEAVE IT OUT. Don't waste the learner's time.

*Faith Fuqua-Purvis  
Deloitte Consulting LLP*

## #296: Take A Chance - Revert To Being 14 Years Old Again

Here's an idea I learned from my son (aged 14 at the time) when he did a week of work experience with me. As part of his duties I gave him a development tool instruction book, some content from the Subject Matter Experts and then sent him away to develop some simple e-courses. His innovation was to introduce novelty feedback in the assessment questions, particularly for incorrect responses, things like: "Sorry that's not quite right, but then again, nobody's perfect." The amount of positive feedback we received was astounding, particularly as the content was very dry. The courses got a bit of cult status and many people did them just to find the jokes he had hidden in them. However, despite this experience, nobody in our team has had the nerve (or the creativity) of a 14 year old to further emulate him.

*David Keen  
Leading Performance Pty Ltd.*



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## Chapter 5: The Learning Tools & Technology Tsunami – Will You Sink Or Swim?

*Assuming the right design for the right content for the right course for the right learner ... what is your next goal? The right tool for the right technology! Remember that it is all about learning.*

### **#297: As Fundamental As It Gets**

Match the tools you use to the audience.

*Jo-Ann Driscoll  
Centra Software*

### **#298: SME's Can Author Too**

Content preparation tools may be simple enough for SMEs to master in a small amount of time with some coaching by learning professionals.

*David Gillespie  
Honeywell*

### **#299: Mix and Match**

Don't get stuck and fixated on one kind of technology in any e-Learning event. Use every arrow in the quiver (Flash, HTML, .asp, job aids, .pdf, etc.).

*Donald Humphreys  
Bank One*

### **#300: The Right Tool For The Right Job**

Don't become a tool zealot. It will limit your career growth and ensure unemployment. The industry is rapidly changing and so are the tools used to develop e-Learning. Always maintain a "learning" mind and let your customer's needs determine your tool usage. No one tool does it all.

*Rick Zanotti  
RELATE Corporation*

### **#301: Rules For Successful Use Of Technology**

Content before Technology. Culture before technology. Collaboration before technology.

*Ulrik Ramsing  
LogiLearn, Inc.*

### **#302: All "e's" Are Pesky, But Some "e's" Are Peskier Than Others**

Make sure your LMS is capable of determining the learner's technical environment and proceed accordingly. For example, the available bandwidth between the learner workstation and the LMS, installed necessary plug-ins, etc. The "e" in e-Learning is a very pesky creature that can nullify any amount of good content design and authoring.

*Eli Munzer  
Verizon*

### **#303: More = Less Access**

The more interactive a page, the more technology you use, the more likely someone, somewhere, will not be able to access it.

*Scott Vinkemulder  
Steelcase*



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### **#304:** The Real Value Of An LMS

Don't just think about linking delivering learning content over a network via a web browser to an LMS. In many ways, that is the easiest part of the process. The greatest challenge for any LMS is how it manages and monitors business processes.  
*Stuart Hornsey  
Pathlore Software Ltd.*

### **#305:** HRMS Before LMS

Don't let your LMS data initiative get ahead of your HRMS data initiative. We have been building courses and uploading course history into our LMS without having a 100% implemented global HRMS. So the employee data in the LMS is incomplete, which makes a problem when you import course history. Interesting note: most departmental training teams will keep fairly accurate data on course history, using last name or full name as the key. This works great in small files, but when you try to import it all into a global LMS (without a global employee # system to act as a key field) you can end up with a mess. In hindsight, it would have made a lot more sense to have deployed resources to getting the global HRMS up and running first.  
*Kathy Milhauser  
Nike*

### **#306:** Don't Give Up on PowerPoint

For those organizations that can't afford a \$25,000 e-Learning authoring tool package, don't give up on PowerPoint. With just a little curiosity and some experimentation, you can do amazing things with this program (even the Office2000 version), such as incorporating movie clips (".avi's") with sounds, unique moving graphics (using .gifs), fancy shapes (both built-in and imported), links to Web sites or other slides, and easy voiceovers. At Sarasota Government, we saved thousands of dollars by meeting HIPAA requirements by creating a PowerPoint presentation with voiceover, putting it on our Intranet site, and requiring all employees to watch it.

*Charles Dittell  
Sarasota County Government*

### **#307:** Don't Be Flashy Unnecessarily

Use Flash wisely and only when it meets a specific objective. Try to use Flash for complex interactions to achieve high-level cognitive objectives and to drive the story line. Animations for the sake of animating are a waste of time, money and attention.

*Phil Antonelli  
Intellinex*

### #308: Imaginative Not Imitative

Good e-Learning should be computer imaginative. It should exploit the strengths of the medium for gains in learning. Too often, e-Learning is imitative - it copies one medium onto another. A book on a computer will never be as good as a real book. Computer imaginative e-Learning takes advantage of the computing and networking features of the technology medium.

*Martin A. Siegel  
WisdomTools, Inc.*

### #309: Discipline Your Content Process Via Technology

If you plan to develop more than one asynchronous eCourse, seriously consider using a Content Management System to discipline the process with templates and the ability for SME's to edit content via a web interface. Shop around, web-based Content Management Systems can be rented, supplied by a vendor, or consider using your web department's CMS and modify portions to create web pages that accommodate the lesson/topic structure.

*Jon Aleckson  
Web Courseworks*

### #310: Small = Fast

A lot of success on the Internet is based on speed. One factor of speed is size. Smaller files load faster, which keeps your viewers engaged. Large screen pages usually make for difficult viewing and are not recommended. Monitor sizes and variable browser settings may result in a wide variety of sizes when it comes to live areas on a computer screen. A safe screen size that is generally considered standard is 640 pixels by 480 pixels. This is a conservative size if you're looking to reach the most people.

*Jeff Harris  
Trivantis Corporation*

### #311: The Chicken Or the Egg?

For new projects, nail down the technology before moving too far on content. This is a "chicken or the egg" situation -- you need to specify content to get good Request For Proposals, but a good course should be tailored to use the features (and limitations) of the delivery platform. So, take your best guess on what you want and need, select a platform, and then turn the content people and instructional designers loose.

*Eric Pourchot, Ph.D.  
Am. Inst. For Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works*

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### **#312: Message Before Medium**

Technology will not replace good design. Focus on the message rather than the medium.

*Charles D. Hunter  
Williams Scotsman*

### **#313: More Things To Ask Yourself (or Others)**

How do you intend to house the library of courses, make updates to the e-Learning, and track student/employee progress? Do you have an LMS? Is the CBT/WBT AICC compliant? SCORM compliant? Does your audience have special technical needs? If a good number of your audience is using dial-up, does your software take into account the slower download of graphics, animation and especially the voice files needed? Is there an alternative to playing them live such as downloading them for play later?

*Michael Tucker  
Compuware Corporation*

### **#314: No One Tool Does It All**

In e-Learning, as in other projects, don't fall into the trap of having to fix all the problems with one tool.

*Tom Pears*

### **#315: Time Well Spent**

When working with occasional e-Learning developers (such as SMEs that are not familiar with most development tools), keep the tools as simple as possible. Use templates to even further simplify the creation process. Create a tool that lets SMEs develop and own their modules and remind them on a regular basis to update content. The time spent on programming to create such tools is well spent -- it pays back in reduced support time and standardized interfaces.

*Jan Buhmann  
PeaceHealth*

### **#316: Don't Get Caught Up in Tools**

Sometimes the best solution is a simple HTML page. Some vendors would have you believe their tool is the end-all be-all when you could probably build HTML pages that do the same thing. Plus, you don't waste time and money learning and buying an un-needed tool. Anyone with Notepad can edit HTML. This rule also applies when the company you work for tries to force feed you its own proprietary tool. K. I.S.S. (Keep it Simple Stupid) applies to e-Learning as well as to tools and everything else.

*Bronson Beisel  
IBM*

### **#317: Use Your Selected Tools To The Fullest**

E-learning is to Instructor Led as TV is to tickets on the 50-yard line. The game is the same, the players are the same, the score is the same, and the result is the same. So the result of your learning should be too! You can't be in the huddle at the live game, neither can you feel the heat of the field on TV. In e-Learning, make the most of the tools offered to differentiate the experience from the Instructor Led experience.

*Ken Seemann  
Nextel Communications*

### **#318: Keep The Traffic Moving**

Beware of network "traffic cop" applications if you are implementing AICC/SCORM courses that are not hosted on your Intranet.

*Bernadette McIntosh-Estep  
Country Insurance and Financial Services*

### **#319: Don't Overkill**

Don't let the technology drive the solution. Sometimes a Post-It (tm) note could be the solution to your learning gap. Focus on what you're trying to accomplish, not the tools you'll use to create or deliver it.

*Nina Adams  
Adams I-solutions, Inc.*

### **#320: Match Choice To Need**

Not everything should be a narrated PowerPoint! Choose e-Learning technology based on your content and learning objectives.

*Elizabeth Brock  
Siemens*

### **#321: Use Cheap (Not Tacky) Tools**

E-Learning does not require expensive proprietary platforms. I have used the ubiquitous email as an e-Learning tool. You can specify a topic (such as e-Learning) and invite participants to contribute tips. You can convert this activity into a competitive and collaborative game and collect and post the resulting inputs as examples and templates.

*Sivasailam "Thiagi" Thiagarajan  
The Thiagi Group*

### **#322: Putting Technology In Its Place**

Use technology to add value to learning and/or increase efficiency of the learning services. Nothing else.

*Dennis Macnamara*

### **#323: Reading List**

If you haven't heard of SCORM or 508 Compliance, read up on it. It will allow the greatest portability of your content.

*Mike Davis  
IBM*

### **#324: Work Within The Boundaries Of Your Technology**

Make sure you don't lose sight of the training requirements. It is still about the learning, not the technology.

*Simon Connolly  
ntl Group Limited*

### **#325: Save Yourself Some Headaches**

Unless you have very strong IT support, I highly recommend having your online delivery tool hosted externally.

*Ginger Jones  
Siemens Energy & Automation*

### **#326: Tool Scoop**

When using Microsoft Producer, the free multimedia download tool from Microsoft, be sure to utilize the HTML line of the timeline with a text script of the audio file being listened to at the same time. This added bonus keeps compliant standards for Section 508 of the Disabilities Act and also enhances the opportunities for optimum learning styles, reaching graphic, visual learners with PowerPoint, audible learners with audio recordings, and text readers with the HTML document.

*Michael Pelitera  
Indian River Community College*

### **#327: The Worst Case Scenario Drives The Rest**

Be very, very mindful of the bandwidth limitations which your users would potentially be constrained by - and plan for the worst case "bandwidth" scenario.

*Anonymous*

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### #328: Content In The Driver's Seat

Do not let the technology (i.e., authoring tool) drive the learning solution. Content is, and will always be, king and should be the primary driver.

*David Igel*

### #329: Standards Are Not Standards For Nothing

Adhere to technical publishing standards (SCORM) when authoring e-Learning content. This may seem unnecessary at first, but as your library grows, and the need to keep it evergreen arises, those benefits will, to say it mildly, far outweigh the initial efforts.

*Eli Munzer  
Verizon*

### #330: Technology At Its Best: Simple

Keep the technology simple - the more complicated the technology the more time will be wasted by learners and tutors on getting the technology to work, rather than on the learning.

*Julia Duggleby  
The Sheffield College*

### #331: e-Learning Is All Around Us

e-Learning is not just for the web or the PC - it's PDA, it's phone. Think phlexible!

*Clark Quinn  
OtterSurf Laboratories*

### #332: The Customer Is Always Right

Be cautious of the technology team trying to make e-Learning compatible only with the latest and greatest versions of Media Players (which many people don't have). Yes, it is easy for people to download these, but many have fear in downloading anything, thus the end result is we lose a customer. If at all possible, try making courses available in multiple formats so that it fits the need of the customer.

*Eric Berman  
Brian Tracy International*

### #333: Just Because You Can Does Not Mean You Should

Software gives us hundreds of possible transitions to use in video editing. But it is best to stick to using the basic "cut" or the simple "dissolve" unless your "gee-whiz" transition will somehow improve the learning process. Most others are often distractions. Don't get caught in the design technology trap!

*Tom Forster  
Skywalker Properties Ltd.*

### #334: Murphy's Law - Waiting To Strike

Software installs for e-Learning products and tools always take longer than expected in a large organization. Allow plenty of lead time to get systems and software up and running when starting e-Learning from scratch. Or even if "just" upgrading.

*Tricia Franke  
Fidelity Investments*

### #335: Hey, Who Moved My Course?

Time outs for connections between servers need to be coordinated. LDAP authentication Server, LMS Web Server, Database Server and Course Server. If the timeouts are not coordinated, a student may be in the middle of a 45 minute course, walk away for 30 minutes, come back, and complete the course, only to find out that a connection dropped, and all the work they did was lost.

*Randy Fingleton  
Steelcase*

### #336: Can You Find Me Now?

Develop a strategic plan for the use of key words and metadata. Make sure that you include course, lesson, and topic names in the metadata for each content screen.

*Phil Antonelli  
Intellinex*

### #337: Don't Be A Hammer In Search Of A Nail

Don't let technology drive your solution. There's more excitement here over a stack of laminated cheat sheets (job aids) than a highly sophisticated set of simulations. Given that you know the business result you are trying to impact, what media makes the most sense? It's not always e-Learning.

*Karin Albert*

### #338: Know, Organize Media Files Pre Content Development

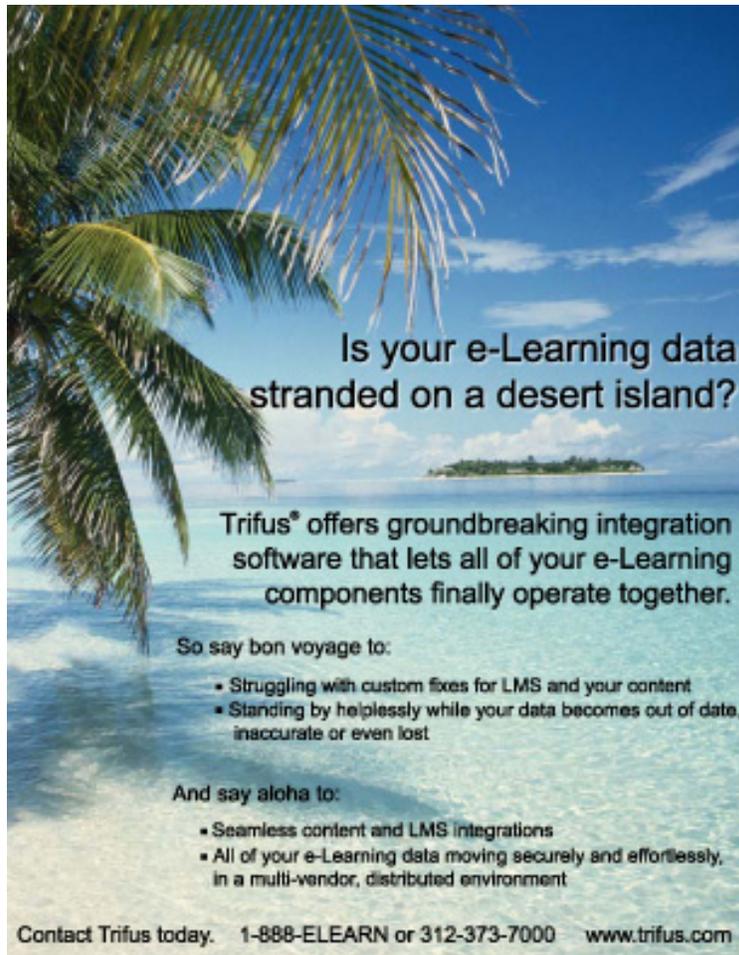
Know your media file types. There are literally hundreds of file types out there and new ones seem to appear daily. Don't worry. Learn the attributes of the twenty most common ones and they will serve you 99% of the time. Once you know them, organize them before you build a single page. By compiling all your media files in advance of building your content, you will save time both in searching and developing.

*Jeff Harris  
Trivantis Corporation*

### #339: Better Safe Than Sorry - Don't Challenge "Off The Shelf"

"Off the shelf" template tools should be reserved for the more simple training programs. Trying to modify a tool takes more time than if you developed in Flash from the start.

*Dave Goodman  
SoftAssist*



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### **#340: Don't Overkill On The Tool(s)**

Use software that is easy to use and doesn't require support. For example, I use PowerPoint broadcasts from our web server. It doesn't require support from our technical team and any technology that can be viewed in a browser is supported.

*Scott Jeffery-Madison*

### **#341: Piggy Back Corporate IT's Infrastructure**

Your IT department probably paid good money for tools and technology, and it's bad form to pay twice for the same thing. Why buy a threaded discussion tool when one may already be owned? Save your dollars for other budget line items.

*Tom Swider*

### **#342: The Right Less is More**

In implementing an enterprise learning solution, don't exchange an extensive feature list (aka - bells and whistles) for strong and compatible enterprise architecture.

*Anonymous*

### **#343: Risky Media Player**

Security is a major concern for most corporations and the IT departments are usually in charge of it. Create content using tools that do not jeopardize corporate operations with security holes due to media players.

*Rick Zanotti  
RELATE Corporation*

### **#344: Define & Document Your Content Interoperability Framework**

E-Learning brings a new dimension to learning practitioners - that of moving content around the network and understanding the server side dependencies involved. Standards do a lot to advance the cause of interoperability with regard to content resources (asynchronous, synchronous, formal, informal, etc.) communicating with system resources (e.g., the LMS). However, standards are only one layer in a robust definition of a complete enterprise level framework. Other factors include network configuration, firewalls and security policies; content deployment scenarios (local, hosted, hosted outside firewalls, etc.); content tool formats (and how they incorporate/generate standards tags); and considerations for managing, assembling and reusing modular components. Defining and documenting how this 5-layer framework works in your organization and providing guidelines for testing and import processes (e.g., acceptance criteria) will go a long way to solving the content interoperability challenge and expanding your enterprise learning footprint further and faster.

