

## LOCK IT IN EDDIE

BY KEVIN LOHAN

### 1. There are four kinds of multiple-choice questions:

- a) Good ones
- b) Bad ones
- c) All of the above
- d) None of the above

I've seen many assessment quizzes over the years. At first they were part of standard, vanilla classroom training course. Later I began to see them as part of eLearning courses but the same problems that inhabited the quizzes in traditional learning seem to remain in the online version.

### 2. Online assessment quizzes when compared to traditional written tests seem to be:

- a) Better
- b) Worse
- c) About the same
- d) Nonsense answer

It seems that the majority of quiz questions tend to favour multiple-choice style and quiz designers seem to me to be making the same design errors repeatedly and I don't understand why.

Perhaps it is that the author doesn't have instructional design experience but rather something else like software or graphics.

Too often the questions are guessable whether or not you have completed the training. The answer options offer too little cognitive challenge and typically one or more of them is so obviously NOT a possible answer that it immediately reduces the number of choices.

### 3. Strangely, even when it seems clear that the author could not think of more than a couple of plausible responses, they continue to create a question with how many possible responses?

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3
- d) 4

OK. I'm trying to be funny but this is no laughing matter. Some of the quizzes I have seen lead to an important qualification or authority to perform in roles that have serious consequences and the test is just plain (how can I put this politely) stupid.

I'm going to paraphrase here to protect the guilty but see how you go on these questions I have seen.

### 4. Which of these is a 'permit'?

- a) A work permit
- b) A job card
- c) A ready-for-use permit
- d) A stand-by order

I mean to say, really? There are two problems with this question. The first is more obvious than the second. First, it's just too obvious. I can't even begin to convince you. If you can't guess the correct response/s then I just give up on human potential. The second problem is that even if the question were better constructed it does not assess what it should be assessing. In the context of the particular safety course and the skills being learned, knowing this little fact adds nothing to the learner's real competence or safety.

How about this one...

### 5. Bill is always putting his hand on Mary's shoulder when discussing work. It makes Mary uncomfortable. Is this harassment?

- a) No. Bill is just being friendly.
- b) No. Bill does this to everyone.
- c) Yes, it makes Mary uncomfortable and is unwanted.
- d) No. Bill is unsteady on his feet and needs the support.

I really had to stretch to make that one up but I hope you get my drift. In the real quiz the correct answer was so obviously the correct one that I didn't even need to read the question to guess the correct answer.

I once attempted an assessment for a training course for people enacting legislation and who had the authority afterwards to issue fines. I attended none of it and have no prior experience.

I passed the course.

Answers:

- 1: c
- 2: b
- 3: d
- 4: a and c
- 5: c

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