

COOL TOOL



Canva: Design for Everyone

Quality graphic design is something every professional who designs learning materials is after—but not many of us are graphic designers. Lately there's been a lot of buzz in the industry about democratizing graphic design with techniques and tools that are accessible to everyone.

Canva is an example of a new tool that allows anyone to create beautiful designs for web or print. Still in its beta phase, the cloud-based program is free to use—to an extent. Users can search a library of more than 1 million graphics, shapes,

grids, photos, and fonts (or upload their own elements); many are free, while “premium” images are just \$1 each.

Collaboration is easy: Teams can simply log in to the program to share and edit their designs. Canva also works with traditional desktop design software. Its pay-on-publication approach ensures users gain complete satisfaction with their product before buying it.

Recently onboard Canva's team is Guy Kawasaki, Apple's former chief evangelist and adviser to Google. Canva recently announced that he has stepped

forward to help build the brand internationally. Kawasaki, who has pronounced himself “enchanted by the company's vision and desire to change the world,” will lend his expertise to its content strategy and business development activities.

The possibilities Canva presents for training professionals are endless: Use it to design flyers (promote your learning events), presentations (grab stakeholder attention), and blog graphics (engage learners through great visuals). Learn more at www.canva.com.

TIPS + TRICKS

Three Ways to Strengthen Work Relationships

Managers can help foster positive relationships and broaden capacity in their teams through communication, genuine understanding, and cooperation, authors Kim Rowe and Patrick Howell write in “The Positive Workplace,” the June 2014 *Infoline*.

Rowe and Howell offer several tips on how both managers and others can build greater rapport in the workplace, which lowers stress levels, decreases work absences, and increases job satisfaction and engagement.

Use active constructive responses. Active constructive responses are verbal and nonverbal responses that we give to others when they have shared positive news that is important to them. Such responses could mean asking questions that encourage the sharer to provide more details, or verbal or nonverbal expressions that show genuine interest in what the sharer is relating.

Use language that primes others for success. “Priming through language involves the use of sensory-specific words that help others share your vision of success,” write Rowe and Howell. This should not be mistaken for misleading statements or false optimism, however.

Smile. It sounds rather simplistic, but smiles really are contagious. You can generate smiles by smiling yourself, beginning a meeting by inviting someone to share a piece of good news, or asking your employees to commit to performing at least one random act of kindness aimed at a colleague each day for a workweek.

These tips were adapted from the June 2014 *Infoline*, “The Positive Workplace.” For more information, go online to www.astd.org/Infoline.

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