



Journal of Applied Research in Workplace E-learning

Advice to authors of case study articles

In addition to the more traditional research, development and theoretical/conceptual articles and position papers, *Impact* accepts and publishes case study articles that share experiences related to the design, implementation, evaluation and/or management of e-learning within the context of a particular workplace or organisational setting. This is consistent with the journal's aim of "contribut[ing] to the development and promotion of best practice in workplace e-learning worldwide".

The journal considers "workplace" to encompass a wide a range of sectors and industries, including but not limited to the corporate sector, not-for-profits, government, healthcare and the military; however, articles pertaining to e-learning in formal K-12 (school) or tertiary/higher education settings are generally deemed to be outside the scope of the journal, with a few exceptions (see <http://journal.elnet.com.au/index.php/impact/about/submissions#authorGuidelines> for details).

A case study article published in *Impact* may, for example, document how an e-learning strategy or initiative was used to address a particular challenge within a specific business context. Or, it may describe the application of principled methods, theory or tools to the development of a particular e-learning resource (eg a learning object / collection of learning objects) or learning design to meet the needs of a department, organisation, industry or group of learners.

It is also important for authors to bear in mind that as its title suggests, a major focus of the journal is how e-learning research and practice can impact on business/organisational performance, ie to produce demonstrable results and outcomes. Readers hail from a wide range of business/industry as well as academic backgrounds. ***Manuscripts that focus solely on the technical aspects of e-learning and/or that describe a particular intervention, tool or technology without demonstrating relevance to and implications for others outside the local situation/scenario (eg by abstracting reflections from the experience and placing them in a broader and more general context, and/or using the case study as a basis for suggesting future research directions) are not likely to be accepted.***

Suggested format

What follows is a suggested format only, and may be modified or customised as necessary by individual authors (with the exception of the Executive summary section, which is mandatory). It is not intended to limit or constrain authors' creativity and writing styles, and as such should not be treated as a comprehensive or exhaustive checklist.

This document should, however, be read in conjunction with the journal's Editorial Policies and Author Guidelines, available at <http://journal.elnet.com.au/index.php/impact/about/editorialPolicies> and <http://journal.elnet.com.au/index.php/impact/about/submissions#authorGuidelines>, respectively.

Executive summary (Mandatory)

This section should consist of a paragraph or set of paragraphs of approximately 300–400 words, providing a brief description or overview of the contents of *the entire article*, including the conclusions. It is not an introduction; it is in essence an extended abstract that gives the “bottom line”. While being written in a concise fashion, it should give someone who has yet to read the full article a good gist of the article, and give someone who has previously read the article enough information to remind him/her of all the main points. The executive summary *must not* contain literature references.

Background and introduction

- Provide a description of the organisation containing key information/facts that are relevant to the case study. This might include, for example:
 - the organisation's history
 - type of business
 - products/services provided
 - management structure
 - financial status (eg annual turnover)
 - strategic planning (including the organisation's unique value proposition, eg competitive differentiator / sustainable competitive advantage)
 - organisational culture
 - overview of the industry in which the organisation operates
 - economic climate that forms the backdrop of the case study.
- Include a few sentences introducing and leading in to the case study, briefly outlining what it covers. Draw out the highlights of the case study (eg key achievements).

Established practice (or Setting the stage)

- Identify the features of the organisation's practice that were previously in use (ie prior to the initiation of the project or initiative described in the case). This may include a discussion of management practices and philosophies in general as well as features relating specifically to (e-)learning and development, ICT and knowledge management.
- Provide a description of the problem being addressed and/or the factors/issues that provided the impetus/motivation for the project or initiative. What were the primary drivers for change?
- Provide the context for the project or initiative covered by the case study. Include relevant information not included in the previous section, eg brief details about strategic partners, types of learners involved.

Case description

Aims and objectives

- Outline the purpose of the project or initiative and the benefits that the organisation sought to realise.
- Briefly describe the expected goals of the project (short and long term, financial or other) and how the success of the project or initiative was to be judged or measured.

Approach

- Provide a description of the planning process, including problem definition and contextualisation, requirements elicitation/gathering.
- Provide brief details about the scope and timeline of the project or initiative.
- Provide details about the approach taken to develop and implement/deliver the project or initiative, including a discussion of the reasons/rationale for why the approach was adopted. This may include coverage of the resources looked to for guidance, selection and use of best practice / frameworks, quality management, risk management, change management, project governance, communication and stakeholder management, technology evaluation and selection, pedagogical/instructional models, etc

- Describe the quality control measures that were established, ie KPI's and other metrics that were used to determine whether there had been a change. In other words, what were the project team / organisation specifically targeting to impact, and how would they know if this had been achieved?
- Discuss how the organisational culture, philosophies, opinions, etc practiced within the organisation impacted on various aspects or stages of the project or initiative.

Evaluation and outcomes

- How was the project or initiative evaluated? Provide details on the methodology/ approach, including data collection and analysis procedures, as well as the results/findings of the evaluation.

Discussion and reflections

Successes and mistakes of the project

- What were the main successes of the project? Discuss from the perspective of learners, practitioners and the organisation as a whole.
- What were the major contributors to these successes (ie critical success factors)?
- What were the biggest mistakes/pitfalls of the project? What should be done differently the next time?

Challenges faced

- What challenges and problems were encountered during and at the completion of the project or initiative? This may include challenges relating to organisational culture, resources, staffing, communication, geography, technology/use of tools, etc.
- How were the problems and challenges mitigated/overcome?
- Describe the current status of the ongoing problems and challenges, if any.

Conclusion and recommendations (or Epilogue)

- Summarise the achievements and benefits that have been realised as a result of the project or initiative, as well as future potential benefits.
- Discuss the key lessons learnt (including both risks and benefits), particularly those relevant to practitioners outside the local scenario of the organisation. What are the key points or "take home messages" in relation to effective practice?
- Briefly outline any future plans to extend, build upon and/or repeat the project or initiative.
- Highlight the main implications for workplace/organisational e-learning theories/models/ frameworks, and make recommendations for future research in this area.

References

Include a reference list in APA style containing *only* the sources that are cited in the article.

Further reading

Include pointers to related materials and/or other content.

Questions and comments should be directed to the Editor-in-Chief at impactjournal@elnet.com.au.

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