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e-Learning As A Business

Why e-Learning can help you leverage all your personal and business resources!

Topics

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Business Startups – An Approach

In today's competitive market, business, you have to change, to become effective. The same thing happens and for the human capital.

Today the old patterns have changed, the work shifting out from its traditional boundaries, covering more levels of everyday living, the old ways have been either abandoning or changing and new opportunities arise, for the ones want to exploit better the new rules of the game.

This situation seems to belong to a global trend usually experienced either as a necessity or as a popular demand.

Business, in modern society, is out of tune (*to say the least!!!*).

The market conditions leave behind a highly skilled human capital, without many alternatives in the traditional paths, searching for new opportunities.

The shifting of old correlations leaves societies with many gaps in the market and business while the new demands of the consumers provide more pressure in an already saturated market. These "gaps" though, leave room for new models of doing work, business, living.

The new working profile includes:

- Vision
- Passion
- New niche markets

- Small initial capital and funding for new companies
- Flexible legislative framework
- Small business formations (1 to 10 people, most of the times)
- Rising of demand for electronic services and innovative products
- Developing of new schemes for doing things in more efficient ways
- New ways for synergies and collaboration
- Innovation
- Social media presence
- Aggregation of ability, knowledge, skills, and attitudes in small groups or, even, in people
- High demand for steep curves of learning and new tools for just-in-time business & learning
- Convolution of business and social activities
- etc

As the highly expertise unemployment rises, the new models of work, develop an enormous momentum.

These models signify the shifting towards:

- Electronically connected and geographically dispersed groups
- Electronically based products and services
- Dependence on specialized social or business networks for finding clientele, contacts, associates, exploitation or development of new markets, etc.
- Heavy use of new technologies and methodologies based upon them
- Rise of novel ways of marketing or selling
- Formation of specialized, loose int their organization, "tribes", often around persons, products, companies, ideas, methodologies, etc
- New forms of employment or even a tendency towards self-employment
- Tele-working practices
- Flexible hours of working
- Passion for excellence
- Balance between personal and professional life
- Emphasis on personality and character

- Advance learning ways and tools accompanied by constant learning procedures and routines
- Focus in the acquirement of new, highly specialized, knowledge and skills
- An urge for education/training and quick dissemination of the acquired knowledge and results
- Integration of various roles in less, in the traditional sense, working profiles or even to individuals (*i.e. a businessman who is also, business developer, marketer, promoter, product developer, promotion specialist, designer, publisher, etc.*)
- Outsourcing of various tasks and delegation of traditional business procedures in 3rd parties (*other peer groups, small companies, specialized networks, or other*).
- New strategic alliances, formations, and coalitions, often from different business paths.

With the advance of these models or trends, came and new channels for communication and distribution as well as new **PoP** (Points of Presence), used in many different and novel ways.

This include:

- Blogs
- Sites
- On-line specialized shops
- Social media
- etc.

along with the traditional channels, resources, and means.

Today we witness the rise of the "**really small business owners**" (*many modern companies have only 1 to 5 persons, running all the traditional company functions*). The new workers usually have a blog as a base of communication and presence, are administrators photographers, design their own graphics and visual communications, handle the management and market, the contacts with associated 3rd parties, the promotion, and

public relationships, etc.

This trend presents, today a new area of employment and it seems large enough, to host many people. It also presents a new challenge or opportunity for many have the talent and the skills to exploit these "new frontiers".

How to Define your Ideal Niche Market

Do you have clients consuming the most of your valuable time without any substantial income? Have you ever feel like that you want to shift your priorities about the support of your clients? Are there any good or bad clients?

These are the questions revolved in my mind after a long session with a client related to a trivial issue about the marketing strategy I have suggested to him? And this event makes me think about what can I do for that situation!

What's Happening With the Clients

In consulting business, you meet a lot of types of people and of clients.

Some are wonderful people to work with while other clients are of the people you want to avoid at any cost. I think, you know the type!

Too much nagging and a little to none income! And that was the problem.

It is essential to know where a client belongs in the market and how he/she will be related to you in order for you to determine if he/she may become one your "**ideal customer**" or not!

A Personal Story

When I started blogging I wanted 2 main things: to provide approaches and ideas to people and small firms wanted high-valued services in a logical price and to promote the concept of "Leadership Initiative", a concept encompassing many business and leadership core approaches for

enhancing someone's personal and professional life!

