

OMDE 604: Management in DE
The Job Ad: DE Leadership Position
Word Count: 1817 (*without headings, citations & references*)
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DISTANCE TRAINING POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

The Center for Business and Industry at XYZ Community College is recruiting for a high-level leadership position in the field of distance training. They are seeking to fill one full-time Project Director's position to establish a new department for Distance Training and Elearning Programs. This position is located in Annapolis, Maryland and the candidate will report directly to the Vice President of Workforce Development and Community Education.

POSITION QUALIFICATIONS:

- Masters Degree in Distance Education; or similar field;
- 3 years of experience in the field of distance training; e-learning, or workforce development training; with an emphasis on market analysis, the e-learning industry, knowledge management, and lifelong learning. Strong understanding of demographic & socio-economic issues, customer marketing, political & economic trends, human capital & the knowledge economy, technological advances, and how to identify internal/external issues influencing the field of distance learning.
- 5 years of experience, which includes administration duties, provision of technical innovation, fundamentals of institutional change, and decision-making techniques for project management.
- Professional work experience in team management and team leadership development.
- Proficient in using virtual environments; organizing virtual training practices; and communicating effectively with online technologies. Experience in strategic planning or business planning and the use of change management concepts and principles.

DESCRIPTION OF POSITION

The mission of XYZ Community College is to deliver high quality, lifelong learning opportunities to individuals, businesses, and community organizations in the Annapolis region. With more than 20 years of experience, our workforce development training, without the assistance of online education, offers: flexible multi-shift scheduling, employee recruitment and retention strategies, skills assessment, consulting and facilitation expertise. We are committed to offering the best services and support to various companies in our region and have been recognized for twenty years as responsive, cost-effective and innovative in our assessment,

teaching, training, and consulting. As part of our strategic plan for 2004, our institutional goal is to enhance our workforce development training into its next level of excellence by pursuing a new venture to move our non-credit division toward offering e-learning programs. We are seeking a key person to lead this initiative, and require a leader who has the vision, influence and skills to get this project off the ground and operating successfully. This candidate will have professional experience in the field of distance training with a strong emphasis on strategic planning and partnering with the e-learning industry.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES & LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

- I. *Responsible for directing and coordinating the planning, implementing and evaluating of e-learning programs for corporate training based on the vision, strategic business plan and operational goals of our institution.*

This individual will essentially drive the success of this new training initiative, develop a comprehensive strategic plan, outline the process, and identify the resources needed to adequately deliver and support high-quality, cost-effective e-learning programs. They will need to be “forward-thinking,” open to new approaches to learning, target new groups of learners, and new technologies to deliver training programs. We need a person who can see the “long –term vision for the direction of our community college, and who can passionately describe this vision to other constituent, companies, stakeholders, employees, etc” (Latchem & Hanna, 2001, p.117). They will identify key “players” to participate in this initiative, while enlisting others from a broad cross section of the organization including (training managers, developers, instructors, administrator) and clients (students, organizations, companies, and sponsors) in a plan of action (Rosenberg, 2001, p. 292). They will address and adhere to any internal and external issues affecting leadership, culture, support, justification, and organizational realignment in addition to those of technology, learning design, and infrastructure (Rosenberg, 2001, p. 302).

- II. *Responsible for managing and developing strategic partnerships with the e-learning industry.*

Many of the companies in our region are interested in establishing outside partnerships to deliver their training needs and there is a strong growth in higher education serving in the corporate e-learning arena (ASTD Trends Report, 2002). The Project Director position will successfully establish partnerships with the e-learning industry and research the objectives, values, methods and standards required to establish the best partnerships for our community college to deliver e-learning programs.

Functions of partnership development include:

- Determining the priority learning needs of the companies in our region,
- Reviewing e-learning companies to determine which one to do business with,
- Reviewing online training products, before purchase, for content and instructional design quality,
- Managing e-learning partnerships, vendors and consultants,
- Managing the e-learning budget,
- Working with the technical staff (either internal or outsource) to ensure that e-learning is accessible, and
- Constantly keeping abreast with the e-learning industry and sharing knowledge with the rest of the organization (Rosenberg, 2001, p. 288).

