



## Scenario + Rapid e-learning = Powerful learning

**Tristram Lawson**

Centre for Learning and Professional Development

The University of Adelaide

The integration of rapid e-learning software with situational learning pedagogy can empower educators to create innovative learning modules for online delivery. Educators using the right rapid e-learning tools together with sound learning design and creative flair can produce learning modules that are not only interactive and immersive but also challenge students to develop their critical thinking skills and deepen their understanding of the subject matter.

### Situational learning

“Situational learning is learning by immersion and interaction within a rich context. It is an umbrella term for a number of methodologies including simulations, case studies, scenario-based learning and online role-plays which present learners (working individually or in groups) with contexts involving concrete, real life problems. To solve these, they must make decisions and deal with the consequences. The content or learning aids required to inform these decisions are accessed as needed.” (Baron, 2007) Most situational learning methodologies are enhanced by the interactive elements and learning design capabilities offered by rapid e-learning software. Scenario based learning strategies are particularly well suited to the use of rapid e-learning software as they can be enriched with audio, video and further resources to make each scene more immersive and context specific. For learners, the ability to make decisions within a scene and receive context specific content and feedback in a variety of forms such as audio video or text, as a result of their decisions, provides the learner with an engaging experience that encourages reflection and critical thinking.

### Rapid e-learning software

The goal in a rapid e-learning program is to develop informational content quickly and efficiently by using materials developed by subject matter experts. This approach is driven by time-critical training and information needs, not mastery programs. (Learning Light, Bersin & Associates, 2006)

Many rapid e-learning software packages available offer educators the flexibility to design effective modules around sound learning methodologies. Some of the key strengths of rapid e-learning products are their ability to assist with learning design fundamentals such as storyboarding and branching through the use of templates and wizard tools. Examples of rapid e-learning products that offer tools for educators to blend technology, pedagogy and subject matter into interactive learning modules include *Articulate*, *Adobe Captivate*, *Camtasia* and *Raptivity*.

### Powerful learning

How and why is the blending of Rapid E-learning software with situational learning pedagogical methodologies so powerful?

For educators, the ability to create highly interactive and information rich learning modules, with the assistance of creative learning templates and within a sound pedagogical framework, is an enticing prospect. It is enticing because educators do not require computer programming skills to integrate multimedia and learning design to publish modules and it also encourages subject experts to be creative and bold when developing their curriculum. Together with their existing pedagogical knowledge and the right rapid e-learning tools, educators can be empowered to develop highly engaging and flexible online learning modules that can be integrated into programs delivered fully online or in a blended online and face to face format.

Adopting a blended teaching model that acknowledges students varied learning preferences, whether visual, aural, read write and kinaesthetic (VARK, 2008) can better accommodate the learning needs of all

students. Scenario based learning, together with the capabilities of a suitable rapid e-learning program can produce learning modules that simulate real life decision making challenges, immerse the learner in the subject matter and use audio, visual and written aids that satisfy the range of student learning preferences. Another advantage of producing effective learning modules is their ability to accommodate for the varying speeds at which students learn as the material can easily be revisited for revision, reflection or to clarify subject understanding.

## Examples

This powerful learning approach has been implemented within The University of Adelaide for staff and student learning as well as in projects for external organisations. Examples of this approach that may be presented on the final poster include:

- The University of Adelaide, Copyright Induction for Staff learning scenarios
- The University of Adelaide, Health and Safety for Students learning modules
- Australian Sports Commission, Play by the Rules - Issues in Sport learning scenarios

## Conclusion

Situational learning scenarios which can be developed using rapid e-learning software, empower educators to create effective learning modules that are engaging, immersive and interactive. These modules give learners the ability to make context specific decisions and receive feedback in a variety of forms which encourages them to reflect upon their decisions and develop their critical thinking skills to gain a greater understanding of the subject matter. Rapid e-learning software provides a variety of features to assist with producing well organised and media rich learning modules that appeal to a student's learning pace and preferences. Blending scenario based learning strategies with the features available in rapid e-learning products gives educators a powerful development environment enabling them to build modules that are both effective for and enticing to students.

## Acknowledgement

Dr Randall W Kindley pioneered scenario based learning at the University of Adelaide and without his work this poster, the numerous projects and body of knowledge that has resulted would not exist. Randall unexpectedly died Feb 2006 and the field of Learning and Teaching has lost a passionate teacher and creative innovator.

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**Author:** Tristram Lawson, Centre for Learning and Professional Development, The University of Adelaide. Email: [tristram.lawson@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:tristram.lawson@adelaide.edu.au)

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