Portfolio Project – Professional Reflection

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Course Number OTL 542 – Learning Technologies

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April 6, 2019
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This paper will provide reflection on the Technology Guide for Distance & Digital Learning Tools that I have created that can be found at www.songcactus.com. It will summarize key trends in eLearning. A focus on the application of Mobile Learning tools will be highlighted as part of a specific action plan for eLearning in my current leadership role. Finally, a rationale for sharing my learning guide with my colleagues will be stated.

Technology in eLearning

Technology in eLearning is evolving and becoming increasingly more important to learners. Their engagement in coursework and their overall perceived experience are impacted by the presence of technologies in the learning environment. Morgan (2018) noted that as learners enter into higher education learning environments they come with diverse backgrounds and technological experience and literacy. Technology is a significant part of their personal lives including mobility and social connection. Learner’s attitudes have trended toward expecting blended learning environments that include technology integration. In a study of more than 450 university students, more than 70% of them stated in a survey that the use of mobile technology in learning is rated as very important in the areas of peer to peer connection, access to course content and access to library resources (Morgan, 2018).

As educational systems evolve the role of technology continues to add value in new found ways especially in a global marketplace where diverse, underserved populations now have access to learning as does any corporate learner seeking to expand skill and knowledge. As stated by Yusuf (2013), eLearning enables course content access at any time that best suits the learner;
provides learners with significant choices in selecting a tuition program that they can afford; facilitates new ways of connecting with instructors and produces positive outcomes for learners who wish to expand, enhance and improve their skills and knowledge (Yusuf, 2013).

Reflection and Application

As I reflect on my Technology Guide for Distance & Digital Learning Tools found at SongCactus.com (2019) I am struck by the variety of tools available and applied in eLearning. Tools such as Gamification that introduce games into a learning process to stimulate learning and engagement. Gamification can also be utilized as a way for companies to educate team members on the values and goals of the organization and to support company achievement of those goals via connected and visible technology. Social Media & Collaboration tools such as Skype for Business enable and facilitate interactive, real time learning, feedback and engagement. Social Media overall has become an integral part of the learner’s personal lives and has therefore become an expectation in their work lives in the future as a way to connect with others and share information. Tools such as LinkedIn have a Facebook type of social network connectivity with and emphasis on professional and career engagement and advancement. Mobile Learning, including comprehensive apps learning platforms such as Udemy have become accessible to learners via a variety of devices such as smart phones, tablets and desktop computers. Udemy is an open source content platform where educational content can be posted by virtually anyone globally. Mobile apps such as this provide access to course content 24/7 and facilitate a method of communication between students and their peers and professors. This greatly expands access to learning for underserved groups and markets in the global environment. As long as a student has a device and access to the internet, they can now engage in the global learning sphere (SongCactus.com, 2019). This is transformative to individuals and societies. It will be
interesting to track the impact of these learning tools on the expansion of global skills and knowledge development.

The area that I plan to use in my current leadership role is Mobile Learning. I am a member of a global account management team that manages global travel programs for our clients. Our Vice President has asked me to be a team champion this year on the subject of presentation skills best practices since our role calls on us to present to all levels of leadership at our client companies including C-level executives. Mobile learning tools such as MOOCs, Massive Open Online Courses and OERs Open Educational Resources are the mobile tools that I plan to utilize with my team to access learning content and interact with each other.

MOOCs Massive Open Online Courses, as described by PRNewswire.com (2015) are web-based distance learning platforms that enable high levels of learner interaction via forums and collaboration (PRNewswire.com, 2015). A MOOC that will be utilized is edX. The edX platform as described by edX.org (2019) is a complimentary MOOC education platform with over 2100 courses. Content is provided by such leading institutions as Harvard and MIT. A wide range of course topics including Arts, Sciences and Business are offered (edX.org, 2019).

OERs Open Educational Resources are the second tool that I will use with my team. OERCommons.org (2019) define OERs as open educational content platforms that are deployed for global use with minimal restrictions on copyrighting of content. Educators may use content freely in such areas as K-12 lessons, open textbooks, full college courses and interactive lessons (OERCommons.org, 2019). In researching the topic of presentation skills on the OERCommons.org site a number of available courses came up in the search including: Business Communication Written and Verbal Presentation Skills. Here is the link to this comprehensive
course:  https://www.oercommons.org/courses/business-communication-written-verbal-presentation-skills/view. This is an example of content that I plan to share with my colleagues.

In summary, I plan to share my Learning Technologies 3.0 guide website with my peers on my global account management team. The variety of tools and technologies presented in the guide offer them tools to not only enhance their personal learning but to provide new methods and tools of creative client engagement.
References


