

1 **EDCI 531**

2 **Ginger Ciuperca**

3 **Case Study 3: Constructivism**

4 *Description*

5           The American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI) is a global hospitality  
6 company that provides quality education, training and professional certification for the  
7 hospitality industry (Upside American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute Case Study).

8           Upper Learning was commissioned to create a new interactive eLearning course for  
9 AHLEIs'. Upper Learning will pull from the existing content for its Front Office Operations  
10 Management role. AHLEI has concerns because the existing content is not interactive because it  
11 is "linear and completely text based, supported by case studies with subjective questions"  
12 (Upside American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute Case Study). AHLEI needs more  
13 engaging and complex scenarios in the online content. They wanted the target audience to learn  
14 independently from multiple perspectives and apply real-life scenarios. The target audience is for  
15 hospitality industry employees who will be taking on the role of Front Office Manager.

16           There were several challenges encountered when developing the real-life course. First,  
17 the content was primarily factual. Since audio is used more for concepts being explained, factual  
18 content would have to be read or displayed linearly. To illustrate the factual content, scenarios  
19 would need to be created as illustrations and/or text. AHLEI expressed that the total content  
20 needs to be delivered within 10 modules. They also did not want the training content to exceed a  
21 total time of 10 hours to complete.

22 *Reflective Questions*

23           1. Will the training be specific to the Front Office Manager role or will it be generic?

- 24 2. How will the end-user build on their current skill set?
- 25 3. Will the training reflect a real-world environment, and will it challenge the learner?
- 26 4. Would various creative content expressions or presentations be encouraged?

27 *Potential Solutions*

28 Based on constructivism learning theory, knowledge is actively constructed by  
29 interactions between experiences and assimilation. Therefore, a learner's knowledge is a  
30 combination of one's prior experiences, their personal interpretation and negotiating its meaning.

31 Designing from a constructivist approach, the training was built on knowledge constructed  
32 from experience and personal interpretations of the Front Office Manager role. It was a dynamic  
33 process in which the learner created meaning on the basis of experience. The training included  
34 open-ended questions to explore various scenarios. Learners were allowed to use conceptual  
35 growth and share multiple perspectives through collaborative learning in an online forum.

36 The goal was to create an environment that mimicked the actual atmosphere that learners  
37 would encounter. This was done by role-playing and using scenarios that reflect the role and its  
38 duties. This created a better atmosphere for engagement and gave the learners a context to the  
39 training. Using this principle, Upside Learning developed a solution that incorporated some  
40 creativity and real-life activities to address the challenge of factual and linear content.

41 The scenario-based course is a fabricated hotel that is explored by the learner. There were 10  
42 modules for the whole lesson. Depending on the topic in the module, relevant areas of the hotel  
43 could be accessed. In each area, content and activity incorporated the hotel staff dealing with  
44 different situations involving guests or demonstrating the use of tools and documents required  
45 for role. In some case, inline questions were built in as a knowledge check to measure learner  
46 comprehension.

47 The course was designed to reflect real-life scenarios graphically and environmentally. The  
48 real-life scenarios included genuine conversations to ensure the course was engaging and  
49 realistic. The “free exploration approach” eliminated the boredom from a linear course.  
50 Infographic–style visuals and animations for concepts “ensured that the learner took away a  
51 complete picture of what had been taught” (Upside American Hotel & Lodging Educational  
52 Institute Case Study). As needed, plain text was displayed as prompts for the learner to read to  
53 access next level.

54 The new content was designed from a constructivist approach. This approach required the  
55 designer to create training that is more facilitative than prescriptive (Upside American Hotel &  
56 Lodging Educational Institute Case Study). With this approach, knowledge will be constructed  
57 through active learning and the interpretation is determined by the learner. The assessments were  
58 subjective because they did not depend on specific criteria or answers. Rather, it depended on the  
59 active progression and exploration of the learner.

60 The constructivist approach to instructional design involves topic-focused knowledge  
61 construction and real-life based learning environments. The above mentioned constructivist  
62 learning principles and the new course design encourages learners not to just memorize the  
63 information but to internalize the knowledge so it can be used later.

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#### 65 References

66 Driscoll, M. P. (2005). Psychology of learning for instruction (3 ed). Boston, MA: Pearson.  
67 Upside American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute Case Study. Retrieved from  
68 <http://www.upsidelearning.com/pdfs/casestudy-scenario-based-course-self-paced.pdf>