The Use of Online Learning Platforms for Employee Onboarding and Training

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The Problem

“Recently, I was asked if I was going to fire an employee who made a mistake that cost the company $600,000. No, I replied, I just spent $600,000 training him. Why would I want somebody to hire his experience?”

Thomas John Watson Sr.
Problem:

- Who we were
  - Healthcare Management Solutions, Inc.
  - Lifecare Oklahoma- Home Health, Hospice, Personal Services
- Who we became
  - LifeSpring In-Home Care Network
    - LifeSpring Enterprises
    - LifeSpring Franchising
Problem(s)

- Diverse service lines
- Expanding geographical footprint
- Owned vs. Franchised locations
- Compliance
- Uniformity
- Discipline specific training needs

Problem(s)

- More, more, more staff
- Remote access
- Content standardization
- Education needs
  - Onboarding
  - Continuing Ed
  - Discipline specific issues
  - Service line specific topics
  - Timely topics- e.g., regulatory changes
We need!!

- Scalability
- Management reports
- New Manager training
- Validation of learning
- Efficiency
- Ease of use

Realization....

- We don’t have the skill set to solve this problem

“We can not solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them” - Albert Einstein
The Solution

“We always hope for the easy fix: the one simple change that will erase a problem in a stroke. But few things in life work this way. Instead, success requires making a hundred small steps go right - one after the other, no slipups, no goofs, everyone pitching in.”

- Atul Gawande, M.D., Better: A Surgeon’s Notes on Performance

The Solution

Hire the needed skill set:

Professional educator
Online development skills

Consult/ Coordinate with appropriate staff:

Clinical leaders
Quality
Human resources
Hiring and Developing Employees

- HR professionals agree that employee performance, job satisfaction, and retention begin with a great onboarding experience

- 5 levels of onboarding
  - Compliance
  - Clarification
  - Culture
  - Connection
  - Check Back

Source: HR Specialist (Vol. 9 Issue 9)
http://www.businessmanagementdaily.com/20066/successful‐onboarding‐follow‐the‐5‐cs#_}

Compliance

- This is the lowest level of onboarding

- Includes teaching employees policies and procedures
Clarification

- Involves checking understanding of employees regarding
  - Position
  - Role in the organization
  - Expectations

Culture

- Includes providing employees with a sense of organizational norms—both formal and informal
Connection

- Refers to relationships and networks new employees must establish

Check Back

- Collect feedback from employees about the onboarding process in order to improve the program and the organization
Why Agencies Do Not Onboard and Train According to These Principles

• “I need nurses in the field now, not two weeks from now.”

• “We hire so many employees, who is going to train them?”

• “Onboarding lasts a minimum of 90 days, I can’t afford to have someone in training for 90 days.”

LifeSpring In-Home Care Network

As the organization expanded, we encountered additional challenges with staff training:

• Multiple service lines
• Multiple disciplines
• Multiple locations
• Levels of engagement by local leadership
• Levels of comfort with technology
Efficiency

• As we searched for solutions, we considered the importance of striking a balance between customized training based on service line and discipline while recognizing the need to streamline as much as possible.

Quality

Quality control was also considered

• As regulations change, how do we communicate the changes throughout the organization?

• How do we take “old” documents out of circulation?
Solution: Online Education

- When done right it can produce great results
  - Decreased costs
    - Once the onboarding program is developed, ongoing costs are minimal
  - Improved performance
    - Employees have 24 hour access to polices, training, and continuing education

Online Learning

We began to research online education as a solution to our complex training needs within the organization

- What is available for purchase?
- What can we customize?
- What skill sets would training staff need?
Online Learning Platforms

- Integrated set of interactive online services that provide instructors and students with information, tools and resources to support and enhance educational delivery and management

Examples of Online Learning Platforms

There are many platforms on the market today. A few examples include:

