FORMATIVE EVALUATION: HOW TO LEARN ONLINE

ABSTRACT

This report presents a formative evaluation of the edX course How to Learn Online to assess its effectiveness, user experience, and overall instructional design. The report features data from expert and learner reviews to determine if the course met its learning objectives and the areas needed for improvement. Findings indicate that while the course provides structured learning and useful content, enhancements such as increased interactive elements, expanded multimedia features, and a stronger instructor presence could improve learner engagement.

Dream Team: Brady Davis, Paola Delarosa-Lloret, Leah Willis
IDE 641: Techniques in Educational Evaluation Dr. Moon-Heum Cho Syracuse University

Formative Evaluation: How to Learn Online

Dream Team: Brady Davis, Paola Delarosa-Lloret, Leah Willis

Syracuse University

IDE 641: Techniques in Educational Evaluation

Dr. Moon-Heum Cho

March 19, 2025

Table of Contents

Formative Evaluation: How to Learn Online

This final report evaluates the effectiveness, design, and user experience of the edX course "*How to Learn Online*". It provides an overview of the course's purpose, scope, and methodology. Online learning has transformed education by providing global access to knowledge and skills. The rapid rise of online learning requires a need to evaluate the effectiveness to ensure that online courses continue to convey information that will engage its users while catering to learners' diverse needs. The evaluation aims to determine how well the course "*How to Learn Online*" offered by edX, a widely recognized provider of massive open online course (MOOCs) prepares students for the growing online learning environment and focuses on its objectives and determines if there are any potential areas for improvement. According to Ismail et al. (2022), "Formative assessment allows for feedback, which improves learning while summative assessment measures learning. Formative assessment refers to frequent, interactive assessments of students' development and understanding to recognize their needs and adjust teaching appropriately" (pg. 23). The formative evaluation is a systematic process that plays a crucial role in the continuous improvement of well-developed instructional materials which focuses on obtaining expert and learners' reviewers data and gathering feedback prior to a courses implementation to aid in its development. Doing so allows for the recommended feedback to be incorporated into the final product.

As online learners navigate the challenges and complexities of the online learning environment, the "*How to Learn Online*" course addresses these issues and aims to make these challenges manageable. While online learning offers benefits such as flexibility and accessibility, it also presents challenges including time management, motivation, self-regulation, and the use of online tools. This MOOC is a self-paced course that allows users to enroll and complete the

modules at their own pace and is designed to provide learners with essential skills to effectively manage the challenges to succeed in the online learning environment. Our group will evaluate its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement to enhance learners' success in this setting.

Overview of Instructional Materials

This section of the formative evaluation gives a detailed overview of the MOOC outlining its core components, the target audience, status of the instructional materials utilized, the media format use, and the context in which it is intended to be used.

The Objectives for the Instruction

The *How to Learn Online* course is designed to equip learners with effective strategies for navigating the online learning environment. The course primarily focuses on aiding students in developing learning techniques that enhance their capacity to manage the requirements of online education. Upon completing the course, participants will gain an understanding of the best practices in online learning and be able to maximize their productivity and be able to do the following:

- Identify at least three best practices for learning online including time management strategies and apply them to a personal study plan.
- Demonstrate effective use of digital literacy skills to include the use of using a learning management system.
- Apply effective learning strategies.
- Evaluate personal progress and adapt learning techniques for improvement.

The Audience

This MOOC is designed for a diverse range of learners including those personnel who are new to the online learning community, those seeking to improve their existing online skills, and educators who aim to enhance their teaching practices. These demographics include:

- Undergraduate and graduate students wishing to pursue or currently pursuing an online degree.

- Life-long learners and working professionals who seek new skills and obtain additional certifications.

- Instructional designers and educators who are looking to develop the best practices for online learning.

Status of Instructional Materials

Prior to the formative evaluation, a front-end analysis was conducted to understand the overall concept of the course. This MOOC is a fully developed self-paced online course available on the edX platform and learners can enroll into the course and track their progress at any time. This self-paced option gives users the flexibility they may need to balance professional or personal obligations. The course's structure allows students to retake portions of the course at any time to reinforce their understanding of the materials. As the course is not synchronous, learners will rely on the instructional materials within the course for further guidance.

Media Format

The "*How to Learn Online* course is available on the edX platform using the following URL: edX: *How to Learn Online | edX*. Users will need to create an account to access the training. Once the sign-up process is completed, the learner will be able to register for the course. The instructional material within the course incorporates multiple instructional elements such as video lectures, interactive quizzes to assess the learner's progress, downloadable materials for

learners to view at their own leisure, and discussion boards where learners can interact with fellow learners who are taking the course. The lectures presented within the course are clear and concise and provide a natural engagement between the instructor and the learner. The interactive quizzes allow the learner to reinforce the key concepts they previously learned, and they also provide immediate feedback for the learner. The discussion boards allow learners to share their prior experiences and lastly, the downloadable materials ensure that students who may have internet problems will have access to the materials offline.

