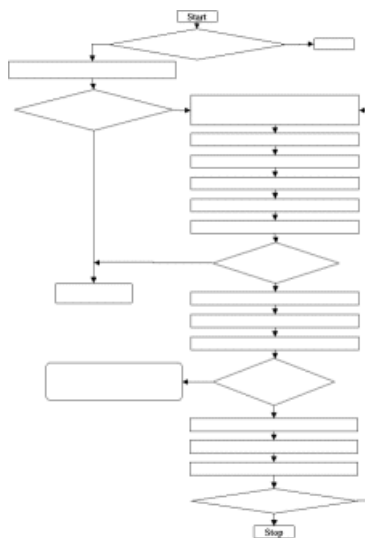





E-learning

Getting started



Your organization would like to start with e-learning. But how to get started? Why? For whom? What is the content?

The purpose of this guide is to eliminate as much as possible the uncertainty related to the effectiveness and feasibility of this method that we call 'e-learning' by offering you this practical guide that shows you how you can manage your project.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
|   Leonardo da Vinci | <p>This project has been financed with the support of the European Commission. The responsibility of this publication lies solely with the author. The commission can not be taken responsible for the use of the contents.</p> |  E.F.ODL |
|--|---|---|

Authors

This guide was written with the participation of the following organizations. (alphabetically):

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>The Belgian network of open and distance education was founded in 1999 following an initiative of VDAB and Le Forem and aims to promote e-learning, together with other public and private partners. The network focuses on the labour market. It aims to promote e-learning in companies. The organization of seminars where best practices are presented to the public, is only one of the many activities of this network.</p> |
|  | <p>Cevora is the education centre for the sector of "paritair comity 218", representing the white collar workers. This sector regroups more than 50.000 companies, with 340.000 white collar workers. Cevora organizes free training sessions for this target group and also for the jobless. Furthermore Cevora pays back training-subventions and organizes outplacement and the industrial body of students for the sector.</p> |
|  | <p>The FOREM, as public service for labour and education for the Walloon Region, acts as coordinator and offers therefore different services of public importance such as qualifying trainings and active support in the search for work.</p> |
|  | <p>GiVi offers the total range of training methods, from traditional training over open learning to e-learning. Hence Givi can offer a blended approach. For each learner and each training the ideal learning track can be offered. Furthermore GiVi offers additional products and services: consultancy related to training projects, the development of training material, advice and implementation of a complete Learning Management System: Competas.</p> |
|  | <p>IPV is the sectoral training centre of the food industry (PC 118 and PC 220). It offers a whole range of services to this industry: standard courses, tailor-made courses, coaching in some specific areas such as training programs, HACCP, BRC, etc. These actions are oriented towards employees, jobseekers and youth.</p> |
|  | <p>The "VormingsInitiatief voor Bedienden uit de Anwerpse metaalnijverheid", in short VIBAM, is the sectoral training organization of the metal industry, electro technical industry and the industry of synthetic materials in the province of Antwerp, that supports industries that belong to the "Paritair Comité 209" for training of their employees. VIBAM works with 500 organizations with a total of 15 000 employees.</p> |