I had the experience to provide assistance, consulting, coaching and services to people needed the help in the small business sector and needed help and training in relation to business and the new technologies (*in many* diversified *fields as is the business strategy, the management, the business development and growth, the business models, the online operations, the IT, the innovation, the e-learning, the startups, the marketing, the sales, the research and development, the human resources management and development, the just-in-time training, the social media, the distribution channels, the cost models employed, the price structure, etc.*)

I had a large experience in such areas (*a working experience of more than 23 years*), and I wanted to transfer my experience to people wanted to learn more about such concepts!

But, soon I found out that all of the clients are not the same! There are people seeking always advice (*free of cost, of course*) without being ready to move further on a more permanent business relationship with you!

And there are people seeking genuine help and trying to make the most of their investment in the process. These types are not the same! Actually are quite different!

It is quite different to provide support to someone who knows what it needs of you and to provide support to someone wants or thinks that he/she have the right to help him/her, no matter what!

Business Growth Pro Bono

You can find such cases in many business areas and are those I have categorized as good or bad clients!

When you have a long relationship with a "bad" client you unavoidably start to lose your time, your energy, your motivation and your intention to bring the results you know you can achieve for a company in need of such

transformation.

The problem though usually is that many clients are not willing either to establish a permanent working relation with you or to pay for your services!

Many clients, they believe that their business can grow without investing either their time or their energy or resources to transform it in something really competitive in their niche market.

Even more, they think that the consulting and training cost is redundant.

Yes, it is a trend that within the financial crisis is broadening, resulting many small companies and firms to provide **pro bono** services to their clients (*just for keeping them)* even to areas they are not have agreed upon! It is the case of "*you know how can I do this or that without*" **over the phone or "***Do you know the best software for social media marketing*"!

Bits-and-pieces (*or business patches if you like*) of course, on which though some, people gamble the future of their company!

Define Your Business

As a consultant, you should know how to maximize your revenue and how to select the best clients you can work with!

It is essential to severe the vicious circle of this false business relationship and focus on what's going to provide growth on your business!

There are a lot of things you can do, but there are 4 things absolute vital for your business operation and growth:

1. To define your **core entrepreneurship and business values/principles** and to set the **strategic goals of your business**, derived by those values,
2. To define and documented your **products/service**s for remedy an existing "**pain**" in your niche market,
3. To define with clarity your **value proposition** in your niche market in

relation to that specific "**pain**", and

4. To define your **Ideal Clients** for your business

What's are your Strategic Objectives

What are your values and principles you want to follow when doing business? What drives your actions and focused your efforts? What is the why of you business? Why you select this niche market versus others? What you can offer, no one else does not, today? How are you going to provide more value to people will associate in business with you? How you cross the barrier from a personal help to a professional service?

These are the questions, along with many more, you have to answer when you start a new business endeavor!

All these questions, though, depend from your core values and principles. What core values are? Simply, the ways your choose to doing business. How to develop them?

Actually there are ways, but basically core values should be rooted on your to do's and don't and to the agenda of the people start with you this endeavor!

Core values are your driving engine behind your motivation, energy and efforts towards one or more strategic goals you want to achieve!

They are related to what you can do in a business level, as well with what you would avoid doing (*no matter what!*)

You should first define your core values and then set your strategic goals of your venture, based on these values!

This procedure will help you to form your strategy and later on to align all your resources and products/services to your values.

What Are You Selling?

Core values and goals are only valid if you have the " **right**"

product/services to support them!

Most entrepreneurs, and especially in the small business area, does not bother a lot to align the core values of their business to their products/services in order to form a valid value proposition for their business!

If you produce or offer the wrong kind of product or of service in your niche market you will be unsuccessful every time! If you do not listen to your clients and your prospects and do not adjust your services and your products to their requirements you are going to fail!

But if you do not produce or offer products/services that are in alignation to your core principles, values and strategic goals you will never manage to do successful business! Or be personally successful!