Formative Evaluation Framework

The formative evaluation framework of this course is designed to assess the overall aspects of the instructional materials to ensure that the course meets its overall learning objectives. According to Tessmer (1993), the formative evaluation should incorporate a mixture of reviews such as expert reviews, one-on-one, and small group evaluation to determine any instructional or navigational challenges one may face when taking the course. With these reviews from key learners and expert reviews, it allows for a range of feedback that will allow the developers to readjust prior to the course's implementation. By ensuring the course meets its objectives to support the diverse learners, we will use guiding questions such as: Is the course engaging and equipping learners with the tools to thrive in the online learning environment? Are the instructional materials relevant to today's learners?

Our group's goal behind evaluating the entire course is essential to ensure crucial elements such as the following:

- Content: Ensuring that the material within the course is clear, concise, and related to the instructional objectives.

- Learner engagement: Examining how learners view the interactive quizzes, discussion forum and the use of different multimedia.

- Usability and accessibility: The course provides easy access to its information and is it aligned with design principles that can accommodate learners with disabilities.

- Assessments: Support a learning environment that is consistent with the course's overall objectives.

Although the formative evaluation is comprehensive, future evaluations could focus on performance analytics, examine learners' retention, and post-course success rates. According to Tessmer (1993), formative evaluations help refine the instructional materials while summative evaluations should be incorporated if necessary to measure the long-term effectiveness of the instruction.

Expert Review

The expert review aimed to critically assess and provide valuable insight into the edX course "*How to Learn Online*" by evaluating its overall instructional design, content accuracy, and overall usability. The goal for the expert was to determine whether the course effectively met the learning objectives, provided an engaging user experience, and focused on creating a learning environment that can mimic the traditional classroom setting. This section will focus on the outcomes of our expert review process on the MOOC.

Expert Review Description

The expert we selected for this review is a seasoned instructional design and development professional with over 20 years of experience of military service. He previously served as an instructor at the Sergeants Major Academy as well as a curriculum developer where he created

numerous courses targeted for Army enlisted Soldiers. Currently, our expert is serving as an Instructional Systems Specialist in the Quality Assurance Office for the Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Center of Excellence and holds a Master of Science degree in Instruction, Design, Development and Evaluation. His previous educational background coupled with his prior and current experiences aligns perfectly with our review goals, thus making him exceptionally qualified to provide an expert review on this course's instructional content, engagement, and usability.

Tools used for the Expert Review

To conduct this expert review, our group utilized the face-to-face interview method as this method provided us with invaluable insights from the expert, allowing us to clarify any questions and obtain a more nuanced understanding of their perspectives and experience with the course. According to Dialsingh (2008), face-to-face interviewing method is a key technique that is widely utilized in the field of research and tends to provide qualitative and quantitative data to support the needs of an evaluation. Armed with this information, we selected five structured open-ended questions that focused on course structure, instructional content and engagement, accessibility and usability, learner activity, and lastly, strengths and areas for improvement.

Prior to the interview, the expert was provided with a set of instructions that guided him on the methods of how to enroll, register, and log into the course. We outlined the purpose of the review, their role, and the key areas we will focus on for the formative evaluation. The five questions were structured to provide the expert with a way to evaluate the course and provide the necessary information needed. The copies of the interview protocols and our expert feedback are included in the appendix of this evaluation.

Expert Review and Summary

According to our expert, the course structure was found to be well-organized and provided a great breakdown of the key topics highlighted in the modules. Our expert noted that the use of videos and audio aided him in creating a learning environment that was conducive to effective learning. The expert found that the course structure was broken down successfully and that the pre-course module will help learners establish their capabilities prior to tackling the course. He also noted that the use of the reflective journal prompts supported the learner engagement as it allowed the learner to track their overall thoughts and progress throughout the entire course.

Our expert then focused on engagement and the overall instructional content, where he emphasized that the videos the course provided were beneficial for those learners that preferred auditory learning to that of reading. Additionally, the expert stated that the course provided the learners with an audio player that was able to project the course in different languages which provided accessibility for diverse learners. After every video, the expert stated that there were questions that proved to be effective to maintain learner engagement and ensure the learners comprehend the tasks.

When the expert focused on accessibility and usability, he stated that the process to create a log-in and register for the course was simple and easy to navigate. He praised the development team for incorporating different activities that contribute to learner engagement. The use of surveys and open-ended questions provided learners with a sense of community that made the course feel more personalized and allowed the learner to have meaningful feedback which contributed to a deeper reflection. Additionally, in the category of interactivity and learner engagement, our expert noted that the videos featured visuals that were relatable and would resonate with the learners.

On the areas of strengths and improvement, our expert noted that while the course engaged its students with a myriad of interactivities, additional training such as knowledge checks and summary quizzes should be incorporated at the end of each module to enhance the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding. Our expert also suggested that additional enhancement to further the learning experience can be facilitated through periodic live Q&A sessions or discussion forums. These factors will benefit the learner by enabling peer-to-peer interaction and instructor support.

The overall view from the expert confirmed that the course was well-structured, provided clear learning objectives, provided assessments that were relevant and accessible and contributed to the necessary learner experience. The numerous integrations of multimedia and interactive elements contributed to the overall learning environment and provided valuable insights for refining the course to ensure it meets the needs of diverse learners while maintaining a high standard of instructional design.

