TESLER'S LAW AND LEARNING COMPLEXITY

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Tesler's Law and Learning

Tesler's Law is an idea that complexity is conserved in a given situation. For example, an easy to use application (simple user experience) means that the complexity is transferred to the underlying code and network infrastructure. References: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_conservation_of_complexity
Complexity Law

Tesler's Law has implications to learning design. For example:

1. An easy to navigate, highly relevant, effective online learning experience is offset by (shifted toward) the complexity of the needs assessment, learning design, and development.
2. When content is Complex, the learning activity may be relatively simple (given a recent white paper, identify one process improvement to increase the quality of our product), if the entry skills of learners are sophisticated (highly qualified, experienced, fluent in complex technical terms).
3. Learning simulators epitomize Tesler's Law. Complex simulation devices and/programming make possible an efficient learning experience (I.e. select the wheel type with the lowest drag using an automotive engineering design simulation program). Flight simulators are another example. The complexity of the flight simulator makes possible a low risk, efficient learning solution. It was complex to design and build, but this is offset by a learning experience with high fidelity to the target learning outcomes (ability to fly a specific aircraft).
4. There are development process implications. There is a strong correlation between level of effort and complexity. More effort assessing requirements can yield more efficiency in the design and build phases of a project.
5. Likewise, more effort and complexity during the design phase, can yield efficiencies post-rollout, in the learning delivery phase. For example, designing an engaging activity that requires custom components can be effective for one single training session; however, more effort applied in the design phase, that considers the long term cost of having to customize activity materials, can yield a scalable learning solution (e.g. find a vendor to produce the custom materials, Re-design the learning activity using off the shelf components, examine the contribution of the activity to the learning outcome).

My take: Consider where the complexity lies in your learning development projects and learning solutions. Someone or some component is compensating for the easy parts!

Think Broadly. Learn Deeply.

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