The Stages of LiFE: The Process of Designing a Gamified, Competency-based Online Education Program

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Intro:
Using self-directed learning theory and backward design, instructional designers at the University of Memphis utilized technology tools to create a gamified, self-paced, competency-based online education program for Fortune 500 corporate employees that meets learners wherever they may be on their educational journey.

Goals:
Can universities collaborate with Fortune 500 corporations to provide employees the benefit of higher education while meeting a diverse group of learners' needs, allowing learners to go at their own pace, and keeping learners engaged in the learning process? One university and corporation recognized the potential for doing so and, as such, were inspired to make certain no matter employees' past experiences, they were able to take steps toward successfully earning a college degree.

The Academy was designed to teach learners skills for academic success, life in general and professional development using gamified, competency-based learning and the theoretical framework of self-directed learning theory.

Target Learners:
The Academy was designed for Fortune 500 workers from an array of departments within the company. Learners had diverse educational needs based on their life experiences. Learners ranged in age from 18 to 65 and were from a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Self-directed learning theory (SDL) was used to inform the design of the Academy. SDL theory necessitated the importance of creating an Academy that prepares students for lifelong learning projects in an online environment. Utilizing content and assessment informed by SDL allowed the Academy to focus on ways to build the individual skills and autonomous learning processes necessary to see students succeed in both an online degree program as well as lifelong professional development.

Scan QR code for references and documentation.

Innovation:
- 100% Competency-based
- Intelligent Agents
- Badging & Certificates
- Adaptive Learning

Demographics:
2,183 STUDENTS
59% 41%

Future Enhancements:
- Hybrid offerings
- Cohorts
- Course Start/End dates
- LinkedIn Learning integration
- Leaderboards