Learner's Evaluation

During the learner evaluation, we focused on using a modified Harmon and Reeves evaluation rubric that aimed to ask the learners key questions. See Appendix. The goal behind using the modified rubric was to critically assess the overall effectiveness of the course, gather in-depth feedback on the course's content, engagement, usability, instructional quality and have the learners think critically and creatively about the course's overall ability to prepare the learners for the online learning environment.

Description of One-on-One User Evaluations

To conduct the evaluation, we utilized two learners, and their primary objective was to assess whether the course met its intended expectations. The evaluation focused on the following:

- Determining the relevance and the usability of the instructional content

- Identify the barriers to navigating the site.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the various multi-media within the course.

- Lastly, determine how the learners can apply their knowledge obtained from the course in a real-world learning environment.

Each learner was instructed to take the course in a controlled yet flexible environment and complete it asynchronously. This format was designed as the course is designed to be taken independently without instructor support. Both users were given the sign-up instruction memorandum (see Appendix). They were responsible for navigating the platform, engaging in the instructional materials, completing the quizzes, and required to participate in the discussion boards. This method allowed the learners to evaluate the course on their own like any user who is taking the course. Due to the difference in the location, after taking the course, each learner was presented with a modified evaluation rubric that had open ended questions to facilitate the discussion feedback. Learners were instructed to respond to the questions and their answers were recorded.

Learner Profiles

Learner 1 is a Captain in the Army and currently serves as an instructor with the Signal Corps of Excellence. He is responsible for training and mentoring future Officers in the Army in their key foundational job. The learner has a master's degree in business administration and is currently looking for material that will enhance his teaching methods for his Soldiers to become

effective when learning online. Although he possesses an advanced degree, his experience with a fully online learning environment is limited thus making his feedback relevant in accessing how well the MOOC tailors to instructors adapting to virtual classrooms. His feedback will help our group determine whether the course supports educators who are transitioning to the online settings and strategies that can enhance the instructor's presence in the online environment.

Learner 2 is a high school graduate who has just enrolled into a fully online degree program. She faces the unique challenges of navigating the digital learning environment to include areas such as time management, and lack of technological skills. Her desire to enroll into the MOOC was fueled by her desire to begin her higher education degree and to obtain some useful strategies for online learning. Unlike Learner 1, Learner 2's feedback will provide greater insights into whether the course breaks down the key concepts, engages the learners, promotes academic readiness, promotes digital literacy, and lastly, instills confidence in first-time online learners.

Learner Key Findings and Data Summary

The two learner evaluations provided great insight into the overall effectiveness of the "*How to Learn Online*" MOOC that highlights its strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Both learners found that the course was highly relevant and well-structured and met its objectives. Due to the stark differences with the learners' backgrounds, Learner 1 found that the course was aligned with his expectations and key online learning strategies but lacks a myriad of real-world applications. Learner 1 suggested that the course should have more interactive elements that could enhance the instructional materials for educators. Additionally, Learner 1 found that the multiple advertisements were a bit overwhelming and could not see the

progress he had made throughout the course unless he returned to the homepage. Learner 1 suggested that correcting these minor issues will make the course more user-friendly.

On the other hand, Learner 2 found that the course should have incorporated more videos and audio capabilities to engage students. Similarly, to Learner 1, Learner 2 found that the course was valuable and found that the quality of the quizzes allowed her to excel. Learner 2 appreciated that there was a quiz after each section as it helped her stay engaged and reinforced the key concepts before moving on to the new material. Learner 2 found that the course boosted her confidence and motivation to continue taking higher education courses and wished she had taken the" *How to Learn Online*" course prior to starting her educational journey. The following data below shows a snapshot between Learner 1 and Learner 2 evaluation results.
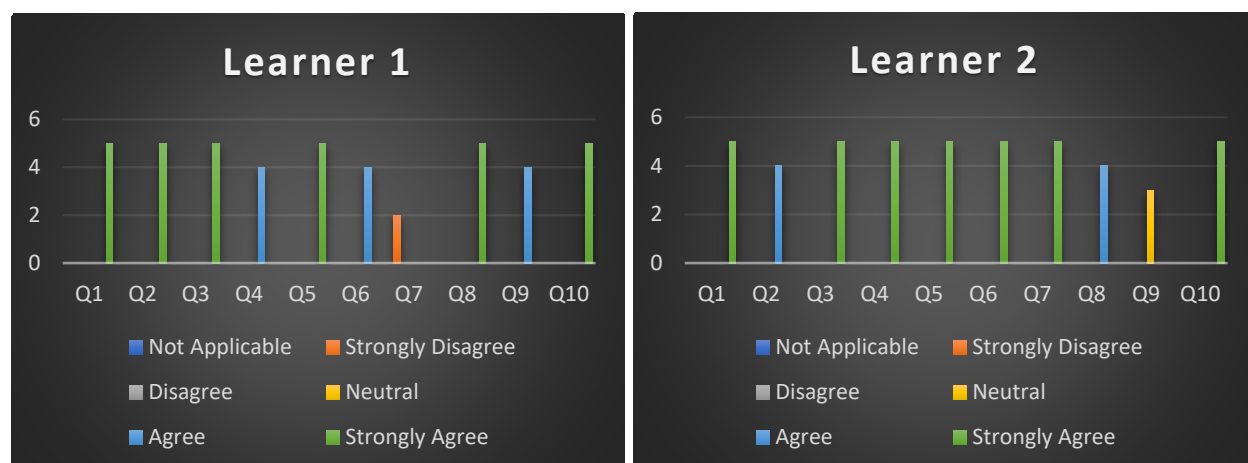
Recommendations

After reviewing both the expert and learners' feedback, they recommended several revisions listed below which could enhance the course effectiveness.