*Grant Ricketts  
Saba*

### **#345: Caching Out**

Make sure if you are using a cache server to have caching disabled for the IP or Domain Name of the server where your LMS and courses reside. If not disabled, this will cause many problems for users on your network as they navigate through a course (e.g. blank white screens etc.)

*Randy Fingleton  
Steelcase*

## Chapter 6: Global & Cultural Perspectives - How NOT To Get Lost In Translation

*What is involved when implementing training programs globally? More than “just” e-Learning! Your toolbox also needs to consider and plan for changing time zones, translation and localization, cultural sensitivity, language and accents, differing bandwidths and infrastructure, round-the-clock support, and the appropriate use of colors and graphics to name just a few additional components.*

### **#346:** 1st Annual Global e-Learning Day

Block a day where everyone does e-Learning.

*Bob Dean  
Grant Thornton*

### **#347:** Cultural Sensitivity

When deploying for multi-culture, multi-language, multi-country, be very sensitive to local nuances and language(s).

*Ashok Malani  
TIMGC, Inc.*

### **#348:** Do You Know Your Content's Reading Level?

Be aware of your content's reading level and make sure that it is reflective of your target learners' aptitudes. This is even more critical when deploying internationally.

*Darren W. Hood  
Galaxy Plus Credit Union System*

### **#349:** International Awareness-o-Meter

When launching an e-Learning program globally, it's important to promote awareness, community, and learning value. This can be accomplished by targeting three key areas within the launch plan: 1) marketing & communications – increase awareness and demand for the e-Learning offering, 2) web development – attract and engage users through online communities, 3) course development – increase learning value through dynamic content.

*Karina Jensen  
Global Minds Network*

### **#350:** Mostly Cultural

Culture is 70% of the success on an e-Learning project.

*Carlos Bravo  
E-Learning Solutions*

### **#351:** When in LA, Blend

In Latin American countries, it is especially important to think of blended solutions that include classroom, async and sync content.

*Juan Diego Jaramillo  
VCB S.A.*

### **#352:** Viva La Diferencia

An e-Learning solution which is effective in one work group or one location/country is often not appropriate or as effective elsewhere. Provide options and alternatives while simultaneously building acceptance.

*Mick Thomas  
Dow*

### **#353: Help The Audio With Neutral Accents**

Try to ensure that the session leader has as "neutral" an accent as possible as strong regional accents (in any language) can be difficult to understand over an IP connection and especially when you have delegates conversing in a secondary (or tertiary) language from their own prime language.

*Anonymous*

### **#354: When Is A Day Longer Than 24 Hours?**

Design asynchronous collaborative assignments and activities such that the frequency of interaction required is not negatively impacted by the latency caused by time zones of global participants. Under normal circumstances, a single simple step of "establishing roles" in a team exercise could take days to accomplish with upwards of 36 hours latency between transactions.

*Christopher Davis*

*IBM*

### **#355: The Value of Humour (or Humor As We Say In The U.S.)**

E-Learning programme makers may shy away from injecting humour into their programmes because one person's humour is deeply offensive to others. What starts as an attempt at humour can breach the bounds of political correctness and, far from achieving its learning objective, produces unlooked for adverse consequences for both the programme's producer and buyer. Yet, unless in-house and external e-Learning developers can anchor their offerings in the humour that underpins the language and culture in which they are working, e-Learning programmes will never compete effectively with other humour-related methods of learning delivery.

*Bob Little*

*Editor of QL Magazine*

### **#356: Round The Clock Global Considerations**

When suppliers go "global" they have to decide how to do all the learning design steps in a way that is related to each particular product and which incorporates clients' wishes. One way to do this is to have task lists, then have templates and checklists for each stage and also have an additional level of review to take account of cultural and geographical differences between the producers and users of the e-Learning materials. As a global producer of e-Learning materials, you need to ensure that the end user has access to the technology to use the materials you have developed. This could be terms of access to technologies such as the Internet, intranets, extranets and videoconferencing. There needs to be an on-site coordinator for the users, along with local subject matter experts, local editors and end-user workshops. There also needs to be strong project management, not just taking account of but also exploiting the time differences between geographies – for example, using different time zones to reduce the time taken to develop the e-Learning materials.

*Sanjaya Sharma*

*TATA Interactive Systems*

### **#357: Growing Your e-Learning, Literally!**

When creating a Spanish-based version of an existing e-Learning course, consider that the number of words when converting from English will increase approximately 30%. This will impact a number of e-Learning components including your on-screen layout, spoken audio, and likely the cost (e.g., we pay by the word for our Spanish translation). Although we've yet to convert courses to other languages, our experience and research shows that other languages such as Italian and French are comparable, and that German has the most significant increase.

*Coley O'Brien*

*Sears University*

### **#358: Don't Ignore The Obvious**

If using offshore development vendors looks too good to be true, it probably is!

*Anonymous*

### **#359: Hello, Hola, Alló**

Always offer students technical support, but also be sure the support speaks the language of the students.

*Eduardo Ramos  
Instituto Infnet*

### **#360: Turn The Audio On/Off As Per Your Bandwidth**

If yours is a large organization with many offices across the globe with varying bandwidths, go for two versions of a course: audio enabled and audio disabled. You can then deploy the audio-disabled version to those centers that have poor bandwidths.

*Linda Al Ansari  
Emirates*

### **#361: Going Globally Primer**

Before you decide to go global with your e-Learning offerings, consider cultural differences such as language, technology, local business practices, learning methodologies, and training needs. Evaluate the following data from your target markets: 1) market demand – user profile and course preference, 2) technology - internet access and cost, 3) language - web support for localized pages, and 4) culture - local learning practices.

*Karina Jensen  
Global Minds Network*

### **#362: Steady, But Surely**

In some cultures, it's necessary to build e-Learning acceptance slowly and with small successes.

*Laura Amick  
Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.*

### **#363: Group e-Learning Works Best For Some Cultures**

The 2 major challenges we are facing to deploy e-Learning in EMEA (Europe Middle East and Africa) are: 1) The motivation barrier: we can say whatever we want about an e-Learning event whether it be a WBT, a virtual classroom, a simulation, a remote lab exercise ... but many students feel isolated and lonely in front of their screens and 2) the language barrier: English/American is the common language for all of us but how good are we at using it for learning purposes? So, the idea I am currently piloting is to deploy local learning facilities for e-Learning events. What does it change? It's not purely virtual any longer because you will find classmates in the local learning facility participating in the same event ... or in another one. You are not lonely any longer because you can share with your colleagues in your native language the learning experience you are having. You can go with them for a coffee. This way, we rebuild in the local learning facility something we had in the classroom and attempt to rebuild something we have partially lost in most purely virtual events - the atmosphere of friendship that supports learning by engaging learners with the content, the instructor, and their peers. Motivation is an enabler or a catalyst for learning. My own experience has shown that in most cases, learners still need proximity their peers to be motivated and engaged.

*Olivier Lavergne  
Hewlett-Packard*

### **#364: Totally Lost In Translation**

If you are training internationally (which will happen more and more w/ remote solutions), you need to be very sensitive to your language, pronunciation and slang. "It isn't rocket science" or "Let's put together a straw man" doesn't mean anything to many people.

*Carmela Southers  
Ken Blanchard Companies*

### #365: Tick Tock, Tick Tock ...

Timed assessments are never the best method for summative evaluation. They are not only culturally biased, but also put the students in a highly stressful situation thus defeating the purpose of the assessment. Be specially careful for international audiences.

*Leni Casimiro  
Adventist Int'l Inst. of Advanced Studies*

### #366: Getting Around Bandwidth

Accessibility in many countries is way below that which allows slideshow presentations. If you will use any slideshow in your course, always give a slide-by-slide option.

*Leni Casimiro*

### #367: PDF, RTF & CSV

Try not to post Word documents - whenever possible save documents as PDF Files. This way no matter what kind of printer someone is using, the information always prints out properly. Should students need to submit work, have them save their work as RTF Files (if they are Word documents) and CSV files if they are spreadsheets. This way it does not matter what software they use, you shouldn't have any problems opening the files.

*Diana Voss  
Stony Brook University*



*"Navigating the perplexing issues related to emerging learning technology is always a challenge but the open knowledge sharing of the e-learning Consortium has made the journey easier!"  
- Rovy Branon, Eli Lilly*

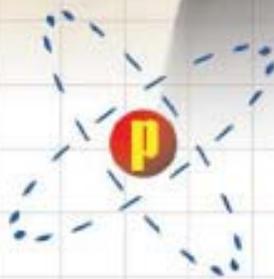
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*- THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, May 24, 2004*



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## Chapter 7: Still Learning After All These Years (and So You Should Be!)

*You too need to be a lifelong learner. And as training professionals, you need to put into practice what you preach to others: schedule time for your e-classes just like you would with any other learning opportunity, create a comfortable learning space that suits your needs, ask questions and participate by becoming part of a learning community.*

### **#368: Plan Your e-Time**

Learners should set aside the same hour every week, either early in the morning or late in the day. Send the phone to voicemail for the hour, turn off email.

*Bernadette Lawler  
McGraw-Hill*

### **#369: Before The Course**

Meet with your manager, mentor (if one has been assigned), find out as much as you can about it, complete any course pre-requisites, ensure you have the correct hardware and software, obtain the course material and job aids, and schedule a specific time and date to complete the course.

*Susan Boyd  
Susan Boyd Associates*

### **#370: If At First You Don't Succeed ...**

... Try again, you're learning! This is especially true in e-Learning since nearly every mistake we make and every problem we encounter teaches us as much (or more) than our successes will ever do.

*Connie Kreischer-Slingbaum  
The Pennsylvania Turnpike*

### **#372: Contract With Yourself**

I recommend creating a learning contract. As with any agreement - it enables the student to really focus on what comes next while keeping the terminal objective in sight. Here are the steps used for creating a Learning Contract:

1. Personal Goal: The personal goal is a brief statement of what the learner intends to accomplish via an independent project.
2. Learning Resources: What resources are available to the learner to accomplish the goal?
3. Learning Strategies: For each phase of your project write a description of your planned strategy.
4. Timeline: A list of the steps with dates (start/completion) of each step in the project.
5. Results: Indicate what results you expect from the project.
6. Evaluation Criteria: Describe exactly how the project should be evaluated to determine how the goal has been accomplished.

*Elaine Winters*

### **#373: File As You Go**

Emails, web addresses, quotes can all go into resources folders. They are highly searchable and over time become a valuable resource!

*Merrily Schalansky  
Lower Hudson Regional Info Center*

### **#374: You Get As Much Out As You Put In**

Set aside time for e-Learning and be sure to reflect on it, just like any other learning. And do it in bite-sized chunks.

*Ana Karakusevic  
BBC Training and Development*

### **#375: Start Early**

Students who start the material the day it is due have the lowest grade achievement in comparison to those that started earlier in the week. Don't leave it till Friday at 11:59 PM.

*Jonathan Mathews, Ph.D.  
Penn State University*

### **#376: 9 Women & 1 Month Does Not Make a Baby**

e-Learning does not necessarily take less time than other types of training. No, you can't cram 18 hours of classroom instruction into 2 hours of a WBT. Plan accordingly.

*Bruce Maples  
Humana, Inc.*

### **#377: You've Got News**

I use "Google News Alert" for my daily "skills" training. Examples: "Mediation and Business" & "Outsourcing and Business." These everyday news feeds help me "leading-edge" manage at the CEO level.

*David Britton*

### **#378: If Only All Learners Were So Self-Disciplined**

Although the well-known benefits of e-Learning are extremely compelling to learners and managers alike and always will account for a certain segment of the online population, the single most defining element in our experience has been the self discipline required to find the time and interest to self educate.

*Sabine Steinbrecher  
The Learning Library*

### **#379: Cultivate A Learning Community**

You don't have to work in isolation - create your own learning community. Find others who are taking the course, and talk to them regularly. Call or email a colleague and share what you learn - sharing knowledge with others reinforces learning.

*Bruce Malnor  
Performance Learning Systems*

### **#380: "Spurt" It**

Log in and work in small spurts throughout the day rather than one long sitting. It makes the work seem less stressful.

*Janet Van Lone Trieschman*

### **#381: Don't Keep The Class/Course Waiting**

The difference in e-Learning is that it is self initiated. The phone doesn't ring and call you to come to class. You must set up time and actively "go" to class. The danger of any time, any place learning is that it can easily turn into no time nowhere. Don't let it happen.

*Lucy MacDonald  
Chemeketa Community College*

### **#382: Find A Learning Buddy**

It helps if you join hands with your colleagues to take the same course online and create your own forum to discuss and share as then the interest and retention of both will improve dramatically. Instead of relying on the organization to create such a forum officially, take this upon yourself to improve your learning experience.

*Abhijit Gupta  
Deutsche Bank*

### **#383: "Root" Your Learning**

Synthesis is not always easy to grasp so build your own mindmap(s) all along the course(s).

*Maxim Van Beneden  
Continental AG*

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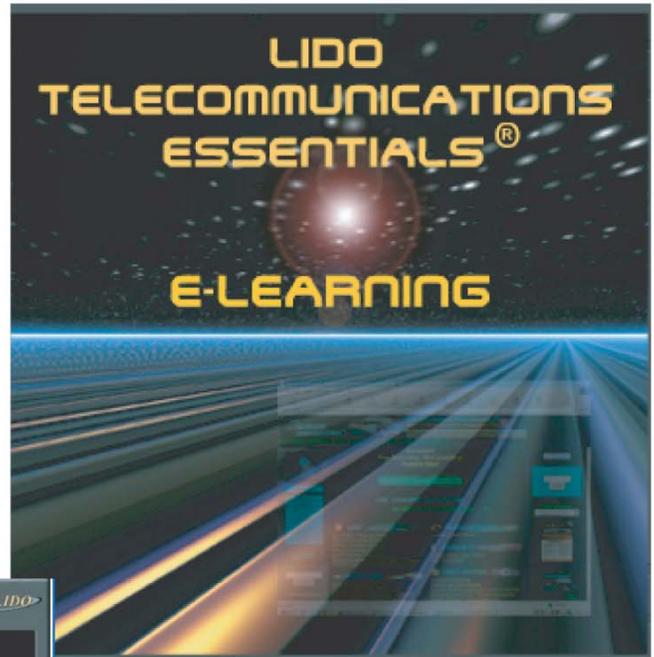
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Alexandra Rehak,  
Manager Asia Pacific, Motorola

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### **#384: During The Course**

Turn off any/all distractions, post a "Training in Progress" sign on your door, use headsets, set a learning goal and check that you've met it by the end of the course, make notes of any questions or problems, keep a "Bright Ideas List" that identifies key points to remember and apply on the job, and find out about any additional resources for reenforcing and supplementing the course materials.

*Susan Boyd  
Susan Boyd Associates*

### **#385: When Only The Best Will Do**

Buy the best telephone headset out there - not the best you can afford - the best there is. A phone headset is no place to save money. And buy a wired headset as wireless headsets are subject to interference.

*Doug Chasick  
CallSource*

### **#386: Do Not Disturb Me**

People sometimes say they have a problem trying to "attend" an e-Learning class from their office or cubicle due to interruptions. This can be solved with a pair of headphones so you can crank up the volume as loud as you need to. This also eliminates distractions. Some managers I know have ordered specialty balloons and a helium tank for their offices. The balloons say, "Training in Progress" or "Do Not Disturb, I'm e-Learning!" When an employee needs to attend a class or focus on a course, they simply tie one of these balloons to their chair or desk (or somewhere it can be instantly seen by those who might be inclined to disturb them.)

*Matt Beickert  
TV II Multimedia*

### **#387: Becoming a Disciplined & Responsible Learner**

Discipline yourself with regular log-ins, readings, and postings. This helps you keep up with material that has been posted. Incorporate into your log-in time some sort of participatory action. Regularly post comments, ask questions, and answer those questions pertaining to your contributions. Add some sense of discipline to your e-Learning life, and you will be amazed at how much you learn.

*Don Newman*

### **#388: High Speed Eliminates The Low Bandwidth Blues**

You may want to take advantage of the high-speed access to the Intranet/Internet at your company by completing training from your workspace, if possible.

*Jim R. Phelan  
Merck & Co.*

### **#389: What Do Learners Say?**

Don't just give me a set of rules, help me understand the business drivers and consequences. Link me to the big picture. Why is this course important to to the organization, to the company? Understand my motivation.

*Faith Fuqua-Purvis  
Deloitte Consulting LLP*

### **#390: Searching For Mr./Ms. Right**

Don't be afraid to move on quickly to other learning sites if you are not engaged immediately. There are thousands of opportunities and sifting to find one that suits you as an individual learner is possible. It is good to let the site know via a brief comment why you have left the site -- I have found that these lead to remarkable improvements in e-Learning at a future time.

*Ray Moos*

### **#391: Be A Student Too!**

Try to learn in the same way you ask your students to learn.

*Simone Testa  
Eos Knowledge & Learning*

### **#392: Three "C's" = One "A"**

In E- learning, assume you are attending a daily classroom training. And you have to have 3 Cs: Choose, Commit and Complete the course.

*Ananthanarayana Srinivas  
Visteon*

### **#393: Schedule Training Like Exercise**

It is easy to place training on the backburner if it is not schedule it into your day. Schedule it and you will accomplish it. Learn in a comfortable place, at a comfortable pace. Then use your knowledge immediately to accomplish a new task or project and inform your boss of your accomplishment.

*Carrie Rollison  
MindLeaders*

### **#394: The Longest/Shortest Hour**

One hour of course duration does not necessarily mean one hour to complete the learning - it may take more time, it should take less time.

*Helen Mcgraw  
General Motors University*

### **#395: Copying Others Is The Highest Form Of Flattery (Or Something Like That)**

When moving into this realm of e-Learning, take as many different e-Learning sessions yourself as your budget allows. You'll see how to, and how not to, do things--visually, verbally, software and platform selection, etc.

*Dawn Mahoney  
Certege*

### **#396: Rejuvenate Yourself By Taking Breaks**

Taking time away from an online course allows you to have a fresh start next time you return. Breathe deeply, get a snack, stretch, talk with a colleague, or move to another task and return to the course later.