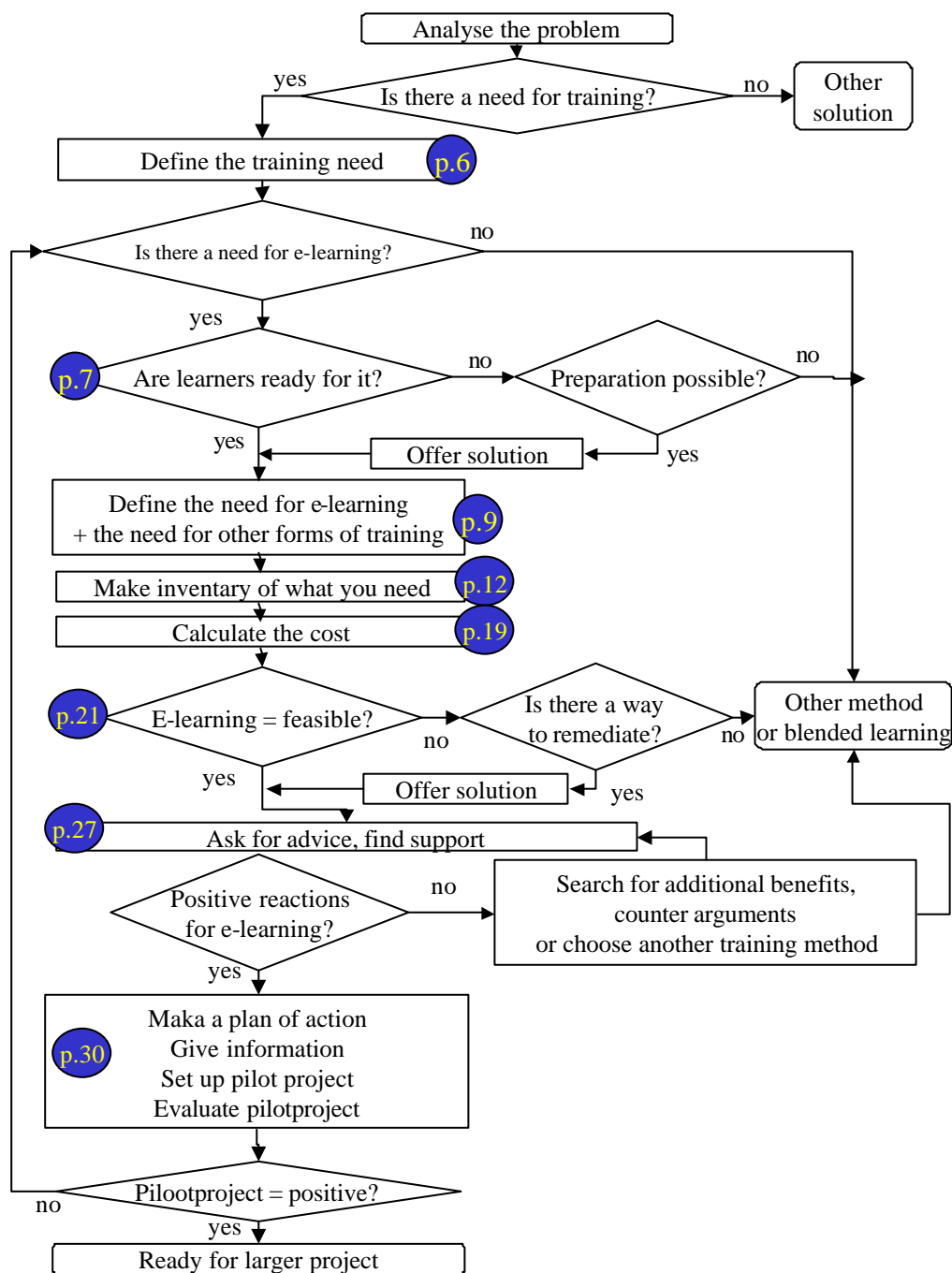
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1. Where to start?

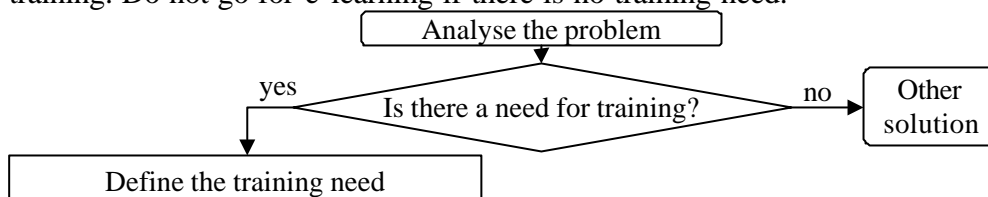
Step by step

The next flowchart shows the different steps you can follow to set up an e-learning project. These steps are explained in detail in the next pages.



2. Define the training need

Define the need Before even thinking of e-learning, ask yourself if there is a real need for training. Do not go for e-learning if there is no training need.



Define the need for e-learning The next table allows you to make a first short analysis to find out if e-learning is a possible approach for your organization.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1 | Define the objectives. | |
| | The learners need to know | E-learning is perfectly possible |
| | The learners need to understand | E-learning combined with tests is possible |
| | The learners need to apply | If the subject is a software, than e-learning combined with exercises is possible. If the training need is in another application area, e-learning should be combined with another method where the content can be applied. |
| | The learners need to change their attitude | Other methods are recommended. E-learning can only give some support. . |
| 2 | How many people need to be trained?..... (This has an influence on the costs) | |
| 3 | Define the characteristics and flexibility of the target group: | |
| | The target group has not the same foreknowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | The target group has not the same objectives | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | The target group has not the same course content | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | The target group is geographically spread | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | A large group of people should be trained in a short period | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | The target group can not be made available at the same moment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ⓘ The more checks you can put here, the more you should be ready to choose for a flexible training method such as e-learning or open learning. | | |

2.1. Do the learners have the requested profile for e-learning?

Profile of the learner

E-learning is not suited for everyone. Nor is classroom training.
 Define to which degree the target group meets the criteria that increase the success of e-learning:

