

Training programs

Introduction

In previous research I have discovered the main problem employees within GroupM experience is that their knowledge of generative AI is limited. To tackle this problem I will together with my team create a training program to give them the knowledge needed to effectively use generative AI.

In this research I will look at other digital training programs and what features they have. But I will also be looking into which methods there are for training people and how to create an engaging and fun training program.

Method: Library research, Benchmark creation

Main question: How do you create an effective training program that is fun and engaging?

Sub Questions:

- What is important when creating a training program?
- What are common training methods, for what are they most effective, and what are the (dis)advantages for each method?
- Which methods are used to make a training program more fun and engaging?
- What are different types of questions for e-learning assessments?
- What are good examples of online training programs?
- What training programs are already available within GroupM and what method do they use?

What is important when creating a training program?

When creating an effective training program, it is important to have a good understanding of what you want to achieve with the program. Here are some key factors to consider before creating a training program: (Indeed Editorial team, 2023)

Identify the training goals: It is important to start with having clear goals in mind for the training program. They should be realistic to complete. What skills or knowledge do you want the participants to gain from the program? Is a good question to ask before creating a training program.

Know the target audience: It is not only important to have a clear goal in mind but to also know the audience you are designing it for. Important to take into consideration is their current knowledge of the topic and the skills they have. When having a clear idea who the participants are you can tailor the training program to their needs.

Variety of training methods: There are lots of different methods for learning. It is important to look at what fits your target audience best. Everyone learns in different ways so it's better to have more options to choose from.

Engaging interactive and fun: Attention span for people is short when in meetings, long presentations or in general when the information is boring, difficult and dry. Not only is it not fun but the information will be less retained. It is important to keep the participants engaged. This could be achieved by making the program interactive, fun and relevant to their needs.

Feedback on current progress: During the training program it is important to know where the participants begin and to show the progress they have made. It is rewarding for people to know how far they have come. Not only is it helpful for the participant but also for the trainer to see in which areas the participant struggles with and could be improved.

Measure the success: After a training program is complete it is important to evaluate how effective the training program was by measuring the goals. This can be done through feedback from participants, formal assessments, etc. At the end you can make further improvements for future participants.

What are common training methods, for what are they most effective, and what are the (dis)advantages for each method?

Everyone learns differently and some topics are better explained with specific training methods. I will look at different methods for what it is used and what the cons and pros for each of them are.

Instructor-led training: Instructor-led training is a traditional form of teaching. There will be a lecturer who presents information to participants in a classroom or business setting. Most often used when you need to train/teach a large group of people and will be in presentation form. Instructor-led training advantage is that it can be placed anywhere with a screen and space so is very flexible on settings. However it can become quickly boring when the only thing you do is listen or take notes. So it is seen as less engaging than other training methods and can lead to a decrease of retained information. (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022)

Coaching: Coaching is a form where a leading person will give feedback on their participants performance most often used when an employer needs to be worked in a business setting. Having someone dedicated to only you, will help create a bond and make it easier to ask questions. This is one advantage but also to experiencing first hand what everyone else does. A disadvantage is that one person needs to be in charge of coaching, it takes up a lot of time and dedication. When people don't show motivation it can also affect the other person's experience. (Gore, 2023)

E-Learning: With E-learning people use a digital tool. This tool can have for example, online courses, webinars or videos, all to deliver the training content. It is very convenient to access the material everywhere. It's like a hub of information where you can follow content that you want. Advantages of e-learning of course is accessibility as you can use it anytime, anywhere, it is customizable learning to the needs and pace of individual learning and also is cost-effective. However it needs to be organized and have a clear infrastructure to use, people need to have digital skills, may also not be suitable for all types of learners and can isolate people by the lack of social interaction. Asking questions will also be harder when using such a tool.

Hands-on training: Hands-on training can also be described as a workshop. It gives participants the opportunity to practice skills in a real-world setting. This is most effective training when people need to practice their skills and especially need to repeat them to master it. Advantages of this training include that it is very engaging as you use theory in practice giving the participants more context on where it could be used for, seeing first hand how good you are. A disadvantage is that it needs a lot of preparation time and can cost resources. It is also difficult to apply for each setting. For people who are more theoretical it can not be as effective.

Simulation training: Simulation training is when you create a realistic environment where participants can practice skills or techniques in a safe and controlled setting. This learning method is most often used when in real-world scenarios involves high risk. Advantages are that it gives participants a safe setting to test their skills, it also shows when replicating real-life scenarios teaches them of the risks and consequences their actions can have.

However it requires a lot of resources and technology to create and run simulations and may not be possible for all types of scenarios. It is difficult to simulate such a real-life scenario.

