Research Paper

Volume : 2 | Issue : 10 | October 2013 • ISSN No 2277 - 8179

e-Tutoring: a Learning Facilitator with New Competencies

Computer Science

KEYWORDS :

Dr. S. D. Bhoite Asso. Professor, Dept. Of Computer Studies, SIBER, Kolhapur

ABSTRACT

In an e-Learning it is difficult to keep in engage the distant learner and an e-learners can develop a feeling of isolated, and hence, it is the role of the e-tutor to monitor students' contributions to all elements of the course to be taught and to keep a repo with each-one's interest and to develop an environment of having every learner as a part of the virtual class.

Introduction

To make an e-learning process to be a successful one, the e-learner must get involved with all of the following aspects:

- course resource or learning material of the course
- with the facilitator ie: e-tutor
- active participation with the peer group

In any course written course materials with detailed coverage, attracts most involvement of the learner. Also it is observed that increase in an element of "Interaction" is needed in e-learning, even the e-tutor can control by intervention at a private one-to-one level or to interact with whole grou**p.**

e-Tutor Will Facilitate Learning By:

Finalize a study program which integrates all components of the course, includes- self-study, research, assignments, group activities and tests. E-tutor is responsible to ensure that the prepared programme is suitable enough to cover differing learning styles. Thus it call for quick and timely response from the e-learner by initiating discussion questions; organizing group activities; making assignments; providing or suggesting additional study materials and or other sources of expertise content.It is important to help learners to set challenging yet achievable goals for the completion and good quality of coursework and to giving encouragement at every stage of the process by demonstrating the confidence in the learner's ability to succeed. It is important to ensure that all e-learners are keeping on track with the work load and e-tutors should chase e-learners where some action on their part is expected but has not occurred. E-Tutors should be quick to identify situations where the e-learner is in difficulty and provide the necessary support, including, were necessary, assistance in revising plans for completing the course. It is always important to give encouraging comments and to recognize the achievements of the e-learner. E-tutor has think of various ways in which they would maintain the interest of a group of online learners. With online or e-learning it is important that the e-tutor is competent with the online communication tools available within the course - which are increasingly becoming larger in number and more diverse in their application. E-Tutors must know how to use the various tools as per the need of the situation and the group under learning.

E-Tutor is essential to have a good understanding of skills like:

- Electronic mailing and Mail groups,
- Discussion platforms like Bulletin/discussion board
- Sharing and Web page authoring and File sharing
- On-line Assessment ways, such as questioning and answering

Apart from above a few latest tools an E-Tutor has to know such as:

- On-Line Live chat
- Video conferencing
- Interactive whiteboards
- Virtual learning environments
- Electronic lectures
- Multi-media and PowerPoint presentations
- Support for m-learning (using mobile phones) & t-learning (using television)

With all mentioned above the proposed courses may contain new learning paradigms which may include multimedia supported products such as using Macromedia's Flash: Learning through games, Simulation tools, Assessment tools, or in some cases the e-tutor is supposed to give tuition on the use of few of the above tools to their e-learner.

e-Tutoring Drawbacks:

The success of e-tutoring affects due some barriers as in-listed below:

Poor knowledge and expertise in ICT

- Don't know how use ICT tools
- Lack of limited knowing, the needs of disadvantaged learners
- Poor experience in developing online study skills and material
- Over Coming Drawbacks:

E-tutor has to have following skills and expertise to over come the barriers of e-tutoring :adequate hands-on training to be able to develop online tutoring skills and how to use ICT

support for communication and collaboration among other e-tutors

- access to and the sharing of good practice
- the opportunity for discussion on issues of common interest
- access to experts and policy makers
- knowledge of the benefits of mentoring & monitoring online
- knowledge of the importance of early feedback to students

E-tutor is needs to develop a learning focus to the above environment. E-Tutors should be able to create, store and re-use learning material of activities which can be shared with learner group.An e-tutor should posses some understanding of the latest e-learning tools for content Management. It is said to "Online or e-learning must be seen as another tool in the box of the tutor/lecturer for it to be successful" Joint Information Systems Committee December 2002 e-Learning by itself is very impersonal and non-engaging and the e-tutor adds that "human-face" to the online materials. The students have more confidence knowing that there is an "expert" on hand and this, in turn, leads to higher completion and retention rates. However, it should not be underestimated that there is often an additional cost, usually in time, when switching to teaching online. To make e-tutoring a success story new competencies required to be learnt and new working practices are to be developed .

e-Tutoring Recent Competencies:

To be an e-Tutor, he/she has to bear, certain competencies which covers a variety of possible e-tutoring activities. The roles required to played by an e-tutors vary most of time depends upon the design and application of the overall learning course, in which the tutor makes use of the hardware and software tools available while e-tutoring process in progress. Below given are the areas of general expertise are assumed as prerequisites of an e-tutor which forms a basis for the competencies of e-tutoring:

- Should posses a overall knowledge of the course to tutored
- Should know the pedagogy prevailing the course
- Should have the information and communications technology knowledge
- Should be aware of a learners' working and to share relationship
- Should positively encourage and support the learners
- Should play the role of mentor/counselor as well as academic advisor

Tutor' And Learners' Point Of View:
The process of e-Learning, as contrast to that of face-to-face learning, which prevails various changes from the point of the tutor and the learner in process of e-tutoring:

