

Training and Transformation

WHY THIS CHAPTER IS IMPORTANT: Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem, titled *The Law of the Jungle*. The opening lines read: *Now this is the Law of the Jungle – as old and as true as the sky; And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper, but the Wolf that shall break it must die. ... For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.*

I believe KIPLING's poem translated – into the society of men – tells us that every organization desiring to achieve sustainable long term success needs both strong leadership, and a cohesive “pack” (or team) of employees. In the fast moving world of business, real wisdom comes from the understanding that sustainable success cannot be had without developing both strong leadership and strong teams. Organizational development must occur in tandem for both the leadership body that strategizes, decides, presents and motivates its team, and for the teams that believe, follow, execute and innovate on behalf of leadership's vision of the mission and its desired goals. History continually shows us that some organizations can achieve ~~this balance by a strict adherence to a~~



defined set of rules, practices, and near mechanical operations. Other organizations, however, have a less defined, yet nonetheless disciplined culture, around which employees far removed from the boardroom must coalesce. Such a culture where leadership is far removed from the day to day, but still “rally's the troops” to improve performance at all levels, to support each other, and to mentor each other on to greatness. If, however, as history has shown, the truly great companies exhibit both, then perhaps both should be strongly considered.

Throughout this book I have identified, disciplined processes successfully used in the business world today for Sourcing, Marketing, Assessing, Recruiting and Retaining the Right Staff. What I would like to do now is to tweak your interest in how to also develop the cultural laws for your own organizational jungle through Training and Transformation.

TRAINING

If surveyed most people will tell you they think training is for developing skills, expanding interests, and for completing degrees and/or certifications. Wikipedia says; The term training refers to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies as a result of the teaching of vocational or practical

skills and knowledge that relates to specific useful competencies. Often when we think of training we think of training experiences that help us with workplace learning and performance. This type of training commonly falls into the following categories:

- Computer Hardware and Software;
- Office Equipment, Tools and Technology;
- Organizational and Administrative;
- Typing, Writing and Grammar;
- Managing Finances and Budgets;
- Customer Service;
- Workplace Safety and Security;
- Human Resources and Diversity;
- Project and Time Management;
- Mechanical and Technical;
- And even Study Skills training to make us better learners and therefore even more trainable.

How we get trained varies more and more depending on budgets, time and the use of technology. The following outlines the common models for employee training.

Internal Training

Typically internal training is provided by the employer's supervisor, a peer or a human resources representative. Often internal training is referred to as on the job training. Usually the trainee at the most entry level is an intern, an apprentice, or is involved in a mentoring program. More experienced trainees are typically learning new systems because they have just joined the company, new technology has changed the way they do things at work, or they've just been promoted or are preparing for promotion and the new role calls for new responsibilities and therefore more training to be successful.

External Training

Typically external training is provided for more experienced employees and is paid for directly by the organization in the form of programs, classes, courses



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and seminars, widely available through trade associations, consulting firms, corporate seminar providers, colleges and universities, chambers of commerce, local business clubs and the like. External training is provided offsite and normally in large group settings. Externally provided onsite training is usually held in the employer's conference room, cafeteria or a makeshift class room with a visiting live instructor or facilitator and is common for smaller groups, and/or can even be provided over the internet in the form of webinars.

Self Directed Training

Self Directed Training is fast becoming widely used, as technology has advanced and training budgets have been scrutinized where every possible penny can be saved, new types of self directed training have been developed to transfer the control from the trainer to the learner thereby eliminating the need for a live instructor. Self directed training can take place almost anywhere as it is computer based. Interactive computer software training programs, often referred to as e-learning, function much like video games where trainees can compete against themselves and other employees for scores. These "business gaming" forms of learning are more and more frequently replacing the static audio, video and DVD approach to self directed training. Paper/printed books are also being supplemented with electronic and even on line versions with built in study guides, assessment tests and follow up learning refresher aids. These types of e-learning programs are expected to continue to grow at a steady pace because they accommodate the three distinct learning styles – auditory, visual, and kinesthetic – and are a more efficient form of training for dispersed audiences. This type of training also enables continual access and reuse of content, to gain efficiency and helps cut overall training costs. Providing the e-learning platform your employees need allows them to follow a guided career path within their organizations, and often the training will occur on their own time, and through their own scheduling. This approach is now placing the shared responsibility for continued learning with the employee as well as the manager. Now is the time to focus on informal and collaborative learning programs.

Through the use of the internet and to some extent even social networking, technology is opening up whole new opportunities for informal learning, e-learning, collaboration, mobile learning, and blended learning (1).

No matter what your pre-conceived notions are (good or bad) about the varied models for training and their respective effectiveness or value, organizations must safeguard and develop their talent to weather the cyclical ups and downs in an ever changing economy and to manage competitive challenges that change faster by the year. Old ways of thinking about employees as being easily replaced, the first places to cut expenses, or simply being disposable are outdated, counterproductive and should simply be a thing of the past. As a human resource executive or hiring manager you should have significant interest and influence in the success of talent development within your organization or at least your own respective team. Your continued effort to develop your own expertise in competency management, skills assessment and organizational development are vital to employee retention efforts and a successful talent management strategy. When you invest in providing training, whatever the type, or whatever the model, the end result is that employees increase their own personal value and loyalty, while organizations increase retention and the overall value of their employee base.

