

Interactive Learning Design

Using An Interactive Learning Software to
Increase Engagement In eLearning Courses

Contents

Introduction	01
Interactive Learning Design: The Need and Prerequisites	03
Essential Elements of Interactive Learning Design	05
A Checklist of What You Need in an Interactive Learning Software	09
Best Practices to Drive Engagement Using Templates from an Interactive Learning Software	16
Creating Interactive Learning Modules With Raptivity	19
Raptivity Interaction Templates	21
Conclusion	29

Introduction

Call it the digital age's side effects or sheer irony, as much as the modern-day learners want to engage with a course, they are unable to pull it off. Constantly distracted by so many other things around, they cannot figure out what needs the first attention – that Snapchat message, the Insta post, or the learning module. So what can you do to tackle this challenge? Can you make some changes to make to your eLearning modules to make them appealing and engaging? Let me try and explain this with a fabulous quote from Benjamin Franklin.

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."

No other quote emphasizes the importance of interactivity in eLearning better. Involving learners is the key to engaging them and that can only be achieved by making your course interactive. Interactivity also brings in a plethora of other benefits, like:

- ▶ It bridges the instructor-learner gap and helps in engaging learners.
- ▶ It creates a meaningful interchange between the learner and the content, thus enabling active learning.
- ▶ It motivates learners towards critical thinking and problem-solving.
- ▶ It goes a long way in helping learners retain and apply knowledge after the course.

This eBook focuses on the practical aspects of interactive learning design. It will touch upon the key elements of interactivity and how they can be included in your eLearning modules. It will also talk about how this humongous task can be eased by using an interactive learning software.

A young woman with brown hair and glasses on her head is smiling while looking at a laptop screen. She is wearing a white top. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a white shelf holding a plant and books.

Interactive Learning Design: The Need and Prerequisites

Interactive Learning Design: The Need and Prerequisites

Why do you want your learners to interact with the content?

Interactivity in online learning is based on the premise that the learner interacts with the content to progress in the course and achieve the desired objectives. At the base of it, there could be one or more reasons why you want them to interact.

- ▶ You want them to move from one piece of information to another.
- ▶ You want them to collect some information and make decisions.
- ▶ You want them to have a hands-on experience with a process or activity.
- ▶ You want to give them an opportunity to explore.



Essential Elements of Interactive Learning Design

Essential Elements of Interactive Learning Design

► Games

Games add an element of fun to the whole learning process. They let learners explore, try, fail, try again, and learn. Players seek risks, challenges, rewards, and recognition when they play a game. Points, badges, levels, and leader-boards are some common game mechanics that can be deployed to fulfil these 'human motivations'.

► Quizzes and Assessments

While quizzes and assessments are often used interchangeably, there is a slight difference in terms of their layout and impact. A quiz is generally shorter and more informal than an assessment and, often, doesn't have a huge impact on learners' grades. An assessment, on the other hand, is a formal and standard evaluation technique to determine learners' grades. Both of these elements can be used for testing learner knowledge, measuring their performance, and reinforcing feedback.

► Scenarios

Scenarios recreate a real-life situation that a learner might face and expect the learner to make their own decisions and progress through it. They aim to promote in-depth learning and make learners aware of the various possibilities they will come across and need to respond to, in a given situation. Learners become aware of and sensitive to the complexities in each path they choose.

▶ **Simulations**

Simulations promote the concept of learning by doing. They can emulate real-work applications or real-life processes so that learners can practice in a risk-free environment. Simulations come in handy when you need to walk your learner through a critical concept, process, or procedure.

▶ **Videos**

If a picture speaks a thousand words, a video definitely speaks a million. In this era of Netflix and YouTube, it is indeed a smart idea to harness the power of videos in your learning too. Interactive videos take this experience a notch higher as they transform the traditional video experience from a monologue into a dialogue.

Incorporating Interactive Learning Elements in Your Course

Based on your reason(s) for learners to interact with the content and your ultimate learning objectives, you can shortlist the interactive elements that you would need in your course. And from there on, begins the process of creating these elements. You could build these using either the traditional skill-based approach where you build each element from scratch or by using the rapid interactivity building approach which makes use of an interactive learning software.