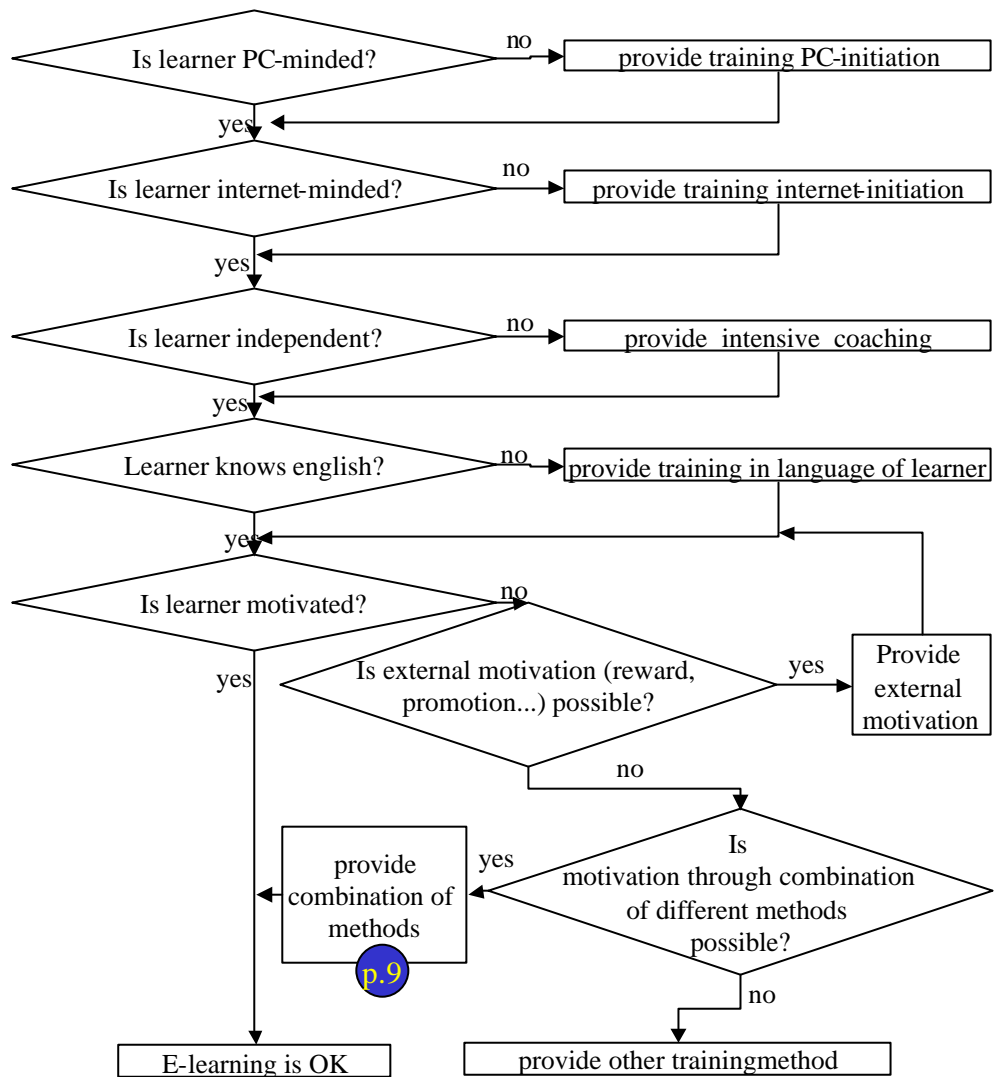
| The target group is... | Applicable? ¹ | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| PC-minded | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Internet minded (e.g. surfing spontaneously on internet) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Knowledge of English | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Does the learner see the benefit of the training? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Motivated (intrinsic and/or 'external' → related to judgement or reward...) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Is the learner assertive enough to learn on his own and contact a coach | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Autonomous/Independent (e.g. seeks first, before asking help) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner has enough perseverance to finish the course on his own? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ... | | | | |

① The higher the quote, the higher the chance that your e-learning product will be used.

¹ 1 = least, 4 = most applicable

What can you do about it?

If the target group or part of the target group does not meet some criteria, the following table will help you to decide what to do about it.



2.2. E-learning as part of a blended training program

E-learning is rarely used on its own

Experience shows that not all learners are motivated and independent enough to follow an e-learning course. Hence it is recommended to integrate e-learning in an overall training program.

Define in which way your e-learning project can fit within the training program of the learner.

The e-learning course is used to get everyone on the same level before the classroom course (or workshop...) starts

The e-learning course allows the learners to prepare themselves at their own speed for another training activity that will follow.

The theory is to be assimilated through e-learning. Another learning activity focuses on the practical part.....

The e-learning course is used after the regular training as possibility to revise. The learners can consult the course at all times..

The e-learning course is introduced in an information session in which is explained how it works and what the expectations are..

The e-learning course allows to update the existing knowledge following changing circumstances.....

The e-learning course offers a solution for a punctual problem by means of a flexible mixture of theory and practice

The learners can choose the learning method that suits them, be it e-learning or another way of learning.

Blended learning

The combination of different learning methods is called 'blended learning'. An e-learning course is preceded or followed by another training.

