

E-LEARNING IN ISOLATION PROVES INEFFECTIVE FOR 65% OF LEARNERS

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Survey by Infinity Learning (<http://www.infinitylearning.co.uk>) finds interpersonal skills are the secret to effective e-learning (<http://www.infinitylearning.co.uk>)

Only a third of learners are being offered blended learning solutions, according to a survey released today by Infinity Learning. Having access to a blended learning solution with a supportive coach was cited as a crucial criterion by respondents, if e-learning was to realise its potential as a training medium.

More than half of learners who had no coach or who had access to one who they thought was not particularly skilled, were unimpressed with e-learning as a medium. However, 100 per cent of those with access to a coach they considered 'good' or 'excellent' rated their e-learning experiences to be equal to, or better than other learning and training methods. "It's worrying that 65 per cent of respondents are still expected to be trained using e-learning on its own, rather than as part of a blended solution. This would allow learners to truly reap the benefit that e-learning programmes can bring", explains Robin Hoyle, head of learning at Infinity Learning.

78 per cent of learners reported that the major barrier to their e-learning experience was not having access to an expert to whom they could pose questions of clarification or gain further guidance. Other significant drawbacks cited included a lack of opportunity to discuss issues with colleagues (66 per cent). "The main dissatisfaction driver seems to have little to do with the subject of e-learning, the provider of the course software or indeed the content or design of the programme", continues Hoyle. "The biggest impact on the perceived usefulness of e-learning was a cultural or organisational issue. Organisations failing to adopt blended solutions, which include on the job learning with supportive coaching, run this risk of not meeting the individual learning needs of their staff."

"Well thought out learning design utilising Web 2.0 technologies and a blend of other training approaches would offer opportunities to create greater collaboration and emphasise the social interaction at the heart of many learning experiences. The increased value of e-learning to those who were regularly coached by a line manager or other with effective coaching skills was surprising and suggests that learning is, and always was, about people rather than technology," concludes Hoyle.

Notes to editor:

Key findings from a survey with 250 respondents aimed at determining key levels of acceptance of e-learning by learners:

- One third think generic e-learning programmes are ineffective when compared to other training methods
- More than half of learners who had no coach or who had access to one who was not particularly skilled were unimpressed with e-learning (54 per cent rated as less effective)
- 100 per cent of those with access to a good coach rated their e-learning experiences to be equal or better than other learning methods

- Only 35 per cent of respondents told us that their in-company training activities included a blend of different learning inputs
- Technology remains an issue for over a quarter of respondents using e-learning (frustrations over speed etc)
- Key benefits of using e-learning - reduced time off job
- 45 per cent of learners want to learn at their own pace
- 60 per cent reported learning at home / away from work as a benefit
- Those relying exclusively on generic e-learning materials missed the opportunity of discussing their learning with colleagues with 100 per cent of these respondents listing this factor as a barrier to their learning

About Infinity Learning

Infinity Learning is a learning design company that embraces new technologies to deliver learning solutions to suit its clients' individual needs.

Infinity's learning methodologies include blended solutions, e-learning and bespoke programme design, all of which integrate to support its clients' business objectives and ultimately to help people to learn more effectively. Infinity's proven expertise in solving business problems through learning design, by drawing on individual experiences, enables it to work across a diverse range of industry sectors.

Please visit www.infinitylearning.co.uk for further information.