*Bruce Malnor  
Performance Learning Systems*

### **#397: Small, Fast and Accessible - Up To YOU**

A time of need is the best opportunity for learning to stick. For example, if you have a bad conversation with a colleague that you know could have gone better, you're probably upset. Instead of complaining at break and furthering the deterioration of the relationship, wouldn't it be nice to go to your "learning area" on-line and search for "difficult conversations" only to find a 10 minute video course? The alternative is to wait for a leadership program to come around 3 months later, hope you get nominated or it can fit into your schedule. That 10 minute course, if you effectively apply the knowledge (a decision that learning can't force), pays more dividends than any 2 hour course ever could simply due to it's proximity to the need.

*Scott Davis  
Bose Corporation*

### **#398: Set Yourself Up For No Interruptions**

When learning, be sure to close down other programs, especially those running in the background, since they may slow down or disrupt your e-Learning session. Then find a quiet time and/or place away from your work environment if possible in order to be able to concentrate and respond without interruptions.

*Karen M. Aulich  
AT&T*

### **#399: Ask - It Is OK!**

Seek clarity in any instruction you receive rather than just "think" you know what you are doing. What you lose in face-to-face contact does not have to be lost forever. It's always easy to freely ask someone "Can I just check what you mean by ...".

*Paul M.*

### #400: After The Course

Complete the evaluation form, discuss the learning and ways to apply it with your manager, meet with your mentor (if one was assigned), use your course materials and the Help Desk when you have a problem, give feedback to the training department and identify future training needs. Above all, recognize that learning is an active process that continues after the course is over.

*Susan Boyd  
Susan Boyd Associates*

### #401: Learning On Overtime?

Online learning is accessible 24 / 7 ... but non-exempt employees may still be subject to wage and hour regulations regarding overtime. Find out the details of your situation.

*Jean Lowry  
Energen Corporation*



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## Chapter 8: In Recognition & Rewards We Trust

*Recognition is one of your greatest motivators for improving performance. It is most powerful at the individual level so you need to systematically and consistently (daily!) provide it to others.*

### **#402: Pat-on-the-Back**

Encourage managers to publicly recognize employee completion.

*Bernadette Lawler  
McGraw-Hill*

### **#403: Put Your \$ Where Your Mouth Is**

Recognize prolific learners in learning and other official events with a tangible reward. Publicize success stories in your Learning Portal.

*Linda Al Ansari  
Emirates*

### **#404: e-Learning = e-Flexibility**

The essence of e-Learning is its flexibility. Be sure you recognize partial completion of classes if a piece is all a student needs.

*Nancy Nash  
MindLeaders*

### **#405: Focus On The Day-to-Day**

Reward the server and IT support for the day-to-day functioning of the learning systems. They (unfortunately) generally only get noticed when things go wrong.

*Charles D. Hunter  
Williams Scotsman*

### **#406: Edutainment Works**

Consider contest and rewards systems via e-Learning solutions for motivating and helping student participation.

*Juan Diego Jaramillo  
VCB S.A.*

### **#407: This Certifies That ...**

People like something to show for completing an online course, whether it is synchronous or asynchronous. Printing a certificate of completion at the successful end of the course (with or without an assessment associated with it) is one way to build a positive experience. This can be posted in their work area for all to see.

*Maxine Sheinin  
MaxESP, Inc.*

### **#408: Find Champions**

Use web reports to spot early adopters and reward them, use them for testimonials.

*Laura More  
Care2Learn.com*

### **#409: Incentives Work - Try It!**

E-learning that has been successfully implemented within a company is directly tied to the employee's yearly performance review.

*Anne Kane Festa*

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### **#410: Reward For Completions X 2**

Reward employees who take and complete e-Learning courses AND the supervisors of these learners. Let the executive support message reach the front line. If learners (and their supervisors) are given some incentive along with the executive support, then there will be a groundswell of e-Learning course completions. The rewards do not have to be significant - a point system might work well, especially if one is already in place.

*Ross McKerlich  
Centerboard Learning Services*

### **#411: Cover Your Internal & External Bases**

The student's motivation is a key feature for success with e-Learning. Since the motivation is always internal, it is necessary to link the e-Learning course with some emotional experience or need of the student. External recognition helps too!

*Sergio Elliot  
Grupo Doxa*

### **#412: Look Ma, I Did It**

People respond best to e-Learning opportunities if you can offer them some "brownie points" for completing an e-Learning program - the "what's in it for me" factor. If possible, link the successful completion of the program with your company's automated HR system so that the staff member's achievement is recorded and acknowledged as a professional development activity.

*Sinead Williams  
Australian Taxation Office*

### **#413: Incentives Go A Long Way**

Create an incentive for the course/program and keep the e-Learning program visible. Tie the training (and the incentive) to Corporate Goals / Mission Statement.

*Carrie Rollison  
MindLeaders*

### **#414: Wanted: Visible Rewards**

Recognize and reward learners. Provide a Certificate of Completion option for each course. Use a well-designed formal certificate format that can be printed by users. Many users value these certificates and even take them to internal job interviews/reviews.

*Linda Al Ansari  
Emirates*

### **#415: Monthly Training Lottery - Buy Your Tickets Here!**

Our people love the idea that they can WIN something. So we pool all the names of people who have completed a course with a 75% or higher and pick a name each month. They win a gift certificate to our company store which sells company merchandise, tickets to movie theatres and other local events. The more courses you complete, the better your chances.

*Lisa Voss  
We Energies*

### **#416: And The Award For The Best Post Of The Day Goes To ...**

When you are using discussion forums as part of an online course, highlight the best posting of the day on the course home page to both reward the contributor and to increase participation.

*Lisa Neal, Ph.D.  
Editor-in-Chief, eLearn Magazine*

### #417: Works Every Time

Consider "bribery" with prizes.

*Adam Oosterhoff  
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu*

### #418: Reward Involvement

Start with a mailing list of students from a class or other group of trainees. Create an email game with short questions or problems to be solved. First or best answers receive a prize at the end of the game or at the end of each round. Some of my students really got into this.

*Rick Winter*

### #419: Celebrate Your Motivation - You Earned It!

Identify why you are taking the course, and regularly remind yourself of your goals. Celebrate your successes - reward yourself!

*Bruce Malnor  
Performance Learning Systems*

### #420: Motivating Students

Positive feedback is vital to adult learning motivation. Be sure to notice when students have met their goals.

*Nancy Nash  
MindLeaders*

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## Chapter 9: Testing Here, External Testing There, Quality Assurance Everywhere

*Testing ... it is all about expecting the unexpected. Learn to be your own worst enemy – in this case it will only help! All that strategic planning, the perfectly negotiated contract, the wonderfully executed design, and your top-down and bottom-up buy-in will be quickly forgotten if problems begin to surface.*

### **#421: Test! Test! Test!**

After posting a module or course to the Web, and BEFORE announcing its availability to students, make sure that all sections of the module or course are accessible to the students and that all the links, etc. work like they were designed to.

*William McPeck  
Maine State Government*

### **#422: Bring In The Instructional Designer Again At The "End"**

With quite a bit of the development happening in an outsourced way, the SME and the development teams are usually sitting miles (sometimes thousands of them) apart. The communication chain - starting from the actual thought originating with the SME and terminating at the programmer or graphic designer - could get really long. And with it increases the chances of information distortion. A good idea to catch (and resolve) such issues would be to have the Instructional Designer review the final product from the development team's end. Close the loop by ending as you began.

*Amit Garg*

### **#423: Make A Commitment To Accessibility For ALL Employees**

Include users with disabilities in the design, development, and testing of e-Learning. It's the best way to determine true accessibility. You'll save money (it costs a lot more to make e-Learning accessible after launch), produce a better quality course, have more productive and satisfied employees, reduce legal liability and enhance the corporate image.

*Dick Mahoney  
The Paciello Group*

### **#424: Wanted: Wide Range Of Testers**

Perform good, solid testing of the course prior to launching it. Have someone who is outside of the project review the course to check for spelling, grammar, functionality, etc. Also have a Subject Matter Expert test the course for accuracy. And have one of the learners who the course is designed for test it out for the transference of knowledge. Did the course meet the established learning objectives? Having many different people test out the course is crucial because they will all look for different things and you will get a wider breadth of feedback.

*Nancy Thompson  
Bank One*

### **#425: Make sure you ...**

... test all user PC/Software possibilities, the bandwidth requirements, and build your content to the minimum configurations.

*Scott Sutker  
Wachovia Corporation*

## #426: Creating Quality: How Can You Produce Cleaner Results Faster?

1. Plan for more than one round of testing. The first round of testing is traditionally called the Alpha test with the second round usually being called a Beta test. Once you do plan for more than one round of testing, still attempt to find all of the defects in the first test.
2. Use the 80/20 Rule. Have just a few people test the first round, and have several test in later rounds. Following the old 80/20 rule, 2-3 people can find the majority of the problems. However, it sometimes takes several people to uncover the remaining problems.
3. Don't take any issue for granted. In other words, keep a detailed log of every problem that is found as well as clear notes about how and when it was resolved. This list can be an important reminder later of why you made certain decisions along the way, especially if there is ever a difference of opinion among team members about why an issue was resolved a certain way.
4. Verify every fix. Personally my least favorite part of the process, this step is extremely important. As a project manager, WBT producer, or one-man-team, you need to make sure that every defect is taken care of before delivering it to your client. Remember though, if you are the one that made the fix, be sure someone else verifies the fix for you.
5. Where possible, perform testing micro-cycles. Instead of having all of the testers test at the same time, then consolidate notes, have them test one at a time and perform quick fixes between testers. Be ready to get their feedback quickly, even real-time if possible and make the fixes as the issues come in or shortly thereafter. This allows the next tester to spend his/her time finding other problems for you rather than submitting the same problems the previous tester submitted. I call these "micro-cycles" because of the quick turnaround time. Using testing micro-cycles, you'll get more testing bang for your testing buck.

*Garin Hess  
Papid Intake*

## #427: Get Tough On Testing

Have a good testing plan for courseware and never cut corners from testing time. We plan for 5 days of testing time for every course we develop and at least 10 days for 3rd party courses. We have a checklist of testing requirements that each course must pass. In the event the course does not pass a requirement, we have a process in place where we return the course to the developer and project leader for corrections. This keeps everyone in the loop regarding the status of the project.

*Debbie Strong  
Country Insurance and Financial Services*

## #428: Execution = Perfection

e-Learning has to be obviously easy to use so that anybody can figure it out with a minimum scan of the screen navigation. And every feature must work impeccably. Testing, Testing, Testing!

*Sally Heinz  
St. Paul Travelers*

## #429: Get Real

Always test your e-Learning in the environment most similar to the environment that the learner is using.

*Joseph Dunlap  
Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance*

## #430: This Is Not Simple Stuff - Learn From Professional Testers

Develop a test plan at the very beginning. If possible, get your organization's Testing & Integration department to conduct the testing. A good test procedure will be based upon written project requirements. We are talking about software development and/or systems integration and T&D professionals need to learn the proper tools to execute these projects efficiently. You cannot wing testing and failure to do proper testing will result in technical "gotchas" and e-Learning that doesn't satisfy customer requirements.

*Tom Swider*

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### **#431: Document To Increase Future Quality**

If you are working with a team of web designers and programmers to create eCourses, always give them the requirements and allocate the time (and administrative assistance) to document each of their processes for repeatability in the next eCourse they work on. For example: How did you get the SME to develop speaker notes for that famous PowerPoint? How long did it take? What stakeholders were involved and when? Did you pilot the eCourse lesson by lesson or did you wait until the entire course was built? How can these successes help the next project? Each time you will build in more quality.

*Jon Aleckson  
Web Courseworks*

### **#432: Better Safe Than Sorry**

Test on more browsers and Operating Systems than you think you need to.

*Joe McBreen  
Frying Pan Technologies*

### **#433: Watch Out For Those Gremlins**

Test everything before you deploy it. I deployed a final assessment that could not be passed. The questions were well written and entered correctly. The answers were entered correctly. No problems, right? The scoring was off by some sort of gremlin. I proofread but never tested the actual assessment. You have no idea how angry learners get when they try and fail, try and fail, try and fail ... ad nauseam.

*Christel Block  
Convergys*

### **#434: The Weakest Link**

Always test out your design early on with the slowest system any of you learners will have to use. Graphics are not helpful when you have to wait two minutes for them to load.

*Charlotte Long  
St. Paul Travelers*

### **#435: Test Yourself & With Experts**

View the course materials as a student/learner would to ensure the material appears visually as you want it to. Provide very clear directions on how to access the course - test it out with someone first to ensure you have not left out the obvious steps to the instructor/designer that are not so obvious to the learner. Also take all the assessment material yourself to ensure the questions are accurate. Test with a content expert if necessary.

*Michelle LeBlanc Blair  
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.*

### **#436: Testing X 3**

Pilot the eCourse doing (1) load testing, (2) navigation/functionality testing, (3) content testing. Have special feedback/evaluation forms available for each course. Provide specific "test scripts" with a "test methodology" so people participating in the pilot know what to look for (i.e., consistency).

*Jo Ann Killinger  
Alcatel University, North America*

### **#437: One Testing Environment At A Time**

Test in every type of environment that the learners may be using. I know this seems rather basic, but is a step that seems easy to cut if the deadline is looming. Lack of testing will always come back to you in some way.

*Debbie Strong  
Country Insurance and Financial Services*

### **#438: Be Prepared: Think Contingency**

Ask "What if?" (the constructive pessimism technique). For example, locate a backup system -- just in case your computer goes down -- as breakdowns will occur. It's more a question of "when" rather than "if." Also, be familiar with multiple Operating Systems as well as with various web browsers (Netscape, Microsoft Internet Explorer, etc.), email programs and word processors (e.g., MS Word, Word Perfect). The key is flexibility-- know (and test) more than ONE way to accomplish a task.

*Ross Hodgkinson  
Tack Training America*

### **#439: Testing, Simply Put**

Be sure to create evaluation questions that are linked to the course content. And use beta testers before rolling out full scale.

*Eduardo Ramos  
Instituto Infnet*

### **#440: One Last Edit: The Comma Challenge**

After applying a "final" edit, always click through the WBT again to make sure it works even if the edit was small. One of our development tools causes the WBT program to stop cold if a comma is used in the answer choices to a question. Definitely a limitation to the program but one we know about and work around. One time we added an additional question at the last minute before launching and even though we went through months of testing and editing, one comma stopped the whole launch.

*Kevin Harrington  
Prudential Financial*

### **#441: Steering The Client Through The Process For Results**

e-Learning courseware development is not the same as any other software development. It is much more iterative inherently as a process. And many a times the client him/herself may not be very clear of the requirements. So have a process which incorporates ongoing reviews and validations at the client end. This will assure you a higher level of quality.

*Amit Garg*

### **#442: How Should We Test? Let Me Count The Ways**

Be sure to build enough time in your schedule to pilot the prototype of the training with the intended audience. Just observing where they get stuck or caught in a loop will help to expose problematic areas that the instructional designers/developers may overlook because they're not Subject Matter Experts.

*Jennifer Adkins  
Quest Diagnostics*

### **#443: Hard To Use = No Use**

Run usability tests on your course deliverables.

*Dr. Erwin Bratengeyer  
Donau-Universitaet Krems*

### **#444: Test And Listen**

Test your course in all its stages of development. Make sure that different people, from different segments of the target audience, are represented in the sample on whom you test your course. Hear the feedback and really take it seriously. Be willing to revise and then revise again until you are confident that you have addressed all key feedback. This doesn't mean that you have to incorporate everyone's changes, but it does mean that you should be able to document why you included specific changes and why you chose not to include others.

*Mary Bollash  
United Technologies*

### **#445: Don't Pilot Without A Map**

Before you make a pilot test, make sure you know what to observe and which is the relevant information to gather from it.

*Xavier Bellés  
Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya*

### **#446: Test Like The Experts**

It is very important for an e-Learning course to be completely tested by a team of professional testers, similar to what is done for a software product. The tests should be performed using good software engineering techniques like planning of test strategies, test cases, using automated testing tools, performance testing, load testing, etc.

*Vidya Nagaraj  
Oracle*

### **#447: 60-20-20 Product(ion) Rule**

Secure success first by satisfying 60% of the vision. Then in order to attain better quality and effectiveness, reduce the project scope accordingly so you can begin to gain invaluable experiences about the remaining 40% just in time for the exterior market developments.

*Ulrik Ramsing  
LogiLearn, Inc.*

### **#448: Participate In Continuously Improving The Courses (& Workforce)**

Keep a note of whether or not you are able to apply knowledge gained from an online course into your day-to-day activities. Make sure that you send your feedback to the e-Learning department. This helps them bring you future courses are better suited for your organization's needs.

*Linda Al Ansari  
Emirates*

### **#449: Test, Re-Test, Re-Test...**

When you request a change to your WBT, make sure that when you get it back for review you test it to ensure the change was made and to see if there is anything else that needs to be changed at that point. Test the WBT EACH time the developer sends you a revised version. Test the computers and other equipment used for WBT, PRIOR to its use.

*Kathy Lents  
HouseHold International, Inc.*

### **#450: Access Is The Key - Literally**

Ensure all content, including multimedia, is fully accessible.

*Keith Bain  
Liberated Learning*

## Chapter 10: High Signal/Low Noise – Promoting Learning Like A Pro!

*Yes, if you build it AND you market it ... they will come! In the hustle bustle of everything else, sometimes this element is underestimated (or worse, forgotten) but our readers told us in no uncertain terms that branding your program and communicating it are critical parts of the e-Learning success equation.*

### **#451:** And The Top 10 Courses Of The Week Were ...

Do learner evaluations on course completions and use them to create a "Top 10 list", like the Monday morning Top 10 movies of the weekend.

*Bob Dean  
Grant Thornton*

### **#452:** Water Your Geranium Daily

An e-Learning program won't survive on its own. Without ongoing marketing and promotion, you're likely to see low adoption rates and half-hearted support from management. Think of an unwatered geranium. It looked so great when you bought it ... You've spent weeks, or maybe months, on due diligence -- and you've chosen the right e-Learning products for your organization. But that's only the beginning. Now your role is to become a marketing expert and a cheerleader, making sure to communicate regularly with all of your many stakeholders. Create a marketing plan... and follow it!! To achieve maximum success with your program, you'll want to continually sell to all groups: executives, managers, employees. Your approach will probably differ substantially for each audience. Talk about the unique benefits each group will realize by adopting e-Learning. Finally, don't forget to bring the other members of your training and IT departments into the fold. E-learning may be seen as mainstream today, but there are still a surprising number of hold-outs.

