

Designing Learner-Centric MOOCs

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Lecture 25

Creating LxIs with Reflection Quiz

The learner experience interactions are an integral part of the LCM model. You have seen the LCM model which has the learning dialogues, learning by doing activities, learning extension trajectories and the learner experience interaction. An LxI cultivates peer learning through focused discussion. MOOCs have discussion forums and are used many times for establishing connect and solving problems. However, we have seen that the discussion forums in MOOCs are often not used to the optimum levels and an LxI helps you in order to fix that problem to a certain extent.

The purpose of LxI is to leverage peer learning and also to avoid scatter, which can happen in a regular discussion forum. Let's see how to get that. To create an LxI, the first step is to design a focus question. As the name suggests, the focus question helps to avoid scatter and bring the discussion around that particular question.

The second step is to encourage participation within the discussion thread. This is required, so that the participants read the forum threads, and try to answer, comment or even encourage each other. After designing the focus question, the instructor should encourage participation within the discussion thread. Finally, create a reflection quiz which will be based on the discussion and will incentivize the participation of the learners. At this point, let us have a reflection spot. Have a look at this discussion thread started by the instructor. In reply, there is a submission. Try and figure out what could be the take away for the learner, who has posted this submission. Think about it, and once you are done, press resume.

Many of you must have seen that this particular thread is very commonly found in discussion forums and what the learners do typically, is to read that and go to the next thread, actually not showing any interest in the submission.

There are few people who will put some positive comments, such as, "Very good", "It looks nice" and so on and so forth, just to encourage the submission which is posted by this learner. However, just think about it. What has happened in this whole process is that the learner, who has submitted his or her assignment, has not got any critical feedback in order to improve their

skills. Lack of detailed feedback has stopped learning for that particular learner, and therefore, it has not resulted in a positive way for that submission. This is because the focus question is designed in a manner that does not elicit any interaction from the peers, except for mere appreciation.

So, how to address this problem? The first step is to design a focus question. The easier way is to treat it as a follow up of the LeD content, what was discussed, or the LbD activity which was performed. That gives a nice follow through for the learners and addresses their misconceptions or the scenarios which they are trying to implement in. This will be also useful for the learners who come from various backgrounds.

The other important thing in addition to the design of focus question is to set the rules of the game. Very clearly, mention the dos and don'ts of what is to be done in the discussion thread. Show examples, if possible. Assign roles to the various stakeholders, which are the instructors, the teaching assistants, or even the discussion forum moderators, for taking this activity through and don't forget to add enough details of the process, so that there is no ambiguity for the learner when they access this learning experience interaction.

While orchestrating this step, it is important to manage the discussion. As an instructor, it is important to encourage the participation, by writing a few words about it. You can also use a technique of up voting the answers (if it is available in the platform), you can invite counter views and nominate other active members in the discussion thread to comment about it. This will encourage them to jump into the discussion and start talking about it.

Finally, for setting up the reflection quiz, anticipate various responses which would be coming in for the forum posts. The design of the question should be such that the learners have to go back to the discussion thread and read the posts.

Finally, design the question in such a way, that it is based on the key takeaway of the discussion that will ensure that the learners have definitely read about it before answering it. Before we end, let's have an example about a discussion thread which has the focus question and the instructions.

In this thread, the instructors have asked the learners to observe a top view of a particular room and create a three-dimensional view of the same room by drawing it on a paper. The instructors also specify that the learners have to comment about the correctness of the camera angle and the placement, proportion and the colour contrast.

With these given instructions, let's see what would be the typical comments about it. The submissions are of various types and you can see that they are quite diverse in terms of the

responses. Many of them have used various techniques of drawing, angles, style of drawing, various elements which have been added there.

You can also see a competitive spirit coming up there because invariably no learner would like to copy each other, especially when they are publicly posting their submissions. That brings up the competitive spirit and you can see the variations in the submissions. You can also see that slowly a connect between the learner-learner and the learner-instructor, is also getting established through this discussion.

Although, creating learner experience interactions is an integral part at the orchestration level, we have included this here so that you can try it out for yourselves for the topic that you have chosen, and see if it works for you.