INFOLINE

Tips, Tools, & Intelligence for Training

SCENARIO-BASED E–LEARNING

by Ken Spero

ASTD
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SCENARIO- AND SIMULATION-AUTHORING

This job aid is intended to be used as guidance for designers when working with subject matter experts (SMEs) to author a scenario-based learning program. In order to capture and deploy the most realistic and effective scenario possible, SME knowledge has to be transferred to the designer. This job aid will provide a process to capture and transfer that knowledge, through two design approaches. Approach A is an analytical approach. Answering the questions below will provide enough data to author a scenario. Approach B is a storytelling approach. Simply relate what happens in a typical day in the life of the person whose job is recreated in the scenario. Please note that names, situations, and specifics should be changed to protect the identity of the persons involved, and disguise the real-life situations if they are described to provide insight to the scenario.

You can use either Approach A, Approach B, or a combination of both to prepare for your authoring discussions with SMEs.

Approach A: Analytical

What do you want to accomplish through simulation?

1)   What do you want people to learn?

_____

_____

2)   What do you want them to do differently?

_____

_____

3)   What knowledge do you want to capture?

_____

_____

4)   What current behaviors do you want to reinforce?

_____

_____

5)   Who is the main character in the scenario?

_____

_____

What are the measurable results?

1)   How would you define them?

_____

_____

2)   How would you measure them?

_____

_____

Describe the situation that you want simulated in detail. (Please assume that we know nothing and you have to educate us.)

1) Describe the situation.

_____

_____

2) Please indicate the correct, best, or optimal path through the situation to be simulated.

_____

_____

3) Please indicate other paths and the results or consequences of pursuing them during the simulated situation.

_____

_____

4) What happens when things go exactly as anticipated?

_____

_____

5) What happens when things go differently than anticipated?

_____

_____

6) What are the details of potential derailments?

_____

_____

7) How can students recover when they realize that they have made the wrong decision?

_____

_____

Who are the stakeholders in this training initiative?

1) How do they interact with one another?

_____

_____

2) Who do the principal participants interact with on a regular basis?

_____

_____

3) Who do the principal participants interact with on an infrequent basis?

_____

_____

4) How might each stakeholder impact the participant's ability to get the job done?

_____

_____

Do you have a model, recommended process, or procedure that you want people to follow?

1)   If the answer is yes, please provide a description and example of how it works.

_____

_____

2)   If the answer is no, do you have a preferred model, process or procedure that you want us to embed in the scenario; or can we choose generic examples?

_____

_____

Approach B: Storytelling

A Day in the Life:

1)   Describe a day in the life of the person whose job we will simulate.

_____

_____

2)   What happens in a typical day?

_____

_____

3)   How did the day begin? What happened as the day progressed?

_____

_____

4)   How did the person interface with the issue being addressed?

_____

_____

5)   Who does the person interact with on a regular basis?

_____

_____

6)   To whom does the person report?

_____

_____

7)   Who are the person's counterparts in other relevant parts of the organization? What are they doing?

_____

_____

8)   How do the person and his or her peers work together?

_____

_____

9)   What are examples of situations that have been handled well?

_____

_____

10) What are examples of situations that could have been handled better?

_____

_____

11) How is the team functioning?

_____

_____

Scenario Development Process

Create a first draft of the scenario and forward it to the SMEs for review. Hopefully, the first draft will be in good shape, but don't expect it to be perfect. Hold some follow-up reviews to expand the storyline and ensure that all aspects of the design are accurate. This approach can be used at the start of any training design.