ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

Year 1 - number 3 Wednesday 29 november 2017

e-Learning training and evaluation tests: how to measure the ROI of training

In the USA Linux Academy was born, a e-Learning system with the innovative system of evaluation to measure in a detailed way the results of corporate training and locate training gaps.

Training often is an expensive yet crucially important investment for organizations. This is particularly true in our world where technical evolution is so rapidly and continuously evolving, and training has the role of main solution to fill the competency gap of the workforce.

In fact, training is core in preparing the new personnel, but it is also crucial in building strategies of employer branding (i.e. the ability of the company to attract new talents) toward already specialized profiles.

In this scenario, e-Learning solutions are more and more demanded by organizations: to fulfil their training needs, organizations can create ad-hoc solutions or use courses and e-Learning systems by third parties.

However, developing your own e-Learning courses might turn into an expensive operation: non so much in terms of direct cost (an American professional estimates an average of 106 hours of work and an average cost of 53.742 US $ for the creation of a course), but for the difficulty to calculate its ROI (i.e. the return on the investment made for the production of the course).

Many companies must cope with employees who are not capable to use the competences they're certificated for. This and other factors bring questions on the value itself of on-line learning and make its quantification a challenge.

How to we win this challenge?

Traditionally, learning evaluation systems are based upon votes, on standardized scores achieved in tests, and this can be misleading. But often there's no causal connection between the mere knowledge and its practical application; many students who have achieved success in their profession have never been first-in-class in the educational career.

This vision has brought to the birth of Linux Academy by Cloud Assessments, a virtual lab allowing students to apply their skills (acquired with the training) in an environment simulating all details of their work.

Software is programmed to consider individual factors like past training and experiences of the individual learner, the characteristics of the company, the time spent on tests and the number of trials needed to successfully pass each phase.

This sophisticated system has obviously met the problem of data management: the huge number of data generated by the software have been analysed in cooperation with a business intelligence company.

Results show a potential value for all business environment: data coming from training sessions give a full picture of the effective competencies of already and possibly hired personnel, are easy to understand and share between the employer and the HR department. In addition, these evaluations are useful also for the learners, because they explore their own competences in a very practical way and help them evaluating the training path still needed to satisfy their own objectives of career development.

The more big data management becomes widespread, the more companies will accept challenges like this and will take advantage of their potential. And we'll see e-Learning platform differentiating in this direction.