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6 moves to create a successful training experience

Mini-guide on the steps you should follow in designing a training experience that focuses on users and not simply about the content.

A girl plans a holiday with her friend as they both love the heat and hiking in the mountains. The girl opts for an adventure trip with encampment and excursions of 10 km a day in different places, as she's certain that her friend will like it.

Once at the airport she realizes from the terrified face of her friend that it is not really the holiday she had in mind. She would have preferred a few short hikes, a comfortable hotel room with a shower instead of a tent, a little bike along the promenade and a little restaurant.

Moral of the story: the friend had planned a holiday without asking for inputs on the activities and the destination, and she went wrong on all fronts.

The same thing happens also when planning training courses: people are often not consulted to understand their wishes, expectations, etc.

Instead of thinking of training as an experience to be lived from the beginning to the end one only thinks of content, of what he wants to communicate.

In reality, a successful learning experience includes the user in the planning of the course, making a mediation between what the target wants, his business needs and the technological feasibility.

For a course to be usable it must have 3 characteristics:

1. Resolve a problem
2. Be easy to use
3. Be pleasant

Here's how to create a successful course in 6 moves:

1. Define the problem

Once the problem has been identified, it is necessary to treat it from the point of view of the company and the users, define the objectives and the way to measure them. Brainstorming tools can be used.

2. Create a map of empathy

There are several online resources to create a map of empathy, where which the user answers questions about a given function or knowledge "X":

- What the "X" user thinks;
- How does he/she feel about "X";
- What they say in the workplace when the user carries out the "X" activity;
- Which actions does the user do by doing "X";
- What are the user's difficulties in doing "X";
- What motivates him/her to do / put "X" into practice.

3. Create the Personas

A Persona is the user's identikit that comes to life (with a first and last name) when planning a training experience, and that will be kept it in mind in each step. In our example, the girl should have asked "Would my friend like this thing?"

4. Plan the learning process

With the learning journey maps, each stage of the learning process is planned taking into account the results of the empathy map and the solutions found. The learning journey must include steps such as:

- Key activities and expected results
- Emotions to be aroused or avoided
- Things that make the experience memorable or unpleasant
- Activity that should or should not be done by the company to support the experience
- Obstacles that may threaten its success
- Opportunities to be seized from the empathy map

5. Create a prototype

A quick prototype of the training project can be submitted to a small target to get their feedback and improve it accordingly.

6. What to get from the experimentation

From experimenting with the prototype, you shoul get information about what the opinions of users regarding the value of the course, the learning experience and how easy/difficult the content was.

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