

# BEST PRACTICE NEWS

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## Dear Customers

I would like to welcome you all to the July 2010 edition of the ILX Best Practice newsletter. We have been very busy here at ILX Group over the last few months. During this time we have launched PRINCE2® Live – a brand new virtual classroom portal delivering instructor led training sessions over the internet and we have extended our range of Snakes and Ladders games to include MSP® and ITIL®.

In this edition, our Chief Operating Officer Eddie Kilkelly looks at the impact of e-learning for Learning and Development professionals. We investigate the complementary nature of two different project management qualifications; namely PRINCE2® (UK) and PMBOK (US).

Finally, we are delighted to announce that KCA Deutag – a major drilling company has chosen to implement ILX Group's e-learning throughout their World-wide operations.

On behalf of the ILX Group, I would like to wish you a pleasant summer.



Ken Scott, Chief Executive

# THE RAPID EVOLUTION OF E-LEARNING



The provision of learning has changed radically over the past two decades. **Eddie Kilkelly**, Chief Operating Officer, ILX Group plc, examines the options now available to Learning and Development professionals and suggests practical strategies for maximising recent technological developments and enhancing blended learning programmes.

Learning and Development (L&D) programmes that were once only available in the classroom are now more accessible and effective thanks to e-learning – and that change has happened only in the past decade. While there was enthusiasm around e-learning in the mid-to-late 1990's, it didn't live up to the hype or learners' expectations. Computer-based training was flat and un-engaging, so it was obvious that it would develop a poor reputation.

## The turning points – and the tipping point

Three turning points came early in the new millennium, when network carriers improved the speed of the UK's communications lines, changing the amount and type of content that could be delivered in a timely way. The use of XML also meant that e-learning could be created, amended and updated more easily, incorporating an increasing amount of interactivity and media rich content. Finally, the greater capability and proliferation of mobile devices and PDA's meant learning content could be delivered away from the desktop. The recent uptake of Business Apps for the Apple iPhone is a case in point.

With the technology in place, we just needed a tipping point in the use of e-learning. That has now arrived, for a number of reasons. First, the recent recession has made organisations more

aware of the cost benefits of e-learning. Many organisations that had been considering using e-learning for several years have finally made that move. Secondly, many L&D professionals are facing on going budget restrictions, so they need to do more with less. Elements of e-learning can often be re-purposed and re-packaged and it is more cost-effective to update. This is essential when organisations change so rapidly and L&D professionals regularly need to refresh learning.

The faster pace of business is another factor driving uptake. E-learning can be rolled out to a team, department or organisation as required and the learning completed at a time that fits the learner's schedule. This flexibility is invaluable in busy organisations that wish to improve capability without negatively impacting productivity. Multimedia e-learning also fits with employees' interest levels and attention spans. People want exactly the information they need, exactly when they need it. E-learning is delivered in bite-sized modules making it easier for users to access the specific elements of the training they need at any given point in time. Innovations like gaming and interactive content also improve engagement and learning retention.

In addition, multimedia learning chimes with the shift in learner expectations. People are now used to looking for

information and transacting over the Internet for business and pleasure, and the gaming industry has changed user perceptions of interactivity and presentation. For many, it is now second nature to query Google for information, so online learning is less of an alien concept. In short, the time is right for e-learning to come into its own in terms of technical ability, organisational desire and learner acceptance.

## The latest developments

Now we have the exciting potential of multimedia and live learning. Multimedia learning can be delivered via a number of different methods, from a desktop PC to a mobile phone or other web-enabled device. It may include voice over IP (VoIP) web conferencing, the use of forums or social networks, and search and retrieval of additional data from specific information sources or the Internet. It is media-rich, using audio, video and animation content and incorporating games and simulations as required. It may include testing to pre-check knowledge and evaluate learning outcomes, and be supported by real life tutors, coaches or mentors – either remotely or in the classroom. It may also include live learning – using technology to access and participate remotely in a live classroom seminar.

