

## The AgLearn Admin Survey

In February 2008, a survey was assigned to all active AgLearn administrators. The survey was designed to give Team AgLearn a "snapshot" of this population before the implementation of Service Pack 3 (SP3). Team AgLearn wanted to identify a baseline of characteristics about this population regarding training and typical daily activities. We plan to use this baseline to compare against feedback we receive after the implementation of SP3, with its role based admin access, customized online training and blended performance support activities.

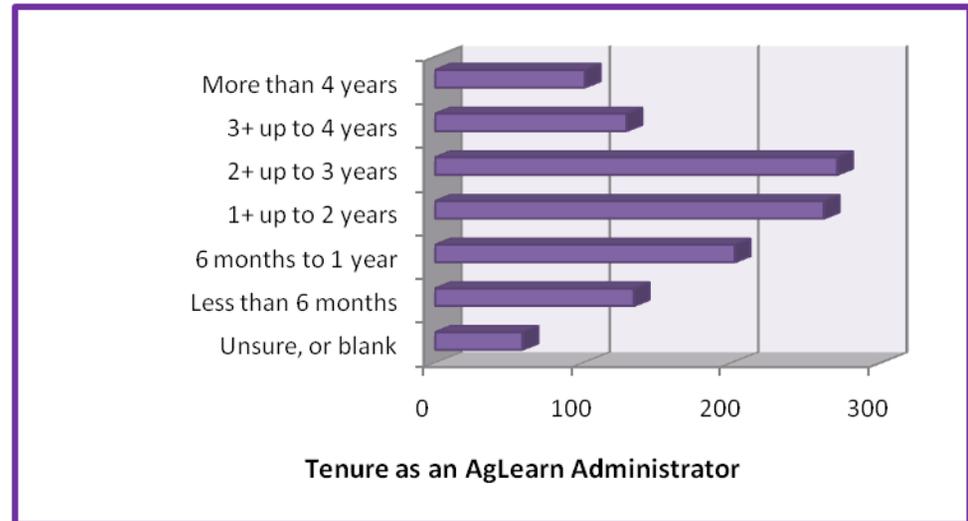
A summary of the results and our approach for future changes follows the questions below:

### Question #1 - How long have you been an AgLearn administrator?

Although more than 760 people have been working as AgLearn admins for more than a year, nearly 400 of the 1150 admins have been doing the job for 1 year or less.

#### In years (or months if less than a year), how long have you been an AgLearn administrator?

Unsure, or blank	59
Less than 6 months	134
6 months to 1 year	202
1+ up to 2 years	262
2+ up to 3 years	271
3+ up to 4 years	129
More than 4 years	101



## Question #2 - How long ago did you receive training?

The startling news here is that 43% of our admins have never received training. Many reported in the comments section that training simply wasn't available, or budget was unavailable to send admins off on travel and per diem to classroom based training. Some admins reported being "mentored" by other seasoned admins, others complained that they were simply handed a book and would have appreciated a more direct "hands on" approach. With classroom training unavailable, many admins reported helpful teleconference training and webcasts that provided opportunities to ask questions of the experts.

### How long ago did you receive training?

I never received training	501
Less than 6 months ago	129
6-12 months ago	215
1-2 years ago	209
More than 2 years ago	111



### Question #3 – Was it difficult for you to receive training?

Similar results and comments were reflected in this question, because 31% of the population found training difficult to come by; a factor we hope to change drastically with the implementation of SP3 and our customized role based training, always available when and where the admin needs it.

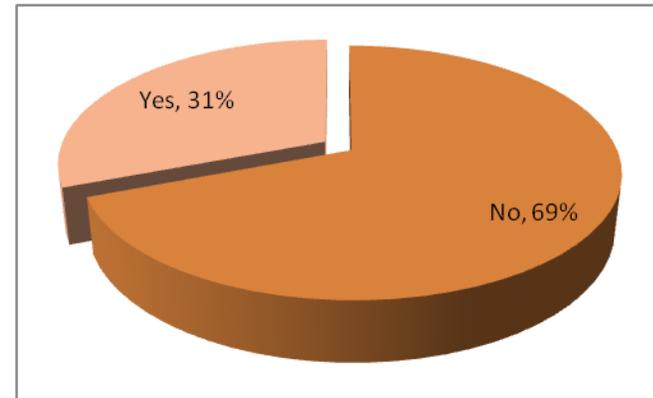
Was it difficult for you to receive training?