This eBook focuses on building interactive elements rapidly using interactive learning software. Such software generally offers ready-to-use interactive learning templates that map to various interactive learning elements. It eases the interactivity creation process by making it as simple as choosing the preferred interaction template and customizing it with your own content. An interactive learning software's output can be used as-is or in conjunction with other authoring tools for best results. The next section details out a checklist of the must-have features you need to look for when selecting an interactive learning software.



A Checklist of What You Need in an Interactive Learning Software

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When tasked with selecting an interactive learning software, look for the following:

1. Interaction Variety

When choosing interactive learning software, the variety of interactions it offers should undeniably be the first evaluation criteria. Choose software that offers abundant templates across a wide range of categories like games, simulations, quizzes, presentations, and more. Higher the interaction variety, more is the scope for learner engagement.

2. Output Format

It goes without saying that any good interactive learning software should be able to produce output in the widely acceptable HTML5 format. This standard output format ensures that the output plays in any browser and is easily updatable.

3. User Interface

Intuitive and user-friendly product interface is the key to the effective use of interactive learning software or any software for that matter. The software controls should be powerful yet easy to use. A significant factor of user interface evaluation is the screen editor. 'What You See is What You Get' (WYSIWYG) editors are generally the smoothest to operate.

5. Language Support

Interactive learning software that supports multiple languages should be your choice if you intend to develop online training for a global audience. Additionally, you might also want to check if the software offers multi-language support as a part of its basic plan or as an add-on.

6. Mobile-Friendly Output

An effective interactive learning software will offer mobile-friendly output which is not necessarily responsive. Software options that offer responsive output are generally limited in terms of the template variety. The decision to choose responsive over a variety or vice-versa should be driven by your most-pressing requirement(s).

7. Integration Support

Any good interactive learning software will integrate seamlessly with third-party authoring tools, presentation tools, and learning management systems. This ensures its seamless use within any institution's digital learning ecosystem to derive optimum results.

8. Pricing

As a precautionary step, when you start evaluating any software, ensure that its pricing plans suit your budget. It is also recommended to explore and choose the right pricing model based on your requirements. While some vendors may offer perpetual licenses, others offer an annual subscription, and there are some that offer both. Your decision should take into consideration all the above factors.

Eventually, create a list of the interactive learning software options you are evaluating and see how they compare on the above points. Take a free trial of each of the tools for hands-on experience and unbiased judgment. The interaction building tool comparison checklist ahead compares some of the most popular tools available in the market for their interactivity building features, and can come in handy when you make your selection.

Interaction Building Tools Comparison Sheet



	Raptivity	eLearning Brothers	Articulate Engage ¹³	Articulate Storyline 2	Adobe Captivate
Tool type	Interaction builder	Interaction builder	Interaction builder	Authoring	Authoring
Variety of Interactions and Questions					
No. of interaction templates <small>(excluding same interaction template presented differently)</small>	191	44	20	12*	31**
No. of interaction categories	13	5	5	8	7
No. of question templates	17	4	N/A	15	9
Questions and options randomization	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓
Multimedia Support					
Can insert images	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Image editor	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Background image library	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Graphics/smart shapes toolbox	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Can insert audio	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Audio editor	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Audio clip library <small>(music, sound effects)</small>	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Audio/voice recorder	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Can insert video	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗
Video editor	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Can embed videos from YouTube/Vimeo	Partial <small>(With Raptivity Linker)</small>	✗	✓	✓	In only one template
Video recorder	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Can insert flash files	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Can insert hyperlinks	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Screen recorder	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Characters library	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Built-in animation presets	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗

Aa Font and Language Support					
Text font and color customizability	✓	✓	Partial	✓	✓
Foreign fonts/characters support	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Spell check	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗
Multi-language support including 'Right to Left' languages	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
🔗 Publishing and Integration Support					
Publish options:	Flash, HTML5	Flash, HTML5 Partial (All templates can't be published in both)	Flash, HTML5, Word, Articulate Mobile Player	Flash, HTML5, Word, Articulate Mobile Player	Flash, HTML5, Devices (App), Adobe Connect, PDF
Integration of output with authoring tools	Microsoft PowerPoint, Adobe Captivate, Articulate Presenter, Articulate Storyline, Lectora	Microsoft PowerPoint, Adobe Captivate, Articulate Presenter, Articulate Storyline, Lectora	Articulate Presenter, Articulate Storyline	Microsoft PowerPoint	Microsoft PowerPoint, Adobe Presenter
Integration of output with LMS's	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Compliance & tracking support	Section 508, xAPI, SCORM, AICC, JavaScript, Flash Shared Object.	✗	Section 508, xAPI, SCORM, AICC	Section 508, xAPI, SCORM, AICC	Section 508, xAPI, SCORM, AICC
Mobile/tablet support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Responsive design	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
👤 User Experience					
Flexibility to move elements within the template	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Form based interface	✓	✓	✓	Partial (For Quizzing templates only)	✓
Ease of learning and use (for a person completely new to authoring tools/timeline based tools)	Easy	Easy	Easy	Complex	Neutral
Real-time preview as you make changes	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
📁 Others					
Desktop/SaaS	Desktop	SaaS	Desktop	Desktop	Desktop
OS support	Windows, MAC with Parallels Desktop, VMware Fusion	Windows, MAC	Windows, MAC with Parallels Desktop, VMware Fusion, or Apple Boot Camp	Windows, MAC with Parallels Desktop, VMware Fusion, or Apple Boot Camp	Windows, MAC
Unicode support	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓



Help and Support Availability

Help document for interaction customization	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Tool training	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Tech-support:					
Email	Free	Free	Paid	Paid	✗
Phone	Paid	✗	Paid	Paid	Paid
Community	Free	✗	Free	Free	Free
Live Chat & Conference	Paid	✗	Paid	Paid	Paid

Note: Adobe Captivate 9 and Articulate Storyline 2 have been evaluated purely for the interaction templates supported by these tools and not for their course authoring capabilities. Hence some features which are applicable to them as authoring tools may be shown as not applicable in this sheet.

*Additional free Storyline interaction templates can be downloaded from E-Learning Heroes Community website.

**Additional games, interactions and scenario templates can be downloaded from eLearning Brothers Assets Library through 'Assets' tab in Captivate 9.





Best Practices to Drive Engagement Using Templates from an Interactive Learning Software

Best Practices to Drive Engagement Using Templates from an Interactive Learning Software

Having an interactive learning software with abundant templates is really beneficial but like any good thing, it can fail at its job if not used cautiously. There are some challenges that might pop up when using interactive learning templates. Here are some best practices that you can follow to keep any commonly-faced challenges at bay.

1. Use The Right Amount Of Interactivity

Having access to a huge library of interactive templates does give you the power to use them infinitely but remember; there is a fine line between engaging learners interactively and frustrating them by having them pass through endless challenges. Strike the right balance and don't overdo it. Inserting an interaction every 3-5 minutes is probably a good benchmark to follow. This way, you don't overwhelm your learners, and you give them some breathing time for content absorption.

2. Include A Good Mix Of Interactions

No learner would enjoy a course that has games one after the other or just keeps playing a video throughout. To avoid monotony setting in, learners need to experience a good variety of interactions. Use the power of interactive learning template libraries to the fullest at such times and be open to building a course using a host of formats like interactive presentations, scenarios, quizzes, games, videos, and more.

3. Select Interactions Based On the Ultimate Learning Objectives

Different kinds of eLearning interactions serve different purposes. When incorporating them into your course, first analyze what type of knowledge you are looking to impart; is it factual or procedural? If all you need them to do is to remember some terms or symbols by the end of the course, then a straightforward memorize and recall interaction can solve the purpose. But if it is a procedure or process you need them to learn, then a scenario-based approach might be the best to follow. Another important consideration is to analyze whether learning needs to be active or passive. Do you need your learners to learn some facts and figures as part of a compliance routine, or do you want them to practice a real-life skill? For the former, you won't need any complex interactions. Most level 1 interactions would be good enough. But if it is a skill that requires learners to practice and learn, then you require advanced interactions that let them do so.

4. Reuse Templates

Make your templates easily re-usable. Prep and save them beforehand so that you don't spend your efforts branding them every single time. Leverage basic template reuse provisions like setting global properties like colors, fonts, etc. This way, you would just need to change the content at the onset of a new module, and you would be good to go.

5. Use Template Prep Sheets

Create prep sheets for frequently used templates. These sheets basically simplify the content organization process and outline multiple parameters available in specific interaction templates, along with content placeholders. They are specifically useful if you work in a team since they enable team members to visualize the interaction outline and share course content accordingly.