2.3. Is there a need for e-learning?

How far are we now

Do not think that all learners are fit for e-learning. A certain number of learners will always be reluctant towards this method. It is possible, however, to increase the number of learners by means of extra training and coaching or by combining it with other training methods.
Fill in the following table to find out how far you are:

First step

| | |
|--|--|
| How many learners need a PC-introduction? | |
| How many learners need an internet-initiation? | |
| How many learners need intensive coaching? | |
| How many learners need extra motivation? | |

The training

| Order | Method | Contents | Number of learners | Objective | Where? | Duration | Starts when |
|-------|--------|----------|--------------------|-----------|--------|----------|-------------|
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

- ① We advice a combination of different learning methods. The other training method may then be used as motivating factor for the e-learning session.
-

2.4. Ask for advice

Importance

It is certainly a good idea to look around to see what the market has to offer you when it comes to e-learning. Do not hesitate to ask advice to more than one provider. Then compare.

The following list shows on which level you can look for advice.

| |
|---|
| General information related to e-learning |
| Standard e-learning courses |
| Content development |
| Coaching |
| Logistics |
| Infrastructure |
| Hosting |
| Implementation LMS* |

* Learning management system that allows to offer the course to the learners and track the progress.

3. What do you need?

Essential components

In this part we give you an overview of what you will need when setting up an e-learning project. A lot will depend on whether you do it yourself or you ask suppliers to do it for you.

OK?

- Content (make or buy, see p. 13)
 - Hardware (see p. 15).....
 - Software (see p. 15).....
 - Logistics (location, see p. 17).....
 - Human resources (see p. 18).....
-

Additional components

Setting up an e-learning project involves more than the elements above. The project must be made known and 'sold' internally. It must be kept going. Sometimes you may need external support.

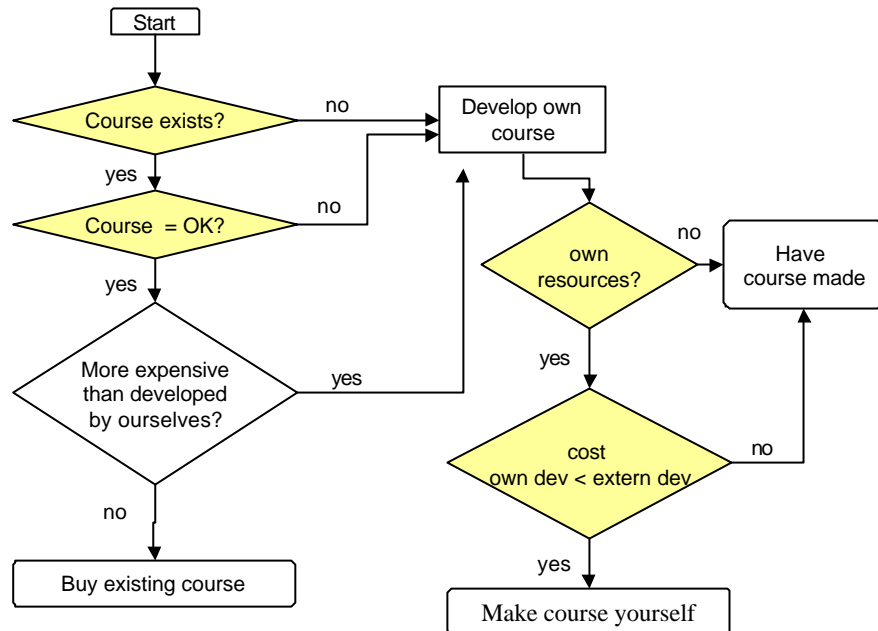
OK?

- Marketing and communication
 - Integration and maintenance.....
 - Consulting
-

3.1. Do you have the appropriate content?

Standard course or tailor-made?

The following flowchart allows you to decide if you will buy a standard course or if you will choose for a tailor-made course.



Criteria for a good course

When you try to find out if a course that is available in the market can be used, you can think on the following criteria.:

- Is the contents OK?
- Is the language OK?
- Are the objectives clearly expressed?
- Does the content match the objectives?
- Can the course be adapted (modular)?
- Is the course user-friendly?

The cost of a course

Find out if the course that is available in the market is more expensive than the development of your own course. (see also p. 19“Calculate the cost”)

Think about:

- The cost per user x number of users.
- The cost for delivery (infrastructure, PC, connections)
- Costs for installation (e.g. Hosting)
- The cost for coaching

Notice that the cost is not always the decisive factor. Other arguments may be more important (under own control, independency, uniformity)

Develop a course yourself or have it developed for you?

You choose for a tailor-made course.

Define according to which criteria you may decide to develop the course yourself or have it developed for you.

Research

Determine if you have the necessary resources to make an e-learning by yourself.

