

Glossary

Avatar – a digital representation of a user in a virtual world

Behaviorism - a theory of animal and human learning that only focuses on objectively observable behaviors and discounts mental activities. Behavior theorists define learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behavior.

Cognitive psychology - the branch of psychology that studies mental processes including how people think, perceive, remember, and learn. As part of the larger field of cognitive science, this branch of psychology is related to other disciplines including neuroscience, philosophy, and linguistics.

Constructivism – a philosophical framework or theory of learning which argues that humans construct meaning from current knowledge structures; values developmentally-appropriate facilitator-supported learning that is initiated and directed by the learner

Criterion-Referenced Measurement – An approach to testing in which an individual’s score on a test is interpreted by comparing it to a pre-specified standard of performance

Delivery System – Term used to describe the means by which instruction will be provided to learners. Includes instructor-led instruction, distance education, computer based instruction, and self-instructional materials.

Micro – used in reference to small units such as lessons or modules; in an organization this would refer to an individual or department

Macro – used in reference to large units such as curriculums; in an organization this would refer to a division or whole organization

Needs Assessment - A systematic study that incorporates data and opinions from varied sources in order to create, install, and evaluate educational products and services.

Participative theory – manager’s who follow this theory seek to involve other people in the decision-making process, possibly subordinates, peers, supervisors, etc.

Performance Analysis - A process by which you partner with clients to identify and respond to problems and opportunities, and to study individuals and the organization to determine an appropriate cross-functional solution system.

Performance Gap - A discrepancy (gap) is a difference between what is and what should be.

Task Analysis - A step-by-step description of what a competent person does when performing a relatively sequential task, whether the steps of that task are mainly cognitive (mental) or psychomotor (physical). It is a way of making competent performance visible, much as a blueprint provides a way to make the components of a finished product visible.