No

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Yes

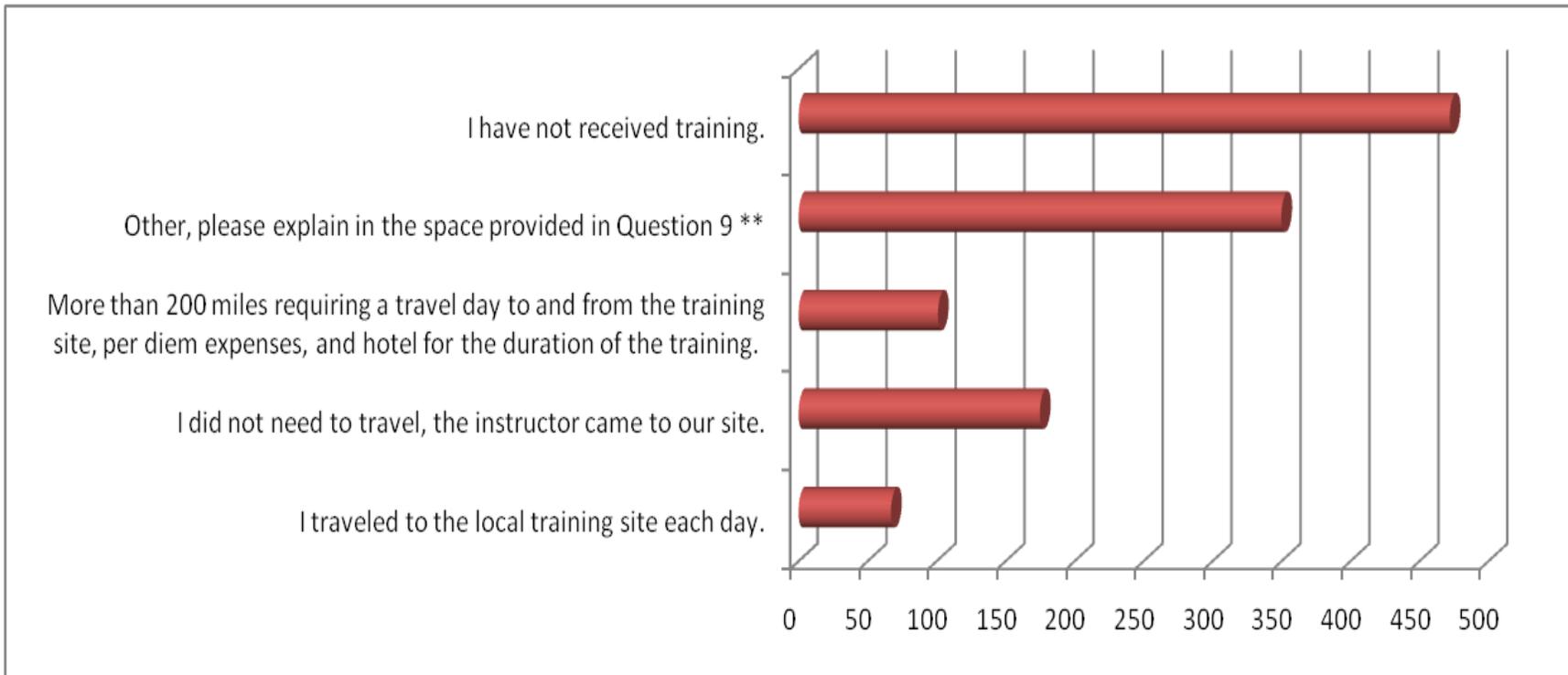
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#### Question #4 – How far did you travel to receive training?

Here we tried to get an idea of the expense of classroom based training. Approximately 100 admins traveled over 200 miles to receive their classroom training. Most of the admin training extended over 4 days and required 4 days hotel plus airline travel and per diem expenses. The cost of the instructor plus the production of printed materials would add an additional expense. A conservative estimate for this training might place it at \$100,000, a more realistic estimate might be closer to \$150,000 to train less than 1 tenth of the admin population. Another 67 admins also received classroom training, incurring only local travel expenses, with 175 admins receiving training on site from an instructor traveling to the workplace.

Surprisingly, 350 respondents identified “other” as their method of receiving training. I attribute this to a “designer’s error” on my part because I didn’t consider that other types of training might be offered to admins who couldn’t receive classroom based training. After reviewing the “Other” comments, I found that many admins reported receiving very helpful “live” training “online”, via web or audio-conferences. These synchronous methods of online training will certainly be a part of our instructional strategy for admin training in the future!



