Assignment #4 – Curriculum Implementation Plan

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Overview

In this document, I discuss a plan to implement a training course within a fictional global service company. The fictional company, Cerberus, is a London, UK based company which provides luxury spa services to a predominantly female clientele in six international cities. In addition to the founding location, Cerberus has locations in Singapore, Tokyo, New York City, Beverly Hills, Paris, Dubai, and Buenos Aires. Cerberus prides itself on providing its services to a clientele that is used to international travel and expect a high attention to detail. Cerberus is looking to add a nail service to its line and needs to train technicians across their eight locations.

The corporation is launching a new service for its clients based on research on global beauty trends. They found that most of their clients are coming in with acrylic nails and are looking for maintenance as well as touch ups. Cerberus has decided to launch a new product line – a full service acrylic nail service.

Keeping in line with their commitment to impeccable service to their demanding clients, Cerberus has decided to provide a corporate training program to all eligible employees. Understanding that nail art is as much a skill as it is an art, they have decided to model their training program on the informal learning communities that exist on the YouTube video hosting platform.

Eligible employees will be able to apply to the program. Eligibility will be based on several criteria and will include:

* Employment with Cerberus for a minimum of two years
* Minimum of six months on the job experience in a position with direct client contact
* Four star or greater customer service rating\*
* Recommendations from two supervisors
* Minimal level of proficiency in English
* Proficiency with existing corporate computer platforms

\*Internal rating system based on volunteer client feedback. Rating system is based on a 0 to 5 stars where 5 stars indicates superior customer service.

Cerberus would like to launch the new product line by the fall which gives the training program six months to graduate its first set of learners. The salons will be installed in each of the salons within the next two months and outfitted with all necessary products one month after that. This timeline allows for delays in construction and enough training time for the first cohort of learners.

Cerberus recognizes the commitment to quality service in its employees. The company prides itself being able to provide a quality experience to its clients, while at the same time maintain an internal culture committed to the growth and development of its employees. Internal feedback by employees has ranked the accessibility to high quality training and development as a key reason for their low turnover rate.

In the past, training and development has taken place via corporate generated training modules distributed to branch locations. The training materials typical consisted of manuals supplemented with online videos when appropriate. The corporate office deiced to move to a new training modality due to the rapidity of change in the acrylic nail industry. It was determined that a community of practice model would better fit the training needs of the employees and allow the company to better serve their customers.

A community of practice model was chosen for its ability to allow employees to learn at their own pace, learn and share techniques with others in real time, to become owners of their practice, and to allow employees to keep up with changes in products and techniques in a rapidly changing field. As employees are distributed across the world, and online asynchronous learning modality was deemed appropriate.

Rational

Cerberus has chosen to model their learning system on legitimate peripheral participations as described by Lave and Wenger (2016) where the goal is to transform the learners from novices to experts through a community of practice model. This model was chosen as it allows for the corporation to provide standardized content, learners to progress at their own pace, learners to share ideas with one another, and builds on the sense of community and ownership valued by the corporation and its employees.

For a global training program where a goal is to produce a consistent service product for the clients, Cerberus’s training program is going to create a structured learning environment utilizing online collaborative tools. Within this environment, learners will be able to learn both independently and in a social manner facilitated by a corporate maintained learning management system.

The learning environment will support a global cohort of learners and practitioners and will utilize several existing online collaborative productivity technologies. Cerberus has identified certain features key to the learning system and are based on a corporate needs assessment.

* Maintained by the corporation
* Able to track learning progress of learners
  + Able to have individual modules / courses
  + Support assessments
* Support learner communication
  + Discussion boards
  + File sharing
  + Video conferencing (may be a stand-alone product)
* Asynchronous
* Technology agnostic
  + Accessible across platforms (PC vs. Mac)
  + Phone and/or Tablet
* Be able to support additional technologies
  + Video conferencing
* Cloud based
* English based

As the managers of the system and the learners come from a pool of existing employees, certain factors do not need to be addressed. These include common language, cultural competencies, access to technology, and

Cultural differences of learners – diversity is a valued quality at Cerberus and as such, the company maintains a rigorous training program for all employees at all levels. As a global corporation, respect and acceptance of our differences engrained in our daily practices. We hope that this new training paradigm will further this mission by allowing our employees to work together in a new and unique manner. By building on the community of practice model, we will be able to further explore and embrace our differences while learning at the same time.

