Developing Customer-centered Online Learning

BACKGROUND:

When approached by a federal agency looking to improve service delivery experiences and outcomes for customers with disabilities, we got to work assessing the underlying cause. We discovered that while staff on the frontlines understood what the law required of them, they often struggled to put policy into practice when providing customer service. They needed assistance *applying* key principles to make a positive service experience for individuals with disabilities.

OUR APPROACH:

We worked with a 27-person task force of disability and employment experts, frontline staff, and partners to assess the needs of learners and center the online learning solution around those needs. In partnership with the task force, we:

- **Identified high impact training topics:** While partners noted a variety of struggles on the job, the task force narrowed the list to three key priority topic areas.

- **Designed a collaborative instructional design model:** We recognized the value of task force feedback and built a design strategy to incorporate their reviews every step of the way.

- **Developed scenario-based, 508-compliant online learning:** The best real-life scenarios come from real-life people. Task force members used their own experiences to suggest scenario subjects and create realistic decision points in the scenarios.

- **Created a grassroots promotional strategy:** All members of the task force served as champions for the modules and led a promotional campaign to get the word out to their personal and professional networks.

- **Evaluated the training and identified future opportunities:** Even the best training needs refreshing over time. We led an evaluation session with the task force team to evaluate our work and plan for future developments and additions.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT:

This customer-centered approach is a hallmark of our Training Services work. We listen to the outcomes our clients hope to achieve, assess the needs of the training audience, and design training strategies and products that directly meet those needs. When there is an opportunity to incorporate real-time feedback, we leverage it. As a result, our clients feel heard and learners can directly apply the training concepts to their everyday work.

In the first year of their release, the modules have been shared far and wide and have received over **7,600 views**. Frontline staff learners appreciated the scenario-based approach to learning and noted an increase in their confidence serving customers with disabilities.

> *"The structure and nature of the course modules were consistent and put the trainee at ease. I particularly appreciated the additional resources available to the trainee and key were the scenarios that provided an understanding of optimal and subpar responses to customer inquiries. Thank you. This has been a refreshing opportunity."*
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> *– eLearning Task Force Member*

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