1. Increase interactive elements for real-world applications: Learner 1 found that although the course aligned with his initial expectations, it lacked real-world applications. Additionally, the expert reviewer emphasized that interactive activities

keep learners engaged and motivated. Additional interactive activities such as scenarios would provide more practical applications for future learners.

2. Multi-media Expansion: Learner 2 highlights the need for additional audio and video capabilities. The expert reviewer stated that there was audio for each section but enhancing the multimedia elements will cater to the diverse learning preferences and increase learners' engagement.

3. Enhance Instructor Presence: This course was designed for independent learning without the need for instructor support. However, the expert stated that fostering a sense of community is essential. Adding a periodic instructor check-in could enhance instructor presence within the course without compromising the course's flexibility.

By implementing the above recommendations within this MOOC, we can significantly improve the overall effectiveness by fostering deeper learning engagement and improving the accessibility for the course diverse learners. The integration of scenario-based learning examples will provide learners with the opportunity to bridge the gap between online learning knowledge and real-world use. Expanding multi-media features can cater to the various learning preferences and keep the users engaged. Additionally, incorporating gamification into the module can foster a more immersive learning experience that will encourage learners to think critically and creatively. By incorporating these examples, the course can become more dynamic and will equip its students with the essential skills to navigate the digital environment.

Reflection

Group

Our group found the formative evaluation to be a great tool for identifying areas in the MOOC "*How to Learn Online*" for improvement. The expert and learner reviews provided

additional insights into the course engagement and its usability. One weakness we did identify was the number of learner reviews conducted. We believe that incorporating more learner reviews would have more impact on our views on the course as a bigger sample population will aid in better understanding of the course's outcomes. However, the limited data collected from the expert and the learners provided a solid foundation for suggestions to improve the course outcomes. Secondly, when we originally developed our feedback questionnaire for the one-on-one learner reviews, we realized that the questions were more closed ended rather than open-ended questions that would provide us with the necessary information needed to critically assess the course. As a result, we restructured our approach to incorporate a highly modified Harmon and Reeves evaluation rubric using the Likert scale to achieve our overall goal. Using this new rubric provided us with a means for the learner to think about the sub-questions related to the major questions and provide an original response that facilitated an in-depth response.

Individual Reflections

Group Member 1:

This formative evaluation process for this MOOC allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of structured evaluation when creating instructional materials. I realized that feedback plays a significant role in enhancing the course overall design. I initially assumed that using only the expert review would be sufficient to provide feedback, but I concluded that both expert and individual feedback are equally important to the overall success of a course's implementation. Using two diverse learners from divergent backgrounds allowed me to capture a wider range of perspectives that provided great feedback on the overall effectiveness of the course.

Additionally, I believe that we should focus time management during our evaluation process. Creating, conducting, and collecting expert and learner reviews took considerable time and resources. If we had multiple learners to obtain feedback for this evaluation, I do not believe that we would utilize the one-on-one approach but instead use the small group approach to conduct the feedback sessions due to the time constraints. Despite the challenges we faced, this process provided me with a meaningful learning experience that emphasized the need to create tools that are well-structured and be flexible during the process to account for unexpected changes.

Group member 2:

After reviewing the expert reviewer and learners' data, it provided me with insightful aspects into the formative evaluation. The expert provided our group with a great analysis of the course effectiveness. His background in instructional and curriculum design further gave me the opportunity to understand how to evaluate a course that will engage students. When looking at the learner's feedback, it was important to restructure the questions to meet our intended goals. This change proved beneficial as it encouraged the learner to think outside of the box. One challenge that became apparent was additional touchpoints with the expert. We realized that follow-up meetings could have been scheduled to address emerging concerns. Despite this challenge, both the experts and the learners provided our group with the necessary materials to complete our formative evaluation and conclude our assignment.

Group member 3:

The project showed me that evaluation is about pivoting as challenges arise and making real-time improvements. When we encountered obstacles, we adjusted our methods using the Harmon and Reeves evaluation rubric, which helped us refine our approach and gather better

insights. Time management was key as we balanced tasks like creating the rubric, coordinating participants, and analyzing feedback. Applying project management strategies kept us organized and on track without feeling overwhelmed. This was particularly challenging because we were learning about project management while completing this course. Despite that, the experience reinforced that having a plan is essential but knowing when to adjust is just as critical.