As Colin Sprake puts it:

> *The reason why most business owners cannot tell people exactly what they do is because they really don't know themselves exactly what they do. This is the first define! You need to be very confident and clearly define what product or service that you are delivering, it needs to be crystal clear in your mind so that when somebody else asks what you do, you can accurately portray and let them know what you do without having to spend minutes describing or convincing them of what you do. If they have a confused look on their face after you have introduced your business – then you have a lot of work to do to get your message crystal clear! (DEFINE, DEFINE AND FIND!)*

This is especially true for services as the consultancy is! It is essential to know what you are selling and if you are addressing to the right audience.

The one "**size-fits-for-all**" rule does not apply to consulting business because every client is unique, and should be treated as such (*as every*

client should be, basically)!

That's why it is important to describe and documented your products/services along to the procedures you used for their development and the additional value/services, etc. you offer to a specific client.

These procedures in conjunction to your standard operation procedures of your company would provide a valuable insight on how you do business and, if not satisfactory, what it needs to be changed in your operations!

What is Your Value Proposition

Your value proposition is a core component for your business. It is a component comprised of 3 elements:

- **Connection**. *It defines the how your product/service connects to your clients. What problem solves, in what way, what features provides, etc.*
- **Differentiation**.*What unique characteristics your product/service may have, what makes it different from the competition, what value added elements may the product/services has in relation to your clients, etc.*
- **Substantiation**. *How your product/service have helped someone, what are the element that enhance its credibility, value and consumers' trust, what testimonials may exist, etc.*

A well-designed value proposition is one of the core element you should have defined for your business because leads you to articulate a unique selling proposition for your business and products!

Furthermore, it can allow you to adjust the value proposition to the specific of your business!

What your "Ideal Client" Is

To succeed in business and make it grow (*along to yourself*) you need to define your core values and principles and your strategic goals, your products/services, your value proposition and, most importantly, to focus on the clients who bring the maximum of results with the less effort.

This is a rule derived directly by the Pareto Principle that states:

> *that, for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes (Wikipedia: Pareto principle)*

Extrapolating on that and if your review carefully all of your clients you are going to see that roughly the 80% of your income comes from the 20% of your clients.

You job is to find **that 20%** and try to disentangle or minimize the effort you provide to the other 80%! You job is to find your "**ideal clients**" for your niche market!

An "ideal client" for small business is someone who can provide high revenue with low support!

As Melissa Chu suggests, a useful tool for finding that may be the Value Quadrant, but there other tools to help you define and select your " **ideal clients**"! You just have to start looking!

Choosing is the most revolutionary business act of our days and sometimes you need to be in a constant procedure of review and selection of your definition about business.

The optimal selection of your ideal niche market and of the products/services you provide would allow you to select the clients that you can interact in an effective way (*i.e. you provide them with the best value you can offer to them and they provide you with the best means and resources - money, time, energy, contacts, trusts, more work, business alliances, affiliation, etc. - they can afford to provide.*)

In this way, you can forge a successful business, a working business relationship and a true win-win strategy for you and your clients in your niche market!

Training is a Core Activity

I was returning an urgent call, the other day, by a client, wanted some explanation about the cost of a project.

The project he had recently launched, related to the development of a social marketing solution for his company.

The contractor has given him a fair price, but he thought he could lower the price even more (*crisis times, you see*)!

The thing he insisted the most and he was unable to accept was the training cost!

He insisted that the specific training was not at all necessary since all of his associates (*and owners of the project*) were knowledgeable on the social networks and of the marketing involved.

For this reason, he thought that he could skip that particular activity (*and the ensuing cost, of course*).

That's why he communicate with me (*no, it wasn't a project I was involved in*)!

He said how much he appreciated my opinion (*we had cooperated before, in the context of a different project),* and ask me if I could help him *(no charge of course*)! I explained to him, that training was a core component of the solution his contractor offered him, and, my advice to him, was that he shouldn't skip it without proper thought!

For me (*say it a professional bias if you like it*), training is a core function in every project either concerns knowledge transfer, product/service development or anything else.

An Easily Forgotten Resource In Today's Business > e-Learning

Today business tries to comply constantly with the changes in the economic, market and financial environment and compensate accordingly.

One way to do that, especially for large business, in an effective and cost productive manner, is the e-Learning.

e-Learning may be a unique proposition for enabling small and large corporations to provide new tools, skills, attitudes, approaches and methodologies to a large audience (*either employees or clients*) in a limited time, with accuracy and consistency.

