Q-CATS Model for Assessing Distance Learning

Q-CATS is a tool developed by PHTN that will assist in determining if distance learning will benefit your organization as part of overall workforce development efforts

Definition:

Distance learning
- Takes training to the learner
- Learners are separated geographically from instructors and often each other
- Is <u>planned</u> learning
- Can be synchronous or asynchronous
- Should be interactive
- Often facilitated by some form of technology

Benefits of distance learning:

- Better learner access – audience reach
- Potential cost savings
- Same or better learning outcomes
- Better use of experts

Q: Qualifying
C: Course
A: Audience
T: Technology
S: Support System

Q: Does Distance Learning QUALIFY? Does it meet your needs?

Answer these questions:

1. Are your learners at multiple sites – Is it necessary for them to travel to be trained? Describe some examples.

2. Does your workforce need extensive training? Examples?

3. How is training critical to your organization's mission?

4. Is there an imbalance between the training available and the needs of the workforce?

5. Are the trainers' travel requirements unreasonable? Examples? Is there

a limited number of qualified teachers?

6. Is there support from upper level management for making a change in how training is conducted?

C: Course Analysis

Select courses with care . . .

1. Which courses are in high demand?

2. Are there particular courses for which there are too few instructors?

3. Are there courses that must be offered in multiple locations to reach the

priority audience?

4. Which courses are most easily adaptable for distance delivery?

5. Do you have access/resources necessary to redesign/convert select courses for distance learning?

6. Are the faculty or subject matter experts willing and available to participate in a distance learning effort?

A: Audience Analysis

    1. Where are your audiences? Are they in multiple time zones?

    2. Describe learner characteristics/demographics.

    3. What are the leading motivators for your audiences?

    4. Describe your audience learning styles/expectations?

    5. What kind of experience does your audience have with technology?

6. What are your audiences' job responsibilities – will they have time to participate in distance learning in the work place?

7. Do your learners have support from their management?

T: Technology Analysis

1. To what technology do your learners have access?

2. Will their technology work for distance learning?

3. What will it cost (rent… buy… borrow… share)?

4. What technologies are most appropriate for the chosen course content?

5. Can learners connect with each other and other faculty at a central point of contact?

S: Support System Analysis

1. What type of marketing support is needed?

2. How will learners register for your courses?

3. What kind of accreditation is needed/desired? How will you ensure that your courses are accredited?

4. How will course materials be distributed?

5. How will faculty be prepared and supported?

6. How will participants' learning be evaluated:
   - Grading
   - Evaluation
- Transcripts?

1. What kind of support will be available to learners:
   - Technical support
   - Advance communication
- Local facilitators?

8. How will your system be sustained?