Beyond just managing the process, this project shifted how I see instructional evaluation. At first, I thought of it to measure effectiveness, but expert and learner feedback showed that engagement and usability matter just as much. The insights we found during the evaluation made it clear that even well-structured content must be accessible and engaging for learners to stay invested. I found qualitative feedback valuable; while numerical data showed trends, open-ended responses explained the reasons behind them. For example, participants who rated engagement lower often mentioned that they experienced issues tracking progress or felt the course lacked interactive elements. These issues would not have been evident from survey scores alone. Moving forward, I will take a balanced approach, using both qualitative and quantitative methods to design instructional materials that are practical, engaging, and learner focused. This experience reinforced that evaluation works best when structure and flexibility are present. Refining our approach based on real feedback led to stronger insights, a skill I will carry into future instructional design and assessment roles.

Summary

This evaluation of the edX course "*How to Learn Online*" provided our group with critical insights into its effectiveness and instructional design. Through reviews from the experts and the learner, we were able to identify critical strengths within the course, a well-developed curriculum, and relevant materials that aided the course overall design. The course objectives

effectively proved that they equip online learners with the necessary skills such as time management, digital skills building, and helpful study strategies. Additionally, the feedback from our experts and learners emphasized areas for improvement such as increasing the use of multi-media engagement and an increase in instructor support will enhance the course overall effectiveness. As the digital world continues to evolve, this evaluation underlines the need for continuous course adjustment to maintain its educational effectiveness.

References

Dialsingh, I. (2008). Face-to-face interviewing. In Encyclopedia of survey research methods

(Vol. 0, pp. 276-261). Sage Publications, Inc., https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963947

Harmon, S., & Reeves, T (1998). Educational Web Sites Evaluation Instrument.

https://blackboard.syracuse.edu/ultra/courses/_532745_1/grades/assessment/_10983592_

1/overview/attempt/create?courseId=_532745_1

Ismail, S. M., Rahul, D. R., Patra, I., & Rezvani, E. (2022). Formative vs. summative

assessment: Impacts on academic motivation, attitude toward learning, test anxiety, and

self-regulation skill. *Language Testing in Asia*, *12*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-

022-00191-4

Appendix A

Expert Evaluation Data

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">

Face-to-Face Expert Review

Dream Team: Hello, good morning, Sir, thank you for taking the time to review the How to Learn Online course. Our group truly appreciates your expertise, and we would like to go over your feedback in detail and discuss additional questions you may have.

To begin, we would like to start with the General impressions with the course.

Dream Team: *What did you think about the course in general and its structure?*

Expert:

The course had a detailed plan that was easily understood. The course structure was broken down into four different areas, Intro to online learning, Technology, Study Strategies, and Time management, which provided another layer for the learner to understand exactly what was being taught within the lesson. The videos were clear, the voice was calm and helped with the overall explanation of the structure. Color schemes were appropriate and were easy on the eyes. Pre-Course Survey helped to establish the learner's ability to learn and was able to capture exactly how the learner felt prior to diving into this lesson. The questions in the survey provided the learner with a way to assess their own abilities prior to the lesson. Reflective questions were added within the (Journal Prompts) to ensure the student remained focused on the course, while collecting valuable data from the learner. The introduction Module provided an in-depth view of the different types of learners, which included asynchronous & synchronous learning.

</div>

Dream Team: *That's great to hear. Now let's talk about instructional content and engagement. Reflecting on the instructional content and engagement, did the course meet its objectives?*

Expert:

The videos were helpful for learners that did not want to read, which included the audio player that was on the pages requiring reading. The translation button was important and provided content in the learner's choice of language. The instructional content was gauged for a learner that had limited to no knowledge of online learning. The topics were clearly stated, and the videos were essential in keeping the learner engaged. Questions between videos were very important, ensuring the learning was paying attention and requiring feedback in most areas kept the learner engaged. Break down with definitions of what different types of learning were provided another layer of learning to the lesson module.
Definitions for Synchronous learning, Asynchronous learning, Cohort, and Blended learning were provided in paragraphs, and were also provided in an audio format for learners that did not want to read.

Dream Team Follow-up Question: *"Were there any specific topics that you felt needed further explanation or elaboration?"*

Expert:
I think the course covered all the bases necessary.

Dream Team: *That's great to hear that the course provided the necessary materials to engage its learners. Now let's talk about accessibility and usability. Was the course easily accessible for a diverse range of learners and how was the course overall usability?*

Expert: *Accessibility required a (Login & password) to be established, but once within the module the lessons were easily understood. The development team prioritized multiple interactive activities that kept learners actively involved, often without them realizing they were absorbing new information. The course employed surveys that encouraged learners to express their preferences and experiences, fostering a sense of community and tailoring content to meet diverse needs. Open-ended questions prompted thoughtful reflections, allowing participants to explore topics deeply while simultaneously providing invaluable feedback for course improvement. Incorporating multimedia elements was another key strategy. This blend of accessibility and usability created an enriching environment where knowledge was gained effortlessly.*

Dream Team: *Thank you for your answer. Moving on to the course interactivity and learner engagement. What are your thoughts on these two topics within the course?*

Expert: *During the development of this online lesson, educators truly incorporating different activities that kept the learner engaged. The development team prioritized multiple interactive activities that kept learners actively involved, often without them realizing they were absorbing new information. The course employed surveys that encouraged learners to express their preferences and experiences, fostering a sense of community and tailoring content to meet*

diverse needs. Open-ended questions prompted thoughtful reflections, allowing participants to explore topics deeply while simultaneously providing invaluable feedback for course improvement. Incorporating multimedia elements was another key strategy. Short, engaging videos broke the monotony of traditional learning materials, making complex concepts easier to comprehend. These videos featured dynamic visuals and relatable scenarios that resonated with learners, igniting curiosity and motivating continued exploration.

