

Case study

Miss Mandy Billingsley (Trainer)

GEST – (Gippsland Employment Skills Training)

Background

When I joined the eMentor Program I was just about to leave my 6 month Project and GEST kindly agreed to put me under their umbrella/organisation, even though I wasn't actively working for them.

GEST assist Learners to develop their employment skills with a focus on assisting the unemployed to develop learning pathways to employment.

GEST Accredited & Pre Accredited Courses, Projects & Activities include:

- Horticulture Certificate and Retail Nursery.
- Also through involvement with various community organisation they have a "Recycle Renew and Retail" wood work restoration and retail Emporium to develop skills to lead to employment or re-engage back into employment and reduce landfill.
- The Zest CAFÉ to assist the unemployed to develop Hospitality and retail skills and pathway to employment or further education in a Hospitality Qualification, Barista RSA, RSG and Food Preparation Certificates.
- Aged Care Certificate
- Computers
- Vocational Prep
- HACC
- First Aid Level 2
- Bridging Courses to the above courses.

At the end of 2012 and start of 2013 I actively participated in the eMentor weekly sessions, developing skills with a keen interest in the Moodle and WordPress for Blended Learning methods, e-Assessment and Blogging. I wished to develop my skills and resources to use in future workplaces or working for myself. At the end of 2012 I aimed to develop iPad Workshops to present at various organisations for students and network with peers within the Training Industry.

From April 2013 I have now started working for GEST as a Trainer within a Team of Trainers delivering an e-Learning, Blended Learning style Training Course called the GEST Project. Training Staff and Trainers in e-Learning to upskill staff in e-Learning and Social Media Skills to be able to develop their own Blended Learning Courses. We have included Blended Learning Methods, e-Assessments, using BlackBoard Collaorate(Bb), a

Moodle, Wikis, DropBox and Lync to name a few so far. Keeping in mind Learners need to also have and develop basic computer skills to smoothly participate in Learning Sessions Online and face to face using Desktop/LapTop and mobile Touch Technologies.

GEST Project (Funded) - Objectives:

- To up skill staff in how to effectively use e-learning and social media tools to enable GEST as an organisation to maximise its offering in the 21st century learning environment.
- To assist GEST to develop a robust blended delivery of e learning offering for potential students in geographically remote areas and also for those who find traditional classroom learning too confronting.
- To attract and retain those students who are increasingly demanding access to the new learning environment, in effect, to ensure GEST's continued relevance in the learning/teaching environment.
- To enable GEST to develop a more accurate evidentiary platform of its impact and outcomes by enabling staff to develop e-learning and blended e-learning teaching methods that will allow for continuous comment by students via blogs which could incorporate photos and movies as part of their evidence of learning.
- To develop facebook and twitter capacity to market GEST's services more effectively.

The project will give GEST an opportunity to gain a strong online presence through playing an instrumental role not only in the forging of organisational networking but also in development and delivery of innovative classes as a flow on for our community of learners. Providing an excellent opportunity for rural/remote learners

This then supports the organisation to confidently provide current training and therefore sustainable practices beyond the project by developing transferable skill sets.

GEST has also invited participants from another 2 organisations, that they Network with. (2 participants from Moe Life Skills and 1 from Moe Neighbourhood House.)

What was done

My aims are to develop my eLearning skills, obtain more work in the training area, developing iPad Workshop for training organisation and working for myself. Also developing my skills in using Moodle, Word Press and now Wikis, which has been beneficial and enjoyable. The idea of short WorkShops for Training Sessions came from the thought that it may be easier to sell to new Students who are not sure about committing to 8-10 Learning Sessions over a Term.

iPad WorkShops:

At the end of 2012 I conducted an iPad 2 hour WorkShop for a Support and community Services Organisation in Wonthaggi, which was a FREE iPad WorkShop for the Community, Staff and Students with an Intellectual disability where Learners had varied abilities.

I was asked to present an iPad Session for the Hume Region in Wangaratta and the Gippsland Region eMentor Program in Sale, PD WorkShop Days.