Group discussions: A group discussion is a training method that involves a group of people that discusses a specific topic. It can help participants learn from each other and share ideas. This method is most effective for collaboration and problem-solving skills. Advantages of using this method are active participants and engagements, opportunity to learn from each other, share experience and come in contact with a dynamic learning environment. However, group discussions require skilled facilitation to keep the discussion on track and focused, it can be dominated by only a few participants or certain personalities, sometimes people are only motivated by their own opinion so should have an open-minded mindset. It is not effective for people that prefer more structured or individual approaches to learning.

Case study: Is a combination between group discussion and simulation: You will get a business/real-life scenario and need to solve this together within a group or alone. This is perfect to learn problem-solving skills. Advantages are you learn how to deal with scenarios work related well, highly engaging and social. Disadvantages: it can be dominated by only a few participants, difficult personalities, and more. (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022)

Film and Video: Film and video training can be found on an E-learning platform. It is often used within business settings as it can simply difficult theory in simple explained videos. Not many employees prefer reading material over videos. You can animate videos. This style can be used to explain relatively difficult topics, live-action is good for demonstrating appropriate or inappropriate interaction through role-playing. Screen recording can show employees step for step how to use a new digital tool. It is often combined with a test or questions to know what you have learned. Disadvantages: creating videos is sometimes a lot of effort, costs resources and it can be time consuming when you have to watch every video. (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022)

Which methods are used to make a training program more fun and engaging?

Gamification: Gamification is when you incorporate game elements such as points, badges, rewards and leaderboards into a tool. It is used to make training programs fun and interactive as it can motivate learners to participate in challenges, activities and encourages employees to compete against each other in a friendly way. This can help with bonding, it can encourage peer feedback and all together and will be easier to share knowledge with each other. Rewards is an element that is used to acknowledge a person's progress which creates a dopamine rush the same as winning something. (Kaikhosroshvili, 2023) However, if there are people that are not as competitive it can have a negative impact on those which can distract them from the learning objectives.

Gamification tools may be more suited to some subjects or activities than others. For instance, it may be easier to gamify activities that involve problem-solving, decision-making, or exploration, whereas it may be more challenging to gamify activities that require rote memorization or conceptual understanding. (Mohd et al., 2023)

Personalization: To make a training more interesting real life scenarios could help envision how this training would help the participants in their life. Making it realistic to achieve and see what you can do with it will motivate people to do the training. It is important to always tailor the needs of your target audience who you are designing to program for. When they see it as a waste of time you did something wrong. Some elements you can put in your program are: offering a choice of learning paths allowing users to set their own learning goals can increase motivation, but also case studies related to their workfield, role-playing, simulations, etc. (E, 2023)

Scenario-based learning: Scenario based learning is an immersive training where the learner gets to practice a skill in a real life situation. Similar to real life scenarios or simulation training. Participants get to practice in a safe and controlled environment. They get to practice their problem solving skills by giving them a scenario they need to solve. Helping them again to pinpoint in which situations they can use their new found knowledge. It also helps with knowledge retention as this way of learning acquires the participants full attention and will be immersed into the story. (Markovic, 2023)

Microlearning: Microlearning is a method to make learning more compact, small and in easily bite-sized chunks. Most of the time these bite-sized modulus are learned or shown via videos, quizzes or interactive elements. This method is able to break complex and difficult theory into simple and manageable information. It has proven to be very effective, engaging and motivating for participants to learn in this way. (Fidan, 2023) As small information is more easily retained and fun to learn from. It is though preferred that this method is paired with a social learning platform making the content more visually appealing and interactive.

Interactive multimedia elements: traditional learning methods are reading books, following lectures, etc. But this can become quite dull and even boring. So adding videos, audio,

images, colors, etc can help with appealing the training program. Making multiple interactive elements also will help with users retaining the information better.

What are different types of questions for e-learning assessments?

When designing a training program it is important to test users on their learned knowledge. Not only is this important for the participant to test their knowledge but also to show progression and where the participant needs help to improve. Simply an eLearning assessment is a tool used to test the participants knowledge of a topic and document this in a measurable way. It should be based on your learning goals made prior to the training.

To make this more engaging there are interactive types of questions to test the participants on their knowledge.

Traditional

- **True/false:** It is used when you want to measure if the participant can identify whether a statement is true or false. It is often used to test basic understanding of a topic or to assess critical thinking.
- **Single choice questions:** In this question the participant can only choose one answer, the rest of the options are distractions. They are useful for testing knowledge of facts, understanding the concepts and critical thinking.
- **Multiple choice questions:** In this type of question the participant can choose from multiple answers. They are often used to test factual knowledge and understanding of basic concepts.

