

# Technology Enabled Learning Excellence

ESSENTIALS » 12.2014  
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Corporate Training  
*How to reduce cost and  
get the most from budget*

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*How to build*

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Fails  
*Six reasons*

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

*Time to move beyond*

Andre Plaut

# Technology Enabled Learning Excellence

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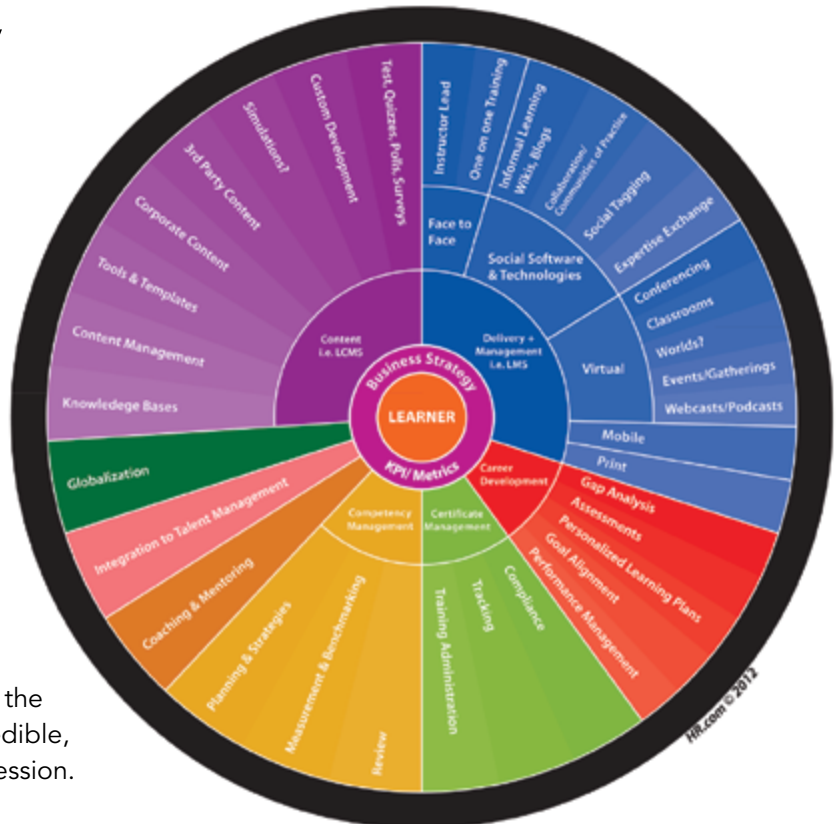
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- E-Learning and Corporate Training**  
*How to reduce cost and get the most from budget*
- Global Learning Community**  
*How to build*
- 2015: Learning and Development**  
*Priorities and plans*
- Why Leadership Training Fails**  
*Six reasons*

## Instructional Design *Time to move beyond*

The process of designing any sort of human experience, regardless of purpose or platform, is centered on reaching a desired outcome; ideally with as little fuss and as much joy as possible. **PG.05**

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Welcome to December readers! As we rapidly bring 2014 to a close and turn our sights towards 2015, the focus of this month's issue of Technology Enabled Learning Excellence Essentials couldn't be more relevant.

Technology enabled learning isn't just a strategy anymore, it's a movement, and if you haven't firmly joined the chorus you risk leaving your organization in the proverbial corporate learning dust. Technology enabled learning couldn't be more central to strategic imperatives in the coming year and beyond. Let me elaborate, and then let this month's contributors drive the point home.

Ask any Corporate CEO what's at the top of his or her hit list, and increasingly the response will include things such as employee engagement, retention and finding ways to get the most out of their workforce. It's true. Learning and Development has finally been elevated to a C-Suite priority. It goes without saying that sales and profitability are essential, but there's a growing awareness that achieving growth in these areas is *an outcome* of the first three things. There's been a sea change in the attitudes, needs and beliefs of today's workers, and if they aren't motivated and excited to be there, you won't get the best out of them, and they won't stick around.

