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Migrating from Instructor-Led to eLearning Compliance & Regulatory Training – Change Report

Introduction

On September 8, 2016, the company I work for, Pinnacle Entertainment, acquired The Meadows Racetrack and Casino in Washington, PA. As the Learning & Development Program Manager, I am leading the implementation of our Learning and Development programs during the transition project. During our pre-acquisition discovery, we learned that The Meadows exclusively utilizes instructor-led training for all their training programs including Title 31 regulatory training, Risk & Safety training, Human Resources EEOC training, and leadership development training. In contrast, Pinnacle Entertainment exclusively uses eLearning training for all required employee training and uses a blended eLearning and instructor-led approach for our leadership development training.

With the goals of moving The Meadows on to Pinnacle Entertainment's learning management system (LMS), SuccessFactors, and launching compliance and regulatory eLearning training to all team members by January 1, 2017, the L&D Transition team and I have encountered some significant challenges:

- The 1,300 team members at The Meadows have never utilized an online learning management system
- The team members at the property have had minimal exposure to and participation in eLearning or blended learning
- The Human Resources team and Training Manager at The Meadows does not have any experience with a learning management system or in training team members how to take an eLearning or blended course

Additionally, the PNK Learning & Development team must also have team members at The Meadows complete five Pinnacle Entertainment online policy acknowledgements within 60 days of the close of acquisition or by December 31, 2016. My role in the transition was to draft and implement a multi-phased transition plan and to serve as the overall project manager to guide the project to success. Additionally, I have been responsible for overseeing the creation and uploading of learner profiles for The Meadows' team members into our LMS.

Problem

When we initially implemented SuccessFactors last year, we made three large assumptions that made the transition to our new LMS rocky:

- Team members transitioning from two legacy learning management systems that they would be able to easily adapt to the new system with little disruption of learning completion.

  When SuccessFactors launched, our team members encountered significant differences from the two legacy systems and struggled to access their eLearning modules because of the differences in the interfaces.

- Supervisors, managers and Human Resources leaders would be able to successfully support the transition with a series of WebEx demonstrations and quick reference guides to help them coach their team members.

  Because of a significant delay between leadership training and the system launch and major configuration changes, leaders were unable to practice using the system prior to the wider launch and, once they were in the system, the configuration changes caused them confusion on how to assist their team members in the system.

- Human Resources leaders and managers would find SuccessFactors' reports easy to access and use to track learning for each team member.

  After the launch the new LMS, Human Resources leaders and other managers found the standard reports in SuccessFactors did not contain enough information to help them track training completion by property, division, and department.

In response to these assumptions and the associated consequences, I drafted a more comprehensive and scalable rollout for the team members at The Meadows including six primary goals in two phases:

Phase 1:

1. Teach all team members at The Meadows how to log into SuccessFactors and navigate to their Learning Assignments
2. Coach supervisors, managers and Human Resources leaders on how to guide their team members to successfully log into SuccessFactors
3. Reach 100% completion rate for the five Pinnacle Entertainment online policy acknowledgements

Phase 2:

4. Using a basic, 5 to 10-minute purpose-built module, teach all team members how to complete an online course in SuccessFactors
5. Coach supervisors, managers and Human Resources leaders on how to guide their team members to complete their sample eLearning course prior to December 31, 2016

6. Coach Human Resources leaders and department managers how to use Pinnacle's customized reports in SuccessFactors to track training completion of the online policy acknowledgements and sample eLearning course

I believed this phased approach will build a high-level of comfort with working in SuccessFactors prior to rolling out required compliance and regulatory training on January 1, 2017. Additionally, we believed that using a gradual, phased introduction to both SuccessFactors and our eLearning offerings would help prevent inflated expectations and offset or shorten the "Trough of Disillusionment" phase of the Gartner Hype Cycle[1]. Additionally, we hoped to increase the speed at which our new team members will become productive in the LMS and the ease with which the Human resources team and department leaders can track their team members' completed eLearning courses.

Gartner Research's Hype Cycle diagram[2]
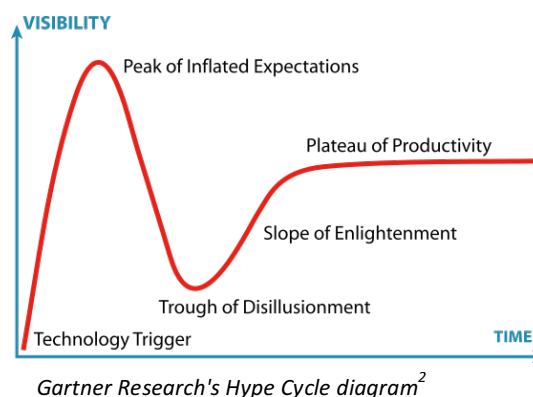
Intervention

With the close of the acquisition of The Meadows on Friday September 8th, we began meeting directly with the larger transition team and the Human Resources team at the property to share our project plan. Based on the information we learned from the full transition team, we discovered three key dependencies that would impact our project:

1. Integrating The Meadows' HRIS feed into SuccessFactors

2. The schedule for loading team members into Pinnacle's HRIS system, Infinium

3. Additional orientation and training initiatives scheduled to overlap with our project

The challenge of integrating The Meadows HRIS feed proved to be more substantial than we anticipated. It was originally scheduled to be complete by October 1st. Because of a required server update at The Meadows, the integration was not completed until October 28th. This delay meant that we were unable to start training the HR team and operations leaders until November 3rd, missing our original training dates by almost one month with team member system access turned on by November 15th.

