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How to Create Effective Slides for an eLearning

Course Slides are one of the most widely used tools in an online course. Here's how to design them to make learning effective and engaging.

Developing an **eLearning course** requires the preparation of appropriate materials, both to allow users to access and use them properly during the learning process and to present the course. In this sense, one of the most commonly used techniques is creating a series of slides that can be scrolled through to present the various content of the lessons.

As explained in a **previous article**, the **slide deck** is an excellent tool for organizing ideas and presenting the main concepts of an online course. However, composing a set of slides is not enough to capture the attention of potential users of digital training. To make slides effective, it is necessary to consider several characteristics during the design and creation process to help the trainer compose a slide deck that is both effective and engaging.

Ways to Catch Attention

Capturing and maintaining the **attention** of a potential learner during an eLearning course is not a straightforward task. Students are often discouraged from starting an online training journey due to an unappealing presentation. Even after starting a course, some lessons may feel heavy due to ineffective use of slides. How, then, can you capture the student's attention? There are various strategies, and applying them can immediately engage the learner in the eLearning process. Among the possibilities, the following tips can be helpful:

1. **Include captivating animations, images, or videos**. Images and videos are more explanatory than written text and engage multiple senses, allowing the student to have a more comprehensive learning experience.
2. **Emphasize interaction**. Allowing users to interact with content is one of the strategies that significantly enhances engagement in the learning process. Avoid limiting interaction to a series of clicks on different buttons. This way, the student feels more involved in the learning process.
3. **Start with a question** or challenge. To capture the student's attention, one strategy could be to stimulate curiosity at the beginning of the course. This can be done by using intriguing questions that encourage reflection or challenge the user's abilities and knowledge. Organizing lessons as a challenge, where the student must answer questions correctly to move on to the next lesson, can be an effective strategy to keep the learner engaged in the learning process.
4. Focus on **emotions**. In eLearning, as in learning in general, the **emotional aspect** is crucial because emotions help internalize concepts and maintain users' attention. Eliciting emotions in students increases their level of attention and captures them, as emotions trigger memories or recall past situations.

Creating Effective Slides

Capturing the user is an important step for the successful functioning of an eLearning course. To do this, it is necessary to act on the tools used for training, including slides.

Here are **6 tips for creating effective slides** that can capture the attention of an eLearning student:

1. **Use colors effectively**. In an online course, the visual aspect is crucial, as lessons are mainly based on this. The choice of colors used in presentations changes the user's first impression of the lesson and, consequently, could influence its effectiveness and success. Colors create emotions and associations. For example, if the lesson topic is water, using blue as the main color makes sense, while green may be suitable for nature, and so on. In general, colors can be divided into two categories: warm and cool. Cool colors, like blue and green, can be used for backgrounds, while warm colors, like red, yellow, and orange, can be used for text or other content.
2. Remember that **images** are important. Images serve two purposes: on one hand, they translate even complex concepts

into emotions; on the other, they are essential for maintaining high concentration because they facilitate the memorization and understanding of content. Additionally, they often break up written text to make the slide easier to interpret and increase the student's attention. It is not advisable to create slides rich in text to avoid overwhelming the user with concepts. When creating a presentation, it is important to choose high-quality images that do not appear blurry during projection: low-quality images make the lesson ineffective because the student will struggle to follow the slides and understand the concepts they present. Even in the choice of images, attention must be paid. It is better to avoid inserting clipart or pre-set drawings (unless the slides are intended for a course aimed at children); photographs are more effective because they create greater empathy and develop students' emotional level.

3. Choose the **text font** carefully. Like colors, not all fonts are the same. Since slides are usually projected or shared on the screen of a computer or mobile device, the text must be highly legible and chosen from those designed to help the reader's eye.
4. Use different **means of communication**. In an eLearning course, multimedia is an important resource. To make the presentation more effective, the creation of slides should not be limited to the combination of text and images. There are many other communication methods that can be integrated into slides to ensure that users' attention remains high throughout the entire online course. For example: audio and video, animations, interactive questions, and quizzes.
5. **Avoid writing too much**. Slides with overly dense content confuse the user and lower their attention. Reading very long text requires effort and a lot of concentration, and the risk is losing the interest of students who cannot follow the lesson. Furthermore, the impression will be that of a confusing and unhelpful course. In slides, it is advisable to include only keywords, accompanied by tables, maps, or short phrases. Images and videos can also help break up the textual part, making the lesson more dynamic and engaging for the student.
6. **Do not create overly long presentations**. A presentation consists of multiple slides, but the number of individual slides should not be excessive for a lesson. It is important that too much content is not included in a single presentation. The risk is to decrease the concentration and attention of the student, as well as to make learning less effective.

Slides are amongst the most important and effective tools in an eLearning course. However, their design and creation require careful attention. A poorly constructed presentation could make learning ineffective, while well-made materials and contents can be crucial for the success of the course.