GET PEOPLE OFF TO A GREAT START

According to one study, 50 to 60 percent of employees change jobs in the first seven months of employment – as soon as they're hired, they start looking for better opportunities. Experienced managers understand that they are most vulnerable to losing employees during this initial period. For an organization that hires 25 college graduates a year at an average salary of \$ 30,000, the difference between correctly managing the initial joining-up process and failing to do so can total \$ 750,000 in annual turnover costs. It is imperative to get new hires off to a great start, yet the majority of firms expect employees to hit the ground running, with little coaching or training. From the new hire's perspective, there are several

fundamental questions that need to be answered in the first days or weeks on the job:

- Do I feel welcomed and valued here?
- In what way is my job important to this organization?
- Exactly what is expected of me?
- Will I learn, grow and be challenged here?
- Will I get to exercise independent judgment and creativity?

Your power to influence the success and retention of a new employee is enhanced by your ability to do several key things, among them:

- Communicate how their work is vital to success;
- Get commitment to a performance agreement;
- Give autonomy and reward initiative.

At Houston's St. Luke's Hospital, for example, nursing supervisor CHERYL HANKS shares with her staff the mission of the hospital, then they all discuss how they fit into it. Their conversations are not relegated simply to providing quality care, but also to the hard-nosed financial and productivity objectives for the hospital, the unit and the individual.

GIVE THE EMPLOYEE THE TOOLS TO TAKE CHARGE OF HIS OR HER CAREER

During the 1990s, many companies entered into new covenants with their employees, in which workers were given the internal systems, services, training and opportunities to take charge of their career progress and enhance their employability.

Some of the ways in which organizations accomplished this are as follows:

Providing Employee Assessment and Career Planning Workshops - Companies such as Raychem, Apple Computer and Sun Microsystems hold on-site workshops where employees can assess their abilities, interests and values, and where they can plan with their company to determine possible future options.

Establishing Employee Career Centers - IBM and Motorola, among others, set up internal career centers where employees can use competency assessments, confidential counseling, career management, lunch-and-learn training seminars and other tools and programs to evaluate themselves, their skills and their career interests.

Maintaining Internal Job and Talent Banks - Microsoft has created an online service where employees can learn about open positions and the skills required for them. The company's "electronic campus" is also stocked with lists of books, professional associations, courses and other valuable professional development resources.

Starting a Mentoring Program - Formal mentoring programs have grown in popularity in recent years, in companies such as Ernst and Young, J.C. Penney, Price Waterhouse, Quaker Oats, Hewlett Packard and others. HP, for example, maintains a highly structured online mentoring database that mentees can use to search for mentors with specific areas of expertise.

JUSTIFYING TRAINING EXPENSES BASED ON ROI

If indeed training budgets are being squeezed in your organization, then investing time to better understand the value of learning, and just as important, how to present to your leadership this value proposition, will be time well spent. In senior management vernacular this value proposition is typically referred to as ROI or "return on investment". What decision makers want to see now more than ever is a direct cause-and-effect relationship between learning initiatives and results (2). So how do you calculate ROI? You start by understanding the goals and objectives of the leader questioning the ROI in your training budget. In many cases, it is not the training programs that need to change; it's the thought processes behind them. The objective is to identify ways in which the learning function can support the organization's strategic goals and then be able to communicate that to company decision makers (1).

Budget squeezers, bean counters and good leaders alike want to see a direct connection relationship between training and financial results. So make sure while you consider spending on training you plan for yourself, or for your staff, that you ask yourself these questions to see if the selected training meets the smell test.

- What is your company's vision?
- How about the mission statement?
- What are the organization's key goals, its customer's expectations, and how the impact of the economic environment is driving the decisions of the senior leadership team?
- Is every piece of training quantifiable from a dollar perspective?
- Is it possible to align the training with business objectives and have a positive financial impact?
- How can you demonstrate ROI when leadership reviews and questions your allocation of training dollars?

"The reason why a lot of learning efforts and/or departments are struggling right now is because they are focused on knowledge gain," says BOB MOSHER, of LearningGuide Solutions. "That sounds like a noble thing, but the reality is that a lot of organizations are shifting to productivity, not knowledge gain. There is no middle manager who would argue that knowledge is a bad thing, but we live in a world now where knowledge for knowledge's sake is not helping." MOSHER says this new approach to learning can be more effective if it addresses five moments of need for learners (3):

1. Learning something for the first time;
2. Learning more about what you already know;
3. Trying to apply or remember what you've learned;
4. What to do when things change;
5. What to do when things go wrong.

