ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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How to prevent students from going into cognitive overload

The "cognitive overwhelm" is that feeling that students can experience when they cannot continue a training course in a satisfactory manner due to stress and an excessively confusing and information-laden program.

During a training course, it is quite common to feel overwhelmed by the volume of content and study times. This phenomenon, known in English as "cognitive overwhelm", also occurs in online courses where students can feel tired, frustrated and a little lost. Obviously, it is up to e-learning professionals to find new strategies to prevent this from happening. What are the main warning signs of this overload?

Information overload

Although the goal is to learn as much as possible, it is also true that the brain is not able to constantly store a great deal of information. For this reason, it is essential that, above all the more complex contents, be divided into small parts to avoid information overload.

Stress

Although stress is a sort of "spring" for motivation, if it occurs at high levels it is likely to cause too high a pressure on students. For this reason, it is necessary to use strategies aimed at curbing the problem both in terms of design and content to prevent trainees from being overwhelmed by anxiety.

Confused platform

To be able to study in the best possible way, students must be able to count on a simple and practical environment. The platform of an online course, therefore, must be intuitive and user friendly so as not to be a further obstacle to the study. Eliminating unnecessary content and graphic elements is an excellent way to avoid confusing course participants.

Lack of context

During the training course, students must be able to connect the various topics and learn about their application in the real world. When content is poorly connected, it is easier for students to feel overwhelmed and stressed by the study. For this reason, the structure of the online course must be designed in such a way as to make the context in which the contents are inserted always clear.

Do not give space to repetitions

To better fix the contents and give students greater security, it is necessary that, during the online course, there are sections in which to practice and repeat the theme just ended. Through quizzes, links to previous contents or small reminders, in fact, it is possible to train the memory of students who will feel more confident and confident in their abilities.

Course too fast

Often, the courses have the defect of wanting to teach too much in too little time. Although this strategy may initially bear fruit, in the medium to long term students will tend to forget the information acquired. For this reason, it is preferable to estimate the right time for the treatment of each content, a period that allows students to learn in a comfortable and structured way in order to

be able to effectively use the contents in the workplace. For this purpose, microlearning may be useful.