

Designing eLearning deliverables that motivate and engage adult learners can be challenging. However, creating top notch eLearning deliverables that cater to adult learners comes with its own unique set of challenges. The good news is that there are a number of tips and techniques that can help you to create meaningful educational experiences for adult learners, which can be applied to eLearning courses and online training events.

1. Make it relevant!

Adult learners need to be able to see the relevancy of what they are learning. How is this eLearning course going to offer them the skill sets they need to improve their work performance? How is the online training event you're developing going to give them the information they need to master a particular task? When designing eLearning deliverables for adult learners, you have to keep in mind that the content has to be relevant, or else they will not be able to see the real value in the educational experience you're providing. While you are writing each block of text or choosing the perfect graphics and images, think about how these are going to serve the primary learning goals and objectives.

2. Include activities and assignments that encourage adult learners to explore.

Adult learners accumulate knowledge most effectively when they are active participants in their own learning process. Design activities or assignments that encourage them to explore a subject matter on their own and learn from personal experience. Pose a question or problem and then ask them to arrive at a solution on their own, or place them in groups and have them collaborate in order to discuss the issue at length and benefit from one another's experience and skill sets. When they acquire knowledge on their own, they get inspired to pursue other avenues of self study and online education, and to become more fully engaged in the eLearning environment.

3. Consider the experience and educational background of the adult learners.

Adult learners have typically gathered more life experience and accumulated a broader knowledge base than younger students. As such, when you're designing your eLearning deliverables for adult audiences, you'll want to take their experience and educational background into account. In other words, it is of high importance to assess your audience carefully. What is the highest level of education they've completed? Which particular tasks are they usually asked to perform while at work? Do they already know the technical jargon that is commonly used in their profession?

4. Offer immediate feedback to allow adult learners to learn from mistakes.

Make the educational experience more powerful and effective by offering immediate feedback when they make an error, or even when they need to know about an alternative problem solving approach. This will provide them with the opportunity to learn from mistakes by catching them at the moment they occur and seeing the direct consequences of that error, rather than waiting until the moment of need has passed to offer invaluable feedback.

5. Integrate emotionally-driven content.

Adult learning audiences often benefit from content that is emotionally-driven. If they feel emotionally connected to the subject matter, then they are more likely to be engaged, so that

they will actually absorb and retain the information. Use images and graphics that are powerful and relevant, as well as written content that evokes a certain feeling. Even the font you use can convey a certain emotion. Positive emotional elements can also serve to inspire and motivate learners who may feel disconnected from the eLearning environment.

6. Emphasize the real-world benefits.

Can you concisely sum up the real world benefits that your eLearning course or online training event offers to its adult learners? The adult learners need to be informed of the real world benefits beforehand, and should be reminded of these benefits periodically. For example, you can add a side note to every module, explaining how the content will offer them real world benefits. This will allow them to realize the purpose behind the educational experience, so that they become motivated and excited.

7. Keep cognitive overload in mind when creating content.

Break your content up into smaller chunks to help avoid cognitive overload. Avoid using large blocks of text, and opt for bullet points or numbered lists instead. Also, you may want to consider designing smaller modules or eLearning courses that focus on specific subject matters, rather than lengthy eLearning courses that cover a wide range of topics.

8. Use avatars and storytelling to draw in adult learners.

Avatars can guide adult learners through modules to increase knowledge comprehension and retention, while storytelling makes the subject matter more interesting and relatable for them. Keep in mind, that when using characters or stories, you should add at least a touch of realism in order to make the content more immersive and effective.

9. Create deliverables that can be completed quickly and conveniently.

Adult learners often learn while they are on-the-go, meaning that they should be able to access the eLearning deliverables on their mobile devices. By creating eLearning deliverables that can be completed quickly and conveniently, you offer them the opportunity to absorb and retain the information anytime, anywhere and when they need it the most.

10. Remember that practice makes perfect.

Include plenty of practice exercises in your eLearning course to ensure that adult learners are able to fully absorb and remember the subject matter. Repetition is key, so develop tasks that require them to repeat certain steps over and over again and keep on reminding them of the important key points all throughout the eLearning course.

11. Use aesthetically pleasing design elements.

Aesthetically pleasing eLearning courses and modules can be more easily assimilated by adult learners, not to mention that can create a more interactive and visually stimulating experience. Include compelling and inspiring images, colorful fonts, and graphic elements that help to draw their attention to the core aspects of the modules.

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