*Geri Bara  
MindLeaders*

### **#453:** e-Learning Is Just Another Way

Clearly communicate why the move to e-Learning is necessary and why it will be used. One possible, albeit obvious, reason is that a decrease in available travel funds makes classroom training virtually impossible. Emphasize that e-Learning is the most cost-efficient, most effective means of providing the same learning curriculum to staff at multiple locations. Assure that the message of the learning will not be lost in the new learning media. Remind learners that the learning objectives are the same as they would be in the classroom.

*William Sotak  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services*

### **#454:** Square One

Focus on the learner and how this training will support the "business" in your communications.

*Edward C. Papke  
U.S. Army Air Defense School*

### **#455:** Tell Them & Tell Them Again

If you have an e-Learning vendor and the vendor periodically adds new courses to the catalog, send out a marketing piece to your audience. It not only informs them of the update, but reminds them that the e-Learning opportunity is out there, waiting for them to take advantage of it.

*Alexis Bernard  
Northern Trust*

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- » **SCORM-Compliant Content:** Simulation practices can be launched directly from within any learning management system

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### **#456: Market Like You Mean It**

Every learning initiative should be accompanied by a Marketing Plan --a real plan that addresses messaging, media, and metrics (for the Marketing Plan, not the learning.). For those with no marketing experience, consult your company's marketing guru. What better way to break down silos. For packaging, write the plan up using one of the very inexpensive Marketing Plan CDs available on the market.

*Dean Brown  
ACT, Inc.*

### **#457: Communicate & Link To Ongoing Events**

I found that you need continuous communication to keep employees using e-Learning. The communications need to be timely and relevant. For example, if you have an e-Learning offering around budget time, when everyone is beginning to think about the budget planning process for the coming year, you should send out a link to the e-Learning offering. A full year Communication/Marketing plan is essential.

*Barbara Testa  
Fleet*

### **#458: To Credit Or Not To Credit?**

Prior to posting any content, make a clear distinction between online learning versus online information. And be sure to clear up if students are to get credit for completing the course (in which case they may need to go through the entire module and complete the quiz) and/or if the course can be also used as an information resource (in which case they may not receive any training credit for reviewing the content.)

*Michael Kwidzinski  
Goldman, Sachs & Co.*

### **#459: Enthusiasm is Contagious**

Be a role model. Take the courses yourself. Talk with others about a couple of the specific things you've learned, how you've become more productive as a result of your new knowledge, how you are better able to do your job.

*Geri Bara  
MindLeaders*

### **#460: Meet Live**

Know your audience. It is very helpful to meet with them in person to aid the communications process. And it is OK to say, "I don't know, but I'll look into this."

*Cynthia Eisel  
FedEx*

### **#461: Consistency Consistently**

Create a brand name that reflects the program intent; Ensure a consistent approach and level of quality to the sessions; Offer sessions at consistent times (e.g. day of week, time of day); Leverage consistent course design (e.g. balance of lecture, casework, use of interaction tools); Maintain consistent program duration.

*Lynne G. White  
Accenture*

### **#462: Communicate It And They Will Come**

Creating the e-Learning is only a part of success. Good communication and deployment plans are critical to success even if you have the best designed e-Learning. Build it and they will come is not true !

*Patricia A Smorkol  
CNA Insurance*

### **#463: Announce Your Rollout In Different Ways**

When working in the corporate environment, do not solely depend upon email for distribution. Provide voicemail and hardcopy announcements of the rollout too.

*Michelle LeBlanc Blair  
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.*

### **#464: Get Participants On Your Side**

Communicate the challenges of technology, explain that you are trying new things in new ways, explain that there may be glitches but you have a backup plan. They will understand that sometimes things don't go right. What they don't understand is not being prepared for when things DO go wrong.

*Ken Seemann  
Nextel Communications*

### **#465: Provide Contact Info**

Make e-Learning sound progressive, fun, and time-saving - everyone welcomes that. And provide a phone number or email address for questions or clarifications. Learners like to know there's a real, live person somewhere in this mix.

*Karen Bullock  
Golden Valley Memorial Hospital*

### **#466: Don't Just Hope, Market**

If you build it, they will not just suddenly come. You have to market e-Learning, tie it to business goals and strategies, professional development career paths, or human capital strategies. You also have to assign accountability for the resulting learning objectives to the managers or the students themselves. The worse thing for a company implementing e-Learning strategies for the first time is to buy or build a large catalog and hope that people within their organization will just be excited and sign up for the courses on their own. All e-Learning implementations should include a strong internal Marketing Plan.

*Bartholomew Jae  
Acadient, Inc.*

### **#467: Market in Parallel to Classroom**

Announce and market e-Learning much the same way your company announces training now. Follow the training culture in place - if you have a class coordinator for training, use one for e-Learning too. Just as with live classroom, touch base with the students, only do so by email. Ask them how they are doing. Do this as an individual email and not a group version to the whole class. Or say you noticed that they have not started the course, could you help in any way. Set a time limit for completion. Provide a means of help and a little hand holding. Once the student has met the requirement, see if they are interested in something else in the catalog for self improvement, and give it to them as a reward. Also ask for some feedback when the course is finished.

*Paul L. Nenninger  
PLN Consulting*

### **#468: Shout It From The Rooftops**

Evangelize e-Learning from the top down and actively market internal achievements.

*Gary Duffield  
Xpertise Training Limited*

### **#469: Keep Management Informed To Retain Buy-In**

To maintain management buy-in, make sure to obtain feedback from key players during the development stages and inform them of your progress.

*Darren W. Hood  
Galaxy Plus Credit Union System*

### **#470: Facilitate Communications**

Use e-Learning as a tool for increasing, not reducing communication - especially for accessing material and feedback.

*Martin Linsley  
Australian Government Dept. of Defence*

### **#471: Déjà Vu**

Buy-in from top management is absolutely essential. As is the marketing of e-Learning resources as part of the e-Learning itself.

*Leon van der Merwe  
LearnScapes*

### **#472: It Takes Two to Tango**

Ask learners to have an open mind toward the new learning format, to cooperate with the new learning format, and positively focus their energies on the message as intently as they would in a classroom. They are the ones who will ensure the learning's success. Their efforts, combined with the new medium, will ensure consistent and cost-effective learning throughout an organization.

*William Sotak  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services*

### **#473: Communication Guidelines**

Make sure you establish clear guidelines for managers and learners and communicate them. Learners need to know that e-Learning will be treated like face-to-face training and doesn't necessarily have to be conducted in the learner's private time.

*Natalie Porter  
Financial Services Authority*

### **#474: Market Your Wares**

If the enterprise is not aware of your offerings, you might go through the painful realization that others are duplicating your efforts at great expense within their departments/business units. Marketing efforts cannot be stressed enough.

*Eli Munzer  
Verizon*

### **#475: Survey Like A Marketing Pro**

On the assumption that helping people to develop is "a good thing," people who develop their capabilities perform better at work and that most people struggle with continuing professional development, you can generate interest in, and use of, e-Learning materials via online questionnaires. You can use these as a survey tool and publish the resulting trends in your company for all to see. This could make headlines and will certainly generate interest. Furthermore, this survey will give you the indicators you need when planning future development activities.

*Dr. Peter Honey  
Peter Honey Publications*

### **#476: Communicate Like You Mean It**

The Corporate Communications department should be your new best friend. They have tons of great graphics and pictures that you can toss in your e-Learning and allow people to identify with your company. This could be anything from the last company picnic to your CEO meeting with someone famous. It will also help your employees connect with the organization. And pictures of your remote office are always well received (add in a caption about an employee from your remote office.)

*Linda English  
Save The Children*

### **#477: Create An "EVENT" For The Launch**

Make it a big "wow" event for the learners and their managers. Involve your marketing area to help you design the event as well as communicate it to the rest of the organization. Being a "marketer" is another role that e-Trainers will have to play!

*Lela Rotondo  
Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield*

### **#478: Course Of The Month**

Making a monthly recommendation of an e-Learning course to employees on a topic which is timely and relevant for a wide audience (e.g. product update, common skill) really focuses and motivates learners to take the course.

*Sue Thomas  
IBM*

### **#479: Be Sales Minded**

Have a plan but be prepared to sell, re-sell and re-sell some more your idea. Also to modify it as the business changes.

*Elaine Wilson  
British Airways*

### **#480: Market With Marketers, Not Techies**

I would strongly recommend that the technical developer of any e-Learning program not be the one introducing the program on any level where buy-in is required. Technical developers don't always have a feel for the audience and/or don't sell the sizzle; they sell the wiring diagram. Many a good concept has been shot down because the presentation is heavy.

*Anonymous*

### **#481: From 0 to 10,000**

Never underestimate the power of marketing to employees and customers worldwide – even on a shoestring budget! When leveraging internal marketing resources for launching an online university, we experienced an increase from 0 to 10,000 customers within one year. This would not have been possible without the magic of web marketing, PR, and events.

*Karina Jensen  
Global Minds Network*



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## Chapter 11: The Name Of The Game: Integrating & Rolling Out Learning Solutions

*Well, here you are. This is the moment you've been waiting for. Everything is working correctly, former issues are resolved, communications are loud and clear, backup plans A, B and C are in place.*

### **#482: And ... Off They Go!**

When giving a learner or group of learners their first e-Learning experience, give them a "Quickstart" sheet. Ideally this is a printed (and maybe laminated) succinct, colorful, unintimidating and dummy-proof step-by-step guide from a blank screen to getting the most out of an e-Learning course. This is based on the technology adoption curve principle where over two thirds of potential "consumers" are in fact reluctant to embrace innovation. The same people reluctant to embrace e-Learning will be the same people who will not respond favourably to a reminder email, a set of instructions on the Intranet, or an attached PDF or Word set of instructions.

*Chris Robinson  
KnowledgePool*

### **#483: Learning Is Like Pyramid Selling**

Small wins at the start of a rollout equate to big results in the long run.

*Adam Oosterhoff  
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu*

### **#484: Segment Into Phases To Better Manage**

Separate your e-Learning project implementation into 4 parts: Technology, Management, Contents and Culture. Take care of each part separately -- each one has a different solution.

*Carlos Bravo  
E-Learning Solutions*

### **#485: Point, Click, Integrate**

e-Learning standards continue to evolve, but it will be years before their promised value comes to fruition. Content integration provides companies an immediate cost effective alternative solution for the challenges surrounding e-Learning infrastructure and allows companies to seamlessly integrate multi-vendor content and Learning Management Systems. The flow of data also aids e-Learning analytics, thereby adding additional value to a company's training program.

*Kim Woodward  
Trifus*

### **#486: All Dressed Up & Nowhere To Go**

In order to successfully implement distance education within an organization, you must have support from leadership of all groups involved. Obvious yes, but we've probably all experienced some version of what happens in the months (and months and months and...) of back-and-forth while your vendors grow impatient because their product is not as widely available as originally promised, your leaders are also impatient because you're not able to deliver on the plans made, and your users (to whom you've been proactively marketing) begin to distrust the whole thing. Consider who can be an ally, a block, a spearhead, and a Plan-B-and-beyond-finder wherever you are wanting to implement your project.

*Diane Wren  
Kaiser Permanente*

### **#487: Take IT To Lunch**

Ensure the cooperation of IT management by embracing them early on in your development process. With IT cooperation behind you, deployment will be easier and non-confrontational.

*Rick Zanotti  
RELATE Corporation*

### **#488: There Is Only One First Time**

It is critical to do everything you can to ensure that someone's first experience of e-Learning is a good one. It is far far harder to convince someone to give it a second try if they were put off the first time! So - when implementing, incorporate not only all the obvious essentials of good design, good marketing, relevant content, etc. but also remember the personal, even 1-to-1 help, if necessary, to ensure that the "newbie" is happy with what they are being asked to do.

*Alison Goldup*

### **#489: The "Short List" Of Players When Communicating The Roll Out**

In movement to implement an e-Learning strategy (especially from a traditional training approach), ensure that communications are loud and frequent to all who will be impacted (dare I say a systems approach to the roll-out). For example: To Managers (How can I support employees in e-Learning efforts?), to Employees/Learners (How do I become an e-Learner?), to Customer Relations and Marketing (How do I advise, sell, advocate, and support e-Learning?), and to the Supply Chain (How does registration differ?, How will learners access e-Learning?, etc.).

*Angela van Barneveld  
Canada Revenue Agency*

### **#490: Show And Tell As You Roll Out**

Remember to provide information on how to use e-Learning. The first lesson for a large training roll-out might need to frame the e-Learning concept and the tools learners will need to use during the upcoming months.

*Tom Swider*

### **#491: Eliminate Rework With Pilot Teams**

When rolling out e-Learning on a local or global scale, start with a pilot team of students, training professionals and IT professionals across the globe. From my experience of implementing e-Learning on a small and large scale within an organization, it is critical to understand the culture, attitude and understanding of the student and the training professional, as well as the capability of your IT environment. You would think this is a no-brainer, yet many teams are tasked with rolling out e-Learning with a narrow understanding of the larger environment to only find themselves caught up in a bunch of rework and "muda" (waste). The well designed pilot team is the way to go during implementations and upgrades.

*Tristan L. Evans  
GlaxoSmithKline*

### **#492: Get The Timing Right For e-Learning**

E-Learning has a short shelf life so it is critical to time the event so it is used or reinforced as soon after the training session as possible. Don't train more than a few weeks prior to receiving that new application -- ideally the training would occur while the application is being implemented. Providing training too early is as damaging as waiting too long after implementation. Consider e-Learning products that provide an extended time (six months to one year) after the event for students to refresh the newly acquired skill. This turns the initial e-Learning experience immediately into Performance Support without a lot of effort and additional cost.

*Oren Guidry*

### **#493: Cover The Basics First**

Insist that managers address computer literacy issues and accessibility before implementing e-Learning.

*Anonymous*

### **#494: Pre-Launch Countdown**

The successful launch of a Blended Learning project takes a solid information phase/event prior to the start of the experience itself. The concept and process should be explained carefully especially if the target group is either unfamiliar with conscious learning or motivation and/or discipline is considered to be doubtful. Any existing means of help, support and service should be communicated.

*Ralf Schlötel  
Educational Consulting GmbH*

### **#495: Education Before Implementation**

Educate your audience prior to exposing them to e-Learning. The e-Learning approach is likely to be very different from their past educational and training experiences.

*Michael Tucker  
Compuware Corporation*

### **#496: Reverse Psychology**

How NOT to implement an e-Learning program: 1. Don't get front line manager and supervisory support 2. Keep thinking that utilization is an inside job and thus don't ask your vendors for assistance with implementation plans 3. Don't focus on opportunities to align learning and performance tools with organizational and departmental mission and 4. Don't expect learners to do something with what they learned.

*Vince Penkala  
Eedo Knowledgeware*

### **#497: Tie To Something Important For Success**

The e-Learning implementation project should be in the charge of a team of leaders who are well committed and whose success is tied to their performance evaluation.

*Carlos Bravo  
E-Learning Solutions*

### **#498: No Big Bang Approach, Thanks**

Implementation of the technology is always more complicated than originally planned. Take your time to get it right with testing, pilots and a phased in strategy. Never plan to just "go live" all at once.

*Larry Cozzens*

### **#499: Pre-Launch Checklist, Anyone?**

When launching / delivering any e-Learning program, don't just "throw it over the wall" but "manage" the process by:

1. Sending our communication messages to the target population with clear information and instructions.
2. Setting deadlines/due dates for (1) course completion and/or (2) gate completions leading to final completion.
3. Monitor progress and send reminder messages of due dates and time remaining to accomplish task(s). (We have even made it a competition between one group and another to see who can get done first.)
4. Send out messages to the Managers of the people targeted to take the training informing them and asking for their support to provide time away from work for the employees to take the eCourse.
5. Make banners and signs available to employees to post by their offices informing people: "Please do not disturb. I am e-Learning! I'll be available at (fill in the blank)."
6. For major initiatives with large target audiences or new functionality, inform the Help Desk so they are ready to "field" problems and questions.
7. Summary: Communicate, communicate, communicate. Follow up, follow up, follow up.

*Jo Ann Killinger  
Alcatel University, North America*

### **#500: Pilot, Don't Auto-Pilot**

Never roll a new initiative without a pilot program - problems arise from the most unexpected places. Implementation requires a cross-functional team including Human Resources Development and IT among others.

*Jean Lowry  
Energen Corporation*

### **#501: Once Again, IT Is Key**

When implementing an LMS, make sure you have the full support of your IT department.

*Nicky Dunn  
ntl Group Limited*

### **#502: "Not Now" May Be Better Than "Right Away"**

When we began looking at an LMS, we did a lot of things right. But one area that was never carried through is now coming back to haunt us. We were working with an external consultant on the adoption and implementation process for the LMS. We were very aware that often it is not the technology that is a problem, but the people using the technology. We were part way through that process (we had interviews with key training groups and key users of the system) and were moving to survey across the company at all levels to determine readiness for the LMS when our senior HR leadership changed. Then, almost everything was put on hold or eliminated including our survey and the resulting implementation action planning. We're now 8 months into the implementation and some of our biggest issues are with the people, particularly the training groups. The readiness of our culture, again including Training, for the LMS is less than what was really needed. There is now no plan to deal with the people issues except in a fire-fighting mode. Lessons learned: include the people part in your planning and implementation and be prepared to say "not now" if that is what it takes to get the attention and support of senior management.

*Anonymous*

### **#503: Don't Go At It Without IT**

Do not implement any e-Learning without IT support. Even if you can do it yourself, having IT aligned with you lends credence and can make everything run more smoothly.

*Anonymous*

### **#504: Hurried Fixes Usually (Always?) Blow Up**

Send out a memo, put up a banner, tell people how to work around the problem ... and then get it right the next version instead of attempting to implement a last minute fix (in a hurry) now.

