



Learning vs. Training, what is the difference?

It's important to understand the difference between learning and training. Of course they are inextricably linked, but they are unique aspects of any educational process. Training is the giving of information and knowledge, through speech, the written word or other methods of demonstration in a manner that instructs the trainee. Learning is the process of absorbing that information in order to increase skills and abilities and make use of it under a variety of contexts. Whatever the goals, the quality of the learning will rely largely on the quality of the training, and so the role of trainer is very important as it can have a huge effect on the outcome of a course for the learner.

Let's look at the characteristics of each, and see what makes an e-learning environment work.

The characteristics of learning

As mentioned above, learning is the process of absorbing information and retaining it with the goal of increasing skills and abilities in order to achieve goals - but it's more than that. Learning is what we go through when we want to be equipped for non-specific and unexpected situations and the two are not mutually exclusive. While you do learn to do something specific, you are also inadvertently equipped with the knowledge and/or skills to face future challenges. In essence, learning is all about equipping a person to tackle not just today's issues, but preparing him/her to creatively come up with ways to tackle tomorrow's issues.

The characteristics of training

Training on the other hand focuses more on the development of new skills or skill sets that will be used. Training is the process each new employee goes through when joining a company to learn how to carry out the day-to-day operations, know how their department works and how job-specific tools operate in order to carry out their responsibilities. In essence, through training, we are not looking to reshape the behavior of an individual rather the point is to teach the employee or learner how things are done so that they can then carry out a process on their own.

Ideally, an e-learning environment will utilize both learning and training principles throughout its curriculum. This allows instructors/trainers to provide their learners with the tools to tackle current issues, develop life-long skills, improve on their problem-solving skills and utilize resources to the best of their ability.

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