You need:

- Course developers (knowledge of subject, of graphical design, manager of a server)
 - Software that allows you to build the course
 - Hardware to deliver the course (PC, server, modems...)
-

3.2. Needed hardware and software

Course delivery E-learning courses can be delivered as independent courses or delivered through an LMS (learning management system) which allows registration, follow-up and personalisation.
 An LMS may be on the server of your organization or on the server of the supplier. In that case the course is offered through hosting.
 The necessary hard- and software will depend on the supplier.
 The following table gives an overview of the most common technological minimal requirements.

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Independent courses | Minimal requirements for the learner | |
| | Standard computer with internet connection ¹ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | At least Pentium II..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | At least 32 MB internal memory..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | At least 1 GB Hard disk..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 24x CD-ROM..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 15" monitor | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| An LMS under own control | Minimal requirements for the learner and for the coach | | |
| | Standard computer with internet connection..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | At least Pentium II..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | At least 32 MB internal memory..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | At least 4 GB Hard disk..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | 24x CD-ROM..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | 15" monitor | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | Minimal requirements for the administration | |
| | Server | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Database | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Operating System: Windows 2000, Windows NT..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Memory: 256MB RAM minimal..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Hard disk 500 MB program space | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Web (HTTP) server: Microsoft IIS 5.0 or higher | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

¹ The rule is: "the faster the connection, the more learning will be comfortable". Ask the supplier what type of connection you need.

**E-learning
courses through
hosting¹**

Minimal requirements for the learner

- Standard computer with internet connection.....
- At least Pentium II.....
- At least 32 MB internal memory.....
- At least 4 GB Hard disk.....
- 24x CD-ROM.....
- 15" monitor.....

Minimal requirements for the coach

- Same as for learner, if coaching under own control.

**Minimal requirements for the administration (also possible through
hosting)**

- Server
 - Database
 - Operating System: Windows 2000, Windows NT.....
 - Memory: 256MB RAM minimum
 - Hard disk 500 MB program space
 - Web (HTTP) server: Microsoft IIS 5.0 or higher
-

¹ We recommend that you verify if there are any problems to be expected with security such as firewall.

3.4. Accommodation

Importance

The place where will be learned is important. The following table shows the benefits and disadvantages of the different possibilities.

| | Benefits | Disadvantage |
|---|--|---|
| The place where you work | Ideal for just-in-time learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disturbing environment: noises, colleagues, telephone, other priorities• No contact with fellow-learners• No control on learning environment to learn quietly |
| Open learning centre¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ideal environment to stimulate learning• Contact with fellow-learners | Need for travel may be a problem. Not always accepted to leave work. |
| At home | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiet, learner determines conditions in which to learn• Ideal in the context of working at home | Learning in own time is not always motivating for learner or family. Learning at home is not always allowed. |

¹ Quiet environment to learn in the organization

3.5. Who do you need?

Competencies

According to your choices (develop the course yourself or not, hosting or own server), you will need different competencies. Some people may have more than one role. Indicate which competencies you may need for your project.

- Competencies of a course developer
 - Competencies of a coach (see also p. 34)
 - Competencies of a system manager
 - Competencies of a training officer
 -
-

Supporting roles

You will need support from different services before, during and after your e-learning project. Define the services that you may need.

- Management
 - Linemanagment.....
 - Internal marketing
 - Communication/documentation
 - ICT-department.....
-

4. Calculate the cost

4.1. What are the components?

| | | |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Components | For a correct calculation of the total cost, a lot will depend on the choices that you made. Think about the following components: | |
| | Human resources..... | € |
| | Content (make or buy) | € |
| | Hardware..... | € |
| | Software..... | € |
| | Logistics..... | € |
| | Integration and maintenance..... | € |
| | Marketing and communication | € |
| | Consulting | € |
| | Total | € |

4.2. Compare

Compare

When you calculate the price of your e-learning project, it is useful to make a similar calculation for a classroom training concerning the same subject to the same public. Be careful: some benefits of e-learning (e.g. other learning culture, rapidity of delivery, effectiveness) can not always be measured.

| | | 'Normal' approach | My project |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Human resources | Number of travel days | | |
| | Duration of the course in days | | |
| | Salary learner | | |
| | Number of working days learner | | |
| | Number of learners | | |
| | Salary /day/Learner. ¹ | | |
| | Reduction course length ² | | |
| | Salary learners³ | | |
| | Number of trainers/coaches | | |
| | Salary trainer/coach | | |
| | Number of working days. Trainer/coach | | |
| | Salary trainer/day ⁴ | | |
| | Learners per session | | |
| | Duration of the course in days | | |
| | Course days / trainer/coach ⁵ | | |
| | Salary trainers/coaches⁶ | | |
| Content | Costs system manager | | |
| | Course development costs | | |
| | Cost course material/learner | | |
| Software | Licences | | |
| | Course hosting/day/learner | | |
| Hardware | Costs workstation | | |
| | Costs server | | |
| Logistics | Travel costs /learner | | |
| | Catering /learner | | |
| | Accommodation ⁷ | | |
| Total | | | |

¹ Calculation: salary learner/Number of working days learner

² An e-learning course is normally a lot shorter than a classroom course, due to the fact that the learner will learn what he needs.