An additional challenge we faced was the lack of a computer training lab and training computers at The Meadows. After working with the PNK IT leadership during the integration delays, we arranged for five desktop computers to be loaned to the property (until permanent purchases were made) from one of our other properties and set up in the team member cafeteria. We also arranged for HR team members to work in one-hour shifts to assist team members with logging in during peak meal periods.

Even though team members at The Meadows are at 36.5% completion for their assigned policy acknowledgements, the HR team and other leaders have been pushing team members to complete the sample online course to a completion rate of 41.2%.

Findings

Using the five metrics we previously selected, we have seen the following positive results:

1. Of the team members who have completed the sample online course on how to navigate SuccessFactors, 85.7% have completed their required policy acknowledgements
2. Completion rates for the sample module jumped by 9% and 6% for the policy acknowledgements after the HR team at The Meadows presented the course to their Executive Team.
3. 97.1% of team members answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" for the post-acknowledgement Level 1 feedback survey question "The 'Navigating the PNK Learning Center' online learning course was useful in helping me complete my learning assignments."
4. 527 of 538 team members answered "Yes" to the question "I would recommend that all team members complete the 'Navigating the PNK Learning Center' course" for a net promoter score of 98.3%.
5. Participant survey comments included:
    a. *"The how-to class was very helpful to helping me figure out how to use the system."*
    b. *"I tried to complete my classes before I took the class and I couldn't figure it out. After I watched the demo, it was really easy."*
    c. *"This is the first time I've ever learned how to use something like this where someone took the time to teach me how to use it right. This makes me excited for what else Pinnacle brings in. Thanks!"*

Next Steps

Now that we have established a comfort level of working in SuccessFactors for our team members at the Meadows, we have three additional steps to complete before assigning compliance and regulatory training:

1. Work with the Meadows' training team to help their team members to get to a minimum of 90% completion of the sample eLearning module.

2. Work with the Meadows' training team to help their team members to get to a minimum of 100% completion of the five required PNK policy acknowledgements.

3. Conduct the final manager coaching session for assisting team members with navigating SuccessFactors, reset passwords, and run learning completion reports.

4. Obtain final approval from the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board for all gaming-related compliance and regulatory courses (submitted for approval on 11/17/2016; anticipated approval by 1/2/2016).

5. Launch Level 2 feedback surveys

6. Team members, Human Resources leaders and operational leaders will also be invited to participate in focus groups to gain their insights on the training process and how the process/materials can be improved for future rollouts.

While the metrics we have seen are initially promising, will continue to drive more of our Meadows' team members to complete the "Navigating the PNK Learning Center" online module, online policy acknowledgements, and Level 1 feedback surveys. Additional completion metrics, survey results, and feedback sessions will enable us to measure how effective our efforts have been at educating and preparing the team members at The Meadows to use SuccessFactors and how comfortable the team members are as they interact with more complex eLearning offerings. Ongoing tracking will allow us to measure (and average) the completion pace, find points for improving our planning and delivery process, and identify

Conclusion

Despite navigating some significant challenges and delays, I feel the effort we took to ease team members at The Meadows into our LMS have been worthwhile. SuccessFactors is a tricky LMS to work with and we wanted to find a better way of introducing team members into the system in a way that would set them up for success. Based on the results that we have seen so far and pending some fine tuning of estimating IT requirements, this method of training should prove even more effective at increasing the speed and comfort with which we can migrate new team members onto our LMS.

Looking back, we should have budgeted more time to the integration process. We also would have provided additional test accounts for the HR team and operations leaders to practice working in the system to reset team member passwords and running completion reports for their property and teams. Additionally, we will conduct more detailed research on the need for additional equipment or space to support training at a given property.

In addition to using the sample online course for newly acquired properties, we want to leverage the positive results we have seen with the property onboarding for all new team members. We have decided that the course will be assigned to all new Pinnacle team members to introduce them to SuccessFactors as part of their company onboarding process.

Resources

1"Hype cycle." Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 17 August 2016. Web. 26 August 2016.

2"Gartner Research's Hype Cycle diagram." Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 27 December 2007. Web. 26 Aug. 2016.