III. Responsible for managing the planning, development, delivery, implementation, evaluation/improvement of online training programs; and overseeing the use and upkeep of equipment/software/technologies used to deliver e-learning programs.

In today's fast-paced technological environment, the implementation of organizational change and the management of innovation are extremely important to our institution. We need a leader who is "empowered and expected to investigate the enormous potential of technology to bring about innovation and improvement with direct participation and support of the institution's administration, faculty and staff" (Cross & Dublin, 2002, p. 31). This leader will have the "ability to capture insight into pedagogical practices and how technology impacts learning; the ability to provide an ongoing commitment to changing technologies; and the ability to understand technological advancements and high tech tools (Cross & Dublin, 2002, p. 36). The Project Director must have strong technical skills; and be proficient in using technologies to deliver online programs. They will manage the learning system to ensure effective utilization of the systems, as well as organize a technical advisory committee consisting of staff responsible for the technology infrastructure, academic technology policy, and administrative requirements for quality performance" (Bates, 2000, p. 193). They will hire, promote, and lead a team of experts to keep abreast of technological development, maintain hardware and software installations and up-date equipment, and provide ongoing training and support of internal staff in charge of e-learning technologies (Bates, 2000). The applicant must work well in a team-based management environment collaborating comprehensive coordination efforts of e-learning programs; while managing the process of delivering courses with technologies to include blended learning formats and digital surrounds (Rossett, 2002). They will maintain a high level of expertise and research in emerging technologies and online training environments. A strong customer focus is required, which includes the ability to identify the changing needs of our clients and an understanding of cultural diversity and global markets.

IV. Responsible for developing and executing a strategic plan for e-learning programs; for maintaining standards that ensures programs meet or exceed quality of education system.

The applicant must have experience working with cross-functional teams and build a collaborative institutional-wide training initiative. They will be able to make decision on how to best balance the e-learning budget while meeting the standards required for delivering quality programs *and* meeting the needs of clients. The Program Director must have an understanding of SCORM [shareable content object reference model] and use guidelines to set specifications for developing, packaging and delivering e-learning programs (Rosenberg, 2002, p. 169). They should have project management skills; be able to focus on and prioritize multiple tasks; be deadline/detail-oriented; communicate effectively, and be able to work well with subject matter experts, trainers, board of directors, political officials and corporate level management. The applicant will embody optimism, be willing to take risks, affirm the values of others, and stand up to political interference for the good of the organization (Latchem & Hanna, 2001, p. 236). Because “global, social, economic, and technological development present our institution with challenges, opportunities and capacities to improve training systems, the candidate must have experience in managing budgets, forming strategic partnerships, and analyzing “external” and “internal” factors affecting higher education (Latchem & Hanna, 2001, p. 177). Duties include “leading and documenting meetings; estimating and documenting costs, generating small-term wins, empowering team-leadership action; collaborating with other units and service providers; solving problems; contracting with outside resources; and ensuring project completion on time/in budget” (Cross & Dublin, 2002, p. 19).

V. Responsible for managing a staff/team to enthusiastically share the vision of advancement through e-learning programs; act as a change agent and a team player

Leadership style will have a tremendous impact on the overall success of this initiative. We are looking for a charismatic leader who can capitalizes on the intellectual, administrative and technical support of our institution; to “create a vision and “see” the steps to realizing that goal” (Latchem & Hanna, 2001). We also need a passionate leader, who “has the capacity to motivate and inspire others to think beyond current frameworks; change mindsets and practices; and gain collaboration and commitment to that plan” (Latchem & Hanna, 2001, p. 53). The Project Director will be in charge of a team of professional who share various competencies, skills and attributes. They will have to effectively manage and support "those who are directly involved with reviewing and presenting the learning content, (trainers/tutors, SME) and those involved in the support of the technologies (administrators, support staff and process staff)" (Chute, Melody, & Hancock, 1999, p. 65).