People with similar learning needs can be brought together virtually to share experiences and learn collaboratively, so these interventions more closely reflect, replicate or even improve upon what actually happens within the classroom environment. What's more, multimedia learning enables learning modules to be combined and updated like never before. Developers have an infinite number of possibilities in terms of what content is delivered via different mediums. At the end of the formal element of the learning, the programme can be extended through the provision of sources of further information and learning, the inclusion of social learning tools, and the reinforcement of learning through online interactive games. This ensures that the basic level of learning is consistent, but each individual can interact with the programme in a way that is unique to them.

## Getting the mix right

Whatever the learning resources available to L&D professionals, they must start with an in-depth learning needs analysis, combined with a realistic appraisal of the corporate culture and technological capabilities within the organisation. It is essential to question everything – what are the benefits of different approaches and how are they used? For example, no-matter how interactive it is, e-learning must be short, punchy and focused. Live learning is not simply a case of delivering a classroom course over a webinar – it is essential to hold the learner's attention and give them breaks around every 30 minutes.

It is then necessary to decide upon the right blend of learning – which interventions will best meet the various learning needs of different groups of employees – and design a comprehensive, structured and effective learning programme. Multimedia and live learning are comparatively new developments, so L&D professionals may benefit from working with external providers who have already built a degree of expertise. This is more cost-effective, as the organisation is able to avoid common mistakes. In addition, while there may be an initial premium for innovation, the modular nature of multimedia learning may ultimately require a more open dialogue on pricing, as employees may access only parts of the programme depending upon their individual needs.

The biggest challenges are ensuring the quality of learning outcomes and understanding the complexity of managing these solutions. Whether it is e-learning, webinars or coaching, the overall message has to remain consistent throughout. Moreover, the Google generation may need direction in identifying reliable sources of additional information. In addition, one of the biggest failures in L&D is when an e-learning course is published but nothing is done to follow up, ensure completion among the target group and check learning. It is essential to manage a multimedia learning or live learning programme; this is not a hands-off method of delivering learning, quite the opposite. It is even more important to follow up and ensure completion or the

impetus can be lost. Multimedia learning in particular requires L&D professionals to keep track of who is accessing which content over each technological platform in a highly structured and managed way. L&D professionals still need to promote the learning – ideally with deadlines for the completion of each stage – and offer incentives to encourage learners.

## A real, credible option

This is still a new area of learning, but there are already indicators of potential success. ILX recently piloted PRINCE2® Live, an online portal to give learners wishing to undertake a PRINCE2® Foundation or Practitioner qualification the interaction and experience of a classroom course via a web browser. The course includes scheduled live instructor-led video broadcasts and post-session interactive activities and quizzes to reinforce what candidates have learned online. Initial feedback has been very positive, with participants from countries including India, South Africa and the UK stating that they felt the training was highly engaging and informative and that they would recommend it to others. The appetite for multimedia and live learning is there – it is up to L&D professionals to put the right strategies in place to maximise this new opportunity.

Eddie Kilkelly is Chief Operating Officer for the ILX Group plc. Eddie has been involved in the Best Practice industry for over fifteen years. During this time he has worked as both a Project and IT Service Manager and more recently as an implementation consultant providing support to organisations who have adopted the use of Best Practice methods including PRINCE2®, MSP® and ITIL®.

## Strategies for learning success

- **Broadly speaking, the flexibility of multimedia learning means it can be deployed in practically any organisation and to meet any learning need.**
- **It is essential that the organisation's culture is or can be conducive to e-learning.**
- **HR and L&D managers must think around the subject matter and not just the content itself.**
- **Employees must have access to computers and mobiles and be proficient in using them.**

## OUR SNAKES & LADDERS APP RANGE IS GROWING!



Our popular Snakes & Ladders exam revision App is available on iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad for those studying PRINCE2® Foundation, ITIL® Foundation and MSP® Foundation courses. The Apps include randomly selected questions, which must be answered correctly to go up a ladder or to avoid sliding down a snake. Avoid being eaten by a snake by playing a 'Snake Card' to provide the correct answer!