Dream Team: ***We're glad to hear that the course excels to keep the learners focused. When looking into the areas of improvements and the strengths of the course, could you provide your thoughts on these two topics?***

Expert: *Overall, within the area of (Strengths), I would highly recommend this online learning module. The design & development of this module incorporated various learning abilities, which can capture more of the population. The inclusion of the translator button allowed for the learner to switch to their preferred language with the push of a button. Journal prompts were creative, because they tapped into the critical thinking of a student. The questions developed provided (open-ended) thought provoking questions requiring the use of memory recall for the information that was taken in by the learner in prior modules.*

Within areas of improvement, this lesson was very successful at:

• Keeping students focused on task.

• Creating questions that ensure the learner recalled the information.

• Including a pre & post survey to collect the data from a learner for later usage.

• Provided a self-pace type learning environment.

Ultimately, the course not only equipped learners with valuable skills but also ensured that the journey was enjoyable and fulfilling, reinforcing the idea that online learning can be both effective and engaging.

Dream Team: Thank you for that answer. Those are all the questions we have for you today. Sir, we want to thank you again for your time and valuable feedback. The insights you've given us will help us develop our evaluation. If any additional thoughts come to mind, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Appendix B

Learner 1 Evaluation Report

One on one Learner Review Questionnaire
Harmon & Reeves – Copyright 1998
Directions: This **instrument** is designed for learners who have completed the **"How to Learn Online"** course on edX to provide a detailed evaluation of your experience. The purpose of this review is to gather meaningful feedback on the course's content, engagement, usability, and overall effectiveness. Read the questions and sub-questions carefully before reflecting on your experience with the course then go back through each question and rate it using the five-point scale. Sub-questions are intended to help in thinking about the major questions.

1. Did the course meet your expectations based on its description?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
- a. What specific elements of the course aligned with your expectations?
- b. Were there any aspects of the course that differed from what you anticipated?
- c. How would you improve the course description to better set expectations for future learners?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:
The course was well-designed and relatively easy to complete.

2. How relevant and useful did you find the course material?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
- a. Which topics or concepts did you find most valuable for your online learning experience?
- b. Were there any topics you felt were unnecessary or needed more depth? Why?
- c. How do you think the material in this course could be applied to real-world online learning settings?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

The course material is relevant to anyone who wishes to learn online. Considering the rise in popularity and technological advances, online learning is becoming the preferred option for many young adults and professionals.

3. Was the course content presented in a way that was easy to understand?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:

a. Were there any sections or concepts that you found confusing? If so, what made them unclear?
b. How well did the course break down complex ideas into manageable lessons?
c. What additional explanations or examples would have improved your understanding of the content?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:
The course content was well-presented. To enable easier learning, there were multiple methods of delivery for some sections.

4. The level of information on this site is appropriate for my learner engagement.
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
a. Does the site contain information appropriate for learner engagement with respect to their maturity?
b. Does the site contain information appropriate for learner engagement with respect to their cognitive abilities?
c. Does the site contain information appropriate for learner engagement with respect to their prior knowledge of the topic?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:
There were quizzes, which served as formative evaluations throughout the course, but there could be more activities for learners to apply what they learned in different contexts.

The site did not factor in users' prior knowledge of online learning very well. To improve this, the course could contain a knowledge check at the beginning to filter out information that will not meet the expectations of more advanced learners .

5. How effective were the video, readings, discussions and assessment in helping you to understand the concepts?
Sib-questions to ask yourself:
a. Which instructional format (videos, readings, assessments) was most helpful to your learning process? Why?
b. Were there any instructional formats that you found less effective or unnecessary?
c. What type of learning activities would you suggest adding to enhance comprehension and retention?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

All content was helpful. While no one was more effective than the next, using a combination of readings and audio was the most effective for me to understand the content.

6. Navigation on this site is user-friendly.
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
a. How easy is it to find information on this site?
b. How easy is it to move around on this site without getting lost?
c. Does the site provide multiple ways of accessing the same information (e.g., does the site have a built-in search capability)?
d. Were the instructions clear on how to proceed from one module to the next?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

The instructions were very clear, but one recommendation is to make it easier for learners to see their progress as they move to different lessons. In order to see my progress, I had to leave the current section and return to the home page. This was a little distracting and demotivating at times.

Moving from one module to the next sequentially was easy, but it was not as easy to switch to a previous module.