*Tom Pears*

## Chapter 12: Pedagogy & Webagogy - Ready, Set ... TRAIN and FACILITATE!

*This is the second category that received the most tips from our readers and once again, no surprise since after all training is our core business. Whether you are teaching in a classroom, online or blending both formats, what are some of the ways our contributors suggest you move successfully from theory to practice?*

### **#505: Can You Hear Me Now?**

Use an auto-mute function on the audio portion for web conferencing to control background noises.

*Karen Clark  
Bank One*

### **#506: Event and Activity Timing Guidelines**

The length of the overall event is most effective at 1 - 1.5 hours maximum for content awareness with limited interaction and 2 - 3 hours maximum for learning-based topics with significant interaction. While classroom course design tactics can be applied in the virtual environment, activities must be shorter in length to hold the participants' attention. Individual activities: 1-2 minutes, virtual team activities: 30 minutes max.

*Lynne G. White  
Accenture*

### **#507: The 60-45-35-10 Minute Rule**

Build in time for questions and discussion. If I am preparing a 60 minute webinar or teletraining seminar, I prepare 45 minutes of material, but only plan to use 35 minutes of it. The other 10 minutes of material are just in case I get the world's least interactive audience. Also, plan time for introductions, requests ("Please don't use a cell phone", "Please don't put us on hold", etc.) and for completing the call (filling out an evaluation, requesting more info, etc.)

*Doug Chasick  
CallSource*

### **#508: Use The Learn-O-Meter**

In a synchronous session, teachers cannot always read how well ideas and skills are being learned moment to moment. Most virtual classrooms have a built-in "understanding meter" that students can use to indicate (click on) their level of confidence during a learning exercise. Teachers should periodically stop and ask for students to anonymously indicate their level of understanding and comfort of the material being taught. Albeit a closed ended question, if used often and appropriately, teachers can proceed or go back and re-teach a topic in a more efficient manner, thus ensuring a more successful learning experience.

*John M. Opron  
Johnson Controls, Inc.*

### **#509: Keywords Are A Way Of Life**

Teach all learners how to pull searchable topics out of all lessons. Keywords can be used as shorthand summaries, reviews or audits to see if they are getting the message. It is a great way to reinforce e-Learning. For example, when teaching someone how to do his or her own career portfolio, they should be able to identify 3-5 key words to describe their best skills. There is no need for complete sentences, they may be short phrases such as training, leadership, management, instructional design, graphic arts, etc.

*Anna Graf Williams, Ph.D.  
Learnovation LLC.*



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## #510: Blend Slowly Before Mixing

If blended learning appears to be a daunting prospect, consider first creating a blend within the classroom. For example, using e-Learning exercises and simulations for practice within the classroom.

*Bernadine Reynolds  
Deloitte*

## #511: No Way To Fake It, Don't Even Think About It

Know how to use your online application thoroughly before attempting to deliver an online class. There is nothing worse than an instructor who does not know how to use the tool that is facilitating the delivery.

*Ginger Jones  
Siemens Energy & Automation*

## #512: Experience Counts

Take into consideration the prior experience that students may have had with e-Learning or even higher education itself. Learning activities that work well with upper level students often do not work as well with first year students.

*Glenn MacDougall  
Algonquin College*

### **#513: Out of Sight, Out of Mind**

I recommend a web-cam on your delivery side so students can at least see you from time to time and remember that you are real.

*Howard Goldstein  
Howard Goldstein Associates*

### **#514: Lurk Before Jumping In**

Encourage the interaction and problem solving skills of students by "lurking" before jumping in with a response. Be aware of your "timing." Try to encourage the group to come up with some solutions first, although you may need to re-focus contributions if the discussion goes completely off track.

*Frankie Forsyth  
Australian Flexible Learning Community*

### **#515: "Office" Hours**

Set aside a block of time each day to respond to learner questions and concerns. Inform the students about these times.

*George Drops  
National University*

### **#516: From Contact To Community**

Try to make contact with the participants early and often. Start with emails giving them instructions for contacting you and a reason to do so. For example: "Please confirm that this is the email address we should use to contact you.", "Please let us know what your technology level is—equipment and personal expertise.", "Please let us know what you hope to gain from this course." etc. If possible, arrange a conference call before the start of the course to address all the questions participants may have and to help them connect with each other. Use calls, discussion boards and live chats to keep them connected and active. Once contact is made, help the participants to build community. Grouping them may work. Asking them to build homepages and/or post introductory messages on the discussion board may work. Asking them to choose an avatar to represent themselves, and then explain their choice is a good option, especially for those who don't want to post pictures of themselves on the web.

*Holly Garrett  
Cogeco*

### **#517: e-Teach To e-Learn**

Always try to get the e-Learner to be an e-Teacher. Get them to engage in discussion with other e-Learners about the topic, particularly if they can provide material or insight into their better understanding of the new discipline.

*Peter Duffey  
Groove Networks*

### **#518: Same As It Ever Was**

Prepare the learner for e-Learning by offering both online and face-to-face orientations to the CMS/LMS. Make students/participants aware of instructor availability at the very beginning of the course. Then be consistent in the delivery of responses, information, assignments, etc. by using the same format throughout the course. Write for the web - do not write in prose - students will not read it. Use bullet points, subheadings, etc. that can be easily scanned for information. And be flexible as an instructor - know how fickle technology can be and be fair to your students.

*Nanette Stillwell  
Pitt Community College*

### **#519: Getting The Right Answer Doesn't Mean You Understand It**

Employ "live" math to assist student comprehension.

*Lynn Brown  
Web Pearls, Inc*

### **#520: Use Trivia As A Hook For More Effective Learning**

Items of trivia can create a powerful hook for learning. Short, sharp and, sometimes, silly facts provide our brains with the fun and interest we need to stay connected to the training. We link these facts to other parts of the content in the same way we would use well placed and highly memorable graphics. Once the association is made, the picture or the trivia sparks the link to the content that may have been mundane without it. Thus the hook is made and longer term memory committed.

*Neil Lasher  
Trainer1*

### **#521: Invent Ways To Keep Your Audience Involved**

Ask for folks to "raise their hands" if they agree with a statement you just made; Ask a question and ask people to type their answer in Text Chat but not to press send until you say "go"; Have people click "yes" on the feedback pallet when they can see your pointer on the slide; Be creative and think of some more ways for learners to participate!

*Malee Jones  
EDS*

### **#522: Use What Works For The Job At Hand**

There's a lot of training that can happen with capturing things through Print Screen, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Paint ... and then sending it out through email.

*Linda English  
Save The Children*

### **#523: Two Due Dates Are Better Than One**

When teaching with an asynchronous discussion board, students often wait until the due date before posting. Because of this, little time is available for replies, so little discussion occurs. To allow more time for replies, consider establishing two due dates. The first due date is for an initial posting, and the second due date is for the end of the discussion. If you have a one-week discussion period, you could require students to make an initial posting by the third day. With this approach, everyone has at least three or four days to reply. I do this when I teach online and have found it really helps, especially near the end of the semester when other time commitments pull for student attention.

*David M. Antonacci  
University of Missouri-Kansas City*

### **#524: Use More Than One Channel**

I encourage students to form small work groups ... interact in as many ways as possible ... behave like a learning team ... just as people do in industry teams, where the stakes are much higher.

*Pete Edwards, Ph.D.  
Adjunct Professor, UD*

### **#525: Get Tough On Students**

Instructors need to remind their students to respond to discussion board postings with relevant information. Often students post responses that are nice or complimentary. This takes a great deal of the other student's time. Students open all the messages and do not have time to open several that have no substance. This week's posting to our discussion board in a class that I am taking totaled 209. I estimate that 40 of these could have been omitted because they really did not say anything new.

*Bill Fleckenstein  
Bellefonte Area Middle School*

### **#526: Class Will Begin Promptly At X Hours**

Once your online class begins, don't hold up those who started on time to allow those who start late to catch up. Otherwise, those who begin on time become frustrated while waiting for feedback and lose their enthusiasm and momentum for the class.

*Judy Breau  
Government of New Brunswick*

### **#527: Are Your Learners Ready?**

Spend the time assessing learner readiness before the course begins. It is terribly frustrating to discover, midway through the course, that a learner is struggling because they lack foundational skills needed for success.

*Tawanna Ward  
University of Phoenix*

### **#528: Provide Alternatives To e-Reading**

Encourage off-line access to reading materials/course content (whether it is hard copy, audio, or downloaded on a computer) to use the online time as productively as possible. For example: interaction with classmates or instructors, skill assessments, etc. This method reduces the need for permanent and extensive (and perhaps even expensive) online access and really puts the learner in the driver's seat by providing him/her with alternatives that work.

*Sebastien Monnet  
Conference of State Bank Supervisors*

### **#529: A Point-of Need Management Training Solution**

We blend a PowerPoint presentation with a conference call led by the appropriate SME once per week on topics relevant to brand new managers. The hosting company will fax or email a roster when the call is complete for tracking purposes. Perhaps this is rather low tech, but it meets the immediate needs of new managers and it is very cost effective and flexible.

*Michelle Manning  
MetLife*

### **#530: Learning Does Not Happen In A Flash**

Provide as much opportunity as time and technology allows for the user to practice with the learning material. Don't just flash cards at them and expect them to remember. We learn when we assemble, take apart, discuss, argue, etc.

*Andy J. W. Affleck  
Development InfoStructure*

### **#531: You Set The Date, I'll Follow Up**

Require your students to pull out their day planner/calendar and set a schedule for completing the course. Have them email this schedule to you.

*Sandi Sturm  
Creative Conservation*

### **#532: Back To The Future - Be a Radio Presenter**

Presentations must be "very catchy"- closer to a radio presenter than a simple trainer. The objective is the same: get people "stuck" to their radio device (here, their PC). The voice and intonation must permanently be modulated according to the message to be passed along. Don't hesitate to go through 1 or 2 octaves (!), send some jokes out, make it live!

*Stephane Alric  
Kodak Health Imaging*

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### **#533: Take Note: Get Organized!**

Script your handout with everything you plan to say. Print it out, with your remarks in a different color than the headings that the participants see and put them in page protectors in a 3-ring binder. Then print out your slides (if using PowerPoint, print as handouts 3 to a page), and also put them in page protectors and in a 3-ring binder. Have both binders on your desk. You will now be fully prepared because you can devote the bulk of your energy and attention to interacting with your participants, knowing what you will say, what they will see, before they do.

*Doug Chasick  
CallSource*

### **#534: A "Level Setting" Success Story**

In moving to a blended solution several years ago, students, service and support technicians who attend classroom training are required to go to a training web site to take a prerequisite first. The course includes flash or video for various topics such as: A Product Tour (which contains a product walk around, statistics related to a product, marketing information ...), Setup and Configuration (shows how to set a product up in a customer site), and Use and Maintenance. When the student attends class, there is a quiz to reinforce the data in the prerequisite. This has worked well to ensure all are at the same starting place before the Instructor Led class.

*Laddene Korhonen  
Hewlett-Packard*

### **#535: Getting Everyone Up-To-Speed**

Use short, content-focused e-Learning modules to level the playing field prior to classroom discussions. This enables the classroom sessions to focus on interaction, activity and application instead of static content.

*Mark Hetrick  
Aetna, Inc.*

### **#536: People Love A Challenge**

Turn management e-Training (soft skills training) into e-Learning by issuing a challenge to the learner. At the end of the lesson, give them a challenge to test the concept or skill within the next week/month (depends on the frequency with which the knowledge/skill can be applied). The idea is to get them to prove to themselves that the skill/knowledge has value to them and that the lesson has credibility. Not everyone responds but some do. And others do the "test" and don't email us but they transfer the learning to the work site which is what counts.

*Jerry Moran  
Hilton*

### **#537: Be Natural**

Use direct language when giving instruction in online sessions. Use the same sort of language you would use if you were meeting the learners face-to-face. For example. I use headings such as: What is this module about? What do I need to do to pass it? This is how I would handle the situation in person.

*Pam Atkins  
Swinburne University of Technology*

### **#538: Count Down To Involvement**

I typically have 8 to 10 people in a class. At the start of class I let everyone know that I will be asking individuals for comments or to respond to questions. I keep notes with each participant's name above my monitor window and mark them as I ask questions or get comments. This helps me to make sure everyone is participating and is engaged.

*Bill C Marquis  
Hallmark Cards, Inc.*

### **#539: Embed The Online "Stuff"**

Relate other parts of the course to the online discussion. For example: post instructions for assignments; attach documents and graphics to postings, discuss results of Web research related to assignments, plan and communicate for group projects, etc.

*Kate MacDonald  
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences*

### **#540: To Make e-Learning More Effective, Take AIM!**

A - assess your teaching style

I - investigate instructional strategies within that style

M - match appropriate instructional technologies and, in particular, e-Learning tools to the strategies and style with which you are most comfortable

*Susan Stansberry, Ed.D.  
Oklahoma State Univ. College of Education*

### **#541: Build Community & Participation - For Free!**

In teaching graduate students, we have begun to experiment with the use of free discussion boards (e.g. QuickTopic) as well as the use of free VoIP Instant Messenger to extend the classroom throughout the week. The reason that we are using these free services is that we want to model to our students, who are K-12 teachers, what they may be able to do with their own students. Many of our student's school districts do not have the funds for commercial tools and products and "freeware" is the only way to go for them. Our experience has been that the use of this additional tool to the teacher's and student's tool kit is fantastic. Properly utilized, asynchronous discussion boards greatly extend the dialogue, reflection, and interaction among students. Over a period of time, with occasional intervention by the professor, one can see the development of a wonderful learning community in the reflection and reaction of participants.

*Bill Kiley  
Kiley and Associates*

### **#542: Reality Check**

Everyone knows the importance of simulations. Unfortunately, few of us have the resources to build them effectively. So don't be afraid to blend your online learning with experiential learning in the real application or, if that puts real data at risk, with a controlled training database.

*Connie Koskinen  
Federated System Group*

### **#543: Getting Our Students "There"**

In a virtual classroom it is even more important to focus on establishing a rapport at the start with the virtual students you can't see. Many times you have the advantage of sound and the ability to conference in but no visual feedback from the students. You must concentrate on listening even more and try to pick up tones of voice or changes in volume as your cue. Establishing this up-front puts students in a positive state of mind.

*Howard Goldstein  
Howard Goldstein Associates*

### **#544: Be Flexible & Don't Keep Users In The Dark**

Define what you expect from users and be flexible when you can. First example: voice connection. Don't think all or nothing. Everyone won't have a great connection, so Voice Over IP won't work for all. Have a phone link and let the user decide whether to do Voice Over IP or use a land line or cell phone. Second example: Internet connection: Can they attend in groups or are you doing interactive polling or tests that require each individual to have a connection? Users need to know ahead of time.

*Patty Crowell  
LSI Logic Storage Systems*

### **#545: Who Are You Going To Call?**

What will you do if the audio doesn't work? Have a backup phone conference call number. And what if you can't demo the system? Have backup screen shots available.

*Jerry Hoffman  
Anheuser-Busch*

### **#546: Help Students Set Goals**

Having total freedom of when to learn can lead to procrastination. Having a dated goal written down will help students make progress.

*Nancy Nash  
MindLeaders*

### **#547: Prepare! Prepare! Prepare!**

Go over your presentation multiple times, and have a Plan "B" and even a Plan "C" in case things go wrong. It is very obvious to your audience who spent the right amount of time "preparing." From "uhs" and "ums," to slides out of order, to equipment not working, and just a totally unpolished performance - you will lose credibility in a hurry.

*Dave McMechan  
Xerox*

### **#548: Be Crystal Clear**

Set clear expectations for what the learner needs to commit to in order to complete the learning -- including time required.

*Jo-Ann Driscoll  
Centra Software*

### **#549: Spread the Teaching Wealth**

Enhance the credibility of e-Learning content by having it presented by an internal Subject Matter Expert (rather than a teaching professional). This will also enhance follow-on knowledge transfer in both directions, because employees and customers will recognize the instructor as an expert.

*David Gillespie  
Honeywell*

### **#550: Keep Students Updated**

Provide timely feedback to students, including grades if part of the course or program, on the work they submit as part of the course or module.

*William Mcpeck  
Maine State Government*

### **#551: Set Boundaries Early**

Tell students what you expect. Reinforce and commend their work to set up a safe community early. They will be more inclined to participate enthusiastically.

*Margaret A. Crisham Ed.D.  
Dowling College*

### **#552: Treasure Hunt**

I use this in a pre-session. Imagine you have a web site directory about a subject (mine is about e-Learning). You send out 10 questions and the answers can be found in the directory. When you receive the right answers, you have succeeded.

*Jacques Fayet  
Cegos Group*

### **#553: Positioning e-Learning**

Make e-Learning courses a pre-requisite for some of the more expensive instructor-led technology courses. You have a better chance of level setting the audience for the classroom experience.

*Alexis Bernard  
Northern Trust*

### **#554: Desktop-to-Desktop**

Desktop-to-Desktop can be an excellent tool to combine with web-based learning. Establish a timeframe for the students to take the web-based instruction by establishing a start date and an end date for the training. Start the instruction with a real-time desktop-to-desktop session led by an instructor who introduces and discusses the training, the purpose, the objectives, the activities, and how students will be able to ask questions once they begin the training. You can also hold a session at the end as an opportunity to answer final questions and wrap up the training.

*Richard Nuffer  
Defense Logistics Agency*

### **#555: Start Them Off On The Right Foot**

Give a proper orientation and you are guaranteed to have fewer problems/issues.

*Geri Hubbard  
Galaxy Net Solutions*

### **#556: These Things Happen**

For synchronous e-Learning, always have a dial-up connection available for use (as a leader) in case the network goes down during training times.

*Cameron Griffith  
Ingram Book Group*

### **#557: Learners Learn From Each Other**

Incorporate participant dialog into the real-time sessions. Don't make the mistake of using e-Learning as another "talking head" approach to learning. Have discussion questions that encourage participants to voice their opinions and to draw the discussions to higher levels of learning.