### Question #5 – Select the statement(s) that describes your training

When asked to describe their training, most admins selected more than a single response. Only 110 were completely satisfied, saying that they received exactly the amount of training needed. About 10% said that training was useful, but it would be nice to have quick and easy access to job aids about specific events in AgLearn, such as mandatory training, SF182s, IDPs, etc. Another 139 felt training was useful but wished they could receive some refresher training on certain topics. 57 mentioned that training was so long ago that they had forgotten a lot of what was learned, and 43 felt that they received a lot of training on tasks not regularly performed. Seems like always available customized online training should be very well received!

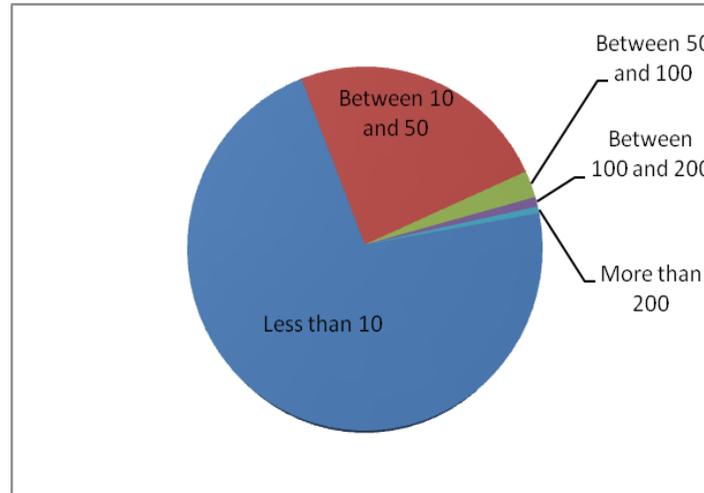


**Question #6 – How many questions, regarding AgLearn, do you personally answer per week?**

Over 70% of the admin population answers fewer than 10 questions per week from their co-workers. Easy access to job aids and FAQs in our “Admin Toolkit” should help admins that perform their role as a collateral duty with many other requests for their time.

**How many questions, regarding AgLearn, do you personally answer per week?**

Less than 10	836
Between 10 and 50	283
Between 50 and 100	28
Between 100 and 200	10
More than 200	7



### Question #7 – Which of these statements best describes you?

This question was designed to establish a comparison to help us identify if customized role based training would more effectively and efficiently prepare admins for their assigned duties. Currently, over half of our admins responded that they often get questions that are beyond their expertise and must forward them to others with more training or experience. Another nearly 30% felt that much of what they did could be done by someone with less training and if they could delegate those tasks to others, they'd have more time to work on more important issues. Instead of trying to train all admins to perform all duties, our customized role based training will help to assign the resolution of problems to those best equipped to answer them.

#### Which of these statements best describes you?

I often get questions that are beyond my expertise and I must forward them to others.

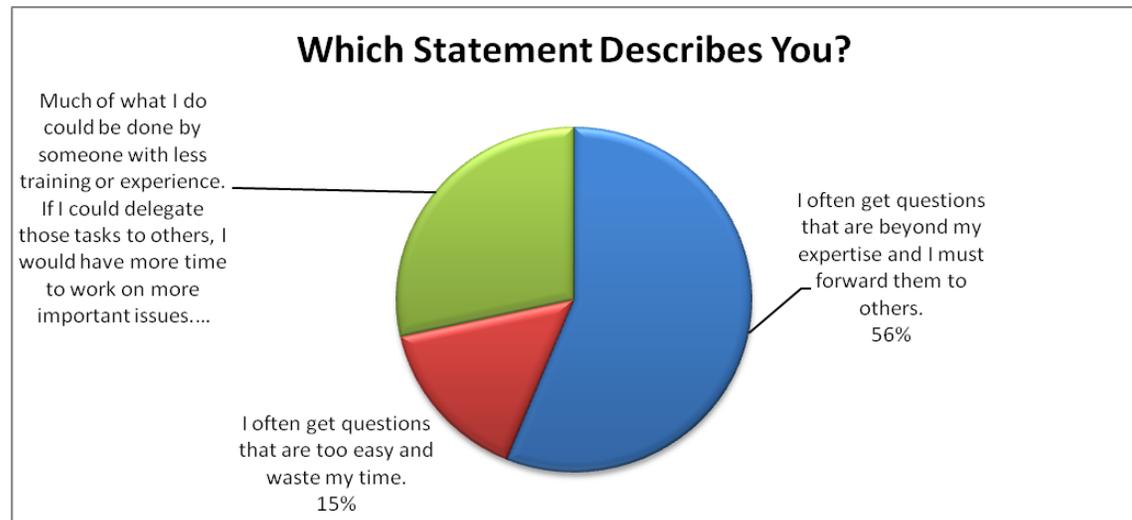
I often get questions that are too easy and waste my time.

