**EDTC 676 Effective Models of E-Learning**

**Leadership Vision and eLearning Plan**

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Rapid advances in technology created a myriad of opportunities for educators to professionally advance using eLearning platforms. According to Hirumi (2013), eLearning design and implementation should be based not only on emerging technologies or political agendas, instead it should rely on best practices and frameworks that are based on human learning as a theoretical foundation. The possibilities that eLearning platforms offer in terms of collaboration are numerous. Learners actively share and produce knowledge, this result in innovative ideas that can be beneficial to the field of teaching and learning (Fernandez &, Valverde, 2014). Collaborative learning is characterized by active shared experiences. Students are responsible of their learning and are encouraged to reflect on their cognitive processes. Scholars agree on the importance of combining eLearning and collaborative constructivist approach (Fernandez &, Valverde, 2014). The relationship between learning theories, instructional design and planned eLearning interactions are the foundations of a successful eLearning program (Hirumi, 2013).

Vision

Attention to workplace learning had greatly increased due to the significant role of professional skill and expertise in organization development (Minhong, Weijia & Yang, 2010). To organize instructional activities and deliver them effectively, designers need to understand the organization, scope and sequence, instructional events, and types of learning experiences (Brown & Green, 2011). Instructional designers need to decide the scope and sequence of instruction in order to identify appropriate content for learners who need extra support and those who need extra challenge. According to Brown & Green, (2011), instructional designers need to apply the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to meet the needs of a variety of learning styles and select activities that is appropriate to each instructional event. The authors also emphasized the importance of choosing activities that match the delivery method or choosing a delivery method that the individuals and the organizations need (Brown & Green, 2011). Organizational learning means that the focus should be beyond the individual level, and on organizational systems, structures and policies, so learning can be reused to serve the organization. Knowledge management refers to the practices used by the organization to identify, create, represent and distribute knowledge for utilization (Minhong, Weijia & Yang, 2010).

Instructional designers should pay attention to the activities in which learners will participate. They should be designed based on the task, learner and goals. The vision for this particular proposal, will use open-ended learning environment as Brown & Green (2011), mentioned and design the activities around learners personalized needs.

Designers of an eLearning practice for an organization need to examine adult learning theories, organizational learning, and knowledge management (Minhong, Weijia & Yang, 2010). Adult learning strategies should be the basis of the design of any professional development eLearning practice along with the ability of self-direct learning. Employees will be motivated if the objectives are set to meet their needs.

Minhong, Weijia & Yang, (2010), define certain requirements for the workplace eLearning to ensure success and to meet the needs of employees. They claim that most eLearning in the workplace despite the need, fail to motivate employees to learn. These requirements involve the relationship between the learner, organization, learning content and social context.

There are three requirements of establishing an eLearning platform; the first is the teaching aspect which refers to the curriculum, course design. Second is the collaboration between teacher and student. Third is the social aspect which allows students to understand how learner project themselves as “real” people, especially in discussion forums where communication is asynchronous (Fernandez &, Valverde, 2014).

Learning in the workplace should be built on practical tasks and objectives that serve the organizational goals. The activities should address organization interests, individual needs and work context. The connection between learning and work performance should be emphasized (Minhong, Weijia & Yang, 2010).

The content of the instruction, and its activities are organized into a curriculum. The curriculum would be further organized into a macro and micro levels (broadest level and most specific ones) or vertical and horizontal dimensions (what will be the sequence of contents and will be taught concurrently). Brown & Green, (2011), define the basic events in instruction as; introduction, body, conclusion and assessment.

Creating a community of practice in an eLearning environment when face-to-face (FTF) interaction is absent require a social presence to compensate for the building of knowledge that takes place in the negotiation of meaning in FTF setting (Fernandez &, Valverde, 2014).

In order to form a community of practice the model used should be based on participation, motivation and learning/interaction. Teachers play a role in creating strong sense of community of practice by creating a positive environment which increases student participation and motivation (Fernandez &, Valverde, 2014).

My proposal is to create an eLearning platform for staff professional development to serve a medium-size school district. The vision for this endeavor is

**“To create an ongoing eLearning opportunities that meet the professional growth standards of technology integration set by the district and promote collaboration among staff members”**