What's the big common denominator? Knowledge. Knowledge is power. Knowledge is confidence. Knowledge is performance. Today's employees won't hesitate to let you know they are mobile, and they actively seek employers who want to invest in their personal and professional growth. In fact, they expect it. But are employers responding? In our "Skills Gap" article by Donna Wells, nothing says it better than real data. You might be as surprised as I was to learn that for every 2 unemployed workers there's an open unfulfilled job, and a core reason is the mismatch of skills and the declining investment in employee training.

There's really no excuse for this; technological advancements have dramatically reduced the cost of training and made it more accessible to the workforce than ever before. Erin Krebs and Heera Edwin touch on this in their articles. In fact, to emphasize the point above related to getting the most out of your workforce, Heera Edwin states that employers now recognize that employees don't stay around forever, and major companies prefer performance to tenure. How do you reduce time to competency and focus on the things that matter? Technology.

From beginning to end, leveraging technology in the most appropriate ways can mean the difference between engaging your workforce immediately at the point of hire and keeping them



active. In his article "Employee Training", Tim Eisenhower outlines specific ways you can use technology to your advantage. Jodi Beuder augments these tips with her own specific ideas aimed at call center environments in "Five Training Tips".

Finally, Andre Plaut takes great insight from leading edge software User Interface and User Experience principles in giving us food for thought about instructional design. Companies spend a lot of time and effort in ensuring that their market and customer facing products and material are clear, exciting and memorable. Why wouldn't we do the same with learning content?

Technology has transformed the world in the last two decades and the pace of change continues to accelerate. Let 2015 be the year that you fully embrace the opportunities that technology brings to the learning world, and allows you to be a force for strategic enablement of C-Suite corporate priorities.



**Carol Leaman** is CEO of Axonify. Carol is responsible for driving the overall strategic direction and Axonify's commitment to revolutionizing employee awareness and corporate learning. Carol brings more than 20 years of leadership and technology executive experience to the company as she has a history of building start-ups into multi-million dollar successes. Connect [Carol Leaman](#)  
Visit [www.axonify.com](http://www.axonify.com)

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Debbie McGrath, CEO, HR.com  
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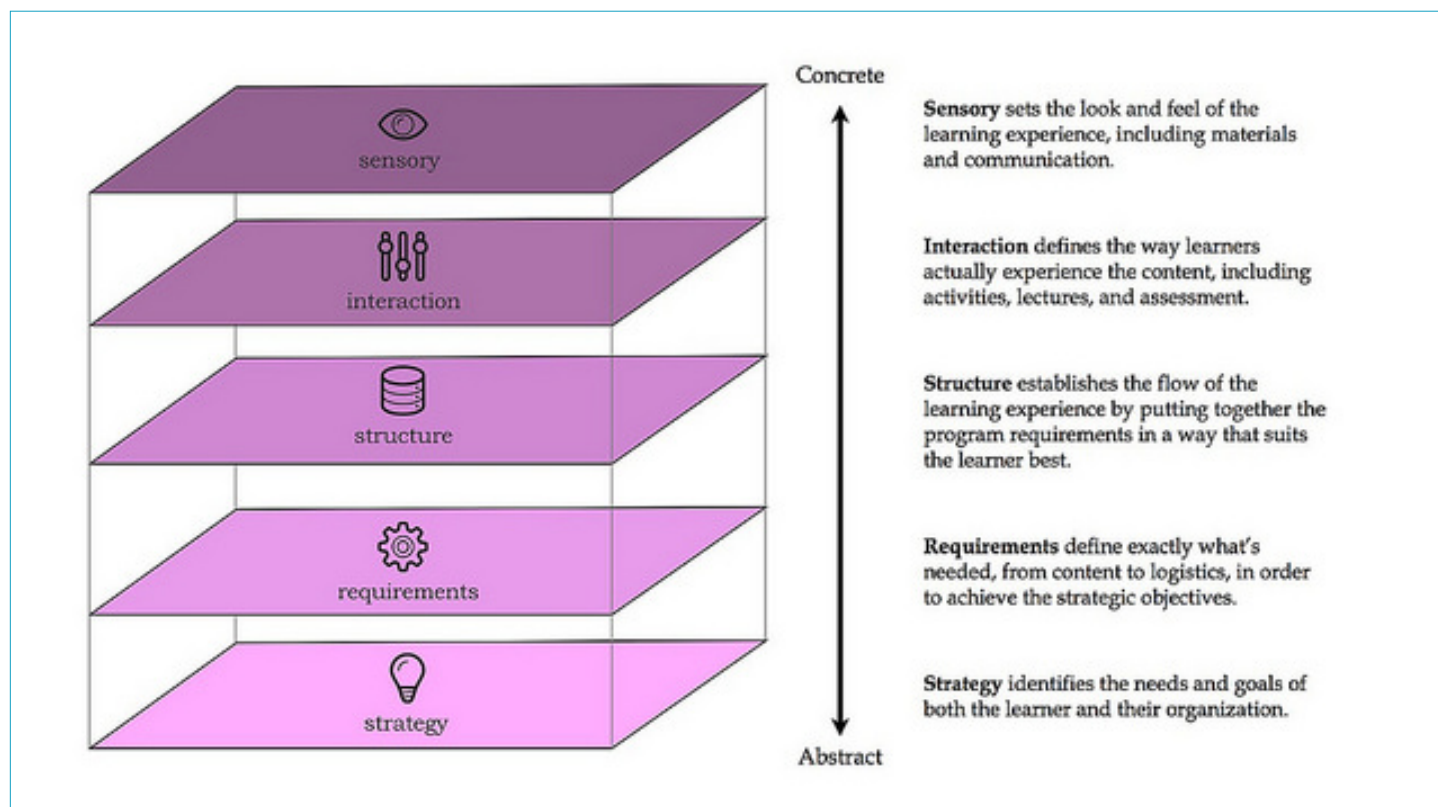
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# Instructional Design