- Blackboard
- Web CT
- Angel
- Moodle
Implementation

- After reviewing options and weighing cost vs. benefit
  - Selected a developer to create our training website
    - Contacted our local career tech
    - The platform our developer recommended was an open-source platform

Moodle (modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment)

- Free and open-source software learning management system
  - Anyone is freely licensed to use, copy, study, and change the software in any way
  - Source code is openly shared so that people are encouraged to voluntarily improve the design of the software
  - Anyone can download and install a copy on his own server
Moodle

- Developed on **pedagogical** principles
  - The heart of Moodle is courses that contain activities and resources
  - App. 20 different customizable types of activities available (i.e. forums, glossaries, wikis, assignments, quizzes, polls)
  - The main power of this activity-based model comes in combining the activities into sequences and groups, which can help you guide participants through learning paths
  - Each activity can build on the outcomes of previous ones

Moodle

- Used for **distance education** and **blended learning** in schools and workplace
  - Blended learning combines online learning with a traditional learning format
    - IV Therapy Course- theory offered online, competency scheduled in office
      - Allows multiple nurses to complete theory at their convenience, then come together for a single competency exam
Moodle

Customizable management features, used to create private websites with online courses for educators and trainers to achieve learning goals

How to Implement the 5 C’s in an Online Learning Environment

- We recognized the basic HR principles of employee onboarding and training had not changed

- We just needed to change our delivery method
Compliance

• Employee handbook available online
  • Most employees don't need the employee handbook information on the date of hire, they need it as a reference tool when working in the field

• Annual Training
  • Required annual courses developed each year, placed online for employees to take on their own time
  • Tracking system in place for compliance

Clarification

• Define role and performance expectations through job specific training

• Employers and employees can check understanding in an online learning environment
  • Quizzes
  • Forums
  • Assignments
  • Blended Techniques
Culture

- Use the platform to make sure employees are familiar with your organization’s mission and vision

- By committing resources to ongoing education, your organization is modeling what it values

- Online learning platforms can encourage interaction and communication
  - Forums
  - Daily huddles

Connection

Nothing replaces great mentoring in an organization; however online learning can enhance the mentoring process

- Online community groups
- Online bulletin boards
- Online calendar of events
Ideal Model for Connecting in a **Blended** Training Program

Check Back

- Managers should formally check in with new employees at key points during the first 90 days
- Electronic surveys
- Course completion
- Analyzing quizzes- where is the employee struggling
Our Product

- Lifespring University is a virtual learning environment customized to meet the training needs of our complex organization.

- As the enterprise grows, the product can expand.

- As changes occur in the industry, the product can dynamically change to meet those needs.

Lifespring University
Design

Categories within the training site are designed according to:

- Service line
- Discipline
- Required Training
- Hot Topics

Each category contains courses.
Who Adds Employees to LSU and Enrolls Them in Appropriate Courses

- Initially, employees are added to an assigned cohort based on information provided by the manager.

- Ongoing, the designated “Moodle Manager” for each franchise can add and enroll employees.

- New employees can be added to cohorts and existing employees can be enrolled in additional courses.

Examples of Cohorts in LSU
How Are Users Added To a Cohort?

- Once a new account has been created

- Site admin>Users>Accounts>Cohorts>Choose appropriate cohort >choose the icon that looks like a person (when you hover it says assign)

- Type in the new employee’s first name in the search box at the bottom under potential users.

- Locate the full name of the person in the box, click on the name, and click add.

How Are Employees Enrolled in a Single Course?

- Select the course

- Go to Administration > Users> Enrolled Users >

- Click the 'Enroll users' icon at the top of the screen

- Select users from by scrolling or using the search box

- Click on the appropriate student>click the enroll button>click finish enrolling users
How Is Employee Training Tracked?

• One of the benefits of LSU is the ability to track employee training records

• There are many ways to track training within the Moodle system

• The easiest method is to require employees to submit copies of their completion certificates (electronically or manually)

Completion Certificate
Tracking Employee Training (cont)

- Another method of tracking employee training involves the Moodle manager using the system to cull records &/or pull reports.