A photograph of three people—two men and one woman—collaborating in a workshop. They are gathered around a wooden table, looking at a laptop screen. The man in the foreground is smiling broadly. The woman on the right is also smiling. The man in the background is leaning over, looking at the screen. On the table, there are headphones in a white case, a smartphone, and a pair of blue glasses. The background is a wall of vertical wooden planks.

Creating Interactive Learning Modules With Raptivity

Creating Interactive Learning Modules With Raptivity

Raptivity is an interactive learning software that lets you bring your digital learning to life in minutes. It is backed by 190+ ready-to-use eLearning interactions spanning across diverse categories like games, exercises, interactive diagrams, simulations, 3D objects, videos, and more. Here are some highlights that make Raptivity a 'must-have' in your eLearning toolkit.

► Lets You Focus On Content

Not all course creators have a dedicated graphic designer within their reach; hence they have to depend on external help. But Raptivity eases this challenge for you. No or minimal help from a graphic designer is required to build content in Raptivity. This helps you focus on the course content rather than figuring out ways to make it look good.

► Integrates With Third-Party Tools

Raptivity interactions can be used as stand-alone learning objects or its output can be easily embedded into your favorite authoring or presentation tools like PowerPoint, Storyline, Lectora, Claro, Captivate, and many more.

► Allows Easy Tracking

Tracking with Raptivity is almost effortless. All you need to do is publish the interaction with the desired tracking option, such as xAPI, SCORM, AICC, or JavaScript.

► Offers Compliance Support

Certain Raptivity interaction models are 508 and W3C compliant. They can be customized to suit the learning requirements of visually challenged learners and those with hearing impairments.

Raptivity allows authors to add keyboard shortcut keys to access the learning objects in the interactivity and provide with accessibility text that can be read by a narrator. All Raptivity interaction models are provided with the TAB Order functionality, enabling learners to access learning objects by pressing the TAB key on the keyboard. Raptivity provides the facility to change the colors of all the screen elements including the buttons to suit the requirements of disabled learners. Color palettes enable authors to change the default colors of the elements.

► Features 'Media Toolbox'

Raptivity offers a powerful feature called media toolbox that lets you include additional media elements such as text, image, video, and buttons on top of interaction templates. So you don't have to restrict yourself to the default template elements and can add any additional media that is best for your learners.

► Comes with Raptivity Linker

In situations when you don't want to insert your Raptivity interactions in other tools and just need to present them smoothly one after the other, you can use Raptivity Linker. Raptivity Linker allows you to string any number of Raptivity interactions together to form micro-learning experiences. Raptivity Linker is a free add-on to Raptivity and does not require any kind of programming knowledge to be able to use it.

Raptivity Interaction Templates

This section lists down several template examples from Raptivity which map to some of the most commonly used interactive learning activities.

1. Game Templates

Spin the Wheel

An interactive game that can be used to assign a diverse variety of questions in one assessment



