

OLL K-12 INTERVIEW PROTOCOL—2007-2008

ONLINE APPLICATION DEVELOPER

This protocol is for use with K-12 application developers. You may need to gather information from more than one respondent. While scheduling the site visit, determine which individuals are best suited to answer each group of questions. Schedule the length of interviews based on how many sections a respondent can address.

Introduction

The following is a suggested introduction. When you begin the interview, make these points, but use your own words for a more personal introduction.

You may know that we are working on a project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education to look at characteristics associated with prevalent types of online learning and identify promising practices that are associated with improved student outcomes. One of our priorities in this project is to learn more from you about *the features and capabilities of your online K-12 offering, as well as how the application is implemented.*

Before we start, I need to have you review and sign this consent form. [AFTER THE RESPONDENT REVIEWS CONSENT FORM] Do you have any questions before we get started?

Interviewee's Role in the Organization

1. Please describe the position(s) you have held in the design and development of this program starting with your current position. How long have you held these positions (in relation to the existence of the program itself)?
2. Please describe the major responsibilities of your current position.

Program Design and Course Development

Features of curriculum (subject matter / grade level, synch / asynch, pedagogical approach, strategies for maximizing student access, technologies used, hardware / bandwidth)

Now, I'd like to learn more about [application x].

3. How and when did this program start? What particular student population is it intended to serve?
4. What are the primary goals of this online program (curriculum goals, etc.)?

5. Please describe the major principles or best practices on which this online TPD program is based?
6. Please describe the major design features of this online program.
[Probe for: specialized content, pedagogy (try to determine if expository, active, or interactive; also are online quizzes present, opportunities for immediate feedback, collaborative or group based activities; degree of learner control), technologies used (forums, email, chat, video conference, telephone, web, etc; and media used (graphics, video, audio, simulations, gaming environments, text)].
7. What features of the program do you consider unique or exemplary as compared with other online programs having similar educational objectives? Why? What are major differences between this online program and similar face-to-face courses?
8. Please briefly describe the instructional delivery model from the perspective of instructors and students.
[Probe for length of intervention; whether it is totally online or blended; amount and modes of online interaction between instructors or facilitators, students, and others; individual or group work; assignment or discussion focused]
9. What is the maximum number of students per section or course in this online program? What is the recommended instructor: student ratio? What is the minimum number of students required for running the application successfully?
- 10.
11. Please describe the process of developing a typical course, unit or module. On what basis is the content or topic of new courses selected and how long is curriculum development process?
12. Is the program localized or customized to meet specific client requirements? If yes, how?
13. Can you briefly describe any new features or refinements under development and the motivation for them?

Outcomes: Expectations, Measures, and Data

14. How many teachers have participated in the program (cumulatively and in the past year)? What is the rate of completion? What are the expected learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, behavior) of taking this online program? Please briefly describe how participants are assessed on learning outcomes. Who developed the assessments? How do you measure the success of the program? Do you have a quality assurance process or metric for assessing the quality of your curriculum? Pedagogy? Assessments? Please describe.
15. Do you have any retention, learning outcome, or quality assurance data that you can share with us?

Instructors

16. How many instructors, facilitators, moderators, and other staff conduct a typical course? Are they full-time staff, consultants, or practicing teachers? Please describe.
17. Please describe how instructors are recruited/selected. Are instructors paid or otherwise compensated? Are there specific knowledge, skills, and competencies that candidate instructors must have in order to be selected?
18. Please describe the content, length, and structure of the training that instructors receive.
19. Do you have criteria and measures to assess the quality of instruction? Please describe.
20. How much time should an instructor spend preparing for this online program? How much time does an instructor spend weekly on program delivery, interaction with participants, grading, and course management?

Enrollment Process and Policies

21. Who is eligible for this online program? Why were these criteria defined? Please describe any eligibility requirements associated with participation (e.g., grade level, academic performance, location, technical skills and access).
22. How do participants enroll in the online program? Do students decide to enroll themselves or are they selected or nominated? Do students enroll as individuals, through schools, or either?
23. What types of students do best in this program? Which students struggle the most?
24. Do participants receive credit of any type? Are there other incentives for signing up and completing the program?

Business/Staffing/Funding

25. What is the target market for the program?
26. What are the up front costs of implementation (tech installation and maintenance, training and support, etc.)?
27. What are the ongoing costs (stipends, release time, substitutes, instructor training, program coordination, matriculation fees)?
28. Can you cite some major users/clients? Which have been most successful implementing the program? Which would you consider typical or average? How do they differ (in terms of learners, instructors, delivery, assessment, etc.)?

29. How many others in your organization work in this program and what are their roles? Are there other organizations that are subcontractors or partners in the development and operation of the program? Please describe their roles.
30. How is development of courses or content, tools / technologies, and training materials funded? Is the implementation usually paid for by the customer (district, school or individual), a grant, or by a third party? If paid by a LEA, from what budget(s)?
31. [If program is outside-funded] Are there plans for becoming self-sustaining when the outside funding ends
32. What are the program's growth goals?
33. What are the major challenges or barriers to sustainability and scalability?

Supports and Barriers

34. What support services were designed specially for this TPD program (e.g., program orientation, time management, online technology support, on the Web FAQ, virtual study groups, online facilitation, peer mentoring, peer coaching, etc...)?
35. What types of technical support were designed for this TPD program? How were these services to be provided? If you had to redesign these services, what would you change?
36. Are there support services for online facilitators and for program administrators?
37. What are the most significant barriers for student participation in this program? What could be done to overcome them?
38. Is access to technology and/or technology fluency by participating students considered a facilitator or a barrier in the implementation of this online program? Why?
39. Are there time requirements (e.g., X number of hours per week) or interaction requirements (e.g., online / onsite synchronous activities) for effective participation in the online program?
40. What challenges or barriers do online instructors or facilitators face? Please comment on situational, technological, pedagogical or other types of barriers for facilitating online learning by participating teachers.

Closing

41. Is there anything else you would like to add about your applications design and / or implementation?

Before you leave, be sure to ask for information to identify one typical site and one exemplary site where the offering has been implemented along with associated contact information so that we can arrange future site visits. Also be sure to ask for any available data on participant outcomes / achievement.

Before leaving the site, we need login in or other access information so that we can independently become familiar with the user interface and features of the application.