NASPE Innovative State Human Resource Management Program Nomination – 2015

Louisiana State Civil Service –
Web-based Training: Preventing Sexual Harassment

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Program Summary

The Preventing Sexual Harassment course, which is a web-based training, was developed for the State of Louisiana with over 65,000 employees dispersed throughout a state. These employees work in a variety of settings and conditions, and adhere to a variety of shifts and work hours.

Training in preventing sexual harassment for all Louisiana's employees was not only considered desirable, but became legislatively mandated beginning in 2013. Louisiana State Civil Service had to determine the best method for meeting this legislative requirement for a large number of diverse and dispersed employees. After careful consideration, SCS decided to have their Training and Workforce Development Division design a web-based training that could be hosted and tracked on the Learning Management System module of the organization's existing enterprise software.

The course was customized to provide users with relevant practice of concepts and techniques presented in the training through situational practice. The context of the various practice situations was designed to mirror the varied occupations found throughout the state to enhance practicability for the learners.

SCS has planned for a variety of metrics with which to track course impact on organizational goals. These metrics include post-testing, and behavioral metrics such as sexual harassment-related grievances and EEOC charges. SCS believes the training will have the effect of reducing the number of sexual harassment complaints received and increasing the level of workplace respect throughout the organization.

1. **Please provide a brief description of this program.**
    State Civil Service was faced with new legislative requirements requiring sexual harassment training

for more than 65,000 employees who were geographically dispersed across the state and who worked a

variety of competing and conflicting schedules. In order to best deploy the organization's talents and

resources, and to most efficiently and effectively meet the organization's need for training, a web-based

training, Preventing Sexual Harassment, was designed, developed and implemented. While the SCS

Training and Workforce Development (TWD) division took the lead on the design, a cross-organizational

collaborative approach was used to ensure the training product was accurate, complete and

instructionally engaging.

2. **How long has this program been operational?**
    The program has been operational since the fall of 2012. Since its release, the web-based training

program has had over 65,000 views within the state of Louisiana. The course's clarity, popularity, and

ease of use, however, have led to an expanded audience. Since 2013, the course has been used with

parochial and municipal organizations throughout Louisiana, raising its exposure to well over 100,000

public servants.

3. **Why was this program created? What problems or issues does it address?**
    The program developed was a web-based training called Preventing Sexual Harassment. The course

was developed for the state of Louisiana, which now employs over 40,000 employees dispersed

throughout the state. These employees work in a variety of settings and conditions, and adhere to a

variety of shifts and work hours.

    Training in sexual harassment for all the organization's employees was not only considered desirable,

but became legislatively mandated beginning in 2013. State Civil Service had to determine the best

method for meeting this legislative requirement for a large number of diverse and dispersed employees.

After careful consideration, SCS decided to have the TWD Division design a web-based training that could

be hosted and tracked on the LMS module of the organization's existing enterprise software.

    In addition, the SCS's mission includes helping the organizational departments to retain and develop

an effective workforce. The Preventing Sexual Harassment training is aligned with this mission. It encourages both staff and management to become more aware of sexually harassing behaviors as well as organizational policy and federal statutes that assist the employee when facing or observing sexual harassment.

The course was customized to provide users with relevant practice of concepts and techniques presented in the training through situational practice. The context of the various practice situations was designed to mirror the varied occupations found throughout the organization to enhance practicability for the learners.

4. **Why is this program a new and creative method?**
State Civil Service considered several approaches before deciding to design a web-based training solution in-house. These solutions included both live, instructor-led training options and web-based training options. Instructor-led training options included delivering live training through the training division, delivering live training through a train-the-trainer approach, and delivering live training through a vendor. Web-based training initiatives included purchasing an off-the-shelf sexual harassment training and hosting it on the organization's LMS, or developing a web-based training option in-house.

Before alternatives were considered individually, the organization considered a range of criteria upon which to judge each alternative. These criteria included course development time, cost of development, cost of deployment, ease of deployment, compliance tracking, and customization. Each alternative was compared to the success criteria.

Instructor-led options were all rejected based on the criteria listed. SCS does not have the staffing resources for the training division to complete annual sexual harassment training.

Web-based training had several advantages, including cost, ease of delivery and deployment, and, as the organization already owned and operated an LMS, ease of compliance tracking. The organization needed to decide whether to develop the web-based training in-house or purchase an off-the-shelf product.

While an off-the-shelf product would have the shortest development time, there would be few opportunities to customize the product to the organization's employees. Cost was also calculated to be fairly extensive.

The organization's training division already had three instructional designers on staff with experience developing web-based training using rapid e-learning tools. The organization decided to use their in-house resources including tools already purchased and designers already hired to produce a web-based training program for sexual harassment.

In addition to meeting the instructional interests of the organization, the training also supports the organization's unique scheduling needs. Having a course hosted on the organization-wide LMS system allows users 24-hour a day, 7-days a week access to the course. This type of hosting accommodates the organization's employee base, who work multiple shifts and schedules..

5. **What was the program's startup costs?**
The creation of the web-based training for Preventing Sexual Harassment was done completely in-house, therefore, there were no costs associated with the training.

6. **What are the programs operational costs?**
The training solution supports SCS's fiscal needs by providing an effective training solution at minimum cost to the state. The course is owned by the SCS, eliminating the need for licenses and license renewal. It can be updated, changed, or customized at any time.

7. **How is this program funded?**
The TWD Division of SCS is funded by fees assessed by each state agency employing classified employees, a percentage based on the amount of their classified salary budgets.

8. **Did this program originate in your state?**
Most states have some form of sexual harassment training. Project team members researched other public and private entities to formulate ideas and plans as to what would work best for the State of Louisiana.

9. **Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If yes, how does this program differ?**
The course references and links out to particular legislation and other organizational resources to

provide the user an integrated resource that can be used both as a training tool and as a reference. The course was designed with the end-user as well as the organization in mind, and presented learning concepts with significant contextual variation, providing plenty of realistic practice opportunities for learners.

10. How do you measure the success of this program?

SCS has planned for a variety of metrics with which to track course impact on organizational goals. These metrics include post-testing, and behavioral metrics such as sexual harassment-related grievances and EEOC charges. We expect the training to have a significant impact on the number of sexual harassment-related grievances and EEOC charges filed against the organization as well as for the training to enhance feelings of respect and tolerance in the workplace. The metrics chosen to measure course effectiveness are readily available and able to be causally linked to the training intervention.

In addition to training approximately 65,000 employees using the web-based training, SCS has also supplied the course discs to over 100 parochial and municipal agencies. These smaller agencies requested the course to educate their employees on preventing sexual harassment. Since its inception, our course has been used to educate well over 100,000 public servants throughout the state of Louisiana.

11. How has the program grown or changed since its inception?

The training program was updated for 2015, to reflect the need for variety of material as well as to take advantage of technological advancements. The result is a course which improves the learner's experience through embedded animation, and advanced graphics and image rendering.