



The many hats of eLearning

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These days, being a learning professional allows us to wear many hats.

Which hat are you wearing now?

We've all been there. The PowerPoint deck gets emailed to us on a Thursday, with a brief note asking if we can turn this into an eLearning module by next week. "We just need to track that people have done it"

This hat is the "take my crappy PowerPoint and do that thing that you do" hat.

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We then get the product manager SME coming to us and saying "we need to train all our sales people on the road with features and benefits of the new product coming out".

This is the "here's the product brochure with technical specifications. Can you storyboard, script, narrate and develop this into an eLearning module please, and it needs to play on their tablet. Oh, and by the way, a lot of them a running crappy 3G dongles with crappy mobile reception" hat.

Then there's the one where compliance come up to us and say they need a Privacy module. "Here's the half day course for all new employees, but we'd rather they did the 3 hours online . . ."

This is the "we'll build 3 hour eLearning for new employees, as long as *we* don't need to do it ourselves" hat.

Oh, then there's the "how many people have completed my online induction course?" requester who needs a dashboard of completions broken down by division and location. That's the "run a report from the LMS and pivot table through excel with charts" hat.

Yes, we've all been there, every company, every client. No idea. "Weave your magic" they say. This is the "now you see me, now you don't" hat. If only it was that simple.

"If I was magic," I'd reply, "I wouldn't be here, that's for sure, but hey, I love a challenge, and I love turning nothing into something!" This is the "yep, i'll do it, and because I love it so much, I'll work night and day until it's finished" hat.

I'm sure most of us can relate a little bit to these situations, and the beauty of this type of work, along with other types of creative endeavours, is that it is creative. Sure there is a certain common thread that runs through a lot of these projects, no budget, high expectations, 28 reviews through multiple SMEs, and the list goes on, however the art of creating an experience that many people will interact with, gives us a buzz.

One of my biggest fans at a previous job was the Compliance Manager. Yes, I got a buzz out of dazzling her with my brilliance. Yes, I got a buzz out her saying "you're the best John"

And you know why? Because to her, it was magic. Taking the crappy PowerPoint and bringing it to life. Taking the product brochure and bringing it to life. Creating the whizz bang dashboard in Excel and emailing through in time for her management meeting. Trying to make compliance as non-compliance as possible while still keeping it compliance. There's an art to that. There's magic to that. First and foremost, I will wear my magician hat with pride.

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