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Using an LMS to understand the training needs of students

We are used to thinking of an LMS, learning management system, as a platform to manage and deliver online courses. If instead it were also a tool to analyze training needs?

Companies that rely on eLearning for their employees' continuing education have significant advantages in investing in an LMS, learning management system, a platform for managing and delivering online courses. An LMS, in fact, can be very useful not only in the final part, when a course is distributed and the data related to training are analyzed, but also in the early stages of planning, when it is necessary to evaluate training needs to be covered. Here's how to use an LMS to understand what skills should be passed on to employees to achieve corporate goals.

Use an LMS to trace a profile of course beneficiaries

After defining the business objectives, the time comes for the company to understand what skills are needed to reach them and who should take advantage of the training. AN LMS could be useful to trace a profile of the beneficiaries of the course. With a simple questionnaire, detailed information on future students can be obtained starting from the personal data, seniority in the company, position occupied and tasks in relation to the set objectives. For a medium and large company, the questionnaire is a way to narrow the field and identify the right target for the training course. For example, if the corporate goal is to increase sales by 20% using new software, the affected employees could be in different departments in different locations, not just sales. On the contrary, within the same department, it might be necessary which figures need to know the new software and in what terms.

Understanding the starting level of the beneficiaries with a quiz

Once the group of beneficiaries has been identified, it is possible to get to the heart of the skills to be acquired. As in any training course, one must first understand the starting level of the beneficiaries. In our example, company employees may already know software similar to the ones to be introduced or be used to a totally different system. A simple quiz, will help " instructional designer" to understand what the training gap is for each beneficiary and at what level or type of course to assign it. Through the statistics of an LMS it is possible to analyze a large quantity of data in a short time and to know immediately who should be trained in what. Other tools that can be used for the analysis of the beneficiaries are the surveys, the webinars, simulations and discussion forums incorporated in the LMS.

Analyze the skills acquired after the training

With the data provided by the LMS, training contents can be created in line with the requests of the beneficiaries. At the end of the training cycle, the LMS data is useful to understand what the beneficiaries have learned and whether they have made progress with respect to the starting level. The course evaluation also serves as a basis for analyzing the needs of a new training cycle. In fact, analyzing the statistics of the LMS gives a clear idea about the degree of student involvement and the aspects of training that need to be improved in order to achieve the company objectives.

Questionnaires, surveys, quizzes or simulations of an LMS can be used in the early stages of designing an online course to understand which are the target beneficiaries, their starting level and the skills to be acquired. At the end of the course the LMS reports provide indications on the efficiency of the course and trace other training needs for a new online course.