Online Learning – Neither panacea nor plague
Online learning – Context

- What is online learning in the context of organisational development
- Evangelists vs sceptics
- What the evidence tells us

What it can’t do
- Enable fully participative learning
- Adapt to very short notice requirements / issues of the moment
- It can’t replace *the human factor*
Online learning – ...but what it can do...

- Particularly useful in getting across **factual information**: checklists, tips, processes, structures, standards
- Capable of being **accessed in bite size chunks**
- It is **cheaper** as there are no travel or instructor-related costs associated
- It is **flexible** – organisations and individuals can build learning sets, tailored to their needs by selecting only the training courses they need
- The courses **can be re-visited** time and again, so people can **refresh skills and knowledge**
- It can be used to provide **Just In Time training**
- It provides **consistency** in terms of organisational learning and development
- Training can be **tracked** on an individual or group level, with the LCMS generating reports that HR functions can use
- It is **convenient** – in that training can be accessed wherever an individual has access to an internet connection, including in the field. Learn wherever and whenever suits
- The content is **customisable**
Online Learning – Guidelines on what to look for:

Good online learning is:

- Uses sound pedagogy:
  - Enables exploration;
  - Reinforces learning continuously;
  - Uses real life case studies to bring abstract concepts to life; and
  - As far as practical enables people who learn differently to learn equally well...
- Does not overload
- Uses media – sound, animation, diagrams – but does so to add learning value – not for their own sake
- Signposts to people and places where the audience can ‘dig deeper’
- Is uncluttered
- Enables Organisational Development managers to generate rich reporting to monitor progress / compliance
- Is bite-sized, with chunks ‘advertising’ what the next in the series will cover and how it relates to what has just been learned
Online Learning – Guidelines on what to look for...

This is a main menu from a course on Fire Safety. The menu is cluttered, cramped and poorly laid out. It is not clear what to do first.
Online Learning – Guidelines on what to look for....

This is the main menu from a hotel booking system training course. The visual menu is engaging and informal. The instructions are clear. The most important sections are shown first in the sequence. The later sections are more complex or less frequently used options. Good example of handing control to the audience in a simple way.
Online Learning – Guidelines on what to look for....

This is a content screen from an induction course. The layout and design are simple and clean. The instructions are clear and concise. ‘Drag me’ makes it obvious what to do. A good example of a confirmatory exercise that requires a degree of interaction above and beyond Y/N, T/F...
This is an introduction screen to a systems training course. The design and general layout have good design values. ....But this is page 1 of 120! This sequence should be broken up in to several sub-sections. The objectives are too long.
Online Learning – How animation can liven things up...