

## Do You Have What You Need to Develop e-Learning Internally?

As the number of geographically dispersed employees continues to increase, more and more organizations are turning to electronic media to supplement traditional instructor-led training so as to expand reach and reduce costs.

Many organizations have internal instructional design resources, but most have never adapted ILT content for delivery through an electronic medium, have never managed an e-learning development project, and/or have never story-boarded an e-learning course.

It is our intent with this paper to share a proven process for e-learning project management, and to identify and define each specific step and subsequent resources you'll need to execute against that step.

At the end of the project management outline, you'll find a comprehensive, one-page, Resource Analysis Worksheet you can use over and over again to assess availability of internal resources to execute against each e-learning development project you initiate.

### Getting Started:

The first thing you need to do in the process of developing e-Learning is to clearly identify all the technical specifications and requirements for the project. The following are examples of type of questions you need to have the answer to:

- How is the e-Learning being delivered/served?
- What are the company's restrictions in regards to e-Learning?
- What type of features/functionalities is the e-Learning going to have?



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** The Information Technology (IT) Director or Operations Manager/Director is the person responsible for providing this type of information.

After answering all the technical specifications questions you need to make sure to allocate a resource as a dedicated project manager for the development of the e-Learning.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** A dedicated project manager.

The resource will have to create a Project Management Schedule and manage the project from beginning to end. That person will be responsible to communicate with all the stakeholders and responsible parties in the project and for overseeing that all the tasks are completed on the assigned deadlines.

We will now break up the e-Learning development process into sections so you can determine if you have the resources and skill sets needed to develop e-Learning internally:

### **e-Learning Development Stages:**

The six stages of e-Learning development are as follows:

1. Planning
2. Content Gathering, Content Analysis, Content Development and Instructional Design
3. Storyboarding
4. Development/Production
5. Quality Assurance
6. Integration/Delivery

### **Stage Descriptions:**

Let's look at each of the stages individually and discuss what resource you will need to accomplish each stage:

#### **1. PLANNING**

This stage is for gathering and documenting all the basic and primary information such as:

- Name of Project (or Internal Client)
- Point of Contact (the Subject Matter Expert, i.e. "SME")
- Project number (if applicable)
- Audience
- Date of Planning meeting
- Start Date
- Due Date



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** A dedicated project manager.

*We recommend breaking your project down into specific sections based on the primary tasks that need to occur in order to move an e-Learning project from development to delivery.*

## 2. CONTENT GATHERING, CONTENT ANALYSIS AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

In this stage there are some preparatory tasks to carry out before actually beginning to work on the project itself.

- Gather existing content



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** the project manager, instructional designer or content developer can gather all existing content.

- Analyze content provided
  1. Determine content gaps
  2. Develop new content as needed
  3. Present new content developed to SME for review and approval



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** the instructional designer will complete the analysis and can develop new content alone or with the help of a content developer/Subject Matter Expert (SME).

- Gather graphics, logos and color scheme requirements (if applicable)



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** the project manager should gather all existing graphics, logos, etc. from the Marketing or Art Department.

- Determine instructional strategy. The instructional strategy specifies how the content will be transformed into an engaging e-Learning course. For example:
  1. Experiential Learning
  2. Mentor-Mentee Learning
  3. Direct Game-Based Learning

4. Story-Based Learning
5. Scenario-Based Learning
6. Simulations



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Instructional Designer will be required for this task. Depending on the size and completion date of the project, the head Instructional Designer might need a team to support him/her.

- Create a “design document”. The Design Document serves as the “*blueprint*” for the project. It specifies the content, “look and feel”, and instructional design elements of the program.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** An Instructional Designer will be required for this task. Depending on the size and completion date of the project, the head Instructional Designer might need a team to support him/her.

### 3. STORYBOARDING

This stage is for laying out the content into a design template commonly called a Storyboard. Storyboards document the content and programming instructions as well as voiceover text (if applicable), for each “page” of the course.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Instructional designer familiar with the storyboarding process.

### 4. DEVELOPMENT/PRODUCTION

Some of the tasks under this stage can be done concurrently with the tasks in the Storyboarding stage in order to save time.

