

Alex B. Criswell

Assignment Two

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My personal and professional life revolves around education. As a young child, I always wanted to be teacher and wanted to help others; and my role as a trainer will fulfill those goals. During my current professional experience, I learned of a company philosophy, which is “Always Learning, Always Teaching.” I feel that philosophy complements with my ‘style’ well as I am always eager to learn and share my knowledge with others.

While I have not had the chance in the past to continually demonstrate what I have learned in life, I have had the chance to demonstrate all of my knowledge and acquired skills while in graduate school and working my graduate assistantships. My graduate assistantships, which are at Purdue University Calumet and Purdue University North Central, have opened my eyes to teaching and learning with technology. With my knowledge of learning and technology, I plan to integrate this with my training. After I finish graduate school, I will continue my vision as a trainer to implement an asynchronous training program within restaurants, in an effort to reduce face-to-face training and the labor hours associated with the synchronous training. With my combined knowledge of my undergraduate and graduate studies; I feel I will be able to fulfill my professional vision successfully.

In the service industry, I have been exposed to a massive amount of training and have found that not all individuals are able to train effectively. As a rational and logical individual, I have a compelling drive to understand how things work the way they do and how I can share that knowledge with others. I find that I have a unique style as a trainer.

I notice that I will examine the guidelines or process in front of me, but I will adapt the training to meet the needs of my learners. I feel I need to explain the materials in terms my learner's understand; for if I do not, I will be an ineffective trainer—That bothers me.

An example of meeting the needs of my learners would be in the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT). We worked with professors to transition from Blackboard Vista (WebCT) to Blackboard Learn 9.1. I was instructed to show the professors how to do "X" in Blackboard Learn following specific instructions. After working for several months in the OIT, I found using the instructions I was given was not effective with my learners and after putting the instructions aside, I decided to teach the faculty how to use Blackboard Learn in my own style. My style consisted of assessing the needs of my learner and explaining (teaching) the concept to them in a method where a mutual understanding would be fulfilled. I found many faculty members did not understand how "X" worked in Learn, even though the same exact function was in Vista, but in different terminology. My solution to the problem was explaining how to do "X" in Learn in terms (WebCT/Vista terms) the learner could understand, while incorporating the new terminology in my "lesson" at the same time. While my style was different from the instructions given, I broke no rules, and found in the end—it worked.

I feel the trainer has a dual-role of being a trainer and a leader. My leadership style is similar to the "advocate," whom is known to be very persuasive and articulate (Northouse, 2012). Northouse (2012) notes six key traits in a leader: 1) Intelligence, 2) Confidence, 3) Charisma, 4) Determination, 5) Sociability, and 6) Integrity.

My leadership traits ranked from strongest to weakest would be:

- 1) Intelligence- Graduate school has allowed me to “think outside the box,” which has been great for my knowledge base as I am an individual who is eager to learn,
- 2) Determination- I have always been a very determined person to do the best I can do to my ability in any situation I encounter.
- 3) Sociability- I never used to be very sociable as I was a shy individual until my early college years. I realized that communication is an important factor in life, especially in educational and professional environments. As a personal goal, I strive for myself to become more sociable with others personally and professionally.
- 4) Integrity- I have always been noted as an honest and trustworthy person and am honored to have such a title.
- 5) Confidence- Another educational goal of mine is to improve my confidence before I complete my graduate studies. I feel confidence within an individual is needed in order to be a successful leader in my future profession.
- 6) Charisma- Charisma is something I wish to continually improve on throughout my professional career.

Below is an inventory of topics I feel qualified to train that also contains my experience, strengths, and abilities I bring to the training role for each topic:

- Customer service training
 - I enjoy sharing my knowledge with others.

- I have patience with my learners.
- I treat the guest with respect.
- I possess a dedicated work ethic.
- I am a very motivated individual who prefers to make my training sessions informative, interesting, and fun.
- I tend to be creative in my training format.
- I have received numerous commendations regarding my services to guests in the Office of Instructional Technology and in my role as a Certified Trainer at a restaurant.
- I have a pleasant demeanor.
- I communicate clearly and effectively.
- I keep myself and the learner focused during our session.
- I am able to identify a guest's needs quickly and offer an effective solution.
- Use of Microsoft Office Suite
 - I frequently utilize these programs for my everyday tasks
 - I have attended training sessions on the above programs
 - Though I have experience with the Office programs; I would like to learn more of the advanced features the Suite has to offer.
- Utilization of screen capture and recording software (Techsmith Snagit & Camtasia)
 - Above average use with the listed programs in reference to:
 - Instructional Guides
 - Instructional Videos

- Video Lectures

The additional experience or training I could benefit from would references geared towards assessment and evaluation in training. As a dual-degree candidate of Communication and Education, I have fulfilled most of my degree requirements and have two education courses remaining in assessment and evaluation. In the Instructional Design program; I am learning the principles of designing instructional materials, the technology available to utilize in the learning environment, and instructional communication theories and techniques. After the completion of this course, I will be better prepared to format and conduct a training session. My combined skills and knowledge will allow me to effectively present my content and reach my trainee's learning needs.

In addition to my goal to improve on assessment and evaluation, I plan to expand my knowledge base regarding the following:

- Conferencing Software (such as Adobe Connect and Citrix GoToMeeting & Webinar)
- eLearning Quiz & Simulation Software (Adobe Captivate & Flash)
- Content Management Platforms (Wordpress and Joomla)
- Web Design Software (Adobe Dreamweaver & InDesign)
- Document and HTML Accessibility

With my professional vision in-mind; I would like to spend more time with the topics above to integrate more technology and interactivity in my training classes. Until I master the above topics; I will not integrate technology or interactivity into my training.

In order to begin my research on the above topics; I will need to research more information on assessment and evaluation as I will need to review the effectiveness of technology in training. With my diverse background, I plan to obtain a training position where I can combine all of my knowledge and previous experience to effectively reach my learning audience's needs and gain credibility.

Reference

Northouse, P. G. (2012). *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and practices*. Los Angeles: Sage.