*Sondra Hack  
Highmark, Inc.*

### **#558: To Essay, or Not --That Is The Question**

As you establish the types of questions you will ask in the testing portion, think through the grading procedure carefully. How will the system grade the questions and how much time will you have to grade the questions? If you are testing 150 learners, minimize the number of essay questions or eliminate them all together. If you will be unable to read, grade and record all 150 students in a timely fashion, do not provide essay or short answer questions.

*Michelle LeBlanc Blair  
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.*

### **#559: Be Flexible**

Don't assume. Learn as much as possible about your participants BEFORE the course. If that's not possible, learn as much as possible at the beginning of the course. Then be flexible enough to meet their learning needs and styles.

*Maureen Miller*

### **#560: The Right Context Makes Features Meaningful**

Demonstrate new features always in the context the client or student is working in. Let them experience the difference.

*Jan Cromwijk  
Universiteit Twente*

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### **#561: To Keep In Mind**

Live classroom training is different from synchronous e-Learning delivery. Prepare for a (sometimes) faceless, emotionless audience. Schedule in a time buffer of 10-15 minutes prior to the official start time to troubleshoot attendee connection and/or access problems. Don't assume your audience has the technology skills necessary to join and participate. And make it simple to use.

*Tom McClutchy  
GE Healthcare*

### **#562: Helpful Virtual Classroom Tips**

1. Avoid technology challenges by asking participants to log-on at least 15 minutes prior to a session to ensure their computer has the necessary plug-ins or applets installed for the application you are using. 2. Insert a picture of the facilitator on the opening screen to personalize a virtual classroom session. 3. Use audience polling to measure understanding of material presented.

*Gary Landrum  
CH2M HILL*

### **#563: Story Telling Works**

As practice examples, I like to incorporate scenarios such as would be discussed in a classroom situation. I think people learn a lot from "war stories" and such scenarios that are hard to imagine (yet that have really happened to people). Often, these far-out situations are entertaining too.

*Mina Busch  
American Modern Insurance Group*

### **#564: We're All In This Together**

Make every e-Learner part of a learning community. Whether you do it through discussion groups, bulletin boards, mailing lists or chat rooms, make sure all students feel they have joined a community of learners with whom they have something in common.

*Bruce Hitchcock*

### **#565: Out of Sight Does Not Need to Be Out Of Mind**

In a synchronous session, without video cameras, an "out-of-sight" student will commonly fill non value-added and boring moments with other distractors ... chat-rooms, surfing other sites, etc. When designing and delivering a synchronous session, ask yourself, "What will motivate the student to stay tuned"? The teacher's eye contact is not an option, so a consistent change of delivery modes and participatory involvement may combat the distractions.

*John M. Opron  
Johnson Controls, Inc.*

### **#566: Reach Out**

Student-teacher interaction for e-Learning should be high especially at the beginning of the course to foster understanding and involvement on both sides.

*Jennifer Lamkins  
California State Univ. Long Beach*

### **#567: Deconstruct Into Smaller Pieces**

When working on a large e-Learning project or course, establish benchmark dates for completion. Break up the project or course into different phases or sections and provide dates for each section to be completed. This will ensure that your audience does not wait until the "last" minute. I found that by doing this, most of the learners finished the material early or on time as they will have the option to complete it all or by section.

*Michelle LeBlanc Blair  
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.*

### **#568: See You At 10:03**

Advertise sessions as 2:05 pm or 11:05 am. That five minutes gives people the opportunity to refresh before jumping into the next meeting.

*Kacy C. McDonough  
Bank One*

### **#569: Divide and Conquer**

Divide a group of learners into smaller groups, where each member posts reflections on common reading materials on set dates and the other members all respond to their fellow's reflections. The moderator can then later summarize the discussions for each theme. We found this to be a very stimulating way to discuss the texts and to add an external element of discipline to help the learners read and reflect regularly. Do note that it is very important to find the right size of group for the specific context.

*Hrobjartur Arnason  
Iceland University of Education*

### **#570: Show Them Where You Are**

Webcast participants frequently lose track of where they are in the overall presentation. I find it eases participants when they understand where they are on the session by providing a graphic representation (of some type) on each slide. Examples: listing the agenda along the left side of each slide with an arrow indicating where we were in the session or a gas gauge.

*John Schuster  
INNOVAguide LLC*

### **#571: Interact Early and Throughout**

Start early engaging the learners and keep the content and practice activities interactive so to keep the learner involved throughout the entire class. You can use practice activities, skill checks, quick polls, breakout rooms, etc.

*Lorraine Ligas*

### **#572: Link Class Activities**

Create in and out of class activities for a hybrid course (note I did not use the terms in class and online) as linked experiences where one could not be done without considering the other. For example, if the student is to do prep readings for an in class experience, then the instructions for doing the readings should indicate this purpose so the student is reading with a critical eye.

*Gail Allan  
Algonquin College*

### **#573: Dear Teacher**

To all instructors: Practice, practice, practice!

*Paula Cancro  
Independent Financial Marketing Group*

### **#574: Maintain That Connection**

When teaching online, individual feedback on a regular basis is important (say, once a week, if it is a 8-15 week course). This feedback fits very well with the concept of formative learning assessment, as well as promotes the type of personal interaction desired by both facilitator and learner. Learners remark how the feedback (which contains examples of student success as a online learner, evidence of content learning, approaches for improvement and general encouragement) serves as their "connection" to the class and virtual classroom. Past research has shown that maintaining a "connection" is a key success factor to retention of online learning students.

*Kathleen Kelm  
Edgewood College*

### **#575: Those Who Can, Teach**

As instructors for e-Learning: keep it interactive, keep your voice loud enough for everyone to hear, display enthusiasm, and know how to use the tools of the trade.

*Connie Fluegel  
BMC Software, Inc.*

### **#576: Teach to Match Your Objective**

When skill-building is the primary objective, it is critical to force interaction to both improve the participant experience and to enable faculty to gauge comprehension. Effective techniques include cold calling (calling on individuals before waiting for virtual hands to be raised), informal polling (asking the group questions and having them click to agree or disagree), formal polling (providing the group with multiple choice survey questions), and text chatting (communicating in a text chat room.) If your objective is wide awareness of content, you can engage people without two-way interaction, provided it is for short bursts of time and the content is compelling.

*Lynne G. White  
Accenture*

### **#577: Build In the Orientation**

Front load the first couple of classes in a hybrid course (or one that will be supported with web courseware) with an explicit e-Learning orientation so that there is no doubt in the student's mind as to what is expected to be successful in the course. Make sure you have done your homework as the teacher vis-a-vis all of the e-Learning resources in your institution that can be used to support the students in your course. If you are not familiar with them and what they offer, chances are your students will not use them. Think as well about keeping track of support they are not receiving and pass this information on to the appropriate departments.

*Gail Allan  
Algonquin College*

### **#578: Plan For Chatroom Hours**

Open a chatroom in the morning of any day so that any learner or number of learners can set a time to enter and carry on a discussion.

*George Drops  
National University*

### **#579: Reach Out**

Provide encouraging feedback really quickly -- especially for new online learners at the start of a course.

*Jane Anderson  
TAFE Global*

### **#580: Personalize The Start Of The Course**

Send a welcome letter to students 2-3 weeks before the start of the semester or course. Include the URL of the course homepage, instructions for logging in, textbook or material information (including how and where to order), and instructions for the first day/first week. Provide a means for the students to check their computer system and login before the official first day of class. Also include a Frequently Asked Questions List and refer students to it. Create a student lounge in the discussion board where students can make casual postings to one another to build community. This will all help you to provide a personal touch from the beginning and ensure that everyone is getting the information they need.

*Karla Embleton  
Iowa State University*

### **#581: Use Text Appropriately**

When using narration and text, do not read the text aloud. Use text to support the narration and vice versa. This will result in greater retention and students will be less likely to stop listening or stop reading.

*Marc Sebes  
Digitas*

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## #582: Eleven Tips For The Price Of One

Log on/call in early. This allows time to relax before the presentation and to handle any unanticipated "surprises."; Prior to beginning, take a deep breath, relax, and be as conversational as possible in your delivery; Be very familiar with the content. Practice several times so you know how much time it takes to present it. This will help you relax and not be overly worried about the time; Factor in the time allotted for audience interactions. Most presentations have a Q&A session and some have other audience interactions like polling. Remember to include time for these in your total presentation timing; Consider having "pad questions." These help to "get the ball rolling" in case your audience is shy or slow to begin participating in the Q&A session; Avoid "dead air." If audience feedback is being taken via polls, consider elaborating on the reason for asking the questions and/or the value of their responses to avoid this; Have a clock or watch handy. Occasionally check it to pace your timing; Try to eliminate interruptions. Put a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your closed office door and turn off your cell phone and/or pager; Try to minimize ambient noise. Coughing, throat-clearing, and paper shuffling can often be reduced simply by awareness; Be polite. If co-presenting with others, do not click on slide titles while someone else is presenting. All presenters have equal control of slide publishes during an event; Keep it in perspective. If you make a mistake or lose your place, it's not the end of the world. Don't make more out of it than necessary by over-apologizing or sounding defeated. The less attention you draw to a mistake, the quicker your audience will forget it.

*Bryan Crum  
Communicast, Inc.*

## #583: Help Students And Yourself By Listing Expectations

Let students know the timeframe they can expect a response from you. Before I instituted the ("within 48 hours") time frame, I would receive several daily emails asking me if I had received an email or assignment yet. Since I've identified this time frame and abide by it, those "did you get it " emails have stopped. And the guideline: "Should you have questions, please post them in the appropriate discussion thread" has also saved me a lot of spent answering the same questions. Now, I only accept emails regarding personal issues (grades, requests for extensions, etc.). I find that not only do I save time and energy, but many times the students will help each other within that discussion area.

*Diana Voss  
Stony Brook University*

## #584: Teach Out Of The Box

Engage the mind of every participant every 3-5 minutes. Think beyond the tools and technology to other options such as participants spending 10 minutes writing in their materials during a web-cast. Use the tools in different ways, such as asking a multiple choice question with no single correct answer, and having participants explain their choices.

*Ken Seemann  
Nextel Communications*

## #585: Set Both The Learner Expectations And Yours Up Front

Complete a run-through, especially if it is your first time teaching - you will get a better idea of the flow as well as the time needed and have practice using the technical equipment. Test the day before and then an hour before the session so that you are prepared. Have a "Plan B" for any technical problems you may have.

*Katie Amato  
Progressive*

## #586: Keeping The Learner's Attention

How can you do this and be successful? Consider using action learning where learning is directly related to personal values, goals or success, identifying the strengths of the learner and helping them work through learning, and/or using "whatever" it takes to keep people engaged: multimedia, games, goals ... or even fun.

*Mike Jay  
Leadwise*

### **#587: Make Up For The Difference**

Connect with the virtual learner and compensate for lack of face-to-face contact by: Sending a confirmation when the registration is received and a day before the session; Using pictures (yours and theirs); Greeting the learner when he/she signs-on and welcoming each learner with an easy/involving activity; Sending a brief pre-course assignment and information about the course and yourself; Planning questions and interaction ahead of time; Using posts, emails before and after the class; Having a summary activity; Sending congratulations for completing the class.

*Jean Barbazette  
The Training Clinic*

### **#588: Make It Personal**

If at all possible, e-Learning should be as personal as a classroom setting. Consider having a hands-on learning portion taught via e-Learning and then classroom instruction for interaction and the "personal touch."

*Dori Ottaviano*

### **#589: Examples You Can Relate To**

Blend in scenarios or examples that relate to the company and the way it operates to help the student convert the knowledge to practice. This may have to be an addendum delivered in a live analog or virtual classroom.

*Paul L. Nenninger  
PLN Consulting*

### **#590: Never Assume**

Instructor Led courses have the benefit of an instructor making real-time adaptations according to audience needs. Online classes have to fit more into less time and offer less flexibility so try not to make assumptions as to audience's abilities and relevance. As I was once told, ASSUME makes an ASS out of U and ME!

*Martin Cannard  
Symantec Corporation*

### **#591: More Ways, More Learning**

Ensure there are lots of ways for your learners to learn. Plan many modes of interaction among your learners - not just the more obvious reading of text and test taking.

*Mary Anne Campo*

### **#592: How To Make It Into The Agendas Of Your Learners**

During a course, arrange for synchronous events on a regular basis. In addition to the opportunity of being in contact with your learners, this structure will force the participants to add the events to their calendars and so the 'learning' is going to be part of their plans for the week/day.

*Urs Frei  
Teachforce Urs Frei GmbH*

### **#593: Use Virtual Tools For Troubleshooting**

When teaching someone how to use a custom computer application via the (Intranet/Internet, consider using a virtual classroom & collaboration platform so you can see if what the user is actually doing is what they are telling you they are doing. Many times learners leave out a vital keystroke or are even on a different screen than the trainer.

*Dailia Adams  
International Comfort Products*

### **#594: Goal: Learn By Doing**

Who is more tired at the end of the day? You, or your students? Don't spoon feed your students the information. Make them work for the knowledge, skills, and tools.

*Adele Pastor*

### **#595: It's All In The Outline**

When presenting a webinar, don't use the slide shots as your handout. Instead, use an outline so people follow your slides as they are revealed and have an organized way to take notes. Otherwise, they will read all your slides and do something else during your presentation.

*Doug Chasick*  
*CallSource*

### **#596: Let Students Manage Discussion Boards**

Discussion board participation is most successful when tied to content-based assignments and when it is considered a percentage of overall grade in course (which needs to be clearly articulated to students). Large classes should be divided into several discussion groups and each group assigned its own discussion board. If possible, assign a student as "moderator" of a discussion board (or of a forum if it's a very active board) for a few points of extra credit. The student answers basic, operational questions for the others, is the first point of contact for problems, and each week sends you a summary of key discussion points and significant outcomes.

*Kate MacDonald*  
*Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences*

### **#597: The More, Not Always The Merrier**

Bear in mind that the larger the group, the more difficult it can be for them to work collaboratively.

*Frankie Forsyth*  
*Australian Flexible Learning Community*

### **#598: Sylvia, What Do You Think Was The Reason For ...**

In order to get learner's attention span high, regularly ask each (by naming them) some questions, have them give their standpoints, or ask them to do exercises online.

*Stephane Alric*  
*Kodak Health Imaging*

### **#599: In This Lesson I Learned That ...**

At the end of each "lesson", always ask the learner "What did you learn in this lesson?". Whether he/she learned something or not, it encourages him/her to reflect on what was taught and discussed, and articulate it, which reinforces the learning process. This little exercise may also help the learner realize that he/she actually did learn something.

*Sebastien Monnet*  
*Conference of State Bank Supervisors*

### **#600: Blend To Finish**

Use blended learning to increase the completion rate of self-paced learning by providing deadlines and consequence for non-completion.

*Jo-Ann Driscoll*  
*Centra Software*

### **#601: Faculty Rules**

Faculty must be experts; there is less tolerance in virtual environment for lightweights; Big names draw a crowd; Having multiple faculty makes it more interesting for the participants by providing different perspectives on the same topic and holding attention longer, thereby increasing the overall learning and participation.

*Lynne G. White*  
*Accenture*



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## #602: Body Language Tells It All

Before you post directions for an assignment or course, give it to at least two different people to read (someone who is familiar with the content and someone who is not) and watch their reactions and body language. By doing this, it will help you identify areas of the assignment that are unclear ahead of time.

*Diana Voss  
Stony Brook University*

## #603: Be There -- And Others Will Too

In my own experience, being "present" within the online course sets the stage for building community and creating that environment that encourages participation. Usually I will send some kind of an email to kick-off the week and often will try and get into the thread discussion myself over that same period of time. People will respond to this and real "conversations" begin to emerge.

*Susan Byrne  
Brock University*

## #604: Be Professional

At the outset, agree to a time frame for responding to student questions / problems and stick to it. To keep students waiting will frustrate them and probably hinder their progress.

*Anonymous*

## #605: Connect 3 Ways

Trust is an essential component in building any learning environment but even more so in an e-Learning environment where visual cues and body language generally are not the typical norm. So design the e-Learning space to connect to your learners, connect learners with each other, and connect learners with their own world so they can make a difference.

*Mark Freeman  
University of Sydney*

## #606: Experience = Learning

Remember John Dewey's key point: "All we learn, we learn by experience." Thus, e-Learning is good, but b-Learning (b for blended) is even better. Make an effort to supplement the "e" of learning with an on-site application /discussion or some form of "putting the e-Learning to work" as soon as possible after each e-Learning event. Even better if the "putting-to-work" is on or close to the job. Better still if with co-workers.

*Richard S. Webster, Ph.D.  
Abintra LLC*

## #607: Subject: Read This Now!

Use an action-based subject line in the class reminder emails so that the class enrollee knows that there is work to be done prior to showing up for the class. This helps lower the rate of unprepared attendees, especially for the first-time attendee who needs to run a wizard to prepare for web-conferencing. For example: Print Your Worksheets! or Prepare Your Computer For Class!

*Cheral Stewart  
CallSource*

## #608: Yes, Mixing Online And Face-to-Face Works, Did You Ever Doubt It?

I have found integration of online tools and classroom to be very effective. Participants learn a technique and then access online tools to build and reinforce the learning using tools to change how they would approach doing something at work. Some examples include meeting effectiveness evaluation (reinforces effective meetings), project risk analysis and even brainstorming.

*Steven Lesser  
InfoWorks International*

### **#609: Be Professional**

At the outset, agree to a time frame for responding to student questions / problems and stick to it. To keep students waiting will frustrate them and probably hinder their progress.

*Anonymous*

### **#610: Think Outside Your Group**

Group work doesn't always have to be with just the online participants. Participants can be assigned group work that requires them to find or form a group back on the job or out in the community. This allows for meaningful face-to-face interaction which then can be rolled back up into the e-Group. This is also very valuable because the utilization of people outside of the participant population broadens and deepens the insights and inputs.

*Thomas Campbell*

*Thomas Campbell & Co., Inc.*

### **#611: Time It To Succeed**

Without a facilitator and integrating discussion groups into something that is timely, learners will die a slow death. There needs to be urgency and a clear person leading the discussion.