## Time to move beyond

By Andre Plaut



The process of designing any sort of human experience, regardless of purpose or platform, is centered on reaching a desired outcome; ideally with as little fuss and as much joy as possible.

The purpose of an experience and the platform on which the experience takes place will vary: purchasing a plane ticket on a tablet for vacation, enjoying a musical performance in a theater, or learning to code in a classroom. Although each of these experiences require its own unique methods and frameworks, elements that should be taken into consideration during the design process remain mostly the same.

The best representation of those elements comes from Jesse James Garrett's *Elements of User Experience*. While Garrett's 'elements' are most relevant to digital product design, I've been able to use them as a roadmap for developing learning experiences for adults.

Designing adult learning experiences that take place either online or in a classroom has always traditionally been about defining a curriculum. That process of curriculum creation is most commonly called instructional design. However, in the same way that user experience design requires much more than deciding what content should go on a website, true learning experience design requires much more than curriculum.

With that in mind, I took Garrett's Elements as inspiration to create my own Elements of Learning Experience Design to formalize and communicate a design process I have struggled to explain to others.

### Strategy Plane

*What are the needs and goals of your learners and your organization?*

The goal of almost any learning experience is rooted in acquiring new skills, knowledge, motivation, and/or confidence to change an existing behavior or create a new one. Those changes in behavior should have measurable impacts, allowing you to define key success metrics.

Before you start building anything, you should first get a better understanding of the needs you're trying to solve.

This means identifying the learner's needs, which include additional skills and knowledge required to do something differently, and their goals, which is what they hope to accomplish by doing things differently. Identifying your organization's needs and goals are equally important. A successful learning experience must be able to address the objectives of both, regardless of how different they may be.

Ultimately, adult learners and their organizations expect learning experiences to establish behaviors that make their lives or work more efficient and effective.

As a learning experience designer, you should focus your time and attention during the strategy plane on identifying gaps that exist between the learner and his/her desired outcome. Those gaps exist due to the lack of the following:

- \* **Knowledge:** Do learners lack proper information to complete a task?
- \* **Skill:** Do they have all of the right information, but lack the ability to translate that knowledge into action that could be applied to a given situation?
- \* **Confidence:** Are they able to demonstrate or apply the skill, but

do they hesitate or refuse to apply it?

\* **Motivation:** Are they able to demonstrate or apply the skill confidently, but don't want to do it?