For traditional testing

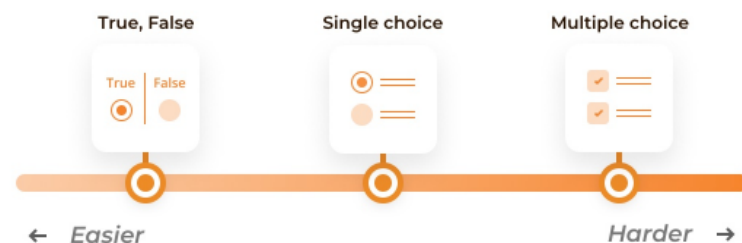


Figure 1: Traditional testing difficulty ranking. (Bhamidi, 2022)

Word Based responses

- **Fill in the blanks:** This type of question requires the participant to fill in a word or phrase in a blank spot of a sentence. They are used to test knowledge on specific concepts.
- **Open question:** Open ended questions do not have a single right answer. Usually, they require more effort to answer, because the learner has to have an underlying understanding of the subject. (Bhamidi, 2022) They are used for testing higher-level thinking and writing skills.

For word-based response



Figure 2: Word based responses difficulty ranking. (Bhamidi, 2022)

Visual responses

- **Single image choice:** This question has several images and answers. It is used to test if participants can identify facts that have one correct answer.
- **Hotspot:** A hotspot question starts with one image where participants need to click or fill in spots on that specific image.

For visual response



Figure 3: Visual responses difficulty ranking. (Bhamidi, 2022)

Making groups

- **Text matching:** This type of questions requires participants to match items from one list to another. The task is to make correct pairs. They are used to test if the participants can see relationships between concepts.
- **Drag & Drop:** Drag & drop questions can be used to drag and drop objects or items to match with an answer or to form connections between subjects. They are useful for testing when a user needs to recall information and complete the challenge.
- **Ranking text:** Ranking text required participants to rank items in order of importance or relevance based on the question. They are used for testing understanding of concepts and decision-making skills.

**For groups
(matching,
sorting,
ranking)**



Figure 4: Making group difficulty ranking. (Bhamidi, 2022)

These are a broad number of examples that can be used when creating an eLearning platform. It is important to look at what you want the participant to learn and choose a correct form of question and answer format.

What are good examples of online training programs?

For this question I want to look into existing online training platforms and how they work. What are the features in this platform and how does it check your result?

Google course: Effective Networking

For this course I will learn how to effectively create my network and why this is important. The course starts off with an introduction video on why you should network and how. After you have watched the video you will get a scenario and have to click the correct questions to test your knowledge.

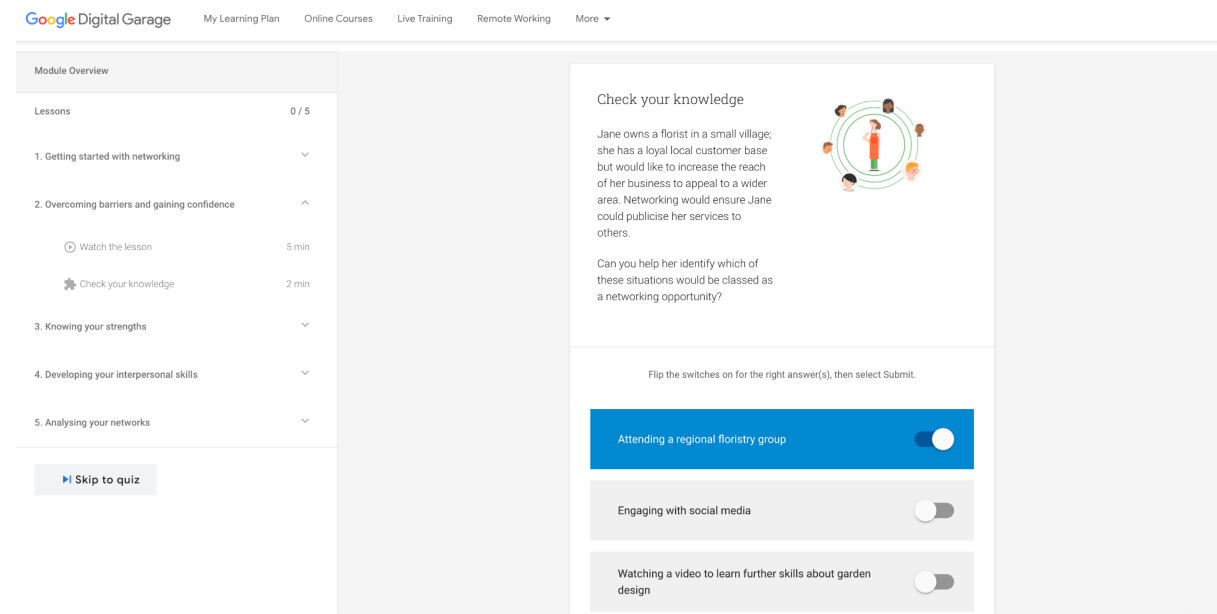


Figure 5: Google course: test your knowledge. [Google Digital Garage, z.d.]