"Historically, training has only addressed the first two needs," MOSHER says. "That has made training nice to have but not mission-critical. We now live in a world where people must survive every day by applying and

remembering, keeping up with change, and getting out of trouble when things go wrong." (3) Accountability for workplace learning and performance is here, and it is critical that you know what to measure, how to measure it, and how to present the results to the rest of the business. You must understand the business, the human capital needs, and how your training strategy links to business results. With scarce resources – including tighter budgets and reduced staff – you must concentrate on developing employees to perform successfully in challenging times, not just on delivering training (1).

CEOs also want to know how learning affects specific objectives such as customer satisfaction, productivity, profitability, and sales. When budgets for training are tight, employees must have the skills to maximize their organization's core business strengths. What is your organization's competitive advantage – do employees have the skills and competencies to successfully support business strategy? Are you familiar with your organization's key competitors and the capabilities of their workforces? (1) These are questions you should better be prepared to answer if you don't want to see your training budget cut. Customer service has a direct impact on the credibility of an organization. It is essential that employees working with the public have skills in personal awareness, communication, planning, problem solving, quality, and teamwork because many times, there are no second chances when it comes to customer satisfaction (1). Existing employees honestly want to perform well, and potential new employees really want to know that your organization has an authentic culture that provides a consistent platform for constant improvement, so they have a greater chance to succeed. Top quality new employees especially the newest generation of Millennials will tell you that next to salary, the most important thing to them is that they want to learn as much and as fast as they can, and they aren't afraid to put pressure on management to increase their involvement in learning, training and development (1).

According to the 2008 ASTD State of the Industry report, more than 70% of the average number of learning hours per employee is spent in front of a live instructor. If budgets squeezes are making the use of live instructors a real problem then look for

creative, cost effective ways to educate your employees through more informal learning mechanisms. Try some of these approaches (1):

1. Encourage greater use of informal learning – especially coaching and mentoring programs. You may consider:

- Using more short learning sessions to support inter-departmental knowledge management, delivery of policy-related information, and inform and discuss new marketplace trends.
- Offer training on personal financial planning, stress management, and personal and professional career development.

2. Make learning opportunities more universally available for everyone in your organization from both content and delivery perspectives.

- Offer soft skills training, for example, listening skills or the ability to motivate. These skills will help support a more positive culture and maintain a more solid environment during unstable times.
- Offer more 24/7 accessible learning through your company intranet and e-learning initiatives.

3. Retrain employees whose skills are outdated.

4. Emphasize individual responsibility for learning.

- Provide systems that support knowledge-sharing, such as wikis, blogs, and social networking tools.
- Increase the knowledge assets available to employees through learning management systems.
- Recognize and reward employees' self-motivated learning efforts.

5. Don't stop leadership development programs that focus on financial and performance goals – your high-potential employees may end up filling open positions in the coming year.

6. Keep supervisors and company executives abreast of learning outcomes. If you can prove that learning has a positive influence on performance, it will be less likely to be cut from budgets.

KEEP LEARNING TO KEEP LEADING

The secret to success can be found in people's daily agendas. If they do something intentional to grow every day, they move closer to reaching their potential. If they don't, their potential slowly slips away over the course of their lifetime. If you want to be a good leader, you've got to be a good learner. If you don't have a plan for personal growth, then don't expect to grow! As you seek to learn and grow as a leader, here are a few suggestions:

1. Invest in yourself first. As long as people are following you, they will be able to go only as far as you go. If you're not growing, they won't be growing – either that or they will leave and go somewhere else where they can grow. Followers get better after their leaders do.

2. Be a continual learner. If you want to lead, you have to learn. If you want to continue to lead, you must continue to learn. Successful people continue to exhibit an excitement, a curiosity or a sense of wonder.

3. Create a growth environment for the people you lead. To be a lifelong learner, get out of a stagnant environment and distance yourself from people who have no desire to grow. As a leader, you need to create a positive growth environment for the people you lead. Being around people who are better than we are has a tendency to make us stretch to improve ourselves.

Everyone Must Be Involved

Everyone in the organization must be involved in multiplying talent. Leaders of talent-powered organizations take a visible role in using people's talent to gain sustainable competitive advantage. Talent management needs to become everyone's responsibility in every organization. While top leadership and HR involvement are essential, a talent mindset and capabilities must be embedded and sustained throughout the organization. In talent-powered organizations, capabilities in discovering, developing and deploying talent allow everyone in the organization to identify and nurture talent in ways that

enhance performance.

Engagement

Talent is the engine of the modern organization, and engagement is the mystery ingredient that can transform the engine's output. The primary drivers of engagement can be listed as six Cs:

1. Content – Do I enjoy what I do?
2. Coping – How am I supported?
3. Compensation – Am I fairly rewarded?
4. Community – Is it socially rewarding?
5. Congruence – Do values align?
6. Career – Where am I going?

Focus on the strategic role of line managers in building engagement. Do everything you can to make them take responsibility for building engagement, and give them the training and support they need to do it. Make clear that they will be judged on their success. To succeed in this, you will of course have to ensure that line managers are engaged. So begin by applying each of the six Cs to them.