Developing a Training Strategy to Enable Virtual Learning Content

Virtual learning content enablement (LCE) is the process through which information is disseminated across, within, and beyond the organization to a variety of potential audiences.
As many learners continue to interact with companies via electronic means, organizations need to be prepared to provide learners information through a variety of channels and methodologies. While virtual learning content enablement (LCE) for onboarding purposes often takes the form of organizational socialization (e.g., assimilating and communicating information to newcomers internal and external to the organization), the nature of LCE can encompass a range of purposes.

There are four audiences (or channels) for which LCE is frequently used:

- New employee onboarding
- Merger and acquisition “inboarding” of recently acquired employees
- Contractor/channel partner onboarding
- Customer education on products and/or services

Additionally, there are multiple overlapping content areas where LCE is utilized across these four audiences. As shown in the learning content enablement model, aspects of the organization, an individual’s job responsibilities, standard processes and procedures, and product/service information all play a part across information consumers (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Learning Content Enablement Model
Best Practice
While we are able to use a variety of delivery methods, the most important thing is to determine which method is most appropriate for the objectives.

Creating a training blueprint
For companies seeking to deliver virtual learning content to drive employee engagement, effectiveness, and consistency of content across the organization, there are several steps companies can take to ensure a successful adoption (see Figure 2).

Develop a formal onboarding plan
Having a clearly documented onboarding strategy is a necessary step to ensure learning objectives are properly aligned with business goals. The plan should take into account and anticipate the challenges inherent in online media and potential strategies to overcome any issues that may arise.

Ensure the technology is easy to use
Companies need to ensure that the interface to retrieve content is easy to access and user-friendly. Technical skills training should be provided for more complex systems, in order to close or reduce any skills gaps between individuals and the minimum level of proficiency required to navigate the virtual LCE learner experience.

Provide coaching sessions with a mentor
Target audiences should be provided with resources for coaching them and providing support to ensure positive learning outcomes, whether formal or informal and whether via an assigned mentor or management. Coaching can help reinforce learned skills and increase adoption rates.

Delivering 21st century training
Although enabling learning content for newcomers to a company is nothing new, the techniques of modern organizations can appear very different compared to what was standard practice as recently as a decade ago, giving rise to questions about what constitutes effective onboarding and customer education on 21st century virtual platforms.

By developing an onboarding strategy, organizations can effectively prepare to meet the needs of the modern learner.

For more information, read the full research report on “Enabling Virtual Learning Content for Employees, Partners and Customers.”