\* **Access:** Do they have all of the above, but lack proper tools or resources to complete a task?

Once you are able to properly identify the gaps that cause learners to struggle, you must design a solution that effectively addresses those gaps.

#### Requirements Plane

*What are the key topics, methods, activities, and logistics required to create a successful learning experience?*

Once your objectives have reached a certain level of clarity, you can begin defining the content and functional requirements needed of the learning experience in order to reach those objectives.

Let's break this down by using an example.

Start with your objectives. Let's say a political campaign wants to decrease the amount of inaccurate voter data without decreasing the amount of data coming in.

What key metrics represent success to your organization and your learners? Based on the example's objectives, the key metrics could be maintaining the amount of data being processed, and decreasing the number of "inaccurate information" reports.

Work backwards from there to figure out the core behaviors that support those metrics from being reached. In this example, volunteers must be able to ask accurate questions, know how to fill out data reports, and do it all pretty quickly.

Then, outline the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources needed to exhibit those behaviors. Asking effective questions is a skill built upon the knowledge of what makes certain questions effective, and what the campaign is interested in learning.

Knowing how to accurately fill out a form is a knowledge-based task requiring a limited amount of practice. Doing something quickly and accurately has a lot to do with practice, confidence, and motivation. Logistically, volunteers need to have access to data entry forms or terminals, and voters to speak to.

Next, map those components to topics and activities. By the end of the training session, learners will be able to describe why accurate data is critical to the campaign, prioritize what data is most important to the campaign, identify the right questions to ask to gather that data, and practice inputting that data into different forms or terminals.

And that's how you arrive at your content requirements.

It's also important to think beyond what content is required of an experience. The content outlined in our example above may close our learners' knowledge, skill, and confidence gaps, but it will likely fail to achieve the actual objectives without functional requirements.

For offline learning experiences, these functional requirements include facilities, personnel, logistics (materials, A/V, and the like) and pre-/post-course support (including on-boarding and continued engagement and follow-up). Online learning experiences have similar functional requirements, including choosing a platform (such as a custom site versus Articulate) and finding designers and engineers to actually build the digital product, downloadable materials, and pre-/post-course support.

One of the worst mistakes you can make as a learning experience designer is to assume that functional requirements take care of themselves. When functional requirements are not built into the experience, you end-up with disgruntled learners who will be much less likely to apply anything they've learned during the experience you've designed.

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**The goal of almost any learning experience is rooted in acquiring new skills, knowledge, motivation, and/or confidence to change an existing behavior or create a new one.**

#### Structure Plane

*How will the topics, activities, logistics, and assessments be structured?*  
Imagine you're learning how to drive.

First, your instructor teaches you about starting your car. Next, she goes over and show how to park your car. After that, she teaches you about gas pedal, brake pedal, and shifting to reverse. And finally, she shows you how to adjust your mirrors.

Does this sequence of events sound strange to you? That's because the structure of the learning experience described above is not being taken into consideration. Once you've outlined your requirements and objectives, you must think about how those requirements will be structured.

In user experience and learning experience design, this relates directly to the organizing of information in order to make it usable, otherwise known as information architecture.

For an adult learning experience to be successful, the learning modules must be designed and structured in the way that is the most logical and relevant to the learner. To do that, you must first understand how different topics relate to one another in the learner's mind (example: A key unlocks a door), in what order they usually occur (example: A door must be unlocked before being opened) and what knowledge or skill builds upon another (example: Turning a key builds the skill to turn a doorknob).

If you were to create a sales training program, would you begin with a customer entering the store, or would you begin with the product arriving in inventory? Would the section on point-of-sale systems be near the beginning, middle, or end of the program?

Structure becomes even trickier when your program involves non-linear scenarios, like setting-up a multi-channel marketing campaign. Should the learner know about Google Analytics before or after Facebook Paid Advertising? There are valid arguments to either option, but the real question is what makes most sense to the learner.

To answer that question, you'll often have to look back at your objectives and learner needs. How much do you know about your learners, their daily responsibilities, and their environment? If you're still finding it difficult to determine the structure of your learning experience, you should probably do more research. Structure also applies to the functional requirements of your learning experience.

