FOLIOwing the Sun: how to provide budget continuing professional development (CPD) at a distance

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For Anna Cantrell, Diana Papaioannou, & Anthea Sutton (the FOLIO/FOLIOz team)
Outline

• The Context
• Issues
• FOLIOz Methods
• Model of Work-based E-Learning
• The Way Forward?
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• Email for future contact
The Context

• Health Librarians, at frontline, often in isolation, difficult to get away from workplace to attend training:
  “In the e-learning age, health information specialists need to acquire and implement new skills to deliver information in an interactive way”. (Steyn & de Wee, 2007)

• 2004 – UK National Library for Health (NLH) commissioned ScHARR to deliver Facilitated Online Learning Interactive Programme (FOLIO) to UK National Health Service (NHS) Librarians
Genesis of FOLIOZ Programme

Spring **2003** - EBLIP course subsidised by University of Sheffield (UoS) and offered to International Community


**2006** - Interest from Australian librarians, FOLIOz proposal developed

**2007** – 2nd EBLIP Course subsidised by University of Sheffield (UoS) - again offered to International Community

**2007** - Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) commissioned ScHARR to run pilot in 2007.

**2007-2009** Following success of pilot, further ten courses commissioned.
Issues

- Time difference
- Translation to Australian context
- Making generic from original health context
- Managing/handling expectations
Time difference (7-9 hours)

• Major factor in day-to-day running of course.

• **Timing of emails** – rather then at 9am as for UK course, FOLIOz sent at 4pm previous day. Participants have email awaiting them upon arrival at work.

• **Queries** – typically longer response time (FOLIO team do not see queries until following day). Limited to email, phone calls not being practical.

• Participants impressed by speed of response. All replies within 24 hrs.

• Positive comments in evaluation form:
  • “I appreciated the very prompt manner in which [the course facilitator] replied to my emails. Very well done especially considering the time differences.”
  • “All responses by email from the Staff were very quick and helpful.”
Tailoring for Australia (and New Zealand!)

- UK FOLIO for health LIS staff/ALIA audience (public/private sectors, incl. govt, commercial, health & education)
- Make context (examples & case studies) as generic as possible
- ALIA identified 2 members as “critical readers” - peer-reviewed course materials suggesting Australian/NZ examples/resources where possible.
- Course checked for currency (up to two years since UK version), new resources, examples to update, broken links to be mended or removed.
Cultural Sensitivity

FOLIOz
FOLIOz Methods - 1

- Email message every day
- One substantive task per week
- Guided Reading/ Briefings/ Powerpoints
- Group Supported (buddies)/Self-Directed
• Other ingredients:
  • Voting/Debates
  • Quiz
  • Optional Competition
• Humour/Informality
• Single email contact address for rapid response queries
Model of Work-based E-Learning

- Conducted Systematic Review for UK Higher Education Academy
- Identified 11 considerations for successful e-learning delivery (within 5 themes)
- Has helped to inform/shape future FOLIO/FOLIOz developments

Booth et al, 2009
Figure 2. Framework of work-based learners’ experience of online learning
Learner Control

• “[A] great thing about the course was how flexible it was; I could complete the activities at my own pace (though I would highly recommend trying to maintain a consistent pace!).”

Melanie Kammermann, Health Libraries Australia
Applicability

• “Whatever the task of the day, by the end of the course I had developed a portfolio of work that reflected what I had learnt and how I intended to apply my new found knowledge”.

• Melanie Kammermann, Health Libraries Australia
Offline learning

• “It was suggested that participants would need to put in 2-4 hours of work per week but I found, like most things in life, what you put in was what you got out!”

• Melanie Kammermann, Health Libraries Australia
Flexibility and Formal Support

• “The **flexibility** of online learning suits my needs as a full-time employee based in regional Australia”.

• “The Infoskills course was **run very professionally** and was great value for money, so I will definitely consider doing other FOLIOz courses in the future”.

Claire Ovaska

Overall Impressions

• “I really enjoy this method of eLearning and hope the partnership between ALIA and the UoS continues – I’m hooked.

• Why don’t you sign up for the next FOLIOz – we might be buddies!”

Shirley Ann Summers (Incite 2008)
Considerations designing low-cost CPD e-learning course

1. Storyboarding process in designing course,
2. Creation of support materials via a wiki
3. Practicalities of managing group communications and online broadcasts.

• NB: Production of Course Materials is not low-cost!
  • Requires dedicated staff time
• Also Course Assessment takes significant time
Way forward for health librarians?

- Be flexible in what we deliver and how we deliver it (Irony to swap inflexibility of f2f for inflexible e-learning format!).
- Think about synchronous/asynchronous balance
- Think carefully about deadlines (completion/assessment) - justify for user benefit, not administrative convenience.
- Contextualise learning (realistic scenarios/real-life problems)
- Support – prompt/easily accessible (single one-stop shop)

See archive (11/18 FOLIO courses) http://cpdfolio.pbwiki.com/
Way Forward for FOLIO Team?

- Action Learning approach to course improvement.
- Change as needed. (e.g. self-directed route, “reading week”, discussion with other participants (Google Groups)).
- Proof of concept - successfully providing e-learning courses to overseas participants.
- Model adaptable to other English-speaking countries.
  - Dutch health librarians - blended (e-learning/face to face) FOLIAGE course
  - Exploring with neighbouring European country
- Increasing participant demand – shorter 1-2 week submodules from predesignated timetable? (Pick and mix approach – completely customisable)
Conclusion

• FOLIO/FOLIOz demonstrates successful model for delivering continuing professional development for health library community.

• Low-cost, low-technology approach makes it suitable for adoption by other communities.

• We strongly encourage conference participants to check out our free materials/exercises - seek to adapt and improve them.
Go with the “FoLiOw”!


References - 2

• Steyn C, & de Wee JA. The naked librarian: health librarians in the modern era Library Review 56 (9): 2007 797-802.

• Summers SA. Professional Development: All about FOLIOz. Incite, 29, (10): Oct 2008; 22

Contact Us

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To enrol: http://www.alia.org.au/education/pd/

To check out archive: http://cpdfolio.pbwiki.com/