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Successful eLearning in 4 Steps



The Case for eLearning

Business leaders increasingly recognize that providing employee training is critical to success. Companies worldwide use instructional content available on demand to build eLearning programs that drive positive outcomes.

The global elearning market more than doubled in 2015, reaching \$107 billion. In the U.S., more than 75 percent of companies offer elearning to improve the professional development of their employees. (source)

Tremendous benefits result from eLearning—chief among them improving employee performance and productivity, aligning expertise with business objectives, and providing consistent and scalable training to a dispersed workforce.



What makes
eLearning
successful?

How can an
organization ensure
that success?



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THIS GUIDE DESCRIBES FOUR STEPS ANY COMPANY CAN TAKE TO GET THE MOST FROM AN ELEARNING INVESTMENT.



STEP 1

Identify Needs Section

A “one size fits all” approach to eLearning is not sustainable. Each department at your organization should consider its skill gaps and document its training needs. For example, Human Resources may need to improve new hire onboarding while IT needs to keep engineers up to speed with the latest software. Understanding the most critical pain points helps build a business case for eLearning.



Working with department managers,
take a few moments to answer these questions:

What are the problems?

These could include a need to increase performance and productivity, encourage innovation, create new leaders, or improve employee retention.

How big are the problems?

Consider how many employees are affected in each department, to what extent productivity suffers, and which projects are incomplete.

Could eLearning be a solution?

If the answer is no, ask why. Is the department unfamiliar with eLearning? Without buy-in, eLearning is less likely to succeed.

What are the requirements?

These could include integration with a learning management system (LMS), 24/7 access, detailed reporting. Look for commonalities across teams and departments.



STEP 2

Set Goals

With needs identified, you and your team can start creating a plan that exposes the value of eLearning and set goals for a future deployment.

To set goals, answer these questions.

Why are these goals important?

EXAMPLE

Management training would create opportunities to promote employees, which boosts staff retention and reduces time spent on hiring and onboarding.

Do we need a short or long-term strategy?

EXAMPLE

Several executives are expected to retire in the next five years. A long-term strategy would support succession planning.

Do departments' objectives align with company goals?

EXAMPLE

Management training in the IT Department is needed as much as it is company wide.

How can we reach our goals?

EXAMPLE

With eLearning, we can offer management training anytime and anywhere—making it easily accessible to all eligible employees, who can learn at their own pace.



STEP 3

Decide How to Measure Success, Track ROI

Measuring the effectiveness of eLearning and tracking the return on investment (ROI) is critical to confirming that goals are met.

Define metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs). Create baselines and milestones. Effective eLearning solutions offer detailed reports that track usage, course completions, time spent on the service, and more. Reports can help calculate ROI.



To ensure success, plan on tracking three key metrics.

METRIC NO.1

Employee Engagement

The goal is to evaluate whether training is used. If not, why?
The goal is not determining the ultimate effectiveness of training.

This measures interest and commitment, and how often employees use online training.

To measure this, effective solutions provide reports that contain data on user registrations, course progress and completions, the frequency of logins, and more.

METRIC NO.2

Knowledge Acquisition

The goal is to confirm that learning has occurred.

The measures knowledge, attitudes, skills, or other attributes acquired.

To measure this, effective solutions incorporate assessments that help determine how much critical content an employee learns.

METRIC NO.3

Behavior Change

The goal is to confirm changes in performance and demonstrate positive ROI.

This measures use of new knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

This is measured through observation, performance benchmarks, project analysis, and feedback from superiors or subordinates. The easiest way to confirm change is to document a deficiency before and its reversal after training. Surveys are great for documenting change.



STEP 4

Secure Buy-In

When pitching the introduction or expansion of eLearning to decision makers, focus on the value exposed during the goal setting described in Step No. 2. If possible, include ROI estimates.

To build a solid case, recruit an executive team or leader to sponsor and support the project. Also, decide who will drive and manage the project. For example, if IT has the primary need, it might make sense for the vice president of technology to be the executive sponsor. The IT director could be project manager.

To secure buy-in, be prepared to answer these questions.

NO.1

What's the problem?

Include the challenges identified in Step No. 1. Describe skill gaps.

NO.2

What's the proposed solution?