- Remember, Moodle is a course based system so grades and completions are based on the course, not on the student.

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### Course Completion Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Site pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Log grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Current course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Auxiliary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Navigation**

- Home
- Site pages
- Log grades
- Current course
- Auxiliary
Tracking Employee Training (cont)

- Badges
  - LSU has a system that awards badges when courses in a particular category are completed

- To check to see if an employee has a training badge
  - Site Administration>Users>Accounts>Browse list of users>select user>badges will appear at the bottom of the course list

Training Badges
What Employees See on Their Customized Home Page

Lessons Learned

- Create a culture of onboarding
- The Onboarders need to be onboarded
- Onboarding isn’t the end to training
- Navigation Training
Lessons Learned

Online training as a component of total solution
- Online Training and Testing
- Field Preceptorship
- Sign off at each level
- Human Resources involvement in whole process

Dynamics of a dynamic solution....

Ongoing learning
- Lunch and learns
- Timely topics
- Annual training
- Remediation

Lessons Learned

• Badge System
  - Baseline screening tool for managers to track compliance; it is not an efficient tracking mechanism for non-compliant employees

• Log-in Frustrations
  - The overwhelming majority of LSU calls/emails are in relation to log-ins/passwords; train staff initially and annually; drive employees to the site frequently so they remember log in by putting up calendars, forums, etc.
Future Of Lifespring University

In an ongoing effort to improve our product, processes, and ultimately our organization, our online learning team is reviewing/revising our product based on feedback from users.
Enhancements

Based on this feedback, we have identified key areas in need of improvement:

- Standardization of content delivery
- More “blended” activities (using the platform to assist with competency training)
- Increased training of Moodle managers
- Customized management reports for efficient tracking of staff training

Conclusions

Online Education as a...

- Priority
- Dynamic
- Retention tool
- Component of the total educational solution
- Part of total online solution
Glossary of Terms

- **ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING**: When learners participate in an online learning course at different times.

- **BLENDED LEARNING**: Blended learning is an instructional approach that includes a combination of online and in-person learning activities—also called hybrid.

- **COHORT**: A group of people banded together, treated as a group.

- **COMPUTER-BASED COURSEWARE**: Courseware refers to any instructional software that is delivered on a computer.

Glossary (cont)

- **DISTANCE EDUCATION** or **DISTANCE LEARNING**: Distance Education/Learning occurs when students and their instructors are in different geographical locations and the instruction occurs on an electronic device, such as a computer or mobile phone.

- **eLEARNING**: eLearning (short for electronic learning) is an umbrella term that refers to all types of training, education and instruction that occurs on a digital medium, like a computer or mobile phone.

- **MOBILE LEARNING**: Learning that takes place on a hand-held device, such as a mobile phone, that can take place anytime and anywhere.
Glossary (cont)

- **MULTIMEDIA**: Multimedia refers to the presentation of information and instruction through a combination of graphics, audio, text, or video.

- **ONLINE LEARNING**: The term online learning is often used synonymously with eLearning. It is an umbrella term that includes any type of learning accomplished on a computer and usually over the Internet.

- **PEDAGOGY**: The method and practice of teaching.

Glossary (cont)

- **SELF-PACED LEARNING**: Self-paced learning refers to the type of instruction that allows a person to control the flow of the training/asynchronous.

- **SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING**: When learners participate in an online learning course at the same time but in different locations.
Glossary (cont)

• **VIRTUAL CLASSROOM:** The virtual classroom refers to a digital classroom learning environment that takes place over the Internet rather than in a physical classroom

• **WEB-BASED TRAINING (WBT):** WBT refers to all types of digital instruction in which the learning material is presented via the Internet

• **WIKI:** A website that allows collaborative editing of its content and structure by its users

QUESTIONS
and
Thank You!