In order, though, the e-Learning as a principle and a practice to do that, and to deliver the intended results, a business e-learning solution cannot be viewed as a just-in-time or impromptu operation.

Instead, it should be incorporated in the overall strategy of an organization and aligned with the goals of this organization.

e-Learning is both a knowledge management and a human resources procedure and should be placed within the organizational chart of an organization as an equal and valid method for the human capital upgrading, as the traditional learning procedures are today.

For this reason the business e-Learning should always be derived from the training strategy of an organization, and follow closely the incentives

for the acquirement of the new skills in that organization (*like position or salary improvement, etc.*).

In an operation like that, **e-Learning** cannot be seen as a function totally alienated from the day-to-day business, but should be rather considered as a vital part of the human resources strategy.

This approach, if combined with similar efforts in a business environment (like mentoring, coaching, just-in-time training, etc), may guarantee all the desirable results, intended by its adoption (i.e. *quality training procedures, towards large audiences in a limited time*) and remove the initial obstacles that may arise by its implementation.

Aspects of e-Learning

e-Learning, today, is a major asset for the skill development of everyone. It is essential now that every person should have unlimited access to learning resources according to his/hers style because the right to the knowledge and to the personal development is a critical factor of success in modern society and business.

This is one of the main drives for the development of e-Learning as a discipline as well as the advancement and personification of the existing technologies and tools.

e-Learning > Next Phase?

e-Learning *next*.0 (*the next version in the e-Learning, including pedagogy technologies, rules, tools, etc.*) should be a radical different approach from current learning practices. It should encompass processes and practices that are "*user - friendly*" and transparent to the end-user, should accommodate different aspects of learning (*social, on-the-job, mobile, etc.*) and should be accessible by various platforms, agents, etc.

That's why a new approach in the **e-Learning Business** is gradually developing, an approach that conventionally we can define as **e-Learning *next*.0**.

This approach if implemented correctly, can enable every person to have access to learning resources by the usage of advanced e-Learning technologies, tools, and practices.

A new direction of e-Learning

This path encompasses a variety of tools, technologies, pedagogues and procedures and (*if implemented based on current and future needs*) would

provide a solid framework that would integrate:

- Cloud computing,
- Hosting Services and SaaS Tools,
- Blended Learning approaches,
- Mobile and anywhere learning,
- Standard based adjustable (*according to users' progress*) content, systems, tools, and certifications,
- Just-in-time learning,
- Transparency and seamless integration of various services and tools, totally transparent for the end-user,
- Advanced usability, modularity, and graduality,
- Multiple and smart agents, clients and adjustable systems to specific needs,
- ...
- ...
- ...

The final outlook of the model, as it may be employed, depends, of course on many factors with main driving force the results that it will provide in the skills development of its users.

A Line of Trust

One common problem in e-learning projects is to establish a common "**language**" with the client.

This part is not usually referred to the e-Learning literature as a problem, but my experience says that it is!

And a major one if you do not have the experience to identify it and resolve it quickly and efficiently by establishing channels of "trust" with the client!

Trust is all about e-Learning (*as in business in general*)! Your client, trust you (*i.e. trust your knowledge, your skills, your expertise, your experience, your resources, your partners, your associates, etc.*) for delivering value to his company and his people!

He or she trusts you that you should identify, better than he or she can, the main performance "**bottlenecks**" of his/hers company operations and you will find the ways (*by e-learning, training, coaching, etc.*) to fix them!

This interaction is an interplay of trust, aiming at forging solid foundations for a cooperation, association or a joint venture!

Such venture is not just training or e-Learning! It is, or rather should be, a strategic alliance of freely associated parties providing mutual trust and value to each other!

In the e-Learning area is a little bit more difficult, because, sometimes, you should start from the ground up and build on what is there!

Some companies and organisations have been developed responsively to the market conditions, without following a master "**blueprint**"!

ADDIE Model

The ADDIE model is a framework of reference and of processes that can facilitate the work of e-Learning Process Designers, Training Developers or/and of instructional designers!