After hitting submit you will get to see if you answered correctly. I didn't make any mistakes and got affirmative feedback that I had answered correctly. I can now go onto the next lesson. When given an incorrect answer it asks if you want to retry the answer or watch the video again. It is a simple course with little interaction. It uses videos to give information, underneed a short description of what the video was about and then tests your knowledge. At the end of the course you will even be quizzed if you understand the course. This course gives information but also makes sure that you learn.

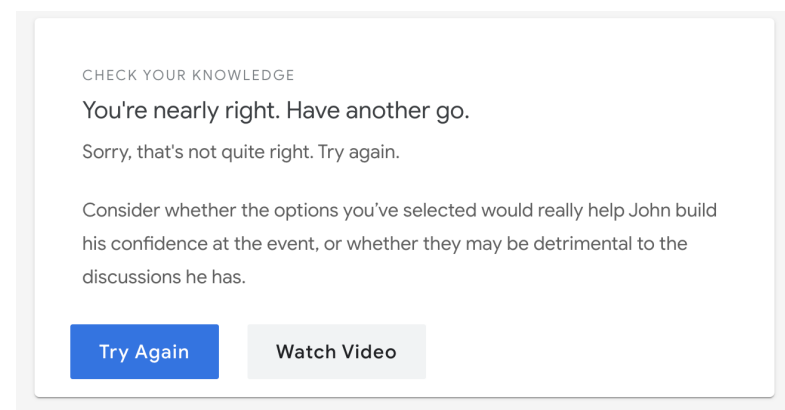


Figure 6: Google course: check your knowledge incorrect. [Google Digital Garage, z.d.]

Codecademy

Codecademy is an online learning platform that helps you learn how to code. It has multiple courses available from different programming languages.

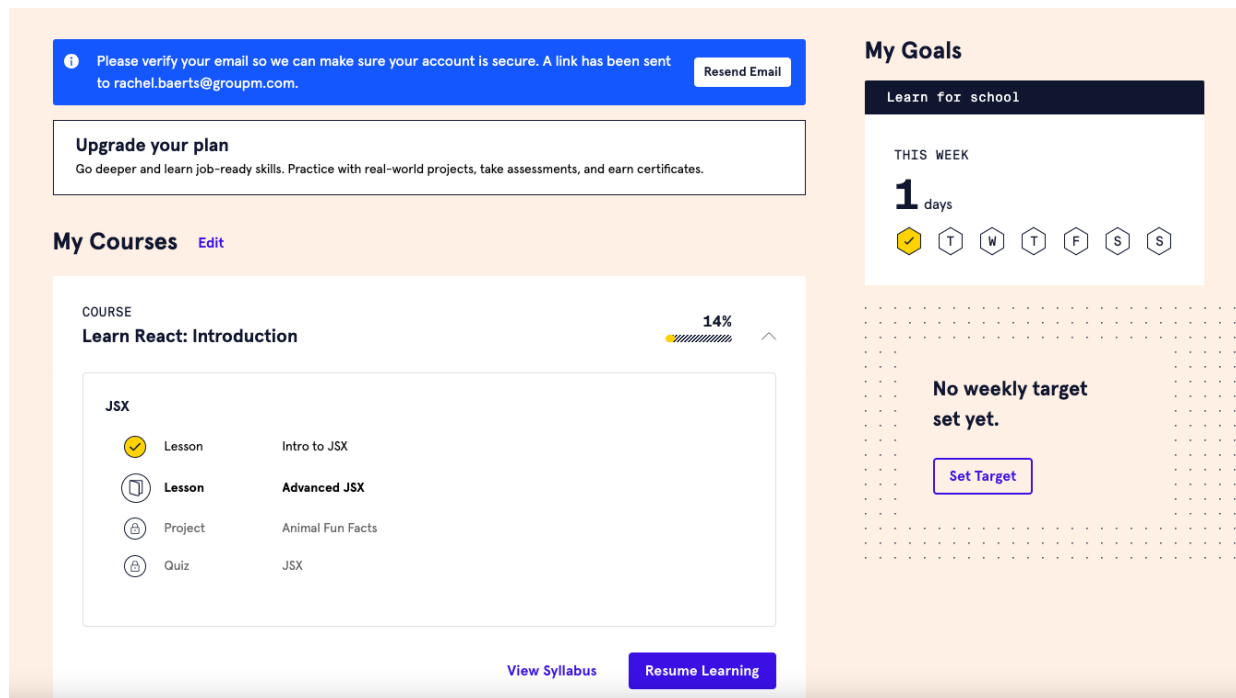


Figure 7: Codecademy learning platform (Codecademy, 2023)

In Codecademy I have enrolled for one course learning how to work with React. In figure 3 the page is dedicated to showing my courses and the potential goals I want to achieve for that week. It has a nice visual of how far I am with the course and what lessons I already finished.