*Linda English*

*Save The Children*

### **#612: No Surprises Are A Good Thing**

Create a "formal" agreement between the student and the instructor regarding the student's study plan. Help students schedule what they must do and how they must study. Explain to the student ahead of time what they are going to go through, what they are supposed to do, what problems they might have.

*Eduardo Ramos*

*Instituto Infnet*

### **#613: The Post From Hell**

Encourage the facilitator or instructor in an online course to outline the limitations of "posting" within the respective Courseware Management System being used. Many times it is not obvious at all that certain documents or file types cannot be converted or accommodated by the system.

*Rose M. Kimberley*

*Soldier Support Institute*

### **#614: Long Live Gumby (The Eraser)!**

Expect mistakes and be ready to demonstrate your flexibility as a facilitator/trainer when they arise.

*Betsie Reynolds*

*Ingram Micro*

### **#615: BookSmart**

Do you need articles and e-books for your e-Learning course? Check with your library - they may already have access to legal electronic copies in their database subscriptions. Assigning projects or essays? Check with your librarians - they may already have useful web tools that help learners with bibliographies and footnotes. Many libraries also have an Ask-A-Librarian button or real-time web-based or email virtual reference services. Consider using it as appropriate points in your courses. Not sure about how to get the rights to that article, graphic or book for your course? Librarians are often experts in copyright and licensing these objects legally. There are many opportunities to integrate libraries, librarians and their services into e-Learning so use your library as a resource - it has good stuff!

*Stephen Abram*

*Sirsi*

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### #616: Connecting Or Reading?

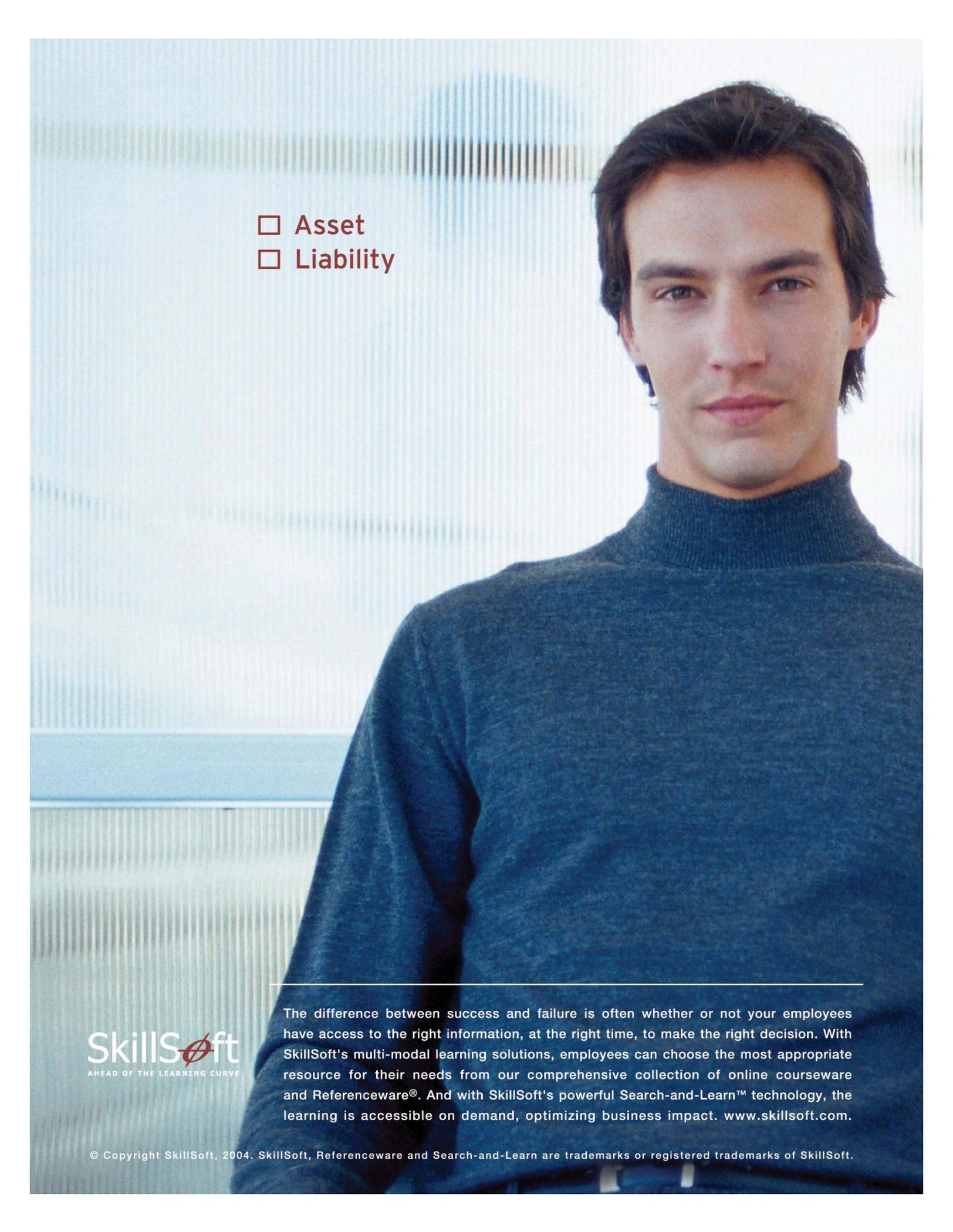
Interaction is critical for building community. Ask questions, discuss experiences, share best practices, ask theoretical questions (what if). Without interaction, you might as well send the learners a book to read.

*Susan J. Odonnell  
Office of Personnel Management*

### #617: Class Prep - Help Them Get Ready

As part of pre-learning, always send out a hard copy of the materials and be sure to accomodate different learning styles.

*Alison Campbell  
Wyeth*

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## Chapter 13: Hey, Who Moved My Administration and Support?

*Just like the supporting walls hold up the roof to your house, your administrative and business processes and your support personnel can make or break your e-Learning program.*

### **#618: Create A Learning Get-a-Way**

I recommend helping people schedule e-Learning into their day by creating an eLab. Our room has 14 PCs where people can access our e-Learning campus via the Internet. It gives people the opportunity to take their headphones, go into the lab, and take training for 10 minutes, 30 minutes or even 2 hours. It's one way for people to actually schedule the time into their calendars as if they were going to ILT training.

*Anonymous*

### **#619: Hmnnn, How About Courses Updates?**

Should students who have completed the original course be able or required to take the updated course? Will the original course still appear in your course catalog? What will be the naming convention for the updated courses? Will there be some information that designates the course as having updated material? Think about the workflow of your courseware and if the updated course is a prerequisite to another or part of a larger curriculum. How will the updates affect these larger structures? How does your LMS handle course updates? Can an original version and an updated version be used simultaneously?

*Diane Weir  
IBM*

### **#620: Aid Support By Keeping A Change Log**

Keep an issues log of all changes within LMS on a shared drive for all to access/view/update for an audit trail. Develop and share a flow chart of the e-Learning process within your organization. Centralize training requests/projects into one file including target audience, roll out, expected completion date etc. as this allows for the impact on the network and resource allocations.

*Cynthia Eisel  
FedEx*

### **#621: What Works In One Case, May Not Work In Another**

You can create it, but will they come? We created an e-Learning "cubicle" where any employee in our headquarters operation could visit to take e-Learning courses. They can also access e-Learning sites from their own desktop but we thought they may want a "quiet" place to take e-Learning. The cubicle is well stocked with information and an upgraded computer, etc. We advertised through a broadcast to all employees. Very little interest was shown. I'm not sure what the lesson is here, but thought I'd share it in case someone else is thinking of the same thing.

*Dorothy Mackay  
Veterans Benefits Administration*

### **#622: Save The Trees**

Allow for a link to printable support materials (including the course summary, outline, FAQ's and quick start) to prevent having to print out the entire course for later reference.

*Roger Steinhorst  
Fireman's Fund Insurance Companies*

## #623: Make It Easy On Yourself: Aim For Consistent Processes

Save creativity for the message. Methodology and infrastructure should drive everything else. If your courses are structured in a consistent way, then any developer should be able to move freely in and out of any course. (A savvy user can also do the same.) We run a performance support site. All the content is mapped on the Intranet in the same exact structure - so much so that when the tool is demonstrated, I simply replace the system name in the URL with another and all of the content changes with it. It also works for a developer as the ability to edit and repair a course requires little effort in understanding how it was built. For example, if the table of contents is broken, that file has the same name, location, and format as it would in any other course.

*Scott Davis  
Bose Corporation*

## #624: Customer Support Cycle: Don't Get Locked In

Be alert for changing conditions. During the training associated with the initial deployment of a new system, technology or business process, classroom training may be optimal. During the sustainment phase, e-Learning may be a better fit. Watch out for the converse, maintaining e-Learning materials after the initial go-live which may be less effective than shifting at that point to on-the-job-training.

*Bruce Jackson  
Resource Consultants, Inc.*

## #625: The 80/20 Rule Process (Or Really, For Anything)

Sometimes, a little people engineering can save a lot of time and effort. If you are going to spend 80% of your effort trying to get the last 20% correct, that is a poor use of resources.

*Tom Pears*

## #626: A Client Is a Client Is a Client

Treat your internal clients as you would external clients - be flexible, but firm.

*Bernadette McIntosh-Estep  
Country Insurance and Financial Services*

## #627: Planning For Accessibility Outside The CMS

Provide a course homepage outside of the Course Management System. This homepage should include a link to the online course login page, a copy of the syllabus, as well as instructor's contact information. Students who can't get logged into the course need a way to reach the instructor! And since most CMS software do not include URL checkers, for each module include an "additional sources" reference list which is an HTML page housed on another server that can be easily checked by students.

*Karla Embleton  
Iowa State University*

## #628: "Formula" for Naming Conventions

Do not use long course names. Long names encumber the search process when a user is looking for a course. Also, they often present display challenges by requiring scrolling or small fonts. A course name should succinctly state the main topic and goal or feature. The course name, "e-Learning", for example, doesn't give enough information, whereas the course name, "e-Learning: How to initiate a successful program at your organization" is a bit wordy. Using the form TOPIC: GOAL or FEATURE you get: "e-Learning: Program Design and Deployment" which is both descriptive and short.

*Diane Weir  
IBM*

### **#629: Easy Does It**

Make it easy to log on and off, and easy to record credit. Provide polite reminders that completion of programs is "due" by a certain date.

*Karen Bullock  
Golden Valley Memorial Hospital*

### **#630: Follow The Steps**

A success in teaching our customers to use our platform has been (literally) our step-by-step approach. This process guides the user to the next step that is needed, once a step is completed. The user follows each step going from left to right which we believe is more intuitive than scrolling from top to bottom.

*Anonymous*

### **#631: Send/Review Ahead Of Time**

My company switched from one web conference solution to another one recently and most of the time we work directly from PowerPoint presentations that we've sent prior to our appointment or training. Having early access makes everyone more productive.

*Richard Thompson  
LexisNexis*

### **#632: Tracking Changes Wisdom**

Version control from day one will save a lot of time and money.

*Janet Lowe  
Sun Microsystems*

### **#633: It Is YOUR Data**

When using as ASP, don't depend on the vendor's LMS -- you own the data and are ultimately responsible for its retention.

*Jean Lowry  
Energen Corporation*

### **#634: Build In Weekly e-Learning**

Give staff an e-Learning training period per week (e.g. 30 minutes to 60 minutes) which they can program into their weekly tasks. When e-Learning/training, they can put up a sign "E-learning in Progress, Do not Disturb" and other staff will respect the period unless an emergency rises. Works well in open plan areas.

*Gary Pettigrove  
Australian Government*

### **#635: Support Your Staff As You Cross Over**

Find ways to minimize the teaching roles changes required between traditional face-to-face classroom to e-Learning. Develop certain online scenarios that help teachers apply their current teaching skills and experience in a new online learning environment. These may range from the "getting started" level (using emails with attached learning resources and instructions) to the highest (developing web-based learning resources and using a Learning Management System).

*Paulis Cheung  
TAFE NSW Sydney Institute*

### **#636: Online Job Aids**

Provide a printable online tip sheet that is similar to a "take-away" in an Instructor Led class.

*Maxine Sheinin  
MaxESP, Inc.*

### **#637: Week by Week Views**

Include a printer-friendly course schedule showing topics and activities week by week, including any set tasks.

*Paul Left  
Verso NZ Ltd.*

### **#638: Need and Relevance Drive Customer Usage**

Try to establish a "need" so the user is encouraged to absorb and understand the material rather than just remember it. And don't expect users to voluntarily sign up for online classes - even a 10 minute module will get pushed to the bottom of the pile if it has no relevance to that person at the time.

*Martin Cannard  
Symantec Corporation*

### **#639: Support Pillars Hold Up The Structure**

Provide ongoing support - either from a mentor, tutor, manager or someone else. There is a strong need for an online learner to feel connected, not isolated.

*Abi O'Neill  
Melbourne Business School*

### **#640: Keep That Support**

Did you know that e-Learning doesn't necessarily save work labor? You still need qualified workers to be in the class, to help the students, and supervise them.

*Shuka Shavit*

### **#641: Auto Response Rules "In A Box"**

Consider using a sequential autoresponder to create follow up emails. We use them to reinforce key principles of our content, remind our participants about certain tasks or habits, and to deepen the understanding by highlighting different aspects of our content. What are our internal rules? 1. Since everybody is in a kind of rush, keep your emails short and precise. 2. If you have more to say, use a link to a webpage to present longer content. 3. Send out messages with a positive attitude. 4. Keep the rhythms reasonable. One email per week in most cases is enough. 5. Give an unexpected freebie (eBook, free course etc.) at the second or third email. 6. Allow participants to get the next tip now, if they wish. 7. Always allow one to unsubscribe, of course. 8. Ask for feedback when the series is over.

*Martin Weiss  
e:works*

### **#642: Connected, Not Lonely**

In blended courses, students should get some kind of a message from tutors every day. Otherwise, he/she will feel alone.

*Marek Kotowski*

### **#643: Let The Social "Safety Net" Work For You**

We must not forget the social dimensions of learning. Build it in all your processes and customer contact opportunities.

*Dieter Stößel*

### **#644: We're All Different**

Remember that some people may need help adapting to "getting to know people" via a solely written medium.

*Frankie Forsyth  
Australian Flexible Learning Community*



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### **#645: Help Create The Right Space**

Create the space, place and opportunity for your learners to do e-Learning. It will never work sitting at their desks, having to field telephone calls or doing their normal duties.

*Tertia Albertyn  
Safmarine*

### **#646: Spring Cleaning May Be In Order**

Make sure your e-Learning is interesting and engaging. Get rid of all those "page turning" e-Learning courses.

*Alex Woodford  
Academy Learning Ltd.*

### **#647: Let Your Help Desk Help Out**

Train your Help Desk on the new online training delivery tool and have students call your Help Desk for support. Never keep the other online students waiting while you help a single student debug their problem.

*Ginger Jones  
Siemens Energy & Automation*

### **#648: Clean Out Your Course Closet (Or Server)**

Schedule time to periodically evaluate and update courses. Out of date information will detract from the learning experience.

*Janet Clarey  
Utica National Insurance Group*

### **#649: eLM -- One Stop Mentoring**

To help promote interest in using webcasts to supplement the classroom delivery our trainers were familiar with, a team of twelve trainers were selected to become e-Learning Mentors, or eLMs. This team became super users of the virtual classroom software we are using and developed our internal processes for preparing for and delivering classes. Other trainers who are getting ready for their first e-Class can call on their eLM to help them go through the setup process, adopt best practices presentation and facilitation skills, and promote learner involvement in a synchronous distance learning environment. eLMs also work with Subject Matter Experts outside of our training group so they understand the nuances of delivering training virtually. The eLM program has been key to the success of our e-Class program, as it has become a preferred training delivery method for many trainers and for our customers.

*Stephen Neff  
Siemens*

## #650: Beef Up Your Chat

Often I find that chat, while popular, doesn't provide much time for "rich content." Participants are basically typing one liners - brief and sometimes succinct, but often of dubious merit to the learning objectives. The chat can be greatly enhanced when the overall instructional design provides rich content that the participants can review, annotate, comment or challenge. A word processing program is terrific for delivery of the material. During the chat, participants can copy and paste either portions of the original content or their additions. This then provides all participants with the opportunity to see the rich content internally in the chat.

*Thomas Campbell  
Thomas Campbell & Co., Inc.*

## #651: A Life (Live Mail) Support Saver -- & Practical Too!

We recently launched a large learning curriculum for a group within our organization and learners were slotted into 3 tracks.

As learners complete the requirements of Tracks 1 and 2, they were required to progress and complete Track 3. Needless to say, we have learners at all stages of the curriculum and have to deal with a lot of questions. Our project team set up a special mailbox on our email system to launch communications and so learners could send questions to it when they need help. The global mailbox has been a life saver! It centralizes all the incoming problems and issues that learners are experiencing. The project team members can take turns handling the mailbox and responding to issues. We set up distribution groups but can also communicate to all tracks at the same time or to each individual track or to a group of learners as needed. It's the same concept as live help, but in the form of an email box for incoming and outgoing communications. For IT type needs, live help is still available and encouraged. This mailbox has also helped us separate some of the workflow and procedural type questions that the project team should be handling to begin with.

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*"With our blended-learning approach, we have been able to shorten the classroom time and improve the retention rate."*

*-Julie Thomas  
President and CEO  
ValueVision Associates*



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## #652: One Stop Print Support

Based on past customer feedback about no hard copy material being available, a current solution we've implemented is a Learning Tools icon within each course that is accessible from every frame. One of the items provided via the Learning Tools is a content summary of the module in PDF format (including graphics and glossary). Students can print sections or the entire summary for a reference both during and after the course. For externally developed courses, some vendors do offer outlines or summaries. For those that don't, we either purchased participant guides for the vendor's ILT version of the course (that we loan out upon request), or we developed our own PDF file summaries that are accessible from our LMS.

*John P. Keefe  
Fireman's Fund*

### **#653: Need To Learn? Step Right This Way Please**

Make sure that companies create e-Learning rooms within their spaces. Don't let people learn behind their own PC at their own workplace. An e-Learning room enhances motivation and concentration for better results.