It helps you to channel efficiently the various processes comprising an effective learning process and focused on the issues, require your most attention!
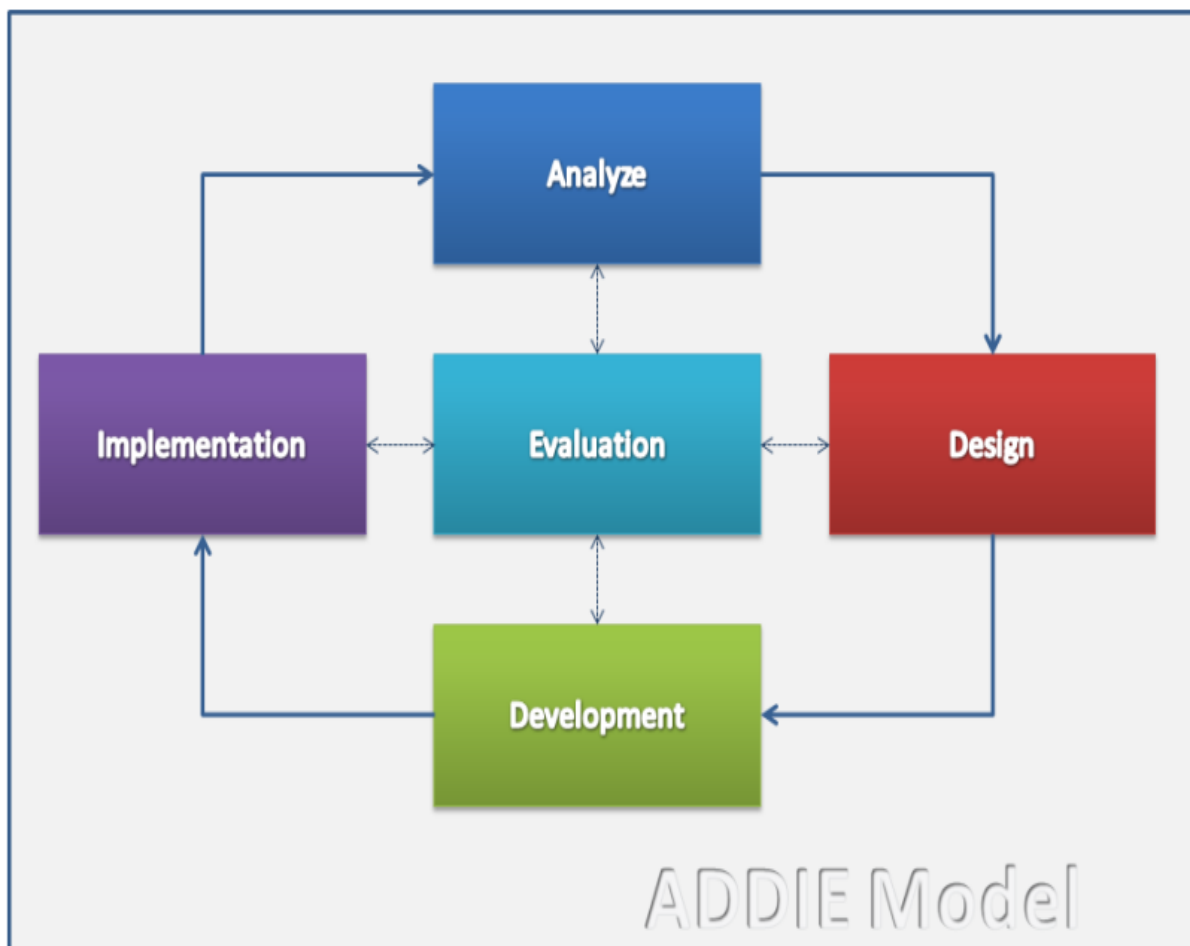
The ADDIE Model

The **ADDIE model** is:

a framework that lists generic processes that instructional designers and training developers use. It represents a guideline for building effective training and performance support tools in five phases.(Wikipedia: ADDIE Model)

Its name derived by the initial letters of the 5 phases comprise the model, i.e. **A**nalysis, **D**esign, **D**evelopment, **I**mplementation, **E**valuation. Each phase or step provides results that used as input to next phase.

ADDIE is an instructional design model, aiming at providing a coherent framework of processes required for the development, maintenance and evolution of any training process. For this reason is very useful, today, in the areas of e-Learning and blended learning!

This model considered as one of the most successful models in the e-Learning area and, today, has more than 100 different variations.

