A Roadmap to Online Learning

Professional and career colleges and universities can drive enrollment and revenue with a well-planned online learning strategy.

START:
TAKE ONE MILE AT A TIME TO ARRIVE AT A SUCCESSFUL ONLINE PROGRAM

CREATE A BUSINESS PLAN

Understand your reasons for going online. Does it make sense for your institution and its current and potential students?

Do the math. What will an online program cost in staff hours, tech upgrades and support and training? Will online revenue outpace these costs?

GET COMMITMENT FROM ADMINISTRATORS

Institutional leaders must fuel an online program with their time and the institution's money.

Use financial proof points and surveys to show viability and student interest.

DESIGNATE A LEADER

A single point person should "own" the start-up initiative and be able to answer administrator's questions.

CONVENE A TASK FORCE

Task force members should include administrators and faculty who get input from students.

The task force will design a program framework, research accreditation, shop for technology vendors, do market research and, finally, create a successful vision for the program.

DETOUR ALERT →

Don't let mission creep detour task force members. They should focus on creating the program, not get bogged down in content and staffing needs for specific courses.

CREATE POLICIES AND PRACTICES GEARED TOWARD ACCREDITATION

The accreditation process for an online program can take from a few weeks to a couple of years and could involve national, regional and state agencies.

Use well-established best practices in distance-learning pedagogy to help speed up the accreditation process.

UNDERSTAND YOUR TECHNICAL NEEDS

What is your IT budget? Can it grow?

How robust is your technology infrastructure?

Can it keep an online program gassed up?

KNOW YOUR MARKET AND HOW YOU WILL REACH IT

Understand what competing institutions are doing and how your school will differentiate itself in the online marketplace.

PREPARE THE FACULTY

DETOUR ALERT ←

Faculty resistance is a fact of online life. Make a plan to address it, and get input from some naysayers.

Roughly 80 percent of institutions with online programs offer training for online instruction.

PILOT AN ONLINE COURSE

Start with one course as your online test drive to prove readiness and viability.

BE PREPARED TO LAUNCH WITH HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT

Make sure to use engaging and dynamic content. It will increase student engagement and foster student success.

Click here to view **Smart Steps to Online Learning** white paper.

END:
A WELL-PLANNED JOURNEY LEADS TO SUCCESS
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