³ Calculation : (((Number of travel days + Duration of the course in days) x salary p.day p. learner.) x number of learners) x reduction course length.

⁴ Calculation : salary trainer/number of working days per trainer

⁵ Calculation : ((number of learners/learners per session) x duration of course in days)/number of trainers

⁶ Calculation : number of course days per trainer x salary trainer per day x number of trainers

⁷ Calculation : course accommodation per day x course days per trainer x number of trainers

5. How to prepare your project

5.1. Is the project feasible?

Steps

At this point you have an inventory of what you need. You have an idea of the price. Now you can look for support in your organization.

First check again if you can answer the following questions positively:

The **learners** have the appropriate profile

E-learning is part of the total **training program**.....

I know how to get the appropriate **courses** (content)

I know what **hardware** I will need

I know what logistics I will need

I can offer the learners appropriate **coaching** (see p. 34)

I know which **budget** is needed

5.2. Swot-analysis

| Strengths (Swot) | Weaknesses (sWot) |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access to information • Learning anytime/just in time • Learning anywhere (office, train, home, . . .) • Focus on the actual needs, I learn what I need know for my job. (Just enough) • No loss of time for subjects that I master already. • High effectiveness combined with motivation. • The learner is in the centre. • Variety of learning methods is also possible through Internet/PC • Interactivity, pre/post tests, discussion forum / newsgroups, FAQ (frequently asked questions), surfing through information, adapted use of multimedia (not over/underdone), • Increases the productivity • Content must be well prepared and developed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible problems when inexperienced in PC / Internet / . . . • 1st line support (help, tutorial, help desk, coach, . . .) for the learner must be available all the time to avoid drop-out. • Need for disciplined learner • High initial investment regarding hardware and software • Need for broadband • Little room for improvisation for the e-coach |
| Opportunities (swOt) | Threats (swoT) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be used as driver for competence management. • Possibility to follow up learning activities in order to get qualitative feedback regarding trainings. • Helps to promote lifelong learning. • Positive learning culture in the company stimulates workers to strengthen their competencies within their function and career. • Unlimited content to learn from available on internet. • Increases the productivity. • Training is available 24 hours a day, 7 days of the week • Theoretical support for learning by experience • Online administration allows to follow skill levels • Cost reductions in travel, training, training rooms and trainers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company without learning culture will frighten employees as learning time is considered as wasted time (this is also linked to other learning methods). • Special attention needed for development of e-learning modules. • E-learning may not be seen as a way to push the responsibility of learning to the employee or to his free time. • When ROI is calculated it is necessary to know also the impact on the improvement of the results. • Lack of discipline and perseverance of the learner • Non-believers still consider classroom training as a better method |

5.3. What are clear benefits and disadvantages for human resource?

benefits

Indicate which benefits are true for your organization. You will need these arguments to gain support and to convince other persons in your organization.

- It improves the learning culture
 - It enables better knowledge management
 - It increases the possibility to offer individual learning programs. Thus it increases the effectiveness. Thus it increases the motivation.....

 - Improved possibility to track training efforts in perspective of competence management.
 - A uniform and recognizable way to offer courses
 - Less 'social control' compared to classroom training, hence less fear to ask questions
-

Disadvantages

Please indicate which disadvantages are valid in your organization :

- Some employees are less ICT-minded and thus less prepared to use the computer as a way to learn
 - Some employees miss the social contacts from classroom courses
 - Some employees fear that the time to learn is taking away own time.....
 - Fear for Big Brother, possibility to track everything and be evaluated
 - No possibility to meet differences in learning styles of learners in a pedagogical and flexible way
 - Resistance of learners
 - Few possibilities to give immediate feedback, compared to classroom training
-

5.4. What is your goal?

Define your goal

Is your motivation to start with e-learning positive or negative?
 The following table allows you to define your target in a positive way.
 Determine what is valid for you and to which degree.:
 (1= not at all, 2= not really, 3 = almost, 4= I agree totally)
 Use the result to convince other people in your organization.

| Negative way of saying it | Positive way of saying it | Applicable? | | | |
|--|--|-------------|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The <u>budget</u> for training should decrease | Training should be organized in a more cost-effective way. The use of e-learning as method is a way to do this | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Training consumes too much time. E-learning should decrease the time | Learning programs should be more adapted to the needs of the learners. This will save time. E-learning allows to do this. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Often people come back from classroom courses without positive result. E-learning is by definition more effective | Training programs should be more <u>effective</u> . In some cases e-learning can be used for this. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The planned courses do not always offer great flexibility. There is rarely a good moment to miss someone for 2 or 3 days. Hence some people never go to a course. | The flexibility of e-learning should allow you to train also the employees who have a loaded agenda (anytime, anywhere). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Sending employees to a course does not seem productive. They do not take much initiative to look up information and acquire knowledge by themselves | E-learning should introduce another learning culture in the organization (by making information and knowledge available) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| People are bored by theoretical approaches in classroom training. They want more variation when learning. | Through e-learning you have the possibility to provide more variety in the training program ('blended'). It is possible to give a better answer to different learning styles | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| For a centrally organized course our employees must do a lot of distances | Through e-learning it is possible to provide the information without need for transport. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| At regular times a large group of employees must be trained in a brief period about e.g. new products, services, procedures, etc... This is difficult to organize. | A good e-learning product allows to communicate the same message 'all-over-the-world' | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