The 5 Phases of ADDIE Model

The **ADDIE model** comprised of 5 phases. These are:

- **Analysis**. The **analysis phase** aims at identifying the instructional objectives and problems, the environment in which learning occurs and the existing knowledge and skills of learners. The basic task of the **analysis phase** is to also identify the limitations and constraints may exist as well as the timetable for the implementation of the given project.
- **Design**. The **design phase** is a systematic and specific phase aiming at identify the required learning objectives, along with all the required activities, tasks, material, etc may be needed by the learners in order to achieve the specified learning objectives. In this phase the visual design, the usability, the content, the storyboarding of the learning objects, the delivery options and the prototyping, are also specified!

- **Development**. In the **development phase** all the blueprints, objects,

assets, graphics, etc have been specified during the previous phase, are assembled and implemented by the development team in the form of learning units. In this phase are been developed the learning units, the content, the support material and the learning activities, along with every other resource needed for a successful (e-)learning process. Moreover, during this phase "*the designers create storyboards and graphics. If e-learning is involved, programmers develop or integrate technologies. Testers debug materials and procedures. The project is reviewed and revised according to feedback*" (Wikipedia: ADDIE Model).

- **Implementation**. The **implementation phase** is the actual implementation phase of the (e-)learning project and consist of implementing the learning procedure in real conditions (*even sometimes it is more preferable the implementation of the project in smaller proportions as a pilot project, before the full implementation! This can save a lot of money and resources pinpointing errors and faults may have been escaped during the previous phases*). In this phase, the learners and tutors are trained to the specified learning procedures, and the training material, activities and tasks are disseminated and evaluated.

- **Evaluation**. The evaluation phase, is the last phase of the model and many time it leads to various cascading circles of repetition various phases of the model *(if needed!)*. This phase consists of 2 parts: the formative and the summative evaluation. The **formative evaluation** is been done in each phase of **ADDIE model**. The **summative evaluation** "*consists of tests designed for domain specific criterion-related referenced items and providing opportunities for feedback from the users*" (ADDIE Model).

Instructional Design as a Discipline

Instructional design is a multi-disciple domain, involving pedagogy, training, design, systems' knowledge, mentoring, community building, mediation, leadership, distance, *on-the-job and at hand*, learning, knowledge elicitation, facilitation management and channeling, human development, creativity, out-of-the-box mental framework, tools mastering, presentation skills, to name only a few.

All these (and some more) are vital and legitimate components of the **Instructional Design** practice.

Instructional Design from an Engineering Point of View

Instructional Design can best be viewed as an engineering approach. It tries to:

- Assemble all the knowledge elements, activities, actions, tasks, support material, etc that can structure a specific autonomous knowledge (or skill) "**unit**",
- Craft a general strategy that would build these units in a logical and augmented way towards a certain, measurable, learning objective,
- Produce an *on the chosen strategy based,* scheme that would direct someone to acquire that knowledge via certain, pre-designed learning paths and activities,
- Pave a smooth path that would lead someone, in the best possible way (*i.e. easily and, if possible, effortless*), through the learning path have been chosen for the gaining of the certain (*knowledge or other*) objective, and
- Evaluate the chosen course of action (and promoting the necessary corrections if, something, needs to be changed)

Where Instructional Design Can Be Used?

Its range of application in the learning development sector is vast, and its goal is to provide all the necessary resources,

in order to support and sustain a learner, towards his/hers training objectives (*either be the acquirement of a new skill, knowledge, attitude, or something completely different !*).

> *No one learns as much about a subject as one who is forced to teach it.* — *Peter F. Drucker*

To acquire someone, a certain knowledge, skill or attitude, though, is not the same as learning the specific knowledge, skill, etc.

Training is about *behavior change*. You cannot learn anything if you don't have change the way you do certain things.

Learning a new thing, is not like piling up new information on top of the existing ones, but rather is the small changes in behavior, ways of perceive, doing, act, respond, pro-act, integrated throughout your whole **YOU** .

What Instructional Design Is?

In a learning process, **Instructional Design** can help in clear up the difficult edge, pave a pre-destined way and setting the learning ecosystem in promoting your learning path, according to your objectives.

In this environment, Instructional Design, can:

1. Evaluate existing knowledge
2. Fill in the identified skill or knowledge gaps in a methodologically and pedagogical correct and acceptable way
3. Lay out the roadmap for the acquirement of the new knowledge
4. Smoothing the transition and the eventual "transformation".

