

UARK Help Desk – “Soft Skills” Training ETEC Internship – Kierstin Bible

Analysis

- *Scope of project:* Training in soft skills for Help Desk personnel
- *Issues:*
 - Lack of overall time for training
 - Lack of time for call-coaching during training period
 - Continual turnover of student workers
- *Needs:*
 - Asynchronous training in short chunks
- *GUEST method:*
 - Adapted from Disney & Hilton training, based on the Subject Matter Expert’s (Shelly Walters) experience:
 - *Greet*
 - *Understand*
 - *Empathize*
 - *Solve*
 - *Thank*

Design

Asynchronous Cognitive Apprenticeship

Modeling	Expert (i.e. supervisor) demonstrates the skill(s)/task(s) for the trainees – this can be repeated at various learning stages. Trainee builds a conceptual model of the skill/task.
Coaching	Supervisor observes the trainee attempting the skill/task and gives feedback to help trainee improve and become aware of opportunities for improvement. Feedback may take place during the attempt or after.
Scaffolding	Supervisor supports the trainee as they learn. Support structures are created, and in some cases the supervisor may give just-in-time help to the trainee.
Articulation	Supervisor encourages the trainees to discuss the process concerning the desired skill/task – this can occur several times during a training sequence.
Reflection	Supervisor encourages the trainees to compare their decisions with supervisor and with other trainees to develop deeper understanding and insight.
Exploration	Supervisor provides trainees with further training opportunities, allowing them to engage their skills and problem solve. The supervisor will slowly withdraw scaffolding, allowing the trainee to take the initiative in the skill/task.

Objectives

- Trainees will be able to:
 - identify the GUEST method of customer service.
 - classify sample calls using the GUEST method.
 - critique their performance on a call using the GUEST method.
 - demonstrate GUEST method during practice calls.

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Alignment Grid for Objectives

Objective	Content/Activity	Assessment
Identify the GUEST method of customer service.	Introduction Video, Office Signage	GUEST Quiz (multiple choice)
Classify sample calls using the GUEST method.	Scripted Call Videos, Coaching Rerun, Group Reflection	Quizzes after Non-coached Videos. Long Call/Group Reflection
Critique their performance on a call using the GUEST method.	Trainee initiated discussion in Voice Thread	Trainee initiated discussion in Voice Thread
Demonstrate GUEST method during practice calls.	Long Call	Long Call

Activities Summary

- Introduction to GUEST video – provides quick definition of each step of the GUEST method
- Videos of Training Calls
 - Scripted by Abi Moser, Blackboard Support Manager
 - There should be at least one call per step in the “GUEST” method. Some calls may emphasize more than one step.
 - Two training videos for each call
 - “Scripted Call” – the entire call, without commentary or interruption.
 - “Coaching Rerun” – the same entire call with pauses for commentary from the instructor
 - “Did you notice how....”
 - “The reason I replied in this way was.....”
 - Keywords from the “GUEST” method can appear as those steps are used in the call.
- Non-Coached Videos of Calls
 - Scripted by Abi Moser
 - Selection of scripted calls with no follow-up commentary/coaching.
 - These video scripts will be designed to showcase one or more aspects of GUEST and will be followed by a short quiz.
- Voice Thread Activities:
 - The “Long Call”
 - 2 participants (instructor and one team member)
 - The instructor initiates the “call” in Voice Thread using audio recording
 - The trainee “replies” in Voice Thread using audio recording
 - Instructor coaching/scaffolding will be video recording.
 - The entire “long call” plays out asynchronously, as the trainee has the time between calls to do the training.

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- The instructor may wait to the end of the call to do an overall reflection or may coach immediately on any input of the trainee, depending on how the call plays out.
- Group Reflection (entire team)
 - Instructor records an example call (this may be something that has happened recently and has been rerecorded for this exercise).
 - Calls should generally have a 2:1 ratio of “positive” to “negative” issues.
 - Calls may be 100% correct in how they were handled – it does not hurt to call out an excellent call from one of the trainees and point out how soft skills were used.
 - Instructor may ask leading questions on the call or may simply ask for any input.
 - Ideally the instructor begins this kind of exercise with a lot of input, scaffolding on previous Voice Thread reflections and then gradually pulls back, letting the team articulate, explore and reflect on the calls.
 - The team replies using audio recording on their analysis of the call – what worked, what didn’t work, suggestions for different approaches.
 - The instructor can reply back or not, as she sees fit (the team may be having an excellent and robust conversation!).
- Trainee Initiated Discussion
 - As the trainees become more skilled, they can be encouraged to share stories of calls on Voice Thread for team reflection
 - What was the issue?
 - How did I handle it?
 - How I used “GUEST”
 - Reflection of myself
 - Reflection from team.

[Alignment of Cognitive Apprenticeship and Activities](#)

Cognitive Apprenticeship Phase	Activity
Modeling	“Initial Introduction to GUEST” Video “Director’s Cut” Video
Coaching	“Coaching Rerun” Video - emphasize “GUEST” method “Long Call” in Voice Thread Office Signage
Scaffolding	“Non-Coached” Video “Long Call” in Voice Thread “Group Reflection” in Voice Thread
Articulation	“Long Call” and “Group Reflection” in Voice Thread
Reflection	“Long Call” and “Group Reflection” in Voice Thread
Exploration	Trainee initiated discussion in Voice Thread

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Training Sequence

- “Introduction to GUEST” Video
- Scripted Call
- Coaching Rerun
- Scripted Call (w/o follow-up coaching rerun)
- Long Call
- Group Reflection
- Trainee Initiated Discussion
- GUEST Training Signage (ongoing)

Development

- Outside the scope of the internship

Implementation

- Outside the scope of the internship

Evaluation

- *The nature of this training is ongoing, so the majority of the evaluation is formative.*
 - Confidence Survey – short survey to measure how prepared the trainees feel in answering Help Desk calls.
 - Pre and post Survey to compare before and after training.
 - GUEST scoring of randomized calls
 - Actual calls will be recorded before the training is implemented, after it begins and then as it continues.
 - One call per business day (AM or PM) – randomized selection.
 - Supervisor evaluates each call on the “GUEST” model
 - Simple survey on the Likert Scale
 - Did they “greet, did they “understand”, etc.....
 - N/A – if one step really wasn’t needed
 - This will inform additional content added to videos and/or voice thread sessions.

Assessment Summary

- GUEST quiz after “Introduction to GUEST” video (multiple choice)
 - Short quiz after each call
 - Quizzes will draw from a pool, ensuring that trainees retaking the quiz will not encounter the same questions.
 - Test how well the trainee has absorbed the previous instruction in GUEST method from training videos with commentary.
 - Grading provided as feedback with comments.
 - Students can retake quizzes until they achieve the predetermined “passing” score.

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References

David, L. (2017). Cognitive apprenticeship (Collins et al.). Retrieved from <https://www.learning-theories.com/cognitive-apprenticeship-collins-et-al.html>

Spector, J. (2016). *Foundations of educational technology* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.