When will learners need the most support? Which topics or skills present the largest challenge to your learners? You should also consider whether or not the learning environment is conducive to the type of experience you're designing (online vs. offline, short-term vs. long-term, facilitated vs. self-led, and the like).

#### Interaction Plane

*What will learners actually be doing, hearing, and seeing during the learning experience?*





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**Designing learning experiences must be treated in the same way as designing any sort of user experience. Learners, just like users, have needs that can only be solved through proper research, design, validation, and iteration.**

The interaction plane deals directly with designing the materials, activities, lectures, and discussions that make up the learning experience. This is where instructional design lives. As an instructional designer, you will focus most of your efforts on defining exactly how learners are introduced to new skills and knowledge, and what practice and application look like those skills.

When introducing new knowledge to learners, it helps tremendously to root it in existing knowledge. This can be done through the use of analogies, previous experiences, and common cultural references. To use these methods effectively, you must have a strong grasp of your learners' perspectives and experiences as they relate to the content.

Acquiring new skills demands a different approach. Learners must be able to actually apply new skills to both real and hypothetical problems within the learning experience in order to become proficient. Think of how many times you had to practice parking a car in both empty and full parking lots before you felt comfortable parking on a daily basis. You must create opportunities that allow learners to practice and apply their new skills in supportive environments.

This is also the time to think how your learners' progress will be tracked. Assessment criteria should first be defined within the requirements plane, and then built into the program in the structure plane. Exactly which tools and processes are used to evaluate a learner's skill-level, and how progress is communicated back to learners should be defined here.

#### **Sensory Plane**

*What will the learning experience look and sound like?*

The experience you design must be able to cater to your learners' sense as well as align with your organization's brand. The sensory plane applies to all materials and instructions designed for the program, including presentation decks, guides, web sites, lesson plans, worksheets, activity materials, and so on.

The sensory plane allows your materials to implicitly communicate information to your learners about the experience they are about to have. The tone of your written content, as well as the visual design of your materials, should represent your organization's branding and communicate the mood of the experience, be it professional, fun, or quirky. In the same way that content should be strategically structured, the visual design of your materials should be cohesive and consistent.

The sensory plane is your opportunity to create a learning experience that is both functional and beautiful. Decks are designed as visual references to anchor learners, but if they're filled with too much text and poorly chosen images, decks end up being frustrating and useless. A lack of verbal instructions will frustrate learners, but it's still better than unclear or misleading instructions.

People, regardless of their preferences, are drawn to polished, well-designed materials and clear communication. The sensory layer

creates a single, cohesive experience that allows learners to focus on gaining new skills and not deciphering their learning environment.

#### **Conclusion**

Designing learning experiences must be treated in the same way as designing any sort of user experience. Learners, just like users, have needs that can only be solved through proper research, design, validation, and iteration.

Anyone involved in adult learning should step outside the limiting boundaries of curriculum design in order to account for the learner's entire experience. By only focusing on content, we are missing out on what actually makes up a person's reality, including the environment in which they're learning in and their lives before and after the learning experience.

By taking each of these elements into consideration, any teacher or instructional designer can start begin to think beyond those limitations, and look to create immersive and enriching experiences for their learners. This not only allows us to be more effective at teaching others, but it also establishes a higher level of quality that people should expect of a learning experience. **TEL**

*This article originally appeared on [Medium](#), and has been republished with the author's permission.*



Over the last seven years, **Andre Plaut** has been designing and delivering learning experiences for Apple, Obama for America, and General Assembly. During the 2012 Obama campaign, Andre worked with campaign staff to redesign, organize, and implement training initiatives and materials to better prepare new volunteers for the field. Now at General Assembly, Andre leads the product team responsible for designing, implementing, and scaling full-time courses around Web Development, User Experience Design, and Product Management. Visit [generalassembly.ly](http://generalassembly.ly)



# Five Training Tips

## Make your call center outstanding

By Jodi Beuder



Managers overseeing a call service center know that their employees require ongoing training if they're to truly excel at delivering excellent customer service. These managers are able to make the business case that their budgets need to have an annual line-item for training new employees, as well as training existing employees. However, just throwing money at training doesn't necessarily yield a successful outcome. Training requires forethought, flexibility, nimbleness, and evolution. Here are some tips to ensure your [call-center training](#) program maximizes your investment.