# ILX GROUP PLC LAUNCHES 'PRINCE2® LIVE' VIRTUAL CLASSROOM TRAINING

New interactive platform that combines the benefits of e-learning and classroom interaction in real time from anywhere in the world.

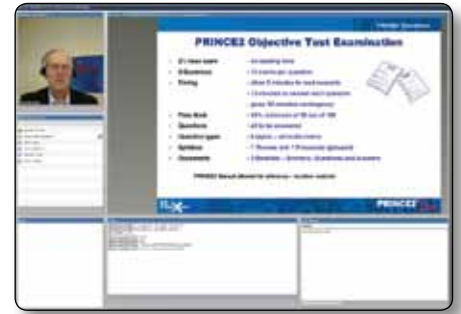
We have launched PRINCE2® Live, a new online portal which provides learners with the interaction and experience of a classroom course, delivered through a web browser. The virtual classroom training is now available for those wishing to undertake a PRINCE2® Foundation or Practitioner qualification from anywhere in the world.

PRINCE2® Live is delivered through ILX's secure portal technology which gives access to a calendar of scheduled live instructor-led video broadcasts and post-session interactive activities and quizzes to reinforce what candidates have learned online. The virtual classroom sessions are delivered in modular way so that they can be taken in one hour blocks.

Eddie Kilkelly, Chief Operating Officer of the ILX Group plc commented, "The launch of PRINCE2® Live has come about due to international demands for greater access and flexibility of learning, and a growing trend to support groups



wanting to collaborate despite geography. Our new platform also incorporates emerging mobile technologies such as Apple and Google phones as part of the blended mix. We believe that PRINCE2® Live delivers world class learning in a format that is flexible, cost effective and innovative." To date, ILX Group has trained over 35,000 people in PRINCE2® across



16 countries worldwide and is recognised as a world class provider of PRINCE2® and management training.

Kilkelly added, "PRINCE2® is the internationally recognised framework for managing projects and is designed to be applied regardless of culture, geography or size. With many organisations now focused on getting ready for improved market conditions, PRINCE2® is ideally suited for those responsibilities in project management, programme management and staff that have a defined role in a project." In summary ILX's PRINCE2® Live delivers:

- A simple learning path with a real time collaborative environment
- Live audio visual interaction with the tutor which is supported by presentations and activities
- Ongoing support through breakout sessions with the trainer to reinforce the classroom like experience, group discussions to encourage collaboration, and exam simulations to help candidate prepare for exams
- A flexible approach to learning that allows classroom interaction and best of online learning
- A scalable training solution to meet individuals and group needs
- A more environmental friendly way to deliver training for organisations with multi-geographic locations
- Course is accredited by the APM Group (APMG)

For further details can be or for general enquiries please contact [sales@ilxgroup.com](mailto:sales@ilxgroup.com) or call on **01270 611600**.

## Don't Dismiss the Business Card Draw

ILX Group continues to prove it is a company well worth giving your business card to. Ben Cornish from Williams Lea is the latest individual to benefit from one of our business card draws. Ben was present at the Learning Technologies show between 27–28 January and chanced his luck by handing in his card at the ILX stand. This paid off and he is now the proud owner of a new iPod Touch loaded with ILX's ITIL® V3 m-learning programme. Our UK Sales Director Nick Gilbert was on hand to present the award.



# It Takes Two to Tango in Project Management

Project management – like life – can be unpredictable. The project management methodology that people adopt, however, is usually very predictable. The UK uses PRINCE2®; the US uses PMI's PMBOK Guide. Both have similarities and differences and companies that recognise the special relationship between the two approaches are reaping the benefits of both.

