Practice & Preparation for IDE 641 Formative paper

For my **Project Title** and **Authors and Contributors**, I co-authored the "Formative Evaluation Report: 'How to Learn Online'". I collaborated on this project alongside my team members Gregory, Greg, and Billy for our IDE 641: Techniques in Education Evaluation course under the instruction of Dr. Moon-Heum Cho.
In the **Context of the project work**, our team conducted a comprehensive formative evaluation of the edX Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) titled "How to Learn Online". With the rising demand for asynchronous education, the objective of this project was to assess the course's instructional effectiveness, usability, and overall ability to foster learner engagement among diverse populations. To accomplish this, we employed a mixed-methods approach that included a pedagogical expert review and one-to-one usability testing. Our usability testing deliberately included diverse representative learners, a 45-year-old returning adult learner to test accessibility and "technostress," and a 23-year-old digital native to evaluate engagement and self-regulation challenges in an asynchronous environment.

Regarding the **Description of which phase(s) of IDD&E this product represents**, this project is a direct application of the **Evaluation** phase of instructional systems design, specifically focusing on formative evaluation. By utilizing a "Think-Aloud" protocol during one-to-one testing and anchoring our expert review in frameworks like Cognitive Load Theory and Social Constructivism, we actively measured the product's effectiveness while in use. This phase demonstrated how to systematically gather qualitative data to identify both instructional strengths, such as effective content chunking, and critical usability barriers that need to be addressed before a product is fully scaled.

In my **Short reflection and self-assessment of the product**, conducting this evaluation reinforced my understanding of just how critical usability and user experience are to the success of an instructional design. The evaluation revealed that even when the core instructional content is robust and factually accurate, significant usability issues can completely disrupt the learning process. I learned firsthand that you cannot assume a platform's navigation will be intuitive for all learners, particularly those susceptible to technostress. Ultimately, this project sharpened my ability to design and execute rigorous evaluation protocols, solidifying my commitment to using data-driven feedback to build more accessible, learner-centric environments.