Much of what I do could be done by someone with less training or experience. If I could delegate those tasks to others, I would have more time to work on more important issues.

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179

331

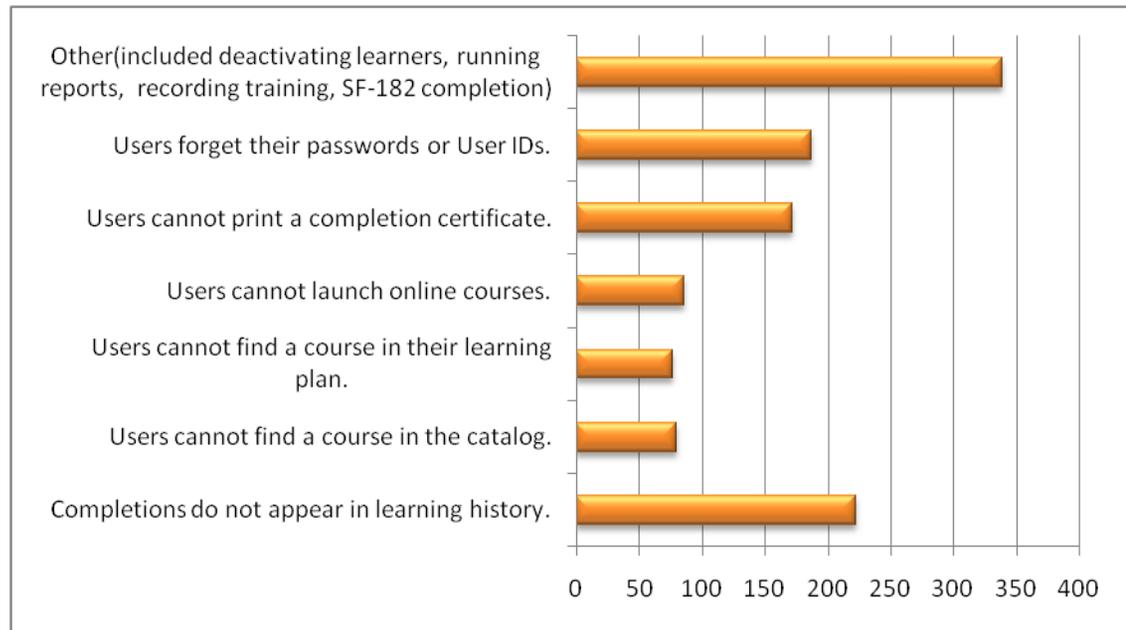


### Question #8 - What are the most common problems that you answer on a regular basis?

Are admins dealing with similar issues and questions that are most familiar to Team AgLearn and the AgLearn Help Desk or are they dealing with different problems for which we need to offer support? While 70% of the population reported that their most common problems were similar to those encountered by Team AgLearn, 30% reported other issues that Team AgLearn will review to ensure our planned training addresses them. In addition to helping users find and launch courses and print certificates, we will also insure that procedures are available to deactivate learners, run reports, record training and complete a SF-182 training request form.

What are the most common problems that you answer on a regular basis? Completions do not appear in learning history.  
 Users cannot find a course in the catalog.  
 Users cannot find a course in their learning plan.  
 Users cannot launch online courses.  
 Users cannot print a completion certificate.  
 Users forget their passwords or User IDs.  
 Other(included deactivating learners, running reports, recording training, SF-182 completion)

223  
 80  
 77  
 86  
 172  
 187  
 339



## Summary

A significant portion of our admin population has been performing their role without formal training. While classroom based training was available previously, many admins were unable to take advantage of it and others have forgotten much of what might have been presented via this “perishable” delivery medium. The perishable nature and the expense of traditional classroom delivery has prompted Team AgLearn to consider an alternative model, a blended approach that would provide consistent, online training customized to specific roles, supplemented with job aides and other performance support strategies such as communities of practice, webcasts and virtual classrooms, which would provide both asynchronous training that is always available and synchronous online venues that provide an opportunity to communicate “live” with subject matter experts.

Customized training targeted to specific roles will enable admins to train on the procedures and only those procedures that they will use in their daily activities. Requisite training will be available to review at their own pace and practice to proficiency. Refresher training will always be available and can easily be accessed through their Learning History. Job aids and performance support tools will keep their skills current and provide the necessary updates and revisions as the environment changes. Common issues can be addressed through a central distribution point, such as the Admin Welcome page, creating a sense of community among AgLearn admins and promoting the sharing of best practices and lessons learned.

Team AgLearn plans to resurvey AgLearn admins one year after the implementation of this blended training approach to assess progress and make adjustments if and where necessary.