In the last two years the UK's Office of Government Commerce (OGC) released PRINCE2® 2009 to replace the 2005 version and the US's Project Management Institute (PMI) published PMBOK 4th Edition to replace the 3rd Edition. The similarities do not end there.

The OGC's and PMI's latest editions have had new sections inserted and old ones combined or cut to make them more coherent and cohesive. PMI's PMBOK 4th Edition aims to align it with other standards, such as the Standard for Program Management: Second Edition. PRINCE2® 2009 signals its clear link to other methods and bodies of knowledge and aligns with other OGC products; for instance, the term 'Themes' replaces 2005's 'Components'. Both systems have clarified the language: PMBOK's process names are in a verb-noun format; PRINCE2® has ditched obscure codifications (such as SU1) that public consultations highlighted as difficult to understand. Both methods cross continents and cultures and both offer a generic approach for use with almost any project.

It is the differences, though, that make the UK and US systems so complementary in project management. PRINCE2® is a structured method for managing projects in the public and private sectors detailing from start to finish the activities to execute in a project. Focussing on key risk areas, it guides the Project Management team and organisation on how to create a successful project but equally offers greater flexibility and control than before.

A PRINCE2® 2009 project is led primarily from the top with the Project Board providing essential input. Considered as comprehensive and generally descriptive, PMBOK is a body of knowledge that

details generally accepted best practices in terms of norms, processes and methods that successful Project Managers should know. Indeed, whilst recognising the role and input of sponsors and stakeholders a PMBOK project is led primarily by the Project Manager.



Driven by the needs and requirements of the customer, PMBOK has a set of Knowledge Areas (around which the manual revolves) and Process Groups to which 42 project management processes with inputs, outputs, tools and techniques belong. Knowledge Areas include Integration Management, Scope, Time and Cost Management and Procurement Management. Process Groups set out the sequence in which Processes are used. Initiating refers to defining a new project or phase when one obtains authorisation to start. Planning establishes the scope and defines the plan of approach. Executing involves doing the work.

The Monitoring and Control sections of the processes track the project's progress and check performances identifying and implementing the required changes.

Driven by the needs and requirements of the business PRINCE2® 2009 now makes explicit the Principles – obligations and good practices – that were only implicit in its predecessor. Seven in all, arguably the most critical of the principles is that project should start and only continue to the end if business justification exists throughout its life; it is common sense, after all, not to throw good money after bad. The 2009 version is also alive to the PINO syndrome and so underlines the principle of management by stages and end-of-stage assessments as a control.

## A PRINCE2® 2009 project is led primarily from the top with the Project Board providing essential input

PRINCE2® 2009 has seven Themes including: Business Case, Change and Progress to which seven Processes belong. The starting-up project process is actually pre-project involving the project board and the project management layers culminating in a clear project brief at the end. In PRINCE2® 2009, completed project elements can be handed over immediately so that the supplier gets paid and the customer gets access to the product as quickly as possible. The seven Processes in turn have a set of Activities (formerly obscure codified sub-processes) that suggest some sequencing but it is the project manager's responsibility to ensure things get done. These activities are made up of clear and recommended but not prescriptive Actions.

PMBOK and PRINCE2® do not offer a one-size-fits-all formula. Each suggests that organisations tailor the system to suit the project culture. PRINCE2® 2009 has taken this on board with a dedicated Tailoring PRINCE2® section to help users scale the method to the specific environment of their project; Project Environment looks at areas such as projects in a programme, alignment with other lifecycle models and bodies of knowledge.

Like all good partnerships, PRINCE2®'s 2009 and PMBOK's 4th Edition have similarities such as Knowledge Areas and Themes and Processes and Activities. But like the best partnerships, it is the differences that make them unbeatable in project management. Two project management approaches are better than one.

## ILX Group wins global contract with international drilling contractor KCA DEUTAG to provide e-learning in project management across 22 countries

Online learning reaches workers located in harsh and demanding environments throughout the world.