*Bert Jorritsma  
Test Select*

### **#654: From Interruptions to Understanding**

To combat the interruptions that occur when a student is taking an e-event at their desk ("I know you're online, but I just had a quick question"... "If you are just listening to the presenter, can you help me with this a second"... etc.) we have printed out a page that announces that the student is in training - Do Not Disturb - and hand it out with yellow plastic tape (like a crime scene) to be posted over office/cubicle "entrance". This really stops people in their tracks, and makes them feel really guilty if they interrupt the student.

*Marsha Melkonian  
Internal Revenue Service*

### **#655: Help Busters**

If e-Training is created in-house, include a customer response email, phone number, and/or online help to use when introducing new programs. If the e-Training is created outside, include some way for students to get additional help. For example: toll-free help line, email technical support, listing of training resources, and/or online tips. In either case, they need to know who to call.

*Joy Frederick  
American Electric Power*

### **#656: Human Interaction Wanted**

If you can provide a tutor or some other method of providing live (or near-live) assessment and feedback, great!

*Andy J. W. Affleck  
Development InfoStructure*

### **#657: Do You IM?**

Instant messaging is critical to the success of any trainer-supported e-Learning program. Although you may experience some problems (corporate restrictions, non-approved browser plug-ins required, susceptibility to pop-ups etc.), the benefits are worth exploring.

*Marty R. Millette*

### **#658: "Hand Hold" Support By Walking Around**

Build in "customer care" initiatives. Your learners are your customers, so build in activities before and after the training so that they will feel supported. One thing I have done that was very well received was to provide desk or office visits to all of the participants to help them with their initial log on to e-Learning and make sure that there were no technical glitches. A bit of hand-holding is necessary in this case, especially if you encounter learners who are technophobes.

*Lela Rotondo  
Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield*

### **#659: Tutoring Is Tutoring Is Tutoring**

Don't expect tutoring of online courses to be less demanding or time-consuming than teaching face to face.

*Julia Duggleby  
The Sheffield College*

### **#660: Production Support: Hands-On Follows Online**

A blended approach is critical to the success of e-Learning in a production environment. Associates need a Subject Matter Expert to do hands-on follow up to online training material.

*Tricia Franke  
Fidelity Investments*

### **#661: Easy On The Eyes**

People don't like to read on a screen, so send paper if there is a lot of complex information.

*Angel Sancho  
Centro de Estudios Garrigues*

### **#662: Be Ecological & Get Organized With e-Notebooks**

Many courses require students to complete assignments and submit them as individual printouts or in 3-ring notebook binders. The electronic notebook method may be used in lieu of printing assignments. How does it work? The notebook is a group of subfolders and files inside a parent folder that is named with the class section # and the student's name. Students submit folders weekly to the instructor. Be sure to discuss the process with your IT staff first as network privileges will need to be granted to students.

*Maryann Watson  
Orange Coast College*

### **#663: Are You Covered For "Overhead"?**

Interactivity and collaboration are powerful tools that enable e-Learning to provide some of the same mentoring and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange that typically occur in a "live," face-to-face environment. Interactivity and collaboration work best when moderators employ strategies and tactics to get learners engaged, and to keep them engaged. Enabling technologies also evolve, and learners' platforms may need updating. Someone needs to keep on top of this. In short, there is an "overhead," or burden, that comes with deployment of e-Learning, and successful e-Learning enterprises allocate personnel and budget to cover that overhead.

*Larry Franks  
VERTEX Solutions, Inc*

### **#664: Let Your Home Page Self-Help Learners**

Take the time to carefully draft the instructions you put on the home page of your e-Learning site. This is the chance to tell users how to use the site, but also WHY it has been implemented, and WHO can help them in case of problems.

*Jocelyn Phelps  
Groupe Société Générale*

### **#665: Can We Set Up A Time To Talk At Your Convenience?**

Just making an offer of personal telephone coaching to support an online learning program heightens interest and willingness to "try it out" tremendously.

*Lee Maclean  
Converge Consulting Group*

### **#666: Additional Contact Can Increase Usage Rates**

Don't hesitate to "tickle" people who should be using an e-Learning module and who are not (you can tickle with email or by phone). Sometimes there are strange reasons why they don't log on: no one told them they should, the system was down the day the link was sent, their name was misspelled by the administrator and they can't log in.

*Jocelyn Phelps  
Groupe Société Générale*

### **#667: Support Your Support People**

E-Learning without an adequate support system of tutors, coaches, and facilitators often leads to low completion rates.

*John Douglas  
Teknita AS*

## #668: How Do I Love Thee, Let Me Count The Ways!

Make IT your new best friend.

*Adam Horbett*

## #669: Bulletin Boards & eCoaches - A Great Support Mix

How do we get the most out of bulletin board usage as a learning tool? We use the bulletin boards in our virtual learning center to create a collaboration culture, and "extend" initial trainings into an ongoing learning experience. To ensure trainee participation on the bulletin boards, we make use of the boards an integral part of the trainees' study. Regardless of whether the LMS shows that they have "completed" a course or not, our trainers do not "pass" them until they have completed the requisite BB assignments. Trainees must post a question or respond to other trainee's questions. The key to effective "knowledge sharing" are eCoaches. Two of the eCoach functions are to check that the trainees have used the board (if not, they email a friendly reminder) and to post on the boards to respond to questions, reinforce best practices, and re-direct if trainee posts are misleading. A large proportion of the Instructor training is skills practice which is done in the classroom by a local trainer. The eCoaches can alert them if a trainee's posts indicate that they could use extra practice to improve certain skills, or if they see an incipient problem. You could therefore have a coach in Helsinki working in tandem with a trainer in Mexico City!

*Cynthia Gould  
Berlitz Languages, Inc.*

## #670: Treat Students As Customers

With increased competition from "for-profits" in the higher education space, it is imperative that traditional bricks and mortar institutions with e-Learning programs treat their students as customers. Focusing on the student as a customer means providing a superior education experience with quick and cordial customer service. It also means managing expectations so when the student earns a certificate or degree, the student is a happy graduate who helps grow your program by word-of-mouth.

*J. Kim McNutt  
Southern Methodist University*

## #671: Be Careful What You Wish For ...

E-Learning is like that pony you wished for at Christmas time. Once you get it you then have to worry about the vet bill, hay, food water, barn, saddle etc, In other words, all the necessary support things you never thought about that will keep your pony healthy and alive.

*Bill Kurovech  
DaimlerChrysler Corporation*

## #672: Capitalize On Past Questions For Future Customers

Devise a mechanism to capture questions from learners and incorporate them into FAQs.

*Linda Al Ansari  
Emirates*

## #673: Buddy Up To Serve Learners Better

When delivering synchronously and using an online chat/whiteboard feature, have another facilitator who is familiar with what is being instructed and the mode of delivery, be the one who dynamically responds to learner questions, etc.

*Dawn Mahoney  
Certegy*

### **#674: Don't Take Anything For Granted**

Don't assume familiarity with a PC, Internet and net-based collaboration tools on behalf of your learners. Or the learners' ability to troubleshoot PC for plug-in's etc if the course requires these as it is likely to be limited.

*Rajesh Lele  
Bank of Baroda*

### **#675: Needed: A Service Level Agreement Process**

Make sure to have a standard procedure to submit changes and know the turnaround time to get the changes implemented.

*Kathy Lents  
HouseHold International, Inc.*

### **#676: Minimum Computer Requirements**

Never assume the learner has the necessary bandwidth and computer requirements to complete the training. ALWAYS send the minimum computer and technology requirements beforehand, so problems can be troubleshooted and taken care of prior to the start of the training.

*Linda Wathen  
AdWare System, Inc.*

### **#677: How About Numbering Conventions?**

Use course numbers to your advantage. They can be used to signify an order in which courses should be taken, whether a course is scored or pass/fail, the date a course was created, the author of a course and much more. And don't forget to be consistent too.

*Diane Weir  
IBM*

### **#678: OK To Re-enter & Re-take**

Allow the user to re-enter the completed course later for review. Allow learners to re-take tests to increase their score(s).

*Roger Steinhorst  
Fireman's Fund Insurance Companies*

### **#679: Orientation Still Has Its Place**

Design and deliver student and teacher induction sessions to ensure students and teachers to develop essential skills to use Learning Management Systems and to study in an online learning environment.

*Paulis Cheung  
TAFE NSW Sydney Institute*

### **#680: Don't Need It, Don't Take it**

When warranted, offer pre-tests as a way for learners to test out of a course or section. This will save money by reducing the time spent in training and will provide training only to those who need it.

*Janet Clarey  
Utica National Insurance Group*



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## Chapter 14: Measure For Measure: Doing The "ROI" Thing

*Tangible and intangible payback. Proving the worth of your program. Accountability. Demonstrating the return on investment for any expense, including e-Learning, makes good business sense.*

### #681: Plan For Success Up Front

Make sure you figure out how you are going to evaluate the success of the program (levels 1 through 5) during your ANALYSIS phase.

*Scott Sutker  
Wachovia Corporation*

### #682: Motivate With Competition

One of the most important techniques we used in developing an e-Learning program for our Customer Service personnel was to include measurement. The measurement criteria was primarily % Completion vs. their peers in their specific branch location, and in their national peer group (750 reps). The program itself measured learning success by indicating wrong answers and requiring them to redo sections they did not successfully complete. The CS reps were eager to see how they stacked up vs. their peer groups and this motivated them to complete the course.

*Dan Castro  
Retired, GE Company*

### #683: $E=MC^2$

Effectiveness = measurements  $\times$  content  $^2$ . Training without measurements is like car without wheels; it may be comfortable but it will get you nowhere.

*Ulrik Ramsing  
LogiLearn, Inc.*

### #684: Think Before You Measure

Determine your online metrics based on the data captured by your system and recognizing two key areas: 1) Online data does not necessarily correlate to the same types of data captured in instructor-led training and 2) the types of data may vary between vendors as well as how it is being captured.

*Michael Kwidzinski  
Goldman, Sachs & Co.*

### #685: How Much To Budget For Evaluation?

Budget for evaluation right up front in your learning initiative Business Plan. Break it out and itemize it just as someone on a manufacturing floor would treat the cost of quality programs. We've found 7-11% to be effective and this also closely follows the costs of quality programs in industry.

*Dean Brown  
ACT, Inc.*

### #686: Measure What Matters

Tracking learning content is meaningless if you do nothing with the information. Get familiar with the Balanced Scorecard approach and tie your e-Learning data into company performance numbers that matter.

*Rick Zanotti  
RELATE Corporation*

### **#687: Don't Fall Into The "Just Because It's There" Syndrome**

Use e-Learning for what it does best - provide small chunks of knowledge when you need it ("guerilla learning") or as an online reference tool, or as a prerequisite for foundational knowledge. Don't compare or treat it like classroom learning. And then only measure what's appropriate for the way you're using the e-Learning. Just because you CAN measure other things doesn't mean that you SHOULD.

*Randy Ranaudo  
Thomson/NETg*

### **#688: Where Are We? Where Should We Be?**

Learning assessments are a tremendous tool to provide enormous value to both you and your learners. An assessment test is normally comprised of questions that help determine knowledge gaps and a good assessment tool will map those gaps automatically to learning solutions to provide a student with a personalized learning path. This is an area in which Internet delivery truly shines. Learning paths efficiently focus student efforts, time and money in areas most needed and as an aggregate, the data that is provided back to the management team provides an overview of knowledge gaps across the organization and therefore a very accurate compass to predict future content development areas.

*Sabine Steinbrecher  
The Learning Library*

### **#689: Early and Ongoing**

Build in ways to measure the content, use, completion etc. on an ongoing basis. And do it early.

*Christel Block  
Convergys*

### **#690: Gotta Prove It**

If you do not assess thoroughly the learning results and the satisfaction of your learners, forget about success. You'll never be able to prove it, even if it is real!

*Victoria Penacca  
Telefonica*

### **#691: The Right Tool For The Survey Job**

If you are surveying your audience, use a tool that is designed to provide outcomes that you can analyze appropriately. Not all assessment tools provide feedback with analytical options.

*Michelle LeBlanc Blair  
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.*

### **#692: Pay Attention To This KEY Question**

At the end of an e-Learning course, be sure to ask the simple question "Would you recommend this course to a colleague or friend?" Pay careful attention to the answers - you can learn a lot from just this one question.

*Mark Freeman  
University of Sydney*

### **#693: Build Metrics Into Reporting**

Make sure that the evaluation metrics are scoped and built into the reporting capability of your e-Learning course at the start. This ensures that management get the data they need to measure learning performance and ROI while the programmer can build a neater application faster. Delivery time will be expedited and users will have to perform the user acceptance testing cycle once rather than in an iterative way until reporting requirements are nailed down.

*Guy Wilkins  
ntl Group Limited*

### **#694: Show Me The Money**

If you want to demonstrate that your e-Learning was money well spent, then pre and post test.

*Wayne Soutter  
SkillWise*

### **#695: Think In Skills (Not Training) Metrics**

Find the person (or persons) responsible for e-Learning within your organisation and ask them if they believe they're responsible for training or skills. Their answer will tell you a lot. If they believe they are responsible for training, their key metrics will be the number of training events they have organised, the number of attendees, the analysis of the critique sheets, and the average occupancy in the learning centre. But if they believe they're responsible for skills, the key metrics they'll talk about are the competency frameworks they've implemented, their assessment and testing processes, the size and impact of the skills gaps they've identified, the competency centres they've worked with, and the public value of the incremental skills that they've developed in employees over the last 12 months. Now, which conversation would you prefer to have? I'll bet it's the latter!

*Colin Steed  
UK Institute of IT Training*

### **#696: Measure The Gap**

Start with knowing the gap between the reality in your company and where you want to go. This can be a performance gap, a knowledge gap, etc. You can then use the gap(s) to understand if the e-Learning project was successful or not.

*Rodrigo Fernandez  
IN2*

### **#697: If It Gets Measured, It Gets Done**

Our program is designed with planned, prioritized groups of learners and a specific end date. Sanctions are imposed on those who do not complete the program in the time allotted unless it is with good reason. Sound harsh? We have found that people still have a problem with the perception of e-Learning not really mattering. They tend to regard it as second best and appear unable to manage the time to complete learning. However, if the learning is part of a program supported by their managers (and where these are judged and evaluated on the outcomes), students will complete it as required. Left to their own devices it is put off ad infinitum!

*Mary Vaughan  
West Mercia Constabulary*

### **#698: If Important, It Should Be Core**

Build e-Learning into the Performance Management process if you want to increase the usage of e-Learning.

*Peter LeCornu*

### **#699: Alter Measures As Learning Evolves**

Don't put all your evaluation time into completion rates. At a corporate level, proven knowledge and skills transfer is more relevant. And as just-in-time learning becomes more attractive to organizations, we must alter our evaluation methods to provide for just-in-time evaluation.

*Paul Allman  
The Edgeworks*

### **#700: Make Sure You Can Measure It**

Most developers can work with you to build measurement tools into e-Learning courseware. If you can show that your e-Learning is delivering results, it becomes much easier to gain support for future endeavors. Pre-test results compared to post-tests is a basic measure, and tracking "time in course" data is also good. Tracking answers to course exercises can also help pinpoint areas that your teams may need to focus on.

*John Nycz  
The Quality Group*

### **#701: Are You Measuring The Right Thing?**

Involve the groups who will be evaluating the work of the students to make sure that what they expect the trainees to know is factored into the training materials. This group may or may not be the same population as the SMEs.

*Mina Busch  
American Modern Insurance Group*

# #702 is up to you

***What you do, matters!***



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## Elliott Masie's Personal e-Learning Tips

*(A bonus... 12 more tips)*

### **#1: Use the "e" in e-Learning very sparingly.**

Call it learning, or maybe don't call it anything. Just do it! Few people have ever said that they were having an e-commerce experience while ordering a book online.

### **#2: Watch the rise and evolution of search engines like "Google".**

I believe that Google is the number one e-Learning tool in the world. It is how workers and customers learn through their browsers.

### **#3: Get the CEO and CFO to take an e-Learning course soon.**

Get photos of them engaged in e-Learning and post them in the cafeteria. When it is used at the top of the organization, the reputation of e-Learning grows dramatically.

### **#4: Use less language of the classroom.**

Don't virtualize the classroom! Instead, create language that is appropriate for e-Learning.

### **#5: Older workers have weaker eyes.**

Use BIGGER fonts.

### **#6: Keep the number of choices on any screen to less than 10 if possible.**

Or even better, to 3. The more choices the user has the less likely they are to choose anything other than departure.

### **#7: People Multitask!**

Live with it! Every time I am learning or even teaching during an on-line session, I am usually doing at least 2 other things, including eating, drinking or checking my email.

### **#8: Blended Learning is the NORM!**

Every learning experience will be BLENDED, whether overt or covert.

### **#9: Rapid Development is happening!**

Business units require faster development, measured in days rather than weeks or months.

### **#10: Build a few templates**

...and give the learner a comfortable and familiar set of navigational tools for ALL of the organization's e-Learning.

### **#11: Make it a one click motion.**

Ask learners on exiting an e-Learning resource if they are leaving because they got what they needed or if the learning wasn't helpful.

### **#12: Invite, Invite, Invite!**

e-Learning requires more invitation than classroom training, yet it often gets fewer invitational moments from line managers.

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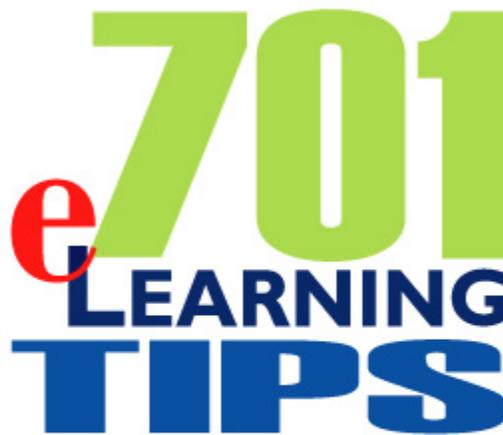
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