Concisely present your objectives and the proposed solution including goals, expectations, and measurements of success.

NO.3

Can it benefit multiple departments?

The larger the reach of the service, the bigger the ROI.

NO.4

What processes would be impacted?

Describe processes that may need to change as well as any new responsibilities created. Consider all departments.

NO.5

What are the requirements?

List all resources needed, including software and technologies.

NO.6

What's the risk of using an alternative?

Determine whether doing something else—or nothing at all—would reinforce the status quo, reduce productivity, increase employee turnover, or bring over negative effects.

NO.7

How will success be measured?

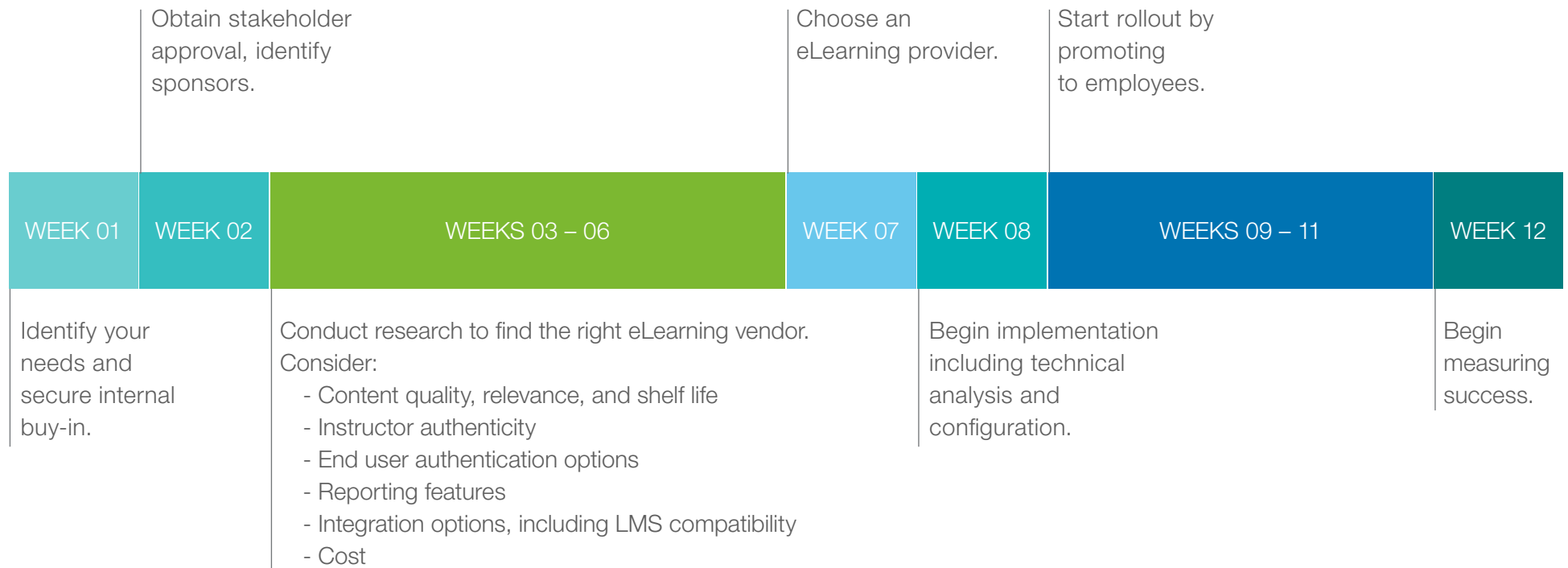
Be able to describe the metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) you've identified. Be familiar with reporting options.

NO.8

What is the implementation plan?

Describe an actionable plan that includes desired results, target dates, and major milestones.

If your implementation target is three months away, major milestones could include:





Conclusion

Some organizations plunge into eLearning without a strategy. This guide can help you and your team create a successful eLearning program. For further encouragement, compare courses in the Lynda.com online training library with the learning needs of your organization. Talk to executives about the value of online learning, and discuss specific use cases.

[CHECK OUT A SAMPLE EMAIL >>](#) YOU CAN USE TO COMMUNICATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ELEARNING TO COLLEAGUES AND EXECUTIVES.

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Author



Lindsay Thomson
Content Lead

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