

to work late or come in extra early, while others are not willing to do so. You might also run into regional connectivity issues that make certain types of eLearning classes difficult to deploy. Think through the barriers and plan for them.

Define success metrics upfront

From the first meeting, discuss the metrics you will use to define success and how to gather them. Is it the number of individuals that complete the courses? A percent positive response on a post-class survey? While participant questionnaires are helpful, follow-up surveys to see if employees have put their education to practical use are also important, as are surveys of those who supervise the people taking the courses. One of our clients compared the no-show rate to the industry average and was pleased that the rate was half that of similar businesses.

Select the right team leader

Unless your client has a manager tasked with leading an instructional design and training team, identifying the right project manager is the most important staffing decision. Select someone with experience building and running large training and instructional design projects. They must be able to estimate the work effort, build the work plan, and manage a large project. Once the leader is selected, let them have the final decision on selecting every other team member. In addition, the instructional designers on the team need to be able to work seamlessly with subject matter experts, some of whom might be skeptical of the value of the training program, including the value of eLearning. And don't forget about ancillary services. One of our clients was pleased with the courses the instructional designers put together, but disappointed by the number of employees signing up. We suggested a marketing writer to add some zest to email copy advertising the classes. The result: The email open-rate improved significantly and class enrollments increased.

Start by creating a pilot project

Whether you are doing the project in-house, using contractors, or outsourcing the entire project, starting with a pilot project can help determine if you've got the right approach and the right mix of instructional designers, subject matter experts, and project managers to get the job done. A pilot will enable you to find out whether your outsourced firm or talent on the team needs replacing or adjustment. One client came to us after their initial pilot project with another firm failed. They then chose two firms to do another pilot and made their selection after seeing the results. The pilot kept them from spending an enormous amount of money, so they wouldn't later discover that the initial firm was failing to deliver the value they needed.