



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Who Benefits From WBT?

Is Web-based training as wonderful as it is being made out to be? Is it suitable for all types of learners? Why do some learn better, and others not at all? Kenneth G. Brown, a professor from the University of Iowa, conducted a research on a sample.

Assumptions

Brown believed that choices are determined by individual differences in goal orientation. Two types of goal orientations determine this - high mastery and high performance. People with high mastery orientation believe they can better their abilities and demonstrate persistence in difficult times and situations. They spend more time learning, examining material, and practicing than people with lower mastery orientation.

People with high performance orientation, on the other hand, believe that their abilities are limited and concentrate on competence. They concentrate on their performance in relation to others, which tends to divert their attention from the task at hand. This interferes with learning, and therefore they might not be able to complete courses.

Another factor that influences learning is self-efficacy, an individual's belief that he/she can perform a task. People with high self-efficacy are likely to spend more time learning and practicing.

Results

Brown's findings, based on self-efficacy and learner orientation, were:

- People who learned the least from WBT were individuals with high performance orientation and low learning self-efficacy.
- People with high performance orientation and high self-efficacy made better and more efficient use of WBT.

Conclusion

Despite being aware of the importance of training, most trainees skipped the practice sessions and stayed only for half the time allotted. Merely providing Web-based training opportunities does not ensure learning. Understanding how learners make choices on how long and how often to practice can help to determine who will learn best from WBT.