5.5. Define your strategy

Purpose You have defined your main objectives and possible e-learning project. Before you can define the critical success factors for your organization, it is necessary to make sure that the objectives are related to an overall strategy. Use the result of this analysis to determine if your project is feasible.

| Question | Applicable? ¹ | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Is your organization strongly dependant of the know-how of the 'human factor' ? Is the mission related with the personnel being up-to-date? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Does e-learning fit in the culture of the organization? <i>Check this by means of the following questions : is ICT an evidence within the organization? Is there enough investment in an effective ICT-infrastructure? Or is the organization rather inflexible regarding processes and structures?</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Is there a certain degree of training culture? <i>e.g.. are people familiar with an annual training plan. Are the employees ready to look up information themselves? Does the organization support employees, does it try to keep them?...</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Has there been a communication about the introduction of e-learning on management level? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|and if yes, was there a positive attitude? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Do you have a possibility for experimentation...can you start with a pilot project or do you have to succeed for 100%? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Is the target group large enough <i>(quantitative – are there enough people for product x - , and qualitative – are these people interested in e-learning ?</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Will the results of the training be surveyed? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

The more the scores go towards 3 and 4, the grater your chances for success!

¹ Code 1 = little. Code 4 very applicable.

5.6. Find support, give information & convince

Who has something to say?

The training plan is the starting point to launch the project. In order to gain support and to convince the non-believers, it is necessary to know in detail the objectives, the strategy and the benefits. Use Swot-analysis (p. 22) to inform and get informed.

The next table shows whom to inform, whom to convince and which arguments should be used. **Communication** is the key for your approach.

| Step | Define key players |
|------|---|
| 1 | Determine who in your organization should be involved to set up an e-learning project ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> management / direction <input type="checkbox"/> human resource manager <input type="checkbox"/> training manager <input type="checkbox"/> ICT-manager/helpdesk <input type="checkbox"/> potential users <input type="checkbox"/> line management <input type="checkbox"/> union representative <input type="checkbox"/> ... |
| 2 | Approach each key player. His/her idea about e-learning? What are the main issues? What idea does he/she have about content, target group, method, coaching, software, hardware, internet, control, evaluation, ...? Where is the resistance? What is the idea about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the content • the target group (experience, familiarity with the medium and foreknowledge) • the degree of difficulty for the target group • the user-friendliness of the software • the goals to meet • evaluation and control • necessary hardware • internet connection and ICT-protection • ... |
| 3 | Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision makers and opinion makers / influent people • partisans and non-believers |

See next page

5.6. Find support, give information & convince, Continued

Who has something to say? (continued)

| Step | Define key players | |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4 | Fill in the following scheme: | |
| Overview of the points of view (scheme 1) | Arguments of these partisans | arguments of adversaries |
| Decision makers: | | |
| opinion makers: | | |
| others: | | |

See next page

5.6. Find support, give information & convince, Continued

| Step | Personalized information and argumentation | |
|------|--|------------------------------------|
| 5.a | Take a close look at the idea partisans and adversaries have about e-learning. Compare with your own action plan. Does it withstand the expected deceptions, thoughts, remarks and critics? Do the key-players of e-learning have a correct image of what you will offer them? What are the differences and where does it match? | |
| | <i>When it matches you should</i> | <i>When it diverges you should</i> |
| | Give information: | Give information |
| | Strengthen by repetition. | Correct the image |
| 5.b | Take a close look at the arguments and critics. Are they justified? | |
| | <i>Justified critics</i> | <i>Unjustified critics</i> |
| | Correct the training program | Counter arguments |
| | Recognize arguments | |
| 6 | Develop a communication plan in which all key players get a reaction on their arguments. Every person should get a correct idea of your action plan for e-learning. Hence give objective and fair information on every topic. Plan meetings, write messages, organize demos, use testimonies of people who apply the method already. Try to get formal and informal approval. | |

| Schema 2: communication plan | Topics to strengthen | Topics to correct | Counterarguments | Approach | Timing |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------|--------|
| Decision makers: | | | | | |
| Opinion makers: | | | | | |
| others: | | | | | |

6. How to set up a project

6.1. Is the project still feasible?

Steps

The feasibility of an e-learning project depends on some important parameters. A budget and the support of your organization are essential.