There are five steps to Development:

- Record voiceovers (if applicable)



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Voiceover talent

- Create Look and Feel (GUI or Graphical User Interface) of the e-Learning project.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Graphic designer working collaboratively with the instructional designer.

- Determine assets needed - such as graphics, photos, animations and characters.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Instructional designer.

- Create assets and have the client approve them.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Graphic designer and/or software developer(s).

- Produce/Develop/Program the course.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Software developer(s).

## 5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To assure the quality of the e-Learning product delivered, the course needs to be tested thoroughly at various points. Normally, there are two deliveries of the course: the alpha delivery (first delivery) and the beta delivery (final delivery).

- Upon alpha delivery of the course, test the course against the approved storyboards to make sure that the programmers followed the storyboards accurately.
  - An Alpha test document should be created, which will include all of the mistakes or oversights found during testing. It's a good idea to have multiple people test the alpha version. Send the alpha test document to the developers and have them incorporate this feedback for the beta delivery.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Instructional designer and a Quality Assurance team.

- Once the corrected version comes back, this is considered the beta version. This version needs to be tested before being submitted to the stakeholders. Ideally this is the final version and the stakeholders will come back with an approval.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Instructional designer and a Quality Assurance team, after which the stakeholders will be needed.

## 6. INTEGRATION

The last step in an e-Learning project is the integration of it.

The integration options are:

- Integrate the course with an existing Learning Management System (LMS). This means the content is stored by and delivered by an internal server and can track user access data and scores.
- Integrate the course on an external server. Typically companies charge a monthly hosting and maintenance fee.



**RESOURCE NEEDED:** Software developer / IT resource with LMS experience.

## Conclusion

Developing an e-Learning course internally can be complex, not everyone has all the resources and skill sets needed to successfully do so. We understand these situations and understand that sometimes there is the need to just get help for specific tasks within the development of e-Learning.

That is why we are a **“custom tailor”** committed to bringing you value and accelerating your results by providing either “a-la-carte” services through collaboration with your internal resources, or developing and delivering complete, end-to-end solutions.



## **e-Learning Development Process Checklist**

The following checklist will help you decide whether or not you are ready to develop e-Learning internally, and if not, will help you identify which specific areas of the development process you need external help on.

Check the areas you are prepared to do internally and do not check the areas you are not equipped to do internally.

- ☐ Know the technical specifications in regards to the development of the e-Learning and of the company (ex: How it is being delivered/served, Restrictions, Features/Functionality).
- ☐ Have a resource that can be dedicated to the project management of the e-Learning development
- ☐ Have existing content for the e-Learning (ex: Training materials, Content from Subject Matter Experts (SME's), Content from/in systems).
- ☐ If not, have resource to gather the content.
- ☐ Have resource to analyze the content (Review existing content and identify any gaps, determine if additional content exists or needs to be developed).
- ☐ Have resource to do the Instructional Design for the e-Learning.
- ☐ Have resource to develop any additional content (ex: instruction, learning activities, activities and/or games, knowledge checks and/or quizzes, pre-and/or post-tests, knowledge and/or process maps, system screenshots).
- ☐ Already have the assets or have a resource to create or gather the assets (ex: voiceovers, graphics, photos, animations, videos).
- ☐ Have resource to storyboard - Lay out of exactly what content, animations, voiceover, and graphical elements will be displayed in each screen and where and how it will play. All programming notes and functionalities are determined per screen.
- ☐ Have resource to do the GUI Development – Design and functionality coding of a Graphical User Interface, or the “Look and Feel” (Template showing exactly how the content will be laid out - placement, functionality, color scheme, etc.)



## About Facilitador™

**Facilitador** creates custom training and development programs that leverage the latest eLearning and virtual classroom technology.

Founded in 2001 under the principles that progress cannot exist without knowledge and productivity can be increased through the facilitation of knowledge, its solutions have been implemented in over 100 countries in multiple languages by some of the world's leading organizations.

**Facilitador** mission is to help its clients and partners solve problems and achieve new levels of human performance.

Many training and development programs tend to forget the most essential key to successful learning transfer: how will the learners actually use the knowledge imparted after the course is taken?

**Facilitador's** first and foremost concern is how learners will use or apply the knowledge to improve themselves and their company. **Facilitador's** solutions are designed to facilitate the application of knowledge.

### Contact:

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