7. Did you experience any technical issues or difficulties while taking the course?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
  a. Were there any parts of the course that were not user-friendly or accessible?
  b. Did the course function well across different devices (desktop, tablet, smartphone)?
  c. If you encountered any accessibility issues, what adjustments would you recommend for better inclusivity?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

I did not encounter any technical issues and utilized a laptop and my phone to access the course.

8. How confident do you feel in applying what you learned to real online learning experiences?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
- a. Has this course improved your ability to learn effectively in an online setting?
- b. Do you think this course adequately prepared you to handle challenges in a virtual learning environment? Why or why not?
- c. What additional skills or topics do you think should be included to improve practical application?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

I am confident that I will be able to apply the different study methods and time management skills in future online learning experiences.

This course provided useful tips that almost anyone can apply.

9. Were there any areas where you felt the course was lacking or could be improved?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
- a. If so, what changes would you suggest making the course more effective?
- b. Did the course address all of your questions and concerns about learning online, or were there gaps?
- c. If you could add one new feature or topic to this course, what would it be and why?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

Less ads as the timing were inappropriate and interrupted my learning and focus.

10. Would you recommend this course to someone new to online learning?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
- a. Why or Why not?
- b. Are there specific types of learners who would benefit most from this course? Who are they?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:
Yes. It provides multiple tips for users new to online learning, particularly those who need help with time management.

Learner 2 Evaluation Report

One on one Learner Review Questionnaire
Harmon & Reeves – Copyright 1998

Directions: This **instrument** is designed for learners who have completed the **"How to Learn Online"** course on edX to provide a detailed evaluation of your experience. The purpose of this review is to gather meaningful feedback on the course's content, engagement, usability, and overall effectiveness. Read the questions and sub-questions carefully before reflecting on your experience with the course then go back through each question and rate it using the five-point scale. Sub-questions are intended to help in thinking about the major questions.

1. Did the course meet your expectations based on its description?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
a. What specific elements of the course aligned with your expectations?
b. Were there any aspects of the course that differed from what you anticipated?
c. How would you improve the course description to better set expectations for future learners?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:
Yes, it did. The course content had all the steps of online learning that I expected. Each part was short and clear.

2. How relevant and useful did you find the course material?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
a. Which topics or concepts did you find most valuable for your online learning experience?
b. Were there any topics you felt were unnecessary or needed more depth? Why?
c. How do you think the material in this course could be applied to real-world online learning settings?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

The course was well structured, pointing out the most important elements of online learning.
The topics I was most interested in were study strategies and time management skills.
There were no unnecessary topics.

3. Was the course content presented in a way that was easy to understand?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:

a. Were there any sections or concepts that you found confusing? If so, what made them unclear? b. How well did the course break down complex ideas into manageable lessons? c. What additional explanations or examples would have improved your understanding of the content?					

Not Applicable ☐ N/A	Strongly Disagree ☐ 1	Disagree ☐ 2	Neutral ☐ 3	Agree ☐ 4	Strongly Agree ☒ 5

Provide comments:
It was easy to access and understand, the content even if it had a lot of new concepts, they were always followed by examples or explanations.

4. The level of information on this site is appropriate for my learner engagement.
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
a. Does the site contain information appropriate for learner engagement with respect to their maturity?
b. Does the site contain information appropriate for learner engagement with respect to their cognitive abilities?
c. Does the site contain information appropriate for learner engagement with respect to their prior knowledge of the topic?

Not Applicable ☐ N/A	Strongly Disagree ☐ 1	Disagree ☐ 2	Neutral ☐ 3	Agree ☐ 4	Strongly Agree ☒ 5

Provide comments:
I think the course had enough information to keep me engaged throughout each section.

5. How effective were the video, readings, discussions and assessment in helping you to understand the concepts?
Sib-questions to ask yourself:
    a. Which instructional format (videos, readings, assessments) was most helpful to your learning process? Why?
    b. Were there any instructional formats that you found less effective or unnecessary?
    c. What type of learning activities would you suggest adding to enhance comprehension and retention?

Not Applicable ☐ N/A	Strongly Disagree ☐ 1	Disagree ☐ 2	Neutral ☐ 3	Agree ☐ 4	Strongly Agree ☒ 5

Provide comments:

I love that they use quizzes after each section. That way you check if you understand the topic and if not, you are able to go back and review the information.

The readings were not very long and having examples helped to better understand and retain the information.

I expected more videos.

6. Navigation on this site is user-friendly.
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
a. How easy is it to find information on this site?
b. How easy is it to move around on this site without getting lost?
c. Does the site provide multiple ways of accessing the same information (e.g., does the site have a built-in search capability)?
d. Were the instructions clear on how to proceed from one module to the next?

Not Applicable ☐ N/A	Strongly Disagree ☐ 1	Disagree ☐ 2	Neutral ☐ 3	Agree ☐ 4	Strongly Agree ☒ 5

Provide comments:

It's user friendly. Easy to go from one section to the other or go back and review any information.

7. Did you experience any technical issues or difficulties while taking the course?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
   a. Were there any parts of the course that were not user-friendly or accessible?
   b. Did the course function well across different devices (desktop, tablet, smartphone)?
   c. If you encountered any accessibility issues, what adjustments would you recommend for better inclusivity?

