E-learning Tips and Resources

Creating a Successful E-learning Environment

- Before starting your course, meet with your manager and determine how the training applies to your job. Set a learning goal to be met by the end of the course.
- Find out the technical requirements of the course and make sure you have the right software and hardware to support the course.
- When taking the course, forward your phone to voice mail and turn off your cell phone.
- Turn off email notification and instant messaging.
- Tell everyone you are in training and cannot be disturbed. Post a note on your desk and let your coworkers know what time you will be available again.
- If there is an audio portion of the course, use a headset to focus your attention and decrease disruptions to those around you.
- Schedule time to study and make it a part of your every day.
- Participate in discussion boards and wikis that are related to the course you are studying.
- Discuss what you are learning with a mentor or a colleague who is an "expert" on the course topic.
- Invite your fellow coworkers to a brown-bag presentation and teach them what you have learned.
- Research and explore other resources (books, articles, and websites are good places to start).

Creating a Culture for Successful E-learning

- Determine the behavioral objectives when planning e-learning. When the training is complete, find out if your employees can "do" the original objective.
- For workers who enjoy learning through social interaction, create collaborative work groups (online/offline) and brown-bag discussions.
- Assign mentors who are experts in the field to employees who are learning new skills.
- Make the training relevant to employee needs. Consider giving them a survey to find out what they do not know.
- Do not view e-learning as an expense; it is an investment in your employees and organization. Training can create efficiency.
- Make e-learning a requirement. Tie e-learning to promotion, growth or an annual performance review.
- If you have employees who lack experience and exposure to technology, get them acquainted with it through an e-learning course.
- Invest in e-learning only where it will make the most difference; e-learning is not necessary for every training/education opportunity.

Two Examples of Blended Learning
at WebJunction

WebJunction's Spanish Language Outreach Program is blending in-person workshops with online follow-up sessions, message board discussions, and online resources. Six weeks after attending an in-person workshop, participants can attend a follow up webinar that allows them to ask questions, share successes and challenges, and hear about the outreach plans their colleagues have underway. The program is also building an online community of interest using WebJunction as the nexus for resources that include curriculum materials, external links, best practices, cases studies, and materials that participants can use to implement outreach activities. Both trainers and participants can also utilize message board discussion on WebJunction to ask questions, find resources, or share their successes and challenges with a growing community of library staff who are interested in meeting the needs of Spanish speakers.

One of WebJunction members is coordinating their State Library to take a blended approach to online learning. The member is pulling together a cohort that will simultaneously take one of the online courses offered on WebJunction while discussing it in the WebJunction message boards. By combining the low-cost course with an easy method of communication, they are working to learn together without meeting face-to-face.

Consider trying something like this with your colleagues or come up with your own methods to learn together. Share your successes on WebJunction!

Additional E-learning Resources

Library Specific Resources

- WebJunction's Learning Center: http://webjunction.org/do/Navigation?category=372
- Library U: http://learning.libraryu.org
- InfoPeople: http://www.infopeople.org/
- Sirsi Dynix Institute: http://www.dynix.com/institute/

General Resources

- American Society for Training and Development (ASTD): http://www.astd.org/astd
- Masie Center: www.masie.com
- Brandon Hall Research: http://www.brandon-hall.com/
- Educause: http://www.educause.edu/
- Learning Circuits: http://www.learningcircuits.org
- eLearning Guild: http://www.elearningguild.com
- Multimedia Education Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT): http://www.merlot.org