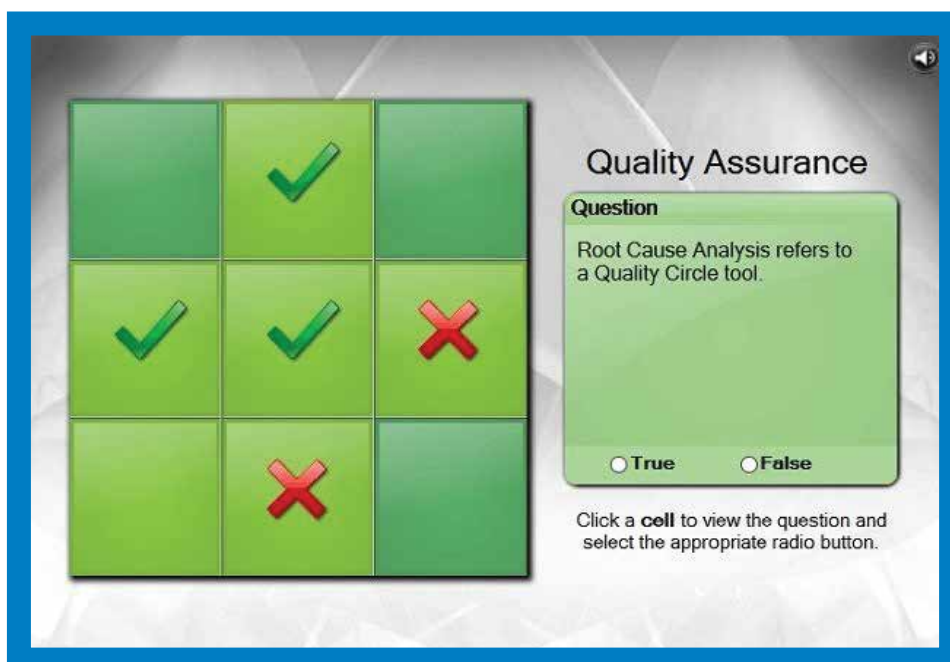
Slot Machine

A game that is based on the theory of positive reinforcement, and can be used to motivate learners.



Tic-Tac-Toe with Questions

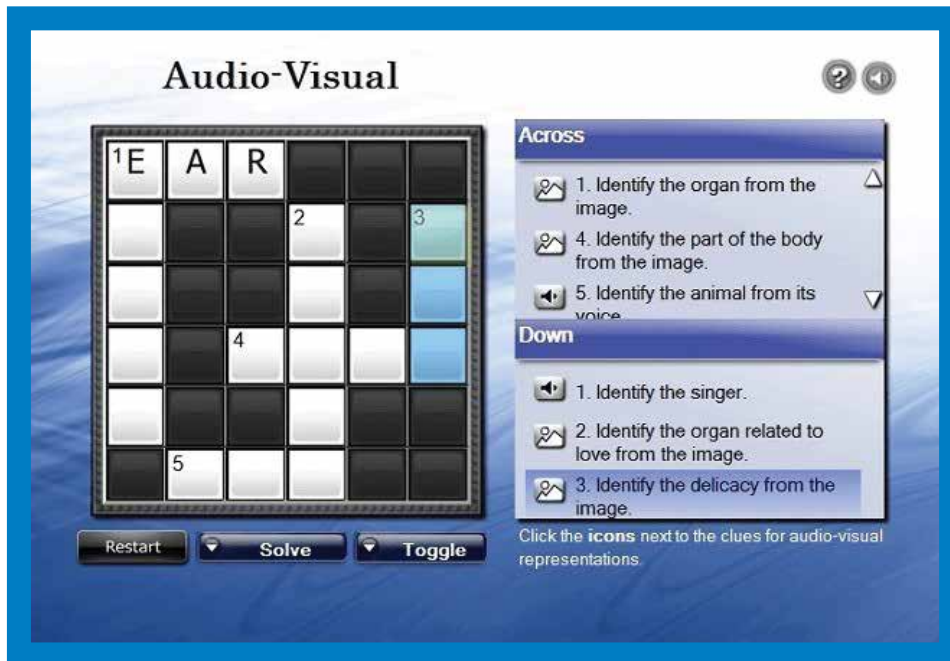
Most learners identify with this game easily, since they have played it all through their childhood. It can be used to reinforce learning concepts effectively.



