ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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Blocking or not blocking navigation in eLearning courses?

Should students of an online course be able to navigate freely through the content or should they follow a set path?

When designing an **eLearning course**, one of the most important choices to make concerns the students' navigation within the course: is it better to let them navigate freely through the content or should they follow a predetermined path by the course designer?

Depending on the online learning platform (LMS) you use, you may not have much freedom with **course navigation**. In most platforms, navigation is already designed by the developers.

But if you have a certain amount of freedom in setting the **navigation rules** within the course, you will have to consider whether to apply restrictions to the use of the content, or whether to give the student full freedom, so that they can decide to skip some topics or follow them later.

1. eLearning course with free navigation

Free navigation offers maximum freedom to students, who can access content in the desired order and skip certain sections if the information is not of interest to them or if it is already in their possession.

In this case, to ensure that the student does not lose important information just because they want to complete the course quickly, you could add a **final test** and make sure that if the user answers a question incorrectly, the system will direct them to that specific content for further study.

2. eLearning course with blocked navigation

With the linear navigation locked, users can only move back and forth in the course and are required to visit each page. Blocked navigation therefore ensures that no content is skipped, but this may not be appreciated by students. On the other hand, just because people are forced to view content does not mean that they are actually assimilating it.

Moreover, blocking the course navigation assumes that everyone approaches the content in the same way and with the same **speed of learning**, but this is not the case.

If you decide to opt for this strategy, then make sure that the sections of the course are short so that users are not stuck for hours in the same section with the feeling that they are never getting on.

Generally, linear blocked use is suitable for **compulsory corporate training** courses, where it is very likely that the user will try to enjoy the content quickly, risking not acquiring the knowledge required by the course.

3. eLearning course with personalized navigation thanks to navigation rules

Some LMS, such as **DynDevice LMS**, allow you to set **navigation rules** by which you can constrain the student's navigation to their achievements, e.g. by inhibiting access to certain sections if certain objectives have not been achieved before (such as obtaining a score in a quiz) or by skipping entire parts of the course if certain minimum objectives have been exceeded.

Customized navigation is the most effective from a didactical point of view, because it allows you to create navigation sequences specific to the user and his results, applying automatic corrections during the course of learning that increase the quality and effectiveness of the teaching.

Combining several rules at the same time allows you to customize the course and adapt it to the real needs and **specific characteristics of each student**.

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