ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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Top 5 tactics to overcome resistance to online learning

eLearning is an effective and comfortable way of learning. However, it is not always easy for students to take the decisive step to access an online course. How to overcome resistance?

School training and **corporate learning** represent an important resource for students and workers who, by accessing lessons and courses, have the opportunity to improve their theoretical knowledge and refine their practical skills. The arrival of new technologies has made it easier to take advantage of training sessions, guaranteeing greater freedom for students and allowing companies to reduce the costs associated with seminars, courses and face-to-face meetings.

However, access to online learning is not always recognized as an easy and immediate opportunity to seize. For this reason, it may happen that learners are faced with problems, doubts and resistance, which do not allow them to undertake a digital training course. Breaking down this wall of distrust is not an easy operation, but it is possible to apply some tactics that allow learners to overcome their **resistance to eLearning**, allowing them to experience an effective, comfortable and easily accessible training model.

Why resist eLearning?

In recent years, the initial mistrust reserved for eLearning has faded and has given way to a complete acceptance of online learning and the **advantages** it presents. In fact, among other things, remote training has made it possible to:

- Reduce the costs incurred by students for transport and eliminate those of companies or schools with campuses;
- Ensure access to learning at any time and from anywhere, as long as you have an Internet connection and digital media;
- Personalize their education, allowing each student to choose their own study path.

However, these benefits do not always make it possible to completely eliminate the doubts and mistrust of the students who try to approach an online course. In a previous **article**, we had already talked about the main problems of learners and how to deal with them. In general, the **initial resistance to change** by those who switch from traditional learning to online training is, nowadays, almost overcome, given that **new technologies** have now entered everyday life. This has allowed people to familiarize themselves with digital devices, which are present in every aspect of everyday life: from television, to the mobile phone and the computer (now used by everyone as a personal tool and no longer just for work), digital tools are constantly at hand. So much so that the change, now, could be for some the absence of situations or environments in which online is not exploited.

Other critical issues that emerged among the eLearning students were the possible technical difficulties that the system could run into. Again, modern platforms have become faster, more reliable and more attractive, often enriched by an intuitive and easy-to-use menu. Despite this, resistance to learning could still be dictated by the inability or impossibility to resolve a **technical problem** with the system or medium used to access the learning, which could discourage the learner. For this reason, it is essential that those who design and program platforms for eLearning courses provide the user with a fast, easy-to-understand access system that is adaptable to any digital device, so as to allow the student to view the web pages correctly whether you use a computer, tablet or smartphone.

The possibility of not having to follow pre-established and fixed lesson times, but of being able to proceed at one's own pace in attending the course and in studying, accessing the lessons at any time and for as long as one wants, places the student in front of a weapon double edged. On the one hand, in fact, the lack of strict programming on the part of the teacher allows the student to organize himself according to his own commitments, preferences and times. However, on the other hand, the user must be careful not to waste time and leave the study of the course topics aside for too long. The risk is around the corner, especially for people **lacking discipline** or who have not undertaken the training course with the right motivation. Thus, the inability to self-regulate and set goals and a roadmap useful for completing the learning on schedule could emerge.

To prevent the lack of motivation and discipline from leading students to failure, some techniques can be developed by the teacher. In fact, the trainer can foresee verification steps or practical exercises in preparation for access to subsequent lessons. For carrying out these tests, deadlines and a maximum time to complete them can be indicated, so as to encourage users who are not able to organize themselves independently to have a trace of the study path. But the inclusion of tests and times is not the only strategy to increase **motivation**. Another possibility, in fact, is to include practical exercises, simulations or playful activities within the course (it is no coincidence that gamification is a widely used strategy) that can keep users' attention high and allow them to participate more willingly to the lessons.

Finally, a final cause of resistance to digital learning could be the feeling of being alone in front of a computer during the course. In fact, the lack of a physical place to meet could lead learners to think that the **social and interactive dimension** is completely absent in eLearning. But is not so. In fact, there are numerous tools made available to students, who can interact with each other and with teachers via forums, dedicated pages or messaging services. In some cases, synchronous lessons can also be organized, during which pupils can ask questions immediately, just as if they were in a physical classroom. To further increase the social aspect of online training, students can also be entrusted with projects to be completed with a group of classmates, who will be able to discuss and "meet" thanks to new technologies, which allow more people to get in touch between them and simultaneously. The possibility of sharing video, audio, images and texts via the Internet allows students to collaborate even without the need to meet in a physical place. Therefore, eLearning also guarantees the presence of an interactive dimension of the courses, without precluding users from the possibility of meeting other people and forging bonds with others: this is the **social aspect** of training, which does not in online courses.

The 5 ways to overcome resistance to learning

Resistance to learning risks making the student lose precious time and unique opportunities, which only eLearning can guarantee, thanks to the advantages it enjoys. To overcome learners' doubts and mistrust, trainers and course designers can use the following strategies:

1. **Facilitate access to the course**, designing an attractive and intuitive interface, which allows the user not to be discouraged by any technical problems. If the platform on which the course is uploaded is simple to use, the student will be more encouraged to access it and will overcome the resistance linked to the technical difficulties, which are eliminated by a complete system of tools of all kinds, simple to use and tailor-made for the user.
2. Make the course **more interactive**, inserting tests, simulations, practical exercises, playful activities that can make the student an active protagonist of the study course. In this way, the knowledge learned from a theoretical point of view can immediately be transformed into practical skills. Furthermore, this strategy will break down the preconception that often links the online course to boring lessons without the possibility of intervention.
3. Lead the students to study **step by step**, to prevent them from being "scared" by the amount of study in the course and from getting discouraged even before starting the study. To do this, it is possible to organize the course in small steps, interspersed with tests or learning checks, which mark the student's training path. In this way, each student will be able to concentrate only on a portion of the course and, once the relative knowledge has been verified, he will be able to move on. This technique could solve the resistance linked to a study volume that the student could perceive as exaggerated for their abilities or for their time.
4. Avoid **idle times** or the slowness of the lesson, so as not to give the user the impression of wasting time. In fact, eLearning is often accessed by workers rather than mere students. The training courses organized by companies or the study paths dedicated to obtaining qualifications to be able to carry out certain professions are often followed by people who, in the meantime, also work. For this, it is necessary that they are not discouraged by the slowness of the course. To do this, it is possible to plan the training path, making the most of the time available to the user.
5. Make sure that learners always keep in mind the **motivation** that prompted them to start their own training path. For this, it could be useful to provide a section that shows the student his progress and the distance from his goal. In this way, even in the event of resistance following access to the online course, the student will have at his disposal a useful tool to break down any temptation to abandon the lessons.

Although the advantages that eLearning offers, proving to be a great training tool, it is possible that students develop a resistance to online learning. The causes can be different, from the fear of being trapped in lonely and boring lessons, to the doubts related to the more technical aspects. However, eLearning has all the elements to overcome students' resistances.