In this context, **Instructional Design,** can both be used as a discipline and as a tool for gaining new knowledge of the world surround us.

UTVP – Unique Training Value Proposition

In the modern world, attention is the most dominant feature, every marketing group wants to capture and manipulate.

In a world of millions (*if not billions*) stimuli, the ones get your attention, are the ones that address their message tell you in a few words the how and whys you can trust them to provide value for you!

What a UVP is?

According to Wikipedia a Value Proposition is:

> *a promise of value to be delivered and acknowledged and a belief from the customer that value will be appealed and experienced. A value proposition can apply to an entire organization, or parts thereof, or customer accounts, or products or services.*(**Wikipedia**: *Value Proposition*)

In simple terms, a **UVP** is what makes you different from the competition and how you provide more value (*with your presence, product, services, etc*) to your prospect clients than all other in your business field!

A well constructed **UVP** (*Unique Value Proposition*) should provide:

- The main things make you different from all the other people/companies/organization in your business area or/and how you help them solve a specific product
- 1-2 points of difference and/or provide value to your customers
- (*perhaps*) some testimonials prove your assertions

The same thing happens in the area of learning & training!

UTVP - Unique Training Value Proposition

The are of training is today a much demanding area. Too many training offers in various knowledge domains for learning new things, skills development, how-to practices, social learning, etc. The competitiveness in high.

That's why you need to have a specialized UVP (*as everyone in the business area*), a one differentiate you and your product from the competitions, providing, at the same time, high training value to your prospect clients!

This is a **UTVP**, a **Unique Training Value Proposition.**

The new business, require new practices and new toolboxes, able to sustain and enhance tour business process!

A **Unique Training Value Proposition** comprises of the same, usual elements of a normal UVP, but it adds a single (*even more differentiated*) component: *the training value*.

Training Value

Training Value can be measured either by measuring your response (*or trainers' response*) to the pre-determine S.M.A.R.T. goals have been set for a specific training course, seminar, etc, or by measuring the "learning gap" of your previous condition to the after the training condition and check what have changed!

If the gap is proved to be smaller than the expected one (*something that depends on the design of the training and can be quantified according to training/course's objectives!*) then the certain training had training value which can be quantified by selected metrics.

If the gap is larger than the expected one, then the course needs, probably, to be redesigned.

e-Learning Is Not Just Systems

The e-Learning business is large business these days!

I work in this area for more than 20 years now and, always, something new makes a different impact on how people can learn better and more effectively!

I started with the multimedia technologies, trying to experiment with the new, then multimedia for delivering a short of vocational training experience (*yes, there were a time when audio, video, images, etc. are not a standard in a computer*)!

Later come the Internet age and everything becomes internet-based. But the aim remained the same: find better ways to deliver training and more value to the people!

Modern analysis, forecast a rise in revenue of more than $100 billion in 2015! e-Learning is modern, is is founded on solid pedagogical and training principles and it is reachable by everyone having an internet connection.

Everyone can use e-Learning for developing his/her business or him/herself!

e-Learning, though, is a lot of things. Most people believe that e-Learning are the systems support the learning process. But they are not.

The Learning Management Systems (*LMS*) & the Learning Content Management Systems (*LCMS*) are just the tip of the iceberg!

The main bulk of effort is the underlying pedagogical and training principles, the design of a course, the strategy of the content, the means of distribution, the quality of the supporting material and of the support!

The main thing in e-Learning is how you deliver more value to your audience and how to make them alter their previous behavior and attitude towards certain situations. And most of all, how to persuade them to use what have learned to their everyday life and work.

Behind this goal, there are at play many principles, methodologies and approaches, targeting, all at making someone to do something, to gain some more knowledge and skills, to chance his/hers attitudes, to alter beliefs and behaviours, to remove bad habits and adopt new, more healthier, ones!

And make someone to do, a lot more things in the process! To making him/her to grow in a way he or she were not seen as possible before!

Yes it is a kind of leadership and a cross-section of areas as the business development, the personal growth, the persuasion engineering, the instructional design, the storytelling, the content expertise, the social media, the training and digital strategy, the marketing, the gamification, and many more! It is also a strive for excellence not only to a business level but to a personal level as well!

e-Learning is about influence, of course, but a "benevolent" kind of influence.