Issues and positive outcomes during iPad WorkShops & Presentations:

- Not all Apps preloaded prior to Workshop.
- Unable to show how to fully upload Apps, Reception had to input Password to permit loading of Apps but they weren't in the training session.
- We found with iPad Sets a possible privacy issue if one person writes a note they all see the note because the Class set are connected. (Staff need to have different iPads not in sync with class sets.)
- Difficulties with availability of WiFi. One organisation had a handout to Learners to access WiFi, however other organisations don't.
- Varied devices, iPad, Samsung and other Brands of Tablets.
- Found that not all tablets have a camera and so encouraged students to share and use the Trainers. WorkShop aimed at iPad however to become more universal with a range of Tablets in future. (One Participant didn't tell the Trainer until the end of the session that they had no camera, however other Participants offered for them use of theirs.)(Sharing Tablets or Trainer to make available a Tablet or theirs for the odd activity.)
- Good getting to know your class mates positive reaction within the IceBreaker to take a Portrait of yourself by flipping the camera to face you and getting to know a fellow student by asking them to take your portrait with your tablet. Also Learners can take pictures of each other, then Email or bump.
- Hands-on Activities went down well even with people who hated their picture being taken eventually got into the fun of taking Profile Pictures and of Objects in the Room from A to Z.
- Universal general Activities across Tablets good with Screenshots information and ability to be taken on Samsung and iPad Tablets, iPhone and Galaxy Ace mobiles. Found that not all tablets have a camera and so encouraged students to share and use the Trainers. WorkShop aimed at iPad however to become more Universal with Tablets in future.
- People enjoyed the Hands on face to face approach and would like to learn more, but the demand has not happened, yet.

Where Online eMentor and eLearning has Led to:

It has all led to work as a Trainer, Training Trainers and General Staff at the RTO of GEST, on e-Learning, Social Media and how to develop Blended Learning Courses and e-Assessments. Which I am still working on within a Team of Trainers I met by Networking through the eMentor Program and ACENetwork.ning. (e-Series etc)

The GEST Project started in April with 2 face to face introductory sessions which setup students to flow into Online Sessions through Bb.

We noticed in the first session difficulties getting through local security to load Java to Log In to Bb. Also Learners needed to develop some basic computer skills for accessing and participating in Online Learning Sessions, inserting Links into Internet Address Box,

Toggling between Open Windows, Starting another Internet Windows, obtaining and using Passwords.

Stressed participants needing to develop confidence in using Online learning and hesitant towards Social Media. Hoping that confidence will come over time and through the completion of Hands-on Activities.

Participants not completing or realising they need to actually do the Activities that are talked about during the Online Sessions. I have created an MS Excel Spreadsheet listing ALL Hands-On Activities and updated who has completed each task in the Moodle, Bb, Lync, Wikis and DropBox.

Delivery Methods:

2 Initial face to face sessions with an Online Session immediately after, to introduce the GEST Project and assist Participants to setup, access and Log In to Bb and also the Moodle.

The Plan was ongoing Weekly Online Session for 1 hr and a face to face Hands on once a month which would also include e-Assessment, Tablets, Social Media, however this has changed.

Currently ongoing Weekly 1 hour Online Sessions with Junita Lyon and Katt Mathews and myself 4 hours as the face to face support before, during and after the Online Session at GEST and by visiting Moe Life Skills and Moe Neighbourhood House.(once each.) I assist staff access via staff DeskTop, LapTops and their own personal LapTops. I also assist with Tablet enquiries. GEST and Moe Life Skills are Samsung, while Moe Neighbourhood House, myself and some staff have iPads. So I have had to practice and develop skills and knowledge on Samsung Tablets and try to keep my examples to Apps and general features that are found on both. Using examples in PTTs on both Samsung and iPad in the future and more of a focus on Cameras for Photos, Basic Editing, Session Notes, Email, Communication and universal Social Media Applications, rather than 50 or 100 different Apps which will be up to the individual which they prefer.

Current & Future Needs:

To check the list of current participants and confirm which have left or new staff joining for the 2nd Semester, who will most likely have a face to face session or 2 to catch-up.

Time for Review and Planning:

Difficulty to sit people down to discuss and plan because of conflicting priorities with organisational needs. (ie Start or End of Term preparations, Auditing and various Staff Leave.) Unable to start new planned (Hands-On and Discussion) 30 minutes due to other organisational needs.

