There's more to training ROI than bleeding-edge technology

By Lyndsey Moorhouse   10 May 2014

Companies that want to drive the maximum return on investment out of their efforts to train users to use new business systems and processes, should let their training needs dictate the technology they use, rather than allowing technology to drive the training strategy.

Many organisations are seduced by the cost-savings and efficiencies promised by the latest Web and mobile learning solutions when they roll out functional training to support new systems and processes.

Difficult transition

However, these *bleeding-edge solutions are often not aligned with the needs of the user. We're seeing training and skills development being heavily driven by the latest advancements in software and hardware. Companies often love the idea of technology-driven training because it promises vast cost-savings on paper and printing, facilitation, training venues and so on.

But the truth is that many users are finding the transition to technology-driven training to be very difficult. For example, many still value the opportunity to interact with a human trainer to ask questions, and find that this helps to them to learn better than looking through an online FAQ. They also like to be in a setting where they can learn from their peers' comments and questions.

Companies need to factor elements such as the age and IT literacy of their users into account when they're developing their training strategy in support of the deployment of a new business system. For example, if the demographic tilts towards shop-floor supervisors or clerks in their late 50s, these users might not be as comfortable having their training delivered via smartphones and tablets as 20-something contact centre agents.

Absorbing information

We believe that electronic channels are great to support the learning process, and are also perfect for certain users who value the flexibility of learning at their own time and place. However, many users find it difficult to absorb the information and skills they're meant to learn through intangible online materials. For them, traditional classroom approaches still have a great deal of value.

In addition to the value of a human facilitator, physical support tools such as blackboards, whiteboards, 'cheat' cards, wall charts and so on, are still valuable for users who like something tangible to aid their learning process. A good trainer will be able to use aids like these to create an interactive learning experience that helps people to internalise the information.

Direct learning

Today, the trainer isn't a guru that dispenses all knowledge, but a facilitator who helps to direct learning. This level of interactivity - the training dialogue - helps people to absorb knowledge and equips them to apply their learning in a practical setting.

With most companies' training budgets under pressure, it is tempting to look at technology to shave training costs. However, the ROI equation should also factor in how much productivity the organisation could gain by equipping employees with the skills they need to perform at their best when using company systems and processes.

If users have not learnt and absorbed what they need to know from their online training, it could have a massive effect on the ROI the organisation is able to get from the systems and processes it has deployed at great costs.

[*Bleeding-edge explained](#)

ABOUT LYNDSEY MOORHOUSE

As Can!Do's managing director, Lyndsey Moorhouse oversees the delivery of high-impact ERP education solutions that help companies drive real ROI from their investments into applications. Lyndsey has been working in the ERP end-user education and change field for 20 years, 10 of those with Can!do Consulting. During this time, she has held trainer, team lead, project manager, change consultant, strategic training consultant operations management roles on a range of projects for blue-chip clients.

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