2. Quiz and Assessment Templates

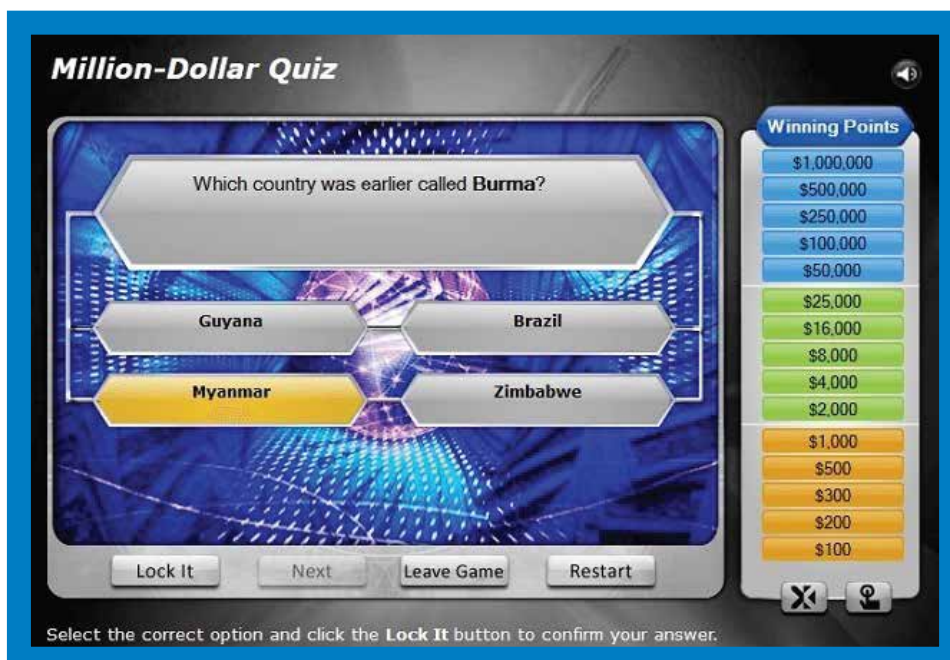
Audio-Visual Crossword

A much-played game; it can be used to help learners recall one correct word specific to the clue with the help of audio or images as clues.



Million Dollar Quiz

Transform conventional multiple-choice questions to an exciting million-dollar game quiz and spice-up your course. Learners test their knowledge in a fun way as they move up levels.



Drag Drop Sort

Build highly engaging exercises using the popular drag-and-drop design. From simple labeling exercises to sorting and even filling in the blanks, this interaction can be used in a variety of ways to build quizzes




Visual Assessment

Present stories or scenarios and then pose an open-book test for your learners with this interaction. It makes use of multimedia elements like a visual introductory screen and audio-visual questions.

Changing and Succeeding Under Any Conditions 09:41:09

Q2. Fred, Louis, and Alice were certainly not aware of it - professional change experts they were not - but by reducing _____ and increasing _____ they had taken the right first steps in potentially saving the colony.
(Fill in the appropriate words from the options given below and click Next.)

Complacency
 Certainty
 Anxiety
 Urgency



Introduction Screen

Restart

Assessment based on the famous fable 'Our Iceberg is Melting' by John Kotter.

3. Scenario and Simulation Templates

Goal-Driven Immersive Learning Situation

A scenario template that can be used to create an interactive tour of a concept, process, or any real-life scenario using hotspots. Learners can choose their own path to move forward and learning objectives can be reinforced with instructive feedback for each learner choice.



Role-Based Individualized Simulation

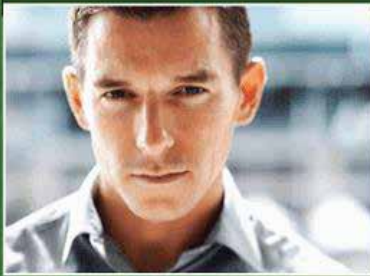
Put learners into situations and get them to react to each one as a problem-solver or a decision-maker. Use instructive feedback to make learners aware of the complexities of each problem.

Problem Solving

Read the scenario carefully. Then answer the questions by clicking the appropriate option. Click **Next** to continue.

Situation: Tim Robinson works as a consultant with Assured Results Corporation. The company has an account with Oris Incorporation to provide them with management solutions. Tim is having a meeting with a manager, Greg Evans, regarding some problems with the implementation at Oris Incorporation.

Put yourself in Tim's shoes. Think you could help Greg solve his problems?



Greg says: "Tim, the managers are recruited internally for each new project. Yet, the managers have not been able to deliver the expected results. What could be the reason behind this?"

- Managers are not efficient
- The team is not proficient in handling projects
- Managers are not treated as superiors by the team

Next

Museum Simulation

An interaction that provides a 3D walk-through of a museum with up to 4 sections that can feature images and videos.



These were only a few interaction templates from Raptivity. You could access more templates and courses below.

[View Raptivity Template Library](#)

[View Sample Courses](#)

[Take a Raptivity Free Trial](#)

Conclusion

As a course creator or instructional designer, it is quite natural for you to be carried away with activities like storyboarding, visual design, interaction design, etc. But remember; content is still the king when it comes to learning.

An interactive course with poor content is worse than a non-interactive course with good content. An interactive learning software can ease this challenge to a large extent by letting you focus on your content. So, know your tool well and use it wisely to boost your eLearning artillery.