What’s to be done about e-dropouts?

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This presentation is based on….


The world is changing

Learning in time/place  ➔ Borderless solutions
Training for many  ➔ Personalized solutions
Instructor dominated  ➔ Learner centered
Bureaucratic control  ➔ On demand
Know it by heart  ➔ Learning and reference

More responsibilities for us

More choices for students
“An important finding in the education literature is that many students given control over their own learning choose to terminate the experience before mastering the training task.”

(Brown, 2001)

“….. found 45% felt the money they’d invested in e-learning had not been a success, with one in three arguing there were too few good quality course on offer. A quarter of the 275 people polled said learning in isolation, often the case in e-learning, meant there was a high drop-out rate with staff.”

[The Guardian, September 2, 2003]
But…

“I’ve been having these two parallel dreams about elearning. One is rosy and rich with possibilities. The other isn’t quite a nightmare, but it has people running down corridors and bumping into walls.”

[www.mcgraw-hill.com/authors/rossett]

Three levers to hold e-learners

1. The assets
2. The organization
3. The e-learners themselves
Three levers to hold e-learners

1. The assets
2. The organization
3. The e-learners themselves
• These programs haven’t worked in the classroom, so they might as well *not* work online.
• We just took our legacy courses and documentation, as they were, and placed them on the server.
• This is a brand new topic or regulation or approach and we’re not *really* sure what we want to say about it.

• Our people can’t get to the hardware, even though it would be a good idea if they could.
• Nobody has any data on how this all works with people like our people.
• Everybody else is doing it, so we figure we need to move towards technology.
True of your organization?

• Our people see no or few good reasons to use technology here.
• Our instructors and managers voice strong doubts about using technology.
• What they learn and refer to online has no link to how they gain recognition and certifications.
Three levers to hold e-learners

1. The assets
2. The organization
3. The e-learners themselves

What to do for e-learners?

- The right assets to the right people.
- Talk to themselves
- Talk to their management
Content relevant to the oil and gas industry.

Incredible relevance to task
• Coast Guard boarding officers must know about many vessels
• High error rate; costly training
• They rely on a PDA to inspect and report
- Conduct analyses (www.jbp.com/rossett.html) to tailor programs to people and needs— to really know them

- Guide learner choices explicitly
  - Learners with control often make poor choices (Williams, 1996), but they like the choices inherent in e-learning.
  - Our challenge: find the balance between choice and direction.

3 levels of support

[www.Plato.com]
Emphasis

- Communicate *why*.
- Frame the experience in authentic ways with problems, war stories and vivid examples.
- Use characters with challenges and priorities similar to the e-learner’s.
- Reiterate through extension methods, such as job aids, performance support tools, online discussion forums, and e-coaching.

Based on Beyond the Podium
[www.pfeiffer.com/go/BTP]
Our New World

Distributed
Anticipatory
Employee centered
On demand
learning and support

Remember:

• Be clear about the advantages that e-learning can deliver.
• Allow people to observe the impact that e-learning is having.
• Show how e-learning is compatible with existing goals and approaches.
• Keep it simple.
• Provide trials, so that people can test e-learning, see what it’s all about.

[Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971!!]
What to do for elearners:

- The right assets to the right people.
- Encourage them to be mindful about themselves.
- Talk to their management.

E-learners:

- **Am I able?**
  - Am I comfortable with a computer, a browser?
  - Am I likely to succeed with this content?

- **Am I honest with myself?**
  - Do I ‘get’ my strengths? Weaknesses?
  - Do I know why I need to know this? Can I relate it to my life? Work? Career?
E-learners: Talk to themselves

- Am I responsible?
  - Do I use time management? Do I deliver on promises? Do I follow through on commitments?
  - Do I provide prompt feedback to teammates? Am I engaged with communities? Do I submit assignments in a timely fashion?

- Am I anticipatory?
  - What might emerge that could hinder progress? Other work projects? Departmental distractions? Family responsibilities?

What to do for e-learners:

- The right assets to the right people.
- Talk to themselves
- Talk to their management
Elearners:

- How is this online experience related to my career? To our unit goals?
- What choices will I have? Any suggestions about how to choose?
- What kind of support is available for me?
- Has e-learning been successful here? What leads to success? To failures?

Altered

At the podium ➔ Beyond it
Bias for ed/trng ➔ Many interventions
Inventory ➔ Customization
Deliver ➔ Integrate, orchestrate
Teach ➔ Serve up content, update, stir, motivate
“Even if you’re on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there.”

Will Rogers

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<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>URL</th>
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Dr. Allison Rossett, Professor of Educational Technology at San Diego State University, is a member of the Training magazine HRD Hall of Fame and received ASTD's 2002 award for Workplace Learning and Performance. She is on ASTD's International Board of Directors. In 2001, she received ISPI's highest award, Member-for-Life. A native New Yorker, Allison has offered keynote speeches in this country and abroad about technology based learning and support, needs analysis and workforce development.

Rossett wrote The ASTD e-learning handbook: best practices, strategies and case studies. Her books, Beyond the podium: delivering training and performance to a digital world, and First Things Fast: A handbook for performance analysis, won the International Society for Performance Improvement's Instructional Communications awards. Her book, A Handbook of Job Aids, also published by Jossey-Bass, won the International Society for Performance and Instruction's 1991 top book award and the Association for Educational Technology, Division of Instructional Development Instructional Design Tool of the Year Award. She has published scores of articles, edited journals, offered seminars, coached and advised business and government leaders, evaluated programs and managed corporate contracts and government contracts and grants.

Rossett's client list includes Ford Motor Company, the IRS, IBM, HP, the Getty Conservation Institute, Fidelity Investments, Deloitte Consulting, SBC, Microsoft, State Farm Insurance, Royal Bank of Scotland, and several new media and learning start-ups.

**Bibliography**


