FACE TO FACE, VIRTUAL CLASSROOM, B-LEARNING AND E-LEARNING: HOW TO CHOOSE

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This article presents a guide that helps teachers in the process of planning and implementing a blended-learning or an e-learning course (e/b-learning). Planning an online course demands reflection and effort in the teaching/learning process. The work described in this paper proposes a guide that speeds the process of creating an online course by crossing cognitive objectives, pedagogical models and techniques, web tools, target public, among other variables.

The ideas presented in this paper come up from the literature review and our institutional experience, in higher education and lifelong learning, which has been improved year after year, since 2003.

This work can help the organizations to make a strategic decision on how to adopt a blended-learning or an e-learning environment and tutoring.

In this paper we present our vision and practice on e/b-learning models and techniques. Giving a course could be from face to face, learning enriched by technology, blended learning, mainly online to e-learning (including moocs), when e-learning becomes a real alternative to traditional classroom. Our investigation and practice shows that it depends on the complexity of the learning objectives and learning outcomes to be achieved, the kind of tutoring we are able to offer and the learners' technology background and experience, among other elements.

As online teachers' skills are very different from those required from a "traditional" teacher, this article also reports the results of the implementation of an educational experience and mentoring of an online course, with more than 100 trainees. The size of the "class" demanded suitable solutions, namely the creation of a dynamic mentoring structure, supported by a team of four tutors. The performance of this team takes place in various dimensions including educational, management, technical and social.

This article comes to an end by presenting a set of recommendations obtained by the application of the pedagogic planning suggested in the implementation of an online course.

keywords: online learning strategies, cognitive objectives, web tools, pedagogical planner.