**ELearning Plan** (U.S. Dept. Education, 2010)

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|  | **eLearning Professional Development Technology Plan** | | | |
| District Goals |  | **Goal #1**: Provide resources at each building for staff to participate in learning modules.  **Goal #2**: Provide opportunities for Building Leadership Teams (BLTs) to work on modules collaboratively.  **Goal #3**: Provide staff training and tech support to facilitate the use of the training material. | | |
| Building Goals |  | **Goal #1**: Each building principal will designate a staff or tech member to model the new technology on an ongoing basis.  **Goal #2**: Staff members in each building will have the opportunity to use the learning modules for their PD.  **Goal #3**: Staff members in each building will provide evidence of their learning through instructional design. | | |
| eLearning Objectives |  | **Objective #1:** Staff will participate in ongoing asynchronous PD sessions focusing on integrating technology in the classroom.  **Objective #2:** Staff members will utilize instructional strategies for technology integration into instruction design. | | |
| Activity | Description of Activity | Outcomes | Responsibilities | Time Frame |
| Needs Analysis | * The purpose of the analysis is to determine areas of weakness in utilizing online resources * Analyze the findings and identify trends that need to be addressed | Administration would acquire knowledge about the PD needed for staff | Building principals  Teachers  Project facilitator  Technology supervisor | September 2015- November 2015 |
| Online Platform | * Identify the most suitable platform to deliver PD | Establish and maintain a platform to deliver PD learning modules | Building principals  Project facilitator  Technology specialist | September 2015- November 2015 |
| Staff training | * Model the use of the platform * Provide flexible training dates and times for staff | * Create buy in with staff through meetings and training * Expand faculty’s knowledge of asynchronous learning through technology | Building principals  Teachers  Project facilitator  Technology supervisor  Media Specialist | September 2015- May 2015 |
| Effective technology Integration strategies | * Provide staff with current strategies for integrating technology into their classrooms * Analyze integration strategies and provide feedback to staff | * Acquire knowledge of useful strategies to motivate students * Collaborate with peers in terms of technology integration into lesson plans | Building principals  Teachers  Project facilitator  Technology supervisor  Media Specialist | September 2015- May 2015 |
| Emerging technology and research resources | * Research emerging technology that will enhance staff learning * Identify ways for possible implementation of emerging technology and create learning modules | * Establish awareness about online resources and among staff members * Allow staff members’ identification and incorporation of new learning | Curriculum advisor  Building principals  Teachers  Project facilitator  Technology supervisor  Media Specialist | September 2015- May 2015 |
| Future of technology integration | * Identify areas of strength and weakness and plan accordingly for the upcoming school year * Share teachers assessment of their technology integration experiences | * Provide staff the opportunity to reflect on their professional development * Give staff members the opportunity to suggest ways to integrate technology and improve existing practices | Curriculum advisor  Building principals  Teachers  Project facilitator  Technology supervisor  Media Specialist |  |
| Evaluation | * Present experiences and ideas to staff and administration * Share reflections with staff * Complete a survey about the PD experience as a whole | * Reflect on areas of strengths and weaknesses and address them * Conduct an analysis of the yearlong experience of technology integration to provide evidence of effectiveness or improvement needs | Curriculum advisor  Building principals  Teachers  Project facilitator  Technology supervisor  Media Specialist | May 2015- June 2015 |

**ELearning platform to deliver professional development activities proposal**

**Project Overview**

Using an online platform to deliver quality professional development activities for staff members is an effective way to address performance issues, meet the district goals and meet individual needs of staff members to grow professionally. Hiring an on-site professional trainer or sending staff members to off-site training cost the district a lot of funds, and do not offer an equal opportunity for all staff members to grow professionally.

Designing an eLearning platform for the district serves many purposes; the ability to provide quality professional development instruction, the ability to provide staff members with better access to PD resources, reduce the restraints of time and place in terms of delivery and address performance issues stemming from summative evaluations.

**Project Goals**

1. To provide quality professional development program
2. To provide staff with access to resources to enhance their practice
3. To provide our students with quality instruction by improving teacher practice

**Project objectives**

1. Staff will participate in ongoing asynchronous professional development aimed at filling the gap in performance and enhance practice.
2. Staff members will utilize instructional strategies for technology integration into instruction design aimed at increasing student achievement.
3. Provide staff with professional development service equal in content and quality to off-site training

**Audience**

There are two different target groups for this project

* The first and primary, are staff members who work in the district.
* The second group are the students who will benefit indirectly from the improvement in instruction and lesson delivery

**Method**

The method for achieving the goals and objectives of the project will be unitizing Google for education sites. The district is utilizing Google and chrome books for instructions, and Google Apps allow districts to create their own learning modules and provide feedback data on performance. With Google Apps staff members can collaborate via Google docs on projects, and share best practices with each other within their own district or outside.

Learning modules will be uploaded on YouTube Edu, and links will be shared with all district members.

**Staff/ Administration**

* Board of education/ Superintendent: Determine approval and funding
* Assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction: oversees the quality of instruction, implementation and the evaluation of the project
* Director of Technology: oversees technology required for the project
* Building Principals: Oversees individual buildings technology requirement and determine staff professional development needs
* Technology facilitators: Oversee the availability and maintenance of technology for the project
* Project managers: responsible for training staff and updating learning modules
* Staff members responsible for keeping record of modules attended

**Facilities**

This project will utilize the district building computer labs for the initial training and on occasional F2F presentations. Most of the time staff members will use their district issued or personal computers to access learning modules

**Equipment/Supplies**

Needed equipment

Smartboard, Computers, Printers

Needed supplies

Paper, pencils for note taking

**Instruction material:**

The main focus of the instructional material will be about online recourses that are available to the district on a subscription basis in various content areas. The goal is to familiarize staff members with these resources so they will utilize them in their lesson plans. School Library Media Specialist (expert) will be responsible for preparing the instructional materials and review them with the Director of Curriculum, to determine any weakness and make revisions, and with Department Supervisors to determine suitability of the material for the learners.

**Evaluation plan**

* Formative evaluation: mainly qualitative in nature conducted through interviews, observations and exit tickets. This ongoing data gathering during material delivery aims at finding weaknesses and make revisions.
* Summative evaluation: mainly quantitative in nature through collecting data about hours attended and staff summative evaluations. Summative evaluation will include:
  + Reactions: to determine the staff members reaction to the training and whether they have enjoyed it or not.
  + Learning: to determine whether staff members’ skills have changed as the result of the training using data gathered from lesson plans.
  + Transfer: to determine whether the newly acquired knowledge are being used in the classroom using data from observations.
  + Results: to determine the training overall effectiveness in terms of increased students’ scores or improved quality portfolios.

**Budget**

There is no startup costs since the district is utilizing Google and YouTube Edu, and the course designer is a staff member. This eLearning project will operate within designated funds for professional development.

**Conclusion**

The design of this eLearning program has taken a systematic approach; starting from the analysis of the learning needs and goals, development of the instructional materials with the help of an expert in the subject, and finally the evaluations of the instruction and the participants’ activities and attitudes. Success of this project will depend on the availability of a staff member who is familiar with the learning module and the software application to facilitate access of staff members and provide tutorials when needed.

Reference

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