Not Applicable ☐ N/A	Strongly Disagree ☐ 1	Disagree ☐ 2	Neutral ☐ 3	Agree ☐ 4	Strongly Agree ☒ 5

Provide comments:

It was easy and had a very well-structured table of contents. I used as a device a desktop and I didn't have any issues.

8. How confident do you feel in applying what you learned to real online learning experiences?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
   a. Has this course improved your ability to learn effectively in an online setting?
   b. Do you think this course adequately prepared you to handle challenges in a virtual learning environment? Why or why not?
   c. What additional skills or topics do you think should be included to improve practical application?

Not Applicable ☐	Strongly Disagree ☐	Disagree ☐	Neutral ☐	Agree ☒	Strongly Agree ☐

N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

I find the course motivational. I would definitely use it as a tool, before starting a new course or when I feel stuck and can't finish one, as a reminder of the things I should do. And probably in time those strategies would become natural.
Doing the course just one time and not applying the strategies right away won't help much, at least for me.

9. Were there any areas where you felt the course was lacking or could be improved?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
    a.   If so, what changes would you suggest making the course more effective?
    b.   Did the course address all of your questions and concerns about learning online, or were there gaps?
    c.   If you could add one new feature or topic to this course, what would it be and why?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:

The reading /audio part put it into videos may be more attractive.

10. Would you recommend this course to someone new to online learning?
Sub-questions to ask yourself:
    a.   Why or Why not?
    b.   Are there specific types of learners who would benefit most from this course? Who are they?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Provide comments:
I would highly recommend it to new learners. It helps you create a plan, provides useful tools, and encourages interaction with others or to share your own thoughts. I found it helpful for learners who are not so confident in sharing their thoughts, opinions with others when they are learning something new.

Appendix C

Expert Memorandum

Expert Face-to-Face Meeting Conversation

Meeting conducted on 7th Feb 2025

Dream Team: Good morning, Sir, thank you for taking the time to meet with me. We really appreciate it.

Expert: Of course. How can I help you all?

Dream Team: We wanted to discuss an opportunity for you to serve as an expert reviewer for a massive open online course (MOOC) called "How to Learn Online." As you're a previous instructor and currently serving as an Instructional Systems Specialist, we believe that your expertise in this course will be relevant to our formative evaluation. The course will take approximately 2 - 4 hours to complete and can be done in multiple sessions.

Our goal is for you to review the course content and structure to ensure that the course meets its intended learning objectives. Once you've completed the course, we would like to conduct a feedback session to discuss your experience with the course.

Expert: Sounds great, I'll be happy to help.

Dream Team: Great. Thank you. I'll stop by and give you a copy of the registration instructions for you to begin the course. If you have any questions prior to beginning the course, feel free to reach out to with one of us. We really appreciate your assistance.

Learner Request Memorandum

Subject: Invitation to Participate in a Formative Evaluation for How to Learn Online

Dear Learner X,

I hope you're doing well. I'm reaching out to invite you to participate in a formative evaluation for the edX course **How to Learn Online**, a course designed to equip learners with strategies to thrive in an online learning environment. Your insights and feedback would be invaluable in refining the content and ensuring an optimal learning experience for future participants.

As a learner in this evaluation, you will have the opportunity to:

- Engage with the course material and activities.

- Provide feedback on the clarity, structure, and effectiveness of the content.

- Share your perspectives on the learning experience, helping to enhance its overall quality.

To ensure your feedback is captured effectively, I'd like to schedule a brief session to discuss your thoughts. We can conduct this feedback session via Zoom or phone call, whichever is most convenient for you. Please let me know your availability, and I'll be happy to coordinate the time that works best.

If you're interested in and available to participate, please reply by **14 Feb 2025** with your preferred method (Zoom or phone) and time slots that work for you. I truly appreciate your time and consideration. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or need further details.

Best regards,

Leah Willis

Dream Team Formative Evaluation Team

Appendix D

Expert and Learner Instructions for Course Registration

Instructions for Signing Up on the edX Platform

Dear _____ (Expert and Learners)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our group's formative evaluation as an expert reviewer/ learner. Your feedback will be invaluable to our group's success. Below you will find directions on signing up for the course on the edX platform.

Instructions for Signing Up on edX

Step 1: Creating an edX account (If you do not have one already)

1. Go to the following link: https://www.edx.org/learn/how-to-learn/edx-how-to-learn-online

2. Click the register in the top right-hand corner. You will be taken to the registration page. Complete the necessary fields, then click the **Create an account** for free button.

Step 2:

1. Log into the edX platform.

2. Use the search bar to find the course "How to Learn Online". Click enroll and choose the audit track to access the course for free.

Step 3:

1. Once enrolled, begin the course and engage with the materials as er the instructions.

Please complete the assigned course no later than **21 February 2025**. After you have completed the course, we will schedule the feedback session to discuss your thoughts.

If there are any issues, please feel free to contact me at the email address provided.

Best Regards
Dream Team Formative Evaluation Team

Appendix E

Expert Photos During Evaluation

Learner 1

Learner 2