- Learning place and time changes in the process
- Newer latest variety of teaching and learning models to facilitate different learning styles
- New skills upgrading to accommodate synchronous communications using tools, such as video conferencing and live chat, to support collaborative learning
- To adopt skills upgrading to facilitate asynchronous communication using email and discussion boards with group activities.
- To use various models of online learning and e-tutoring as used in face-to-face learning and tutoring process.

e-Tutoring : Focus on Following Models:

- Approach instructions
- Attention towards behavioral changes
- An approach of developing models
- Learning to happen in communities, by having participation
- Thus an e-Tutor point of view, he has to be aware of the models or themes underlying the courses on which they are tutoring.

e-Tutors' Role:
An e-Tutor has to understand the complexity of face-to-face support because an e-tutor is suppose to exhibit the below mentioned aspects while online tutoring. It seems these are some of the things a face to face tutor use to do.

Provider of Information: In e-tutoring the tutors' role is to provide information focusing on resources and procedures to be followed. He/she encourage learners to select suitable learning programme and ask them to go for in-depth assessment or guidance as needed.

As a Initiator/Assessor: An e-tutor finds out learner's needs and interests and preferred style of learning. He/she explains the type of support provided to them and avail the learner with any information or paperwork needed to proceed with the process.

As Adviser and Guide: An e-tutor identifies the learner's aspirations, barriers to learning, levels of computer literacy and any special or basic skills needs. The tutor will prepare a learning plan identifying how support will be provided.

As a Facilitator: An e-tutor basically initiates, monitor the process and reviews. He/she required to maintain regular contact with learner either face-to-face, on-line, or both. The tutor undertakes review and assessment of learning to make sure the learner is proceeding satisfactorily and individual learning needs are being met. The tutor will update the learning plan as appropriate, identify problems and issues and advise the learner on solutions. They will provide advice on formal assessment, keep accurate records and set up and maintain active tutoring groups as appropriate. Things are never as simple as they first look and many different organizations have tried to produce a list of functions that a teacher or support worker does. Possibly the most important function that is carried out (apart from that of subject specialist) is that of learner facilitation and this is certainly true when supporting learners online.

Some of the tasks of an e-Tutor will include:

- Be An Expert on On-line Learning
- Develop a pre-course guidance to online learners
- Built-up an On-line relationship with the learner
- Initiate activities that will facilitate and support online learning
- Continually evaluate progress of learner

Some of these function are described below:

Be An Expert On On-line Learning

- Elaborate and focus-out the advantages of online learning
- Develop skills on how to create a useful, relevant online learning recourses
- Develop an On-line Learning- positive attitude, commitment and enthusiasm

Develop a pre-course guidance to online learners

- Describe what the learner can expect to get out of the course
- Describe what hardware and software learner will require access to, and level of IT competency required to learn online
- Describe any particular skills or aptitudes learner needs to help them participate successfully

Focus On On-line learning contracts

- Negotiate individual goals so that each learner has a personal learning plan
- Create a climate that allows learner to learn independently and confidently
- Provide learner with technical and subject matter support

Built-up An On-line relationship with the learner

- explore ideas
- develop arguments
- promote valuable threads and close off unproductive threads
- develop and enable others
- act as a catalyst
- foster discussion
- summarize, challenge, restate as appropriate
- monitor understanding and misunderstanding
- create a climate that allows learners to learn independently and confidently

Begin the activities which facilitate and support On-line Learning

- Make usage of HTML pages, e-mail, bulletin boards, text, audio and video conferencing, 'virtual classrooms' and other on-line learning systems.
- Develop communication among e-learners using web pages.
- For information of the course, use web pages, having, related:
- information on e-learners
- specifications of the course
- the details of schedules and activities.
- Give the web links and reading pages
- Permission to self-study materials

Conclusions:
In brief an e-tutor has to play multi-role in e-Tutoring process which includes : has constantly work as an evaluator of e-learner; has to be attentive on Learners' feedback ; modify learning plans in review learners' progress: has to provide suitable advice, guidance and resources if needed. Thus an e-Tutor communicate precisely and concisely, provide administrative support and be a good facilitator and motivator, avoiding sexism, racism, ageism or other discriminatory behavior, with empathy, using a friendly, non-patronizing way.The role of the e-Tutor is as a "jack-of-all-Trades" but he/she must be: well-versed with the technology and its limitations, have to develop On-line relationship within groups, capable to design activities and provide support, a good evaluator of e-learners' progress, must make use of th technologies like - email, discussion boards and so on.

Volume : 2 | Issue : 10 | October 2013 • ISSN No 2277 - 8179

REFERENCE

1) Software Project Management by Joel Henry, Person Publication, | 2) Statistical Methods For Practice & Research by, A.S. Gaur & Sanjay S. Gaur | 3) Data & Text Mining A Business Application Approach by Thomas W.Miller, Person | 4)Modern Data Warehousing, Mining & Visualization by George M. Marakas, Person | 5) Data Warehousing Data Mining OLAP, by Berson Alex, Stephen Smith,McGraw Hill 1973. | 6)Shrobe, Exploring AI, Survey Talks From the National Conferences on AICA, AAAI 1988. | 7) Internet A Nut Shell by Quincie, Orealey Publication | 8) The Global Information Technology Report by Sumitra Dutta, B Lenvin INSEAD | 9) Information Technology Control & Audit by Fadric, Sandro, Daniel, Aurabach Publication |