We have won a major global contract to help KCA DEUTAG, a major international drilling contractor, to deliver project management training across 22 countries. ILX will host a secure e-learning platform to deliver both the APM Introductory Certificate in Project Management and PRINCE2® Foundation and Practitioner courses to remote geographic locations such as the arctic conditions in Siberia and Kazakhstan and offices based in the deserts of the Middle East and North Africa.

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**KCA DEUTAG has ambitious growth plans in 2010 and believes Best Practice Project Management skills provide a critical link to ensuring business success**

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KCA DEUTAG is one of the world's largest international drilling and engineering contractors working onshore and offshore with a focus on safety, quality and operational performance. KCA DEUTAG employs about 8,000 people and operates worldwide. The company has a history of over 100 years of drilling and engineering activities across the globe, and undertakes projects in some of the most harsh and demanding environments in the world, the Middle East and North Africa, West Africa, Siberia and Kazakhstan, and the challenging offshore conditions in the North Sea and offshore Sakhalin Island, far Eastern Russia. KCA DEUTAG has ambitious growth plans in 2010 and believes Best Practice Project

Management skills provide a critical link to ensuring business success.

Based at KCA DEUTAG's headquarters in Aberdeen, Scotland, Ian MacKenzie, Director of Projects, Technical Services and Business Excellence said, "Our staff often work on 28-day or 35-day rotation, either on a rig or in a remote geographic location which makes traditional classroom training unworkable. Very few people within our organisation were formally trained as project managers and many learnt their key skills whilst on the job so we took the decision to invest in helping individuals gain formalised best practices through an introductory APM Certificate and the PRINCE2® Foundation and Practitioner. Our philosophy is very much geared towards continuous improvement and excellence in project management. We believe that by deploying world class training to our remote workforce in a flexible and cost-efficient manner we will ensure consistency in our quality of work and ensure that all members undertake best practice methods in whatever they do. KCA DEUTAG has a commitment to investing in our greatest asset – namely our employees – and we are confident this approach will help us meet our ambitious business objectives."

In any one year, KCA DEUTAG has a number of on-going rig maintenance projects, upgrading and modification projects and expansion into new regions. This includes the expansion of the rig fleet by six new-build rigs – each a significant project in itself. Amidst its ambitious growth plans in 2010, KCA DEUTAG is also embracing a number of change management programmes within the organisation which will involve a number of geographically dispersed

stakeholders and project managers within Human Resources, IT and Finance departments. The new online courses are available to all senior or supervisory managers who are currently managing projects or are likely to do so.

MacKenzie continues, "We selected ILX for two key reasons. First their ability to deliver the APM certificate and PRINCE2® Foundation and Practitioner courses in e-learning format with materials that were well presented and easily understood by everyone. Second, ILX's easy user interface encourages people to use the web-hosted training. In fact, we ran an initial test across some of our remote bases and found that individuals wanted to start the course immediately. In just one month of launching the programme, over 240 people registered and started the online courses and we are expecting this number to further increase during the course of this year. PRINCE2® provides a consistent framework around which KCA DEUTAG will initiate, execute and complete projects throughout its global business – the KCA DEUTAG way."

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**Our philosophy is very much geared towards continuous improvement and excellence in project management**

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Eddie Kilkelly, Chief Operating Officer at the ILX Group, commented, "We are delighted to be supporting KCA DEUTAG in delivering fast and flexible project management training. This specific programme illustrates how e-learning can be rapidly rolled out to a geographically dispersed team without negatively impacting productivity. Experience has shown us that e-learning also fits with employees' interest levels and attention spans. Bite-sized modules will also make the process easier for users to access the specific elements of the training when they need it. The appetite for e-learning and multimedia is here – it is therefore now up to Learning and Development professionals to put the right strategies in place and to maximise new learning tools."