LEADERSHIP CRITERIA

I. Experience in Strategic Planning: Scanning Internal/External Environments.

The candidate will demonstrate familiarity with fundamental issues facing higher education and how these issues will likely affect their strategic plan over the next five years. (Bates, 2000, p. 49).

Skills, Knowledge, Abilities:

- 1.) Professional work experience identifying external and internal environments and a proven ability to understand the most important factors influencing the field of distance training.
- 2.) Knowledge of strategic planning functions include: a.) financial planning; b.) internal analysis (identifying strengths & weaknesses); c.) external analysis (identifying future opportunities & threats); d.) demographic analysis and community needs; e.) and technology trends (Bates, 2000).
- 3.) Familiarity of national, state or local priorities; identifying new and existing markets' and current and potential competitors (Latchem and Hanna, 2001, p. 237).
- 4.) A working knowledge of how distance training programs function and the planning, resource allocation, and promotional tasks required to implement and launch such programs; (O'Rourke, 1993, p.6).
- 5.) A working knowledge of how higher education institutions function and how distance training (e-learning) will affect existing systems and internal departments (O'Rourke, 1993, p.7).

II. Ability to Research and Develop Quality Partnerships & Alliances

It is essential to effectively assess and evaluate collaboration alliances. Quality control issues are important to our institution and we adhere to high standard in choosing and delivering course content.

Skills, Knowledge, Abilities:

- 1.) A working knowledge of selecting, managing and combining resources in quality partnerships. Skills in the decision making includes: a.) "managing a clear task and agreed on budget, b.) understanding staff time and access to technologies, c.) creating a production schedule, and creating a deadline for the first offering of a course or program" (Bates, 2000, p. 179).

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- 2.) Familiarity with researching and gathering data to explore potential partnerships. Skills include: a.) “how to determine the priority learning needs of the company’s served, b.) how to review e-learning companies to determine which one to do business with, c.) how to review and evaluate online training products, for content and instructional design quality, and d.) how to effectively work with a technical staff to ensure the performance of the e-learning process” (Rosenberg, 2001, p. 288).
- 3.) Demonstrated competencies in evaluating the e-learning industry by identifying a.) “the reputation of vendors and e-learning companies, b.) resources available (i.e. people with the right skills to spare the project), c.) location and accessibility of resources, d.) cost range (including maintenance and upgrades), subject matter expertise, and e.) willingness to support the organization” (Rosenberg, 2001, p. 277).

III. Ability to Lead a Team toward Innovation and Change

The community college has a distinct culture for the necessary values, attitudes, and behaviors surrounding this initiative. The Project Director will act as the leading advocate” in e-learning to change, innovate, and improve programs and services.

1. Demonstrated ability to provide leadership in professional development for new training environments; a.) “able to increase awareness and understanding of technology-enabled training and learning methods among administration, faculty and staff; b.) able to develop a communication plan that focuses on trust, c.) able to communicate a meaningful vision that motivates learners, managers, and the entire organization; c.) able to recruit a wide base of change agents at all levels of the organization to help communicate the vision and remove obstacles, solve problems, and maintain enthusiasm; and e.) able to make e-learning an integral part of the organizational culture” (Cross & Dublin, 2002, p. 21).
2. Demonstrated leadership ability to “act as an agent of transformational change, to be able to envision and work through the ‘big picture’, and enable other team members to acquire and exercise team- leadership skills” (Latchem & Hanna, 2001, p. 59).
3. Familiarity in creating a learning environment that fosters communication and collaboration, encourages shared decision-making, and balances autonomy with standards (Rossett, 2002, p. 194).
4. Proven ability to determine the resources needed to use e-learning programs, evaluate effectiveness, and commit to providing ongoing financial, personnel, training and technology support (O’Rourke, 1993).

Please send a cover letter, vita, a short statement of your leadership philosophy & style including a description of your e-learning experience & project management/strategic planning, salary range and names, addresses and phone numbers of three references to: Attention Search Committee, XYZ Community College, Annapolis, MD 21042 or email searchcommittee@XYZ.edu

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