The Training Room Podcast Guidelines

Development Guidelines

Introduction

PTT's W-2 short format (under 10 minutes) podcast is titled "The Training Room". All The Training Room podcasts should have this name in the introduction. The introduction should also include who the trainers are and/or who the SME is. For example, you might say, "Welcome to the Training Room, your go-to podcast for everything W-2 training related. I'm Kim and today we're joined by…".

Script

Develop The Training Room script in an interview or discussion format. Scripts should be conversational, even more so than script writing for CBTs. For example, in an interview format with a SME, go beyond strictly question, answer, question, answer. In a discussion format, there should be some back-and-forth discussion between the trainers. Learners only will have audio, so it is important to think about using plain language to reduce processing time.

Length/Timing

All podcasts should be under 10 minutes. If content is longer than 10 minutes, split up the content into two separate podcasts, or reexamine the methodology. This equates to approximately 2-3 pages of content and script.

Development Tips

Develop content for the podcast first, separate from the script. This allows focus specifically on what the podcast will cover before making decisions on how the voice talent will say it. This helps keep reviewers within scope and to see if there is too much content for one podcast.

Keep voice talent in mind when writing the script. Does it sound like the person talking? If not, adjust the words used.

Use plain language. The Training Room podcasts are meant to sound like a conversation between two people. Remember, many learners do other things while listening to podcasts. The words/conversation should be easy to process and follow.

Technical Standards

The Training Room podcasts should start and end with the same intro/outro music. Use Audacity to insert the intro/outro music into your audio file. The intro and outro music is on the ROCK in the Trainer Resources → Podcasts folder.

Podcasts should be one audio file. If they are recorded in separate files, use Audacity to string them together into one file.

Final podcasts are put in Captivate. The Captivate file should consist of the audio and a still image only. A Captivate template is on the ROCK in the Trainer Resources → Podcasts folder. Do not include closed captioning in the Captivate file.

Podcasts must have a transcript. After recording the podcast, listen to the final version, and update the script so that it matches exactly what the voice talent says. Provide the transcript to Mark for him to list it as a second module. Learners are not required to access the transcript to complete the course.

Technical Tips

It's preferable to record the podcast with both voice talents in the same room. If recorded in Zoom, export the audio files.

When recording the podcast with both voice talents in the same room:

- Choose a location with minimal echoing. Usually, a smaller room with carpet and items on the walls helps to dampen echoing. Mark has a tri-fold board lined with carpet which helps if you don't have a small room.

- Use a quality external microphone. For example, a Yeti microphone in omnidirectional mode.

- Record a few test lines first. This gives a feel for the background noise and allows for adjustments, i.e., if one person needs to get closer to the microphone, speak louder, etc. Repeat this process a few times until everything sounds optimal.

Record the entire podcast at once. Do not record sections at a time. This ensures voice talent sounds the same.

Do a few different takes. This provides options during final editing. Try not to take breaks between takes. This ensures everyone stays in the same location relative to the microphone.

Follow all tips and best practices for audio recording, including:

- Pausing and restarting the entire sentence if you mess up,

- Avoiding movement and shuffling while recording,

- Pausing if you need to shuffle papers, and

- Printing script large and having water readily available.

Edit out all imperfections using Audacity.