

## Message to E-Learners: Focus on Learning, not on Clicking

What constitutes a successful online learning experience? Content and technology are obvious considerations and easily come to mind. Far too often, however, organizations forget about the most important ingredient in the e-learning mix: the learners themselves.

One of the great things about e-learning is that it puts ownership into the hands of the learner, literally. The dynamics of an online learning experience are completely different than those of a classroom experience—with e-learning, it's up to the learner to start, finish, and, most important, LEARN during the experience. Excelling is much more than clicking through the pages of an e-learning course—it's about maximizing all that e-learning has to offer and becoming engaged in the content so that learning occurs. This is the message to send to e-learners: focus on learning, not on clicking!

If your organization is using e-learning, here are some specific messages to share with the e-learners in order to help them excel:

- ▶▶ **Minimize disruptions.** Create an environment that will allow you to focus on the learning. Avoid phone calls and e-mail interruptions by scheduling dedicated time for your online learning. Discuss your schedule with coworkers and your manager so they will understand the times that you are unavailable.
- ▶▶ **Chunk your online learning time.** The most effective online learning takes place in 20- to 30-minute chunks, so schedule your learning time to allow you to be engaged in the content.
- ▶▶ **Focus on the learning by setting realistic goals!** Look closely at the objectives of the learning, determine what it is that you want to take away from the session, and focus on that. You are the only one who can ensure that you walk away from the online learning experience successfully.
- ▶▶ **Take notes.** Learners often forget very quickly what they have learned. Take advantage of the online note-taking feature within your online learning tool. If there isn't one, manually capture relevant and applicable information to help you retain the knowledge.
- ▶▶ **Use all available resources.** Many courses and online learning systems offer a variety of tools and job aids to support the learning experience. These tools are at your fingertips, so take advantage of them!
- ▶▶ **Reflect on what you've learned.** At breaks and upon completion of courses, review your learning goals and recall what you learned. Think of specific situations in which you could apply the new knowledge. Build an action plan for testing your new skills on the job.
- ▶▶ **Share what you've learned.** To support the retention of your new skills and knowledge, share what you've learned with your manager and coworkers. Tell them how the knowledge will benefit you on the job and how you will use it. There may be information that will benefit them as well!
- ▶▶ **Return for a refresher as needed.** Return to the course, job aids, and/or your online notes as needed to remind yourself of key messages that will support you on the job.