

Turning to Learning Management

Shifting Focus to Meet Changing Government Human Resource Demands

A shrinking workforce will create enormous challenges for federal government agencies in coming years. By 2020, it's estimated there will be 14 million fewer suitable candidates to fill the number of job openings available in the U.S. alone.

Public sector institutions realize they must prepare now, to avoid losing their most valuable asset – qualified personnel. This is why many government organizations are turning to learning management from Oracle, to develop and execute a strategy to better equip workers to meet each agency's mission goals.

Organizations are refocusing to define and categorize job skills, competencies and knowledge – everything an agency must know about an employee to determine where he or she best fits, and how each employee can be more productive. There's increased interest in linking pay to performance, and in tying performance to organizational and employee development.

Meanwhile, federal agencies face obvious generational differences as well. While Baby Boomers may have personally attended classes to fulfill learning requirements, Generation Y workers seek more internet-based learning opportunities. There's also an enormous need for more succession planning and leadership development to provide both 'bottom-up,' and 'top-down' employee development and training.

Human Capital Management (HCM) is considered the best way to resolve many of the government's challenges. HCM increases workforce value, selecting the best-suited workers for each job opening, developing critical competencies, measuring performance and delivering rewards. Technology plays a crucial role by delivering strategic, internet-based learning management programs. Oracle learning management solutions, for example, maximize each agency's reach with consistent, standardized global learning tools for employees, constituents and industry partners.

Federal agencies need the ability to document by both job/position and by employee, the agency's primary competencies and requirements for success. There's also a need to rate competencies and accomplishments for each employee, to perform gap analysis with position requirements. Some jobs may require only an

Analyst Tips for Improving HCM

AMR Research, Inc., Boston, Mass., offers several tips to help organizations find learning management systems suppliers who offer strengths to match the immediate needs of federal organizations, including:

- Investigate incumbent software suppliers,
- Focus first on the processes, not the providers,
- Establish personnel competencies as the core of each agency program,
- Don't expect a rock-solid business case or ROI for strategic HCM,
- Enlist employees to drive strategic HCM from the bottom up,
- Realize software as a service (SaaS) isn't everything, but it may be the best way to move forward,
- Ask to see in-depth demonstrations to ensure functionality will work as expected,
- Commit to core HR integration as a key enabler of success,
- ERP can do HCM, but the agency must decide whether to perform HCM using the ERP system already in place.

entry-level proficiency in a given area, while other jobs require a more advanced level of learning. Competency and proficiency ratings must also be defined at the team and project levels, as well as for contractors and consultants. Within the Oracle learning management applications, there are self-service tools to help government organizations manage competencies and easily keep them updated.

In fact, integrating core competencies with organizational processes is considered the next step forward in the evolution of learning management. As agencies address their human capital needs, technology can help them identify learning requirements. For example, if an agency is planning to deliver a new constituent service, Oracle learning management tools enable planners to search in-house for personnel who may possess needed skills to meet the proposed service's goals. Or perhaps an agency needs to match roles and personnel to specific jobs or projects. Oracle's applications provide the ability to compare personnel with requirements, to automatically see where strengths and competency gaps exist.

Evaluating Learning Systems

Here are some important factors to keep in mind when evaluating learning management systems:

- Make sure the system is robust enough to serve the simultaneous needs of thousands of learners, administrators, content builders and instructors,
- The system must scale to meet future needs including the volume of instruction and the size of the student body,
- The system must integrate with source systems, such as financial management applications for billing, charging and HR for employee demographic and position attribute details,
- The access, delivery and presentation of material must be easy-to-use and highly intuitive,
- The system must be based on industry standards (XML, SOAP or AQ) to support content from different sources, and support the major learning standards (AICC, SCORM, IMS and IEEE),
- The system must reliably and effectively manage a large implementation running 24x7,
- For security purposes, the system should selectively limit and control access to online content, resources and back-end functions.

Many departments should be involved in the system's development/support/approval and deployment, to maximize the automation of learning services and resources.

Setting Oracle Apart

Learning management from Oracle has proven to be an effective learning solution for existing customers in both

the public and private sectors. Federal agencies and departments with large or small learning communities can provide learning and development using a full-featured solution that keeps pace with evolving mission requirements. Delivery methods include classroom, web-based learning, assessments, chats/forums and other methods to give organizations true 'blended' learning experiences. Analytics are also delivered to help each agency measure its learning progress by individual and organization. Benefits to implementing Oracle learning management, include:

- Deployment alternatives, including either a hosted or an installed model;
- Reduced cost, complexity and risk with Oracle web conferencing integration;
- Configurations are easily rendered to support organizational growth from small to large;
- Flexible integration methodologies are provided through web services;
- Conformity to industry standards, including AICC, IMS, SCORM, are supported.

For example, within its Enterprise Business Suite, Oracle Learning Management offers integration that's unsurpassed so that a government liaison office that tracks statutes and regulations will understand how new competencies or positions will fit into federal human capital requirements.

Oracle HCM technology plays a pivotal role in delivering an integrated learning management solution for government organizations now and in the future.

For more information, please visit

www.oracle.com/humanresources

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