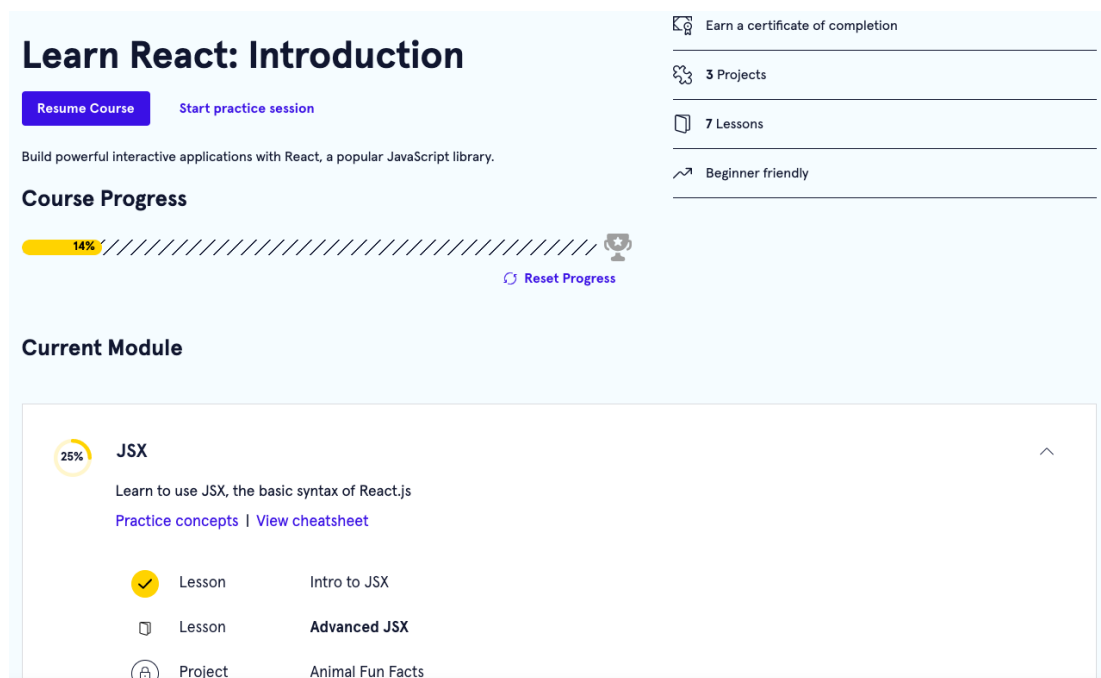


Figure 8: Codecademy course explanation (Codecademy, 2023)

If we go further into the program we can have more in depth information about the course and let me know what I will learn. When starting the course I will have a brief explanation of the theory that is explained with examples. After that I will have to code it myself and see the result.

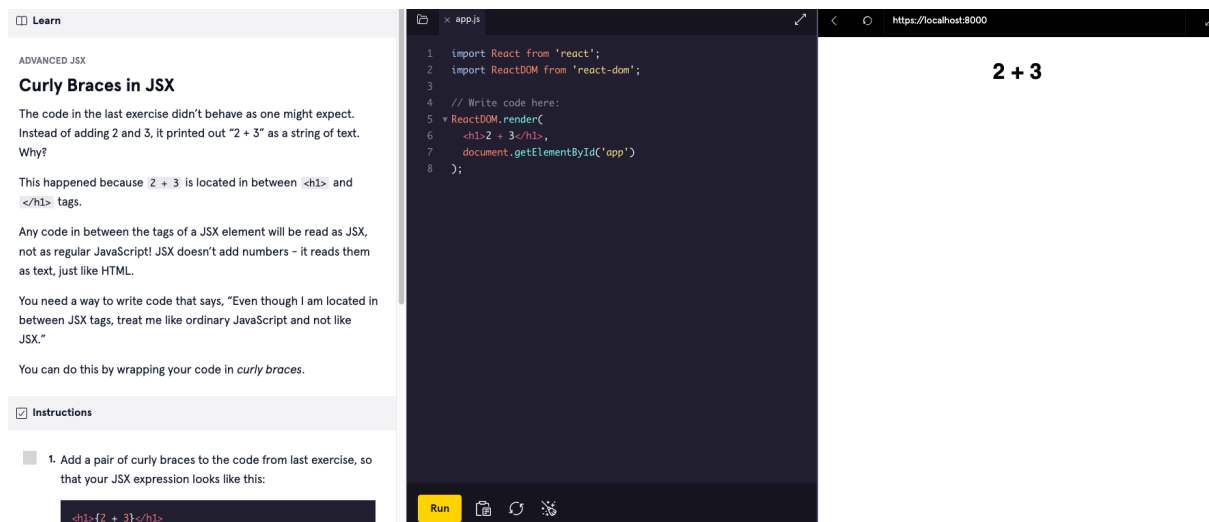


Figure 9: Codecademy learning (Codecademy, 2023)