Need for more formal structure, formal assignment of tasks, upgrade of Hardware and Software and Planning of next 1 hour plus, of face to face hands on sessions on technologies and or e-Assessments.

Equipment, Hardware & Software and Setup:

Used a Class set of LapTops in initial 2 hours sessions, however power ran out on a few since you use more battery charge during Online Sessions. Class set of LapTops are stored and charge in a cabinet, and unable to remove power chargers for connection to

power. Extension cords and power boards purchased but second session still had Java problem, IT company fixed for Computer Lab and Staff not LapTop Class set.

Used 2 Trainers LapTops and Individual WiFi in first 2 sessions to get around Java unable to Load without Administrators Password/Permission.

Good for Trainers to have their own WiFi with access for 3-5 devices. Trainers both have LapTop and iPads and GEST WiFi doesn't work for iPads.

Headsets while using Bb: unable to initially hear sound or record voice with original Speaker setup to DeskTops. Speakers pulled out and Headsets plugged into rear panel.

Software: Using Windows XP, no Snipping Tool in accessories and MS Office 2007. While Trainers and eLearning Activities based on new software need to be adjusted and no Lync loaded on Windows XP for all Staff computers at this time until Upgrade. Staff with LapTops and Class Set that Staff access have had Lync loaded. This could take more than 2 weeks of face to face assisting Staff to Load and Log In to Lync.

8th Week - Improvements made for Formal structure of assigning Activities:

To make participants aware they need to do the listed Activities.

Possibly through previous experience with eLearning, eSeries, eMentor Online Sessions have not formally assigned Activities to participants and within the GEST Project we have found the need to create PPTs and Learner Activities for each Session and also a List of ALL the Activities that each Student is expected to complete and to Tick Off on the list which they have done for their own reference.

Just like face to face delivery, Online Learners also need Trainers to follow up Learner Participation and Learners Work.

Bb:

Difficulty accessing and distinguishing between Moodle and Bb for which to Log In for Online Session.

Bad WiFi for LapTop Learners to be kicked out of Bb Online Sessions. It's not just the Organisations WiFi but also Individual WiFi devices are being kicked out at the same time, while others using DeskTop are still connected to the Online Session.

Moodle:

Not all participants have updated their Profile Photos and descriptions, to do the Computer Skills Survey and Add a Topic in the Form. Continual prompting is needed each week and we have included a List of Task to be completed within a PPT Presentation.

Some confusion over Moodle and Bb, which to Log In to for Online Session and to update their Profile Photo. Also which is for Logging In to view the Forum, Tutorials for Students to Learn about Moodles, Wikis, iPads and Lync etc.

To clear confusion, we included the 5 Main Programs in a discussion and Q & A Session face to face and Online on what each does.

LYNC:

Aim for ALL participants to organise and have Lync, to swap from Bb to Lync for Online Sessions in the distant future. Difficulties: not all staff work from the Main Office, trouble filling in the Forms for Lync within a file, scanning, getting Digital Signatures. These are all good learning lessons in themselves and can be done via scanners, DeskTop/Laptop and Tablets. Started to Load Lync on personal 2 LapTops, 1 Class LapTop and 1 staff DeskTop Computer with Windows 7. (Currently not loading on Windows XP.)

WIKI Access:

GEST decided to select Wikis over a Moodle, however not all staff listed for the Wikis. Currently arranging for all participants to have access to a Wiki, whether it be one of GESTs (GEST, Aged Care, Zest or WLC) or Moe Life Skills to obtain their own and rest of staff and Moe Neighbourhood house currently being given access to my Wiki.

<http://gippslandtouchtechtraining.acfe.vic.edu.au/>

I have obtained a Wiki for myself and called it Gippsland Touch Tech Training (GTTT) and organised my own business cards and sent the Link to Learners.

I am developing resources and examples for GEST Project participants on how they can use their Wikis. I have started placing GEST Project Hands-On Activities within my Wiki for Learners to practice accessing work through a Wiki as one of their future students would. I also wish to display more than one way to present Units for Students to access and complete with Readings, PPTS, Unit Elements and Assessment Tasks. (List Unit work as 6 to 10 files to download or to show all on the Screen to read and view within the wiki and can download Assessment Task s, PPTS, Readings as necessary.)

