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# How to choose a character for eLearning courses

***Using a fictional character to accompany the students in eLearning is a way to increase their involvement. What characteristics should it have? Should it be a drawing or a real character? Man or woman?***

Many **eLearning** tools help companies create interactive and engaging online courses with a library of content from which to choose not only images and commands but also characters. Animated drawings or photos of real people play an important role in the narration of the online course because they help beneficiaries to identify with the story. The choice of characters to use, therefore, cannot be random, but must be in line with the educational objectives to be achieved and, above all, with the identikit of the course beneficiaries. Here are some hints to find the most suitable characters for your online course and create an immersive learning environment.

## Analyze the beneficiaries of online courses

The first question to answer when choosing the characters for an online course is: "**Who are the final beneficiaries?**". The people to whom the course is addressed can be identified according to their role within the company (employees or managers, new hires or experts, customers or partners), but it is not enough. In order to find the person with whom the trainees can identify themselves, you need to know more about the composition of the class: gender, average age and location, to begin with. In this way you can choose a male or female **character**, of the same age as the beneficiaries and of different origins if, for example, the company holds the course for its international workforce. The role of the beneficiaries helps to choose the clothing that the character wears such as the uniform, formal or informal clothing, or his movements and expressions.

## Adapting the character to the style and tone of the eLearning course

The type of online course is the other key element for choosing characters. If it is a course focused on the **game** preference should be given to drawings that make the video lessons light and fun. If it's a technical training course, it might be useful to use real characters to better identify with simulations or branched **scenarios.** The style of the design should also reflect the logo and colours of the company, always to encourage a sense of belonging.

## Create an emotional connection between the character and the beneficiaries of the online course.

When it is clear the character's identikit, his function, his clothing, his attitude and his style, whether you choose a drawing or a photograph, you have to find a story that gives life to the character. Its story tells first-hand about the situations that the beneficiaries of the course face in the workplace, their strengths and weaknesses, their aspirations. Through the **storytelling** a link is established between the imaginary life of the character and the real life of the beneficiaries of the course, helping them to learn and remember the course information for longer.

The choice of a character to animate an online course starts, therefore, from an identikit of the beneficiaries because the main objective is to capture them within a story that helps them to learn and improve.

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