At this point check once again the list and define in which degree your organization is ready for e-learning.

- Do the **learners** have the appropriate profile?.....
- Is your project **part of** a global **training project**?
- Can you get the appropriate **courses** (content)?
- Can you get the appropriate **hardware**?
- Do you have the **logistics** needed?
- Can you offer good **coaching**? (see also p. 34)
- Is there a **budget**?.....
- Do you have the **support** of your organization?.....
-

6.2. Critical success factors

Recommendations

This is a list of recommendations for your e-learning project.
The more items you can check, the higher the chances for success.

Recommendations regarding the preparation

- I have the support of the management.....
 - The learners informed in due time about benefits and disadvantages of e-learning
 - The learners know what is expected from them regarding e-learning.....
 - E-learning is added to an existing training (does not replace).....
 - I start with a small pilot project.
 - I choose quality courses and coaches.
 - I choose good IT-infrastructure.....
 - There is a training need
 - There is a suitable learning environment.
 - I integrate e-learning in the training project.
 - I ask for specialized advice.....
-

Recommendations regarding the preparation

- The learner can contact someone for questions related to the content and knows how long it takes before getting an answer..
 - The learner can contact someone in case of technical problems.
 - The learner is motivated and guided by someone.
-

Recommendations regarding the environment

- The learner can learn in a quiet environment.
 - The training is planned
-

Recommendations regarding the course

- The learner can build his own learning track
 - The course is still available afterwards.....
 - The e-learning course can be combined with other training methods
 - Non-functional courses are offered.
-

6.3. Do not overlook the limiting conditions

Importance When learners are enrolled in a traditional course, we assume that they need time to do so, that the course must be planned and that they need an appropriate learning environment. This is equally true for e-learning. Check whether these conditions are fulfilled¹.

Optimal situation...

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The e-learning course is planned (in a calendar) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner has enough time to go through the e-learning course | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner knows what (s)he can expect (contents, method...) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner knows why e-learning has been chosen and knows the alternatives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner can learn in a quiet spot..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner is not disturbed while learning. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner has contact with a coach..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner has contact with other learners..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| The learner has the support of his superior. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Learning is evaluated positively in the organization (possibly rewarded)..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| After the training the learner has time to apply the knowledge. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

¹ From 1 (little) to 4 (to a large extend)

6.4. Make a plan of actions

Who does what when Start with a small pilot project. Build a clear table where you list who should do what at what time.

The following table is an example.

| Date | Task | Who | Status |
|----------------|--|-------|--------|
| D-day – 3 mths | Information to all actors | IAN | OK |
| D-day – 2 mths | Inscriptions | RITA | |
| D-day – 2 mths | Planning | RITA | |
| D-day – 1 mths | Training PC-skills for target group | PETER | |
| D-day – 2 wks | Training internet-initiation | PETER | |
| D-day – 2 wks | Infrastructure is ready | STR | |
| D-day – 2 wks | Training for coach | PETER | |
| D-day – 7 days | Global briefing of what is expected from whom | IAN | |
| D-day – 3 days | Guideline to participants about how it works | PETER | |
| D-day | First e-learning courses start | PETER | |
| D-day + 2 wks | Reports + feedback from coach | PETER | |
| D-day + 2 wks | Workshop for participants of e-learning course | PETER | |
| | | | |

6.5. Provide coaching for the learners

Recommendations

Coaching is an important supporting task during the learning process. This support can be done by someone of your organization or externally. The following checklist allows you to check if a potential coach of your own has the necessary skills.

- The coach can...**
- answers questions related to the content.....
 - solve technical problems or point out where a solution can be found
 - support the learner during the learning process (motivation)
 - cope with different learning styles.
 - offer different learning strategies
 - define the course track regarding objectives and learning style of the learner.....

The coach needs to...

- communicate the **course track** if asked for
- communicate the estimated course **duration** if asked for.....
- prepare the appropriate learning **tools** or offer others
- give support regarding **content** if needed
- give **technical** support.
- follow up the learners, the results and progresses (re-active and pro-active).....
- motivate the learners.....
- evaluate the learners (satisfaction, results).....
- report possible problems.
- Use the results in a deontological way (to be agreed on).....
- ① The coach should try to increase the independency of the learners . Instead of giving an answer it is more appropriate to point out where the answer can be found.

Specific e-coach tasks

- Give synchronic and asynchronous feedback
- Start a forum.
- Moderate a forum.....
- Evaluate learning objects.
- Offer additional learning objects.....
- Learning objects related to the tasks, the specific situation and the quality standards.....

6.6. Start and evaluate a pilot project

Why

Starting with a small pilot project has the advantage that you reduce the risks. Evaluate carefully all components (content, hardware, software...) and question the actors involved (learners, IT-responsible, coach...)