The Wiki is still under-construction in various Pages. So far I have included my Twitter Feed on the Home Page which also has various Training, e-Learning and Social Media Tips, Resources and Links. Included is a banner for the GEST Project participants on where to go to select the right Activity Page on how to Create a new Page in a Wiki, which includes adding a Link and Uploading a file to their New Page. Also included are Links to Help for creating Wiki Pages, how to create a banner, add Twitter feed etc. I have also started on iPads and Samsung Tablet Pages and added Basic Computers for Beginners MS Word Activity, Internet Searching Activity and obtain a GMAIL Activity and referral to eHow.

So far I have started 3 Learners in my Wiki creating their first Page and will check and prompt them to add more over time. I have given examples for Administration and Finance Pages to add Enrolment Forms, Student Guides, Location Maps, Schedule of Training Programs for the following Terms, ATO Links, Timesheet information and Tips. (ie Use a Calculator and get it in on time the day before its due, not the last day.) It's important to make sure to provide Learners with examples on how they all can use the Wiki.

DropBox:

Not all students realised they should get Dropbox so this was discussed again and I - created a Share Folder – GEST Project Learner Activities – and shared with all Participants. Plan to make another Share Folder in using Dropbox to have ALL PPTs from the Face to face and Online Sessions. Students are not accessing the Moodle for PPTs or Tutorials it seems at this point. Placing Activity Sheets, PPTS etc in a Dropbox we anticipate that Learners will have to access these tools to participate and complete the tasks.

Benefits experienced by [organization/ teachers and learners]

Participants are seeing some of the potential benefits for the few connected to Lync, Dropbox and a Wiki can be. But this is only for the participants who have completed the tasks of getting a Dropbox, accepting to share the folder request/invite I sent to prompt all to access Dropbox for Learning Activities.

Participants have easily accessed Dropbox and the Wiki for their work and can see they have access to other resources.

Need for reevaluation of the Projects progress and seen participant, Hardware and Software difficulties and needs for one on one help increased, this has been provided by extra face to face sessions and via blackboard and Lync.

Lessons learnt

Need to update equipment Hardware and Software for participants to Learn about current e-Learning Methods and to be able to create their own, prior to conducting classes Online in the future themselves.

Flexibility to change delivery method and learning styles.

Follow-up and Prompting of Participants to Participate and to complete tasks.

Learning how to participate and create Online and blended Learning Courses will only occur over a long period of time through active participation and commitment of Learners.

Difficulties to have participants commit to Learning Online, not just sitting in the background and not completing tasks. We advised Learners of the need to remind their students of Self-paced learning and for the participants to practice Self-discipline, and Trainers to continually follow-up.

Each Individual Participant has different knowledge, skills and equipment for the Trainer to adapt training to.

Making Learning Sessions and Tasks relevant to the Learners work and current and future needs. Learners need to know how and why.

The results

I have greater eLearning knowledge and ability to Train others on eLearning. With the ability to create various resources through a Moodle, WordPress and a Wiki, that I have shared with fellow trainers and participants. Still to experience conducting more Online Sessions, as my focus has been face to face.

GEST: Improved knowledge on eLearning and computer skills so far, however still to create the blended learning courses themselves as the project isn't halfway through yet. So far have introduced Learners to various software applications for them to participate and practice in.

Reflections and suggestions

Need for reassessment via a Review and Planning Meeting between Trainers and Organisational Heads.

- Need for Learner Survey – Feedback on:
- What they have learnt so far?
- What was good?
- What they didn't like?
- What do they need and want? (From the GEST Projects last half of eLearning Skills and how to create Blended Learning courses and e-Assessments Training Sessions.)

Consideration for formal face to face training sessions rather than floating between offices.

Understanding of Online sessions difficult for some students with low IT skills, confidence or bad WiFi, Hardware and Software.

Links to tools and websites

eMentor Moodle – Great Resource to show Participants about Profiles, Forums, Online Surveys and Tutorial access, and for them to practice in.

<http://ramblinkatt.com.au/moodle/>

Blackboard Collaborate

MS PowerPoint

Dropbox

Lync

Wikis

<http://gippslandtouchtechtraining.acfe.vic.edu.au/>

For more information

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