

Care UK Case Study

Front line e-learning delivery boosting care in the community



Setting the Scene

This case study reports a business success that directly improves the lives of vulnerable people living in the community. Care UK runs 130 community based care homes and partners with the NHS and Social Service organisations to provide comprehensive home care packages to a wide range of users including the elderly, children, adolescents and families. The organisation employs more than 11,5000 care workers who provide up to 105,000 hours of homecare a week to 10,000 people.

Business Need for learning

Care UK has implemented a blended e-learning training strategy in partnership with ThirdForce plc. The strategic goal is to improve the standard of care received by the increasing number of people who need home care by supporting the learning requirements of up to 3,700 front line workers. CareUK required:

- to improve productivity;
- generate revenue;
- satisfy the compliancy regulations of the CSCI (Commission for Social Care Inspection); and
- decrease staff turnover.

The opportunity to reduce costs was a bonus, the need to increase throughput of learners from the same cost base was essential. Care UK has a 73% growth in business volumes within a period of 24 months and a 60% increase in the number of care workers. Regional classroom training was no longer proving cost effective or meeting the deadlines demanded by the business

The Learning Solution.

The e-learning solution is integrated in Care UK staff training. Common Induction Standards (CIS) training is delivered remotely to every new joiner via portable PC tablet



the 'el-box™'. E-learning is reinforced by practical workshops, working alongside experienced Care Workers during probationary periods and ongoing training needs assessments and mentoring of the learner. A generic Care Induction Standards e-course is part of the integrated system, providing underpinning knowledge and training to staff in a fun, innovative and user friendly way. Learning is directed at users by an enterprise Learning Management Systems (AIMS™) and delivered through a portable table PC ensuring a convenient and cost effective way for Care UK to make learning accessible in the workplace and maximise, track and prove compliant performance.

Care UK SMEs provided input and contextualisation of the product. The course content was storyboarded and mapped to standard and a proof of concept pilot was constructed. Two control groups carried out pilots to test learner acceptance for e-learning formats of different technologies; Tablet and Workstation PC s. This 'proof of concept phase' was followed by outcome and criteria analysis for user acceptance and preference of delivery.

The project was monitored throughout by a rigorous and ongoing Return on Investment assessment, provided by Timely Business Solutions Limited. Money and time was allocated to communicate, teach and train employees about e-learning and how to use it; this included demonstrations of the el-box™ and AIMS™ software. Stakeholders who had made the financial decision to invest in the project were influential in championing the concept of e-learning and achieving the business benefits. The rollout of e-learning was completed via on-site training sessions and pre- briefings involving subject matter experts, sponsors and key people within the company. The comprehensive communication plan involved pre-launch poster campaigns, communication emails and on-site training sessions.

Courses are allocated via the Learning Management system. This reinforces the company philosophy of self management of learning. Learners self elect themselves for additional training and choose where and when they want to learn. The e-courses provide a learning platform by which information is conveyed in an exciting, user friendly environment. Learners are able personalise the whole experience and feel empowered by their own achievements. The blended solution has allowed learners to have more input, monitoring and self-control over their own learning. They can put their knowledge into practice and test their own understanding in real life training situations. It is part of a structured process of learning tailored to the company's individual needs. Managers can track and control learner information, detect any possible difficulties experienced by the learner, manage e-learning courses and send out certificates. The blend combines conventional tutor coaching with technology; enhancing and shaping the future of healthcare training. Learning content is set to a national standard and users are continually tested for knowledge and understanding.



Business Benefits

The result of the e-learning has been remarkable. Training needs have been met without increasing costs, indeed saving an estimated £320k in the first year. Moreover, 100% compliance training is delivered to all new and existing care workers and up to £86,000 in trainer time has been reinvested in the development of new specialised Health and Social Care Training. Business success and financial benefits have the ultimate goal of improving the quality of specialised care to people by raising the operational standards of staff. CARE UK has strengthened their cultural and social philosophy; communicating and promoting high standards of care by more knowledgeable staff. E-learning helped CARE UK through the business problems associated with company growth, high staff turnover and the demands generated by a growing UK Health and Social Care strategy aiming to offer wider choice and provision of care within the community. To fully appreciate the need for a new approach to training, consider that Care UK had actually experienced a 73% growth in business volumes within a period of 24 months and a 60% increase in the number of care workers. Regional classroom training was no longer proving cost effective or meeting the deadlines demanded of this demand led business.

Care UK has exploited the positive effects of the overall e-learning solution by targeting both the business and learner needs of the company

Sarah Pye – Branch Manager:

“The new blended approach is excellent. The e-learning courses get across both best practice and legal requirement in a simple and clear way, my people love using the eI-box™. Our trainers have been able to focus on the practical subjects that need hands on practice. The whole experience is much more orientated to the individuals needs, fantastic!”

E-learning has created a much richer learning experience for the staff and the investment paid for itself within 6 months. The solution reduced the duration of CIS training by 47% with a reduction in labour associated costs of 63%. There is a 15% increase in year on year employee retention, which has directly reducing recruitment cost by 10%.

This case study demonstrates that e-learning really works – when integrated and aligned systemically to form a holistic learning strategy, a learning culture can be formed that has the ability to motivate and embower staff into achieving better things for themselves and their organisation. E-learning has helped Care UK raise the standards of Health Care for vulnerable and sick people all over the UK.

Good Practice ideas

There are a number of lessons taken from the deployment of this very successful project:



- ▽ For success to be maximised, companies must have a comprehensive understanding of their business and learning needs, and that these needs must be addressed simultaneously within a strategy that is endorsed and understood by the organisations leadership.
- ▽ The strategy must be grounded in operational reality and show clear links to operational and business performance improvement.
- ▽ Stakeholder confidence must be maintained throughout the planning and implementation stages.
- ▽ Project management is key to ensure that the outcomes are achieved and contingencies are in place.
- ▽ To exploit the potential, the client organisation must work closely with experienced learning solution providers that understand the technology and how to harness the advantages that are available.
- ▽ It is necessary to involve internal subject matter experts and representatives from the operational user community within the implementation process.
- ▽ For e-learning to really work and achieve great results it must be embraced, championed and accepted by those who must use it as a means of career progression.

Embarking on an e-learning strategy is as much an investment into a company's philosophy and learning culture as it is to do with financial planning. Every strategy needs clearly defined outcomes and measures along the journey so that adjustments can be made as the business conditions changes. All too often organisations fail to strategically manage their Learning and Training. Without ongoing diligence, learning and training degenerate into reactive internal service providers that maintain the operational status quo but do little to enable human capital performance.

By Mr Malcolm Bland

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