It is easy to follow and gives clear instructions. When you fill in the correct answer there will be a green mark on your assignments. If you don't know how to continue you can ask for hints. At the end of each lesson you can read more in depth on the material with a cheatsheet and frequently asked questions answered. Looks similar to stackoverflow. It is easy to follow and straight to the point. At the end you will be tested on your knowledge through a quiz.

This way of learning is best for practicing your skills as you are using the theory in practice and see direct results. The repetition helps with remembering over time. A nice addition of this course is: when you're stuck you can ask people for help. Learning together and stimulating others helps with a good learning experience.

TypeTopia

TypeTopia is a course where you will learn how to type with ten fingers. It uses gamification to stimulate and engage children to learn typing in a fun way. In TypeTopia you have multiple gaming types to choose from with each of them having different learning goals. One of the most common ones is reflex training. Another gamification element is their scoring board.

This platform offers two different courses. One for adults and the other one for kids. I will begin the demo lesson for adults. They start off with why it is important or the goals of this training program and tell you how the program looks and works.



Figure 10: TypeTopia explanation of the course. (TypeTopia, 2023)

When I completed the introduction I got to do some levels. The first training I got was the reflex training. This training test if you are actually typing without looking at your keyboard. They will measure the time it takes for you to type and can make an estimation if you typed without looking.

The game I played was with falling apples. On every apple was a letter which I had to type before the apple fell. See figure 7. At the end of the game you get to see how well you did and points are added to your score.



Figure 11: TypeTopia gamification training program. (TypeTopia, 2023)

With this score you can unlock certain rewards. This is one of their gaming elements, also my account went up the scoreboard. After doing the introduction lesson of the adults I wanted to know how the kids' course looked and what the difference was.

The kids course had more gamification elements than the adults as this was more story based. In the kids course you followed a story of you being an astronaut that would complete missions on different planets throughout the lesson. The kids course will learn via storytelling and completing a mission or mini game of typing they will get points. One thing I really like about this course is that they really know their target audience and to keep them interested. It is very interactive and has lots of gamification elements. It is fun and you are learning. Another great addition is that you can invite friends to join the interactive games which helps stimulate people to learn together.

What training programs are already available within GroupM and what method do they use?

GroupM is a big company and has many different training programs available for employees. There are different platforms to access these programs. But the first training I needed to follow was an Ethics training as this was part of the onboarding.


Ethics training

The ethics training goal was to let employees know what principles were important within WPP in relation to ethics.

BELONGING AT WPP

Please explore this training in linear order, noting you have to complete each module to finish the training successfully.

100% course complete



INTRODUCTION



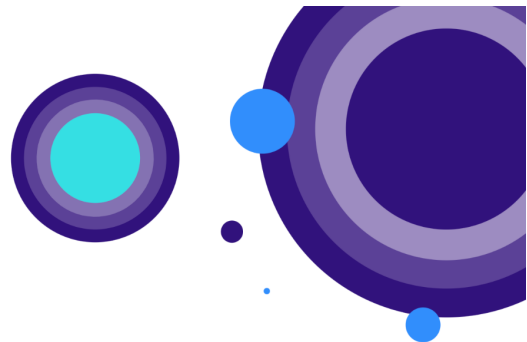
WHAT IS UNCONSCIOUS BIAS?



figure 12: WPP ethics training program

Within this course you start with a video explaining what their principles are. You have to finish every video you want to get to the next step. After finishing the introduction videos you will come to a part with scenarios. In these videos there will be a scenario of a dilemma with characters role-playing and interacting with this scenario. After you have seen the video you will be asked questions for example on a scale to 1 to 5 how comfortable are you after seeing this video.

The video displays discomfort on the workflow and after that asks you how you felt. When you finish the scenarios there will be a video explaining what you should do if this happened to you.



SCENARIOS



Figure 13: Ethics training scenarios

The learning method used for this training program is video. In the videos will be explained what the principles are, examples of situations and what you should do. To finish this course you need to have watched every video and answered the questions. You will not be tested afterwards.

My first experience with this course was that the step to step guide was easy to follow and understand. The videos were clear to follow. The only thing that bothered me about this course was that I had to follow it, had no choice and that watching these videos took a lot of time to complete. If this was a course I choose myself I would find it more interesting and fun to complete.