An influence intended and well directed towards specific results for specific people!

e-Learning is an invitation for a free negotiation among a person and a goal.

And about what he or she can do it in order to achieve it! It is a "whisper" for the people want to do more and achieve more in their life, using their skills and capabilities!

And the price, usually is, a new level of control to yourself and to your environment!

Writing Strategies for e-Learning

Writing is a difficult process, per se!

It is not easy to be confronted by an empty space (*or screen*) trying to find your tempo and rhythm while you have run out of ideas!

But it is more difficult when you're writing for e-Learning purposes. In e-learning and instructional design, you should be prompt, exact and on the point!

You also need to write in a way that would lure your trainees in a story that aims to change their behavior and attitude towards certain situations and events!

When you write for e-learning purposes you need to be: punctual, focused, personal, emotional, prompt, accurate, precise, brief, etc. In short, you need to communicate with consistency and clarity!

In order to do that in an easy way, you need ideas, a plan and a good story that will introduce your trainees in a world full of capabilities (*and possibilities*).

Tell Me A Story!

When you write for e-learning you develop a story with many branches. Each branch should lead the user to a new level of skill or/and knowledge you want him/her to reach!

You gradually build a ladder for your trainees and (*if you have done your job right!*) you develop with them the right tools for each one to "learn" to

use them in an intended manner!

In this process, a story makes a lot of difference because it wrap-ups the message, to content, the goals, and the provided approaches to a unique coherent and easily understood framework!

A Plan Of Attack

In e-learning, you don't just write good stories. You write meaningfully, and personal stories for each and every one of the participants.

To do that, you need a framework of reference and a set of goals/objectives that will lead you to on how you going to design the learning experience for every participant!

To construct such an endeavor you will need well documented and internationally practiced approaches and models, appropriate tools, templates, GOALs, and systems.

Writing Strategies for e-Learning

1. Analyze the needs and requirements of your audience
2. Research the topics need to be explored
3. Develop ideas and approaches you may use effectively in the specified content and context
4. Organize your material (*notes, outlines, etc.*) in a logical way and according to your main objectives (*i.e. course's objectives*)
5. "Compress", simplify and re-write your original material in a series of sets that each set would include **goals** - (*instructional/pedagogical*) **approach** - **key content to support the goals** - **support material or/and resources** (*if needed*)
6. Develop appropriate aggregators and metrics for the learner to proceed in (*self*) reviewing and in evaluating his/her progress of his/her learning (*like summaries, key points, self-evaluation tests, etc*) and, if needed, for the organization to evaluate the process of the overall learning (like performance indicators, *skill/knowledge acquirement, organizations' assessment indexes (if required*), etc.)

7. Write the main instructional goals and an outline that would reflect your original thoughts on the topics to be covered in relation to the trainees and their training requirements you try to cover

8. Develop learning units/modules (*including objectives, summary, learning paths and means for each unit - in an outline form*)

9. Check your structure and sequence to see the proper construction of knowledge/skill against the intended objectives

10. Use simple terms, remove jargon and use, when it is needed, iconic elements, to emphasize some points and provide clarity!

11. Develop a storyboard, that will include all the above elements and items. Try to be personal and write in a way that can be appealing to different learning styles (*check the VARK model*). When it is possible, use copywriting techniques (*like AIDA*) to provide relevance, authenticity, rhythm, interest and accuracy to your writing! Use personal tone, a constant rhythm, self-explanatory headlines, short paragraphs, power phrases and verbs, etc.

12. Verify your approach and test it against real situations (*share it with some friends and challenge them to find the gaps in logic, flow, grammar, spelling, etc*)

13. Review your writing and correct or delete the items are not pertinent, the passages need correction, etc.

14. Fill in the blanks with more details, information, etc (*if needed*)

15. Provide specific slots for multimedia elements, and predict the extra information and clarity they will provide to your writing

16. Check each unit against its intended goals and re-write content if needed according to what purpose it serves

17. Review your approach and fine-tune your content and approach in order to make it as relevant as possible in relation to its goals!

What's Next?

You can subscribe to my newsletter and get some more ideas and approaches to help you do what have to be done in your inbox.

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