Language – Cerberus officially communicates in International English. Recognizing the fact that they are a global company with an international clientele, each branch typically operates in their native language and adapts to the needs of their customers. All employees are minimally proficient in International English. It is expected that a byproduct of this training model is an increase in language skills.

Time allotment – training will take place on the job and during working hours as to honor the lives of our employees outside of work. Employment law differs by country so all training takes place on site and during normal working time. Employees can request overtime in order to train and it will be granted on a case by case based at the discretion of their manager.

Access to technology – all employees are issued standard smart phones (iPhones) and have access to the internet as well as productivity tools.

Systems-Based Proposal

The structure of the company and its rationale in using an LMS and community of practice model are discussed across the rest of the is document. One aspect that was not addressed is the choice of tools. For this type of application, where a company would like to utilize a more home-grown approach to learning technologies, there are wonderful online resources such as Jane Hart’s curated Productivity Tools site (Hart, n.d.).

Evaluation

Evaluation for the program takes place in several ways. First, there is a more formal measurement against learning objectives for specific tasks. These come in the form of more familiar assessments and take place in the form of multiple choice questions (MCQ) and short essays. In addition to these more traditional forms of assessment, learners are involved in a formative assessment process where they take the role of both assessor and learner and fits well in the community of practice model.

Learners are assessed by peers and more experienced practitioners through the process of sharing videos of their work mediated by the LMS. Members of the community are able to create, share, rate, and comment on user created content that is posted in the LMS providing a rich learning experience. As new members become more proficient, they are able to comment and provide tips to those more recently admitted to the program. Those with more experienced are able to provide guidance and other feedback to those in need. The tone and manner in which the community members act is important. Everyone is expected to act with the growth and development of others in mind and with the belief that even experts are able to learn from one with less experience.

About the audience (Koch, 2014):

Those admitted into the program are typical female and range in age from 18 to mid 30s. They typically have at minimum the equivalent of a US high school degree and a proficiency in International English.

Examples of learning modules:

Application of acrylic product using the reverse technique on a nail form

* In this module, an instructor will demonstrate a technique to be shared by written instruction as well as instructional video.
* Learning Objective: At the end of the module, students will be able to successfully apply a bead of acrylic to a nail using a nail form.
* Formative assessment will take place by both instructor and peers through sharing of videos, pictures, as well as discussions.
* Assessment: Review will take place via video recording evaluated by instructor.

Filing off of old designs

* In this module, an instructor will demonstrate a technique to be shared by written instruction as well as instructional video.
* Learning objective: Learners will successfully be able to use an appropriate grinder to remove a previously applied design a client’s nail.
* Formative assessment will take place by both instructor and peers through sharing of videos, pictures, as well as discussions. Users can share experiences with different types of designs.
* Assessment: Review will take place via video recording evaluated by instructor.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

* This module is more formal and traditional in nature. Training is delivered through an industry created training module and contains cases.
* Learning objectives: Learners will be able to successfully don personal protective equipment for both themselves and their client.
* Formative assessment will take place through discussion boards.
* Assessment: Students will be able to write a short paragraph describing the function of various pieces of protective equipment. Students will take a MCQ assessment via the LMS on the types and uses of PPE.

Reflection

Much of what we covered in this course was terribly interesting and made me think more broadly about the process of education as a while. It even had me think outside of more formal education and into the field of training and development, something that I find interesting after spending several years in the corporate world. Being in higher education, but not being a faculty member, the process of education has had a different meaning for me and has fallen somewhere between training and education. I found this course to be really interesting and it has had me reflect on my past as well as my current position.

Though I don’t work in K-12, don’t have kids, and don’t have an interest in working in the field, I have a greater understanding of where my learners are coming from. With that in mind, I approached this project thinking about learners from a diverse background (the world!) but had to narrow it down a bit in order to be manageable. This is something that would be more practical for a corporate situation.

I chose a corporate setting, and acrylic nails in particular, as I find the whole content area very interesting. So interesting in fact, I experimented on a friend at one point. I see this online learning through communities of interest or practice as a model of where education may be going in the future. A model where learning is on demand and more accessible to those with an interest. Of course, more formal learning in early ages will be more structured for longer than I can foresee as far as I’m currently concerned.

It’s inevitable that technology will continue to advance and with it so will educational applications. I believe the best applications will come out of authentic practice, as we see with online communities on platforms like YouTube. Learners will find ways to learn and share and push boundaries. As I transition from being a student to a practitioner, I hope to keep this in mind and always look to those interventions that spark joy in my students.

References

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