Traffic and Content, Design and CX for e-commerce acquisition

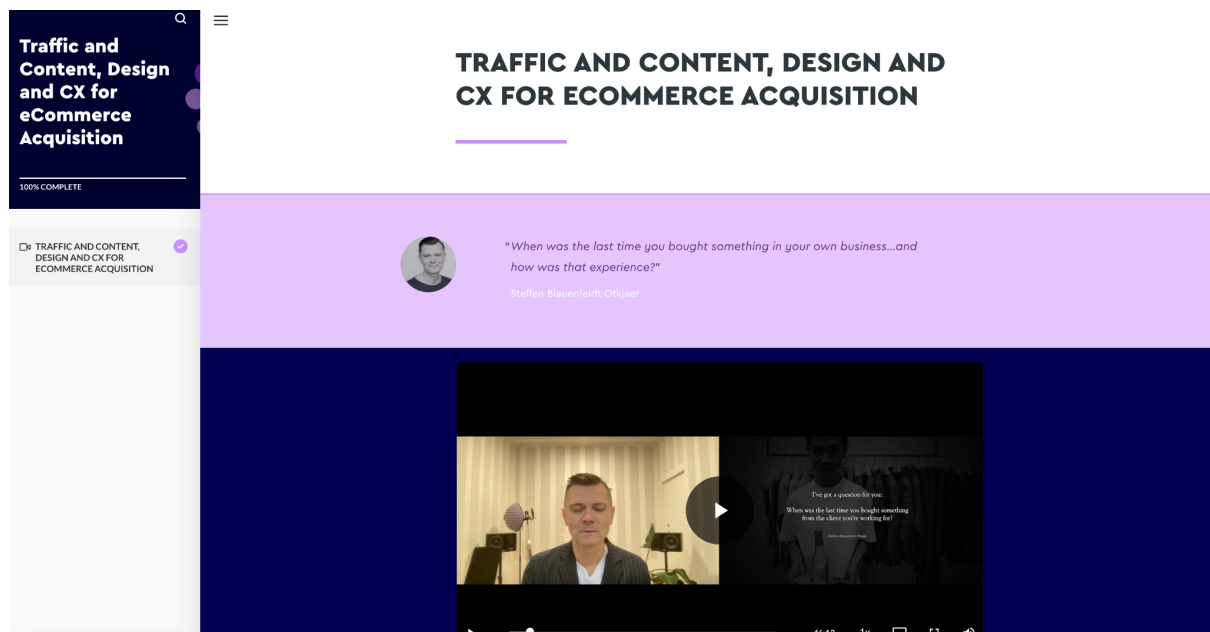


figure 14: training program 2 traffic and content, design and CX for e-commerce acquisition.

This training program is a screen recording of a person talking about the subject. It is about an hour long. You can download the presentation underneath and find a short infographic about the course. The nice part about this training program is that you can learn anytime you want and at your own speed. The visuals look good but there is little interaction, if there were more questions testing your knowledge on the subject would be better.

Learning & development

Within GroupM you can also enroll yourself in courses. This can be workshops, trainings and more.

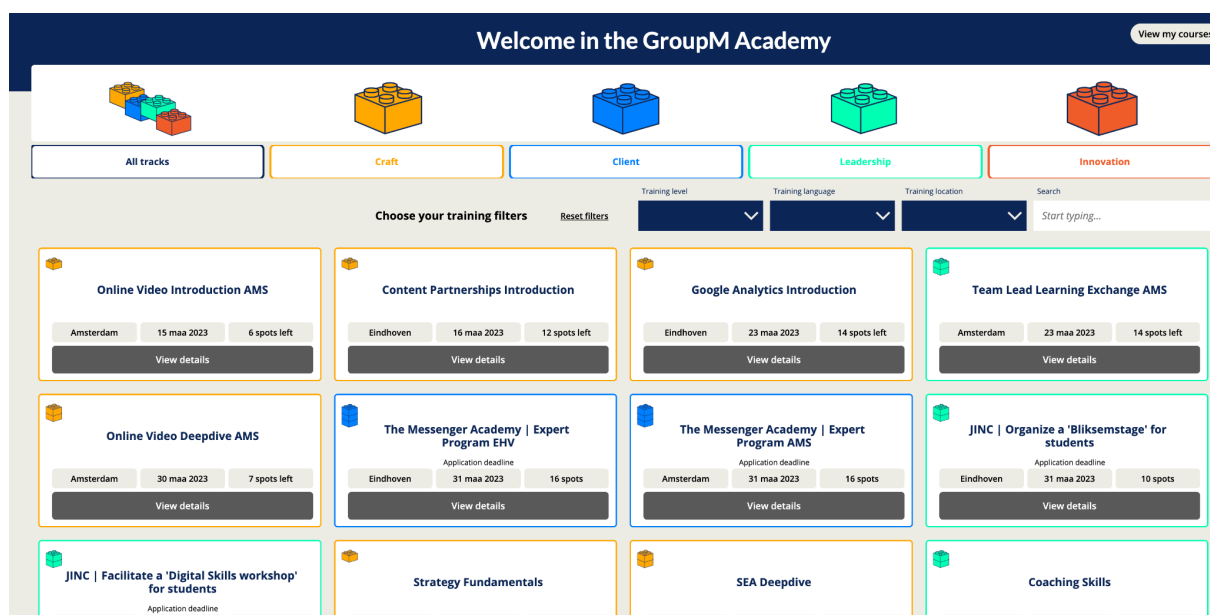


figure 15: Learning and development platform

The design is not necessarily good looking but it works perfectly. It is very easy to enroll in a course and see a short description of what it is about. You will get an email where to be at what time. The blocks represent what subject it will describe and the level is displayed with how many blocks are on one module. To experience one of the courses for myself I have enrolled into a Google Analytics course.

Google Analytics Introduction

On the learning & development platform I enrolled into the Google Analytics Introduction to experience for myself how workshops are given within GroupM. As the title says it will be an introduction of Google Analytics and was given by two people on the analytics teams in GroupM Nexus.

For this workshop it was important to bring my laptop as I would be working with Google Analytics in the presentation. The presenters started off with a description of what they are going to talk about and the main topic was Google Analytics 4. Currently within the company they are using universal analytics but this would change this year. This was the main reason for the workshop.

We started off with an introduction of the course and who were present. Then we got a brief explanation with lots of visuals and simple steps how Google Analytics works. They explained how GA4 processes data, collects it and uses it to visualize. Then we dived deeper into some terms that were newly introduced in GA4.

In the presentation they use humor with some gifs, one liners for simple explanations and simple illustrations for explanation of the model. After the introduction and deep dive on some terms we would try it out for ourselves.

Interactive part

People struggled with going on the correct website, the instructions to get to your starting point could have been better explained. After we all had the same demo of GA4 we started with the tabs and features on the platform. Each tab was explained on what you can do and how to acquire the correct data. After the explanation of each tab we got a question to collect data. If you knew where to look it was okay, but the explanation if you did it wrong could have been better explained. The steps were often not clear and the explanation went fast. This could be improved.

At the end of the presentation and demonstration they quickly reviewed the most important parts of the presentation. They left their contact details if we wanted to ask any questions afterwards.

The presentation was very insightful and had lots of information. The interactive part was nice to instead only listen to do it yourself. Important to add this and test it with users.

Conclusion

To create an effective training that is fun and engaging it is important to have a good understanding of what needs to be accomplished with the training program. For this reason you start with choosing the training goals, make these realistic to achieve for the target audience. As they are the group you will be making it for it is important to know what their current knowledge is and help them in the process to achieve those goals. This can be done through feedback on their process. This will not only help motivate them to finish the program but is also a quick way to see if somebody needs help with anything. It also should be low level to enter the program.

Training programs come in many different forms and there are multiple methods to achieve the desired result. It is though important to pick the correct one for each training purpose fitting to the target audience. Multiple are even better as everyone learns in a different way. Some effective training methods for improving a certain skill set are hand-on training and case study. Both have their advantages and disadvantages but combining them will lead into a well developed program for employees of GroupM.

To make these training programs fun and engaging there are multiple methods to achieve this. Gamification is often used in eLearning platforms to make them more fun and interactive but not necessarily engaging. It even can have a negative impact on the effectiveness of the training. Gamification can be well applied for training problem-solving, decision-making or exploration skills. Gamification can also lead to a more competitive work environment that can be negative for some people. (Mohd et al., 2023) For this reason it is important to choose carefully how you will implement gamification in your training program. Micro learning however has proven to be very effective and engaging. (Fidan, 2023) Micro-learning is a form of making bite-sized pieces of the learning material. People using this method prefer a social learning environment, similar to social media platforms, that includes interactive and visually appealing content.

However it is important to always check the needs of the target audience. They need to know why they are doing it. If they think the training program is useless they will be less likely to continue. So another method that can be used to make it engaging is real-life scenarios or also called scenario based learning. (Markovic, 2023)(Elliott-Kingston et al., 2016) This method helps the employees relate to the topic in their own situation via role playing, simulations, and more. Letting them know where this training could be applied can help motivate them.

It is also important that the training program is easily accessible for the employees. Within GroupM there are certain learning platforms where they can enter learning courses. The goal of our project is to create a learning program that can be used on one of these platforms. The program should also be future proof for next generations. This can be done by making the course easy to adjust to the rapid evolving technology.

Recommendations

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