### Tip #1: Real-World Advice

Training is more than just educating your employees about company policy and protocols. Exceptional service happens when the employee and customer connect as people. Offering your employees real-world advice allows them to understand the bigger picture and objectives of your organization and integrate the mission of your company into customer service delivery. Training offered by experienced, successful representatives can offer valuable insight into the difference between meeting performance benchmarks and exceeding them.

### Tip #2: Training can be Spontaneous and Casual

As a manager, it is your job to listen and respond to your employees. [Coaching/training](#) can happen at any time, at any place, and it doesn't have to be long-winded. Sometimes it is most effective to offer a short piece of advice to your employee that is immediately relevant to a specific situation. The message communicated during these less formal interactions are often heard more clearly as they aren't lost in a longer training session. Training needs to relate to the job at hand. Try to incorporate relevant training into the working days, and tasks and activities that agents have to complete in a real-time setting.

### Tip #3: Individual Training

While your software and equipment in your call center is the same for all employees, each employee will bring his/her personality, strengths and skills to your organization. Training should reflect this, by helping your employees develop his/her skills without over-emphasizing any one specific area. This doesn't mean that each employee be uniquely and individually trained, but rather that your training program allow for the various skill sets of individuals to be cultivated.

### Tip #4: Focus on Staff Engagement

Effective training involves looking closely at what skills are needed within your team. In a customer service call center, training often

focuses on product knowledge, complaint management, or patching the customer through to the right department. In a sales-based call center, training will focus on ensuring employees have the knowledge and tools to advise customers on the best-fit product or service. Engaging your employees in such a manner that they can get answers and support with issues they encounter while servicing customers allows for more positive outcomes for both the employee and customer.

“

Throwing money at training doesn't necessarily yield a successful outcome. Training requires forethought, flexibility, nimbleness, and evolution.

### Tip #5: Training is Ongoing

Ensure you have committed resources for [continuous training and development](#). Training not only nurtures technical ability but also increases staff engagement, helping to motivate and retain talent. It is crucial that your training program remain nimble and relevant to your market and customer demands; as markets, business or products change, and additional training will be required. By staying engaged with your staff and analyzing the data and metrics of your call center, you can help tailor the ongoing training of your organization so that it is current to what is happening in a real-time manner.

[Successful managers](#) recognize the arc of training within his/her call center operation. Training is an ongoing process and can be tailored to meet the needs of your employees. A formal training program isn't always necessary; training can happen spontaneously in a more casual manner. There are plenty of tools and resources to aid managers in providing the best training practices, and if you follow the tips outlined above, you can more readily customize your training program to meet your specific needs to keep your employees engaged and your customers satisfied. **TEL**

The article first appeared [here](#).



**Jodi Beuder**, Customer Experience Advocate at Impact Learning Systems, believes customer service exists not just outside the company, but inside, too. With over 17 years in Marketing Executive roles, Jodi has dedicated her career to assisting companies grow their brand presence and sales, and most importantly, their customer retention and satisfaction.

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# Skills Gap

*Who created it, and who should close it?*

 By Donna Wells



**I**t's a vicious circle we're in today. The majority of companies are letting employee development fall by the wayside – under pressures of the fast-paced marketplace, rapid growth or competitive threats. At the same time, these companies are raising and changing their hiring and skills requirements more rapidly than ever before. It's the combination of these two forces that's creating the skills mismatch, and the large and growing skills gap we see in the U.S. today. In 2014, we have at least two unemployed workers for every open, unfilled job: 10 million active job-seekers vs. 4.8 million open roles according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

That ratio gets much worse when we add in the millions of workers who are [voluntarily leaving the job market every month](#), according to Forbes, and those who are marginally employed... either part-time or in a job for which they are overqualified. And with current trends, the gap is only projected to widen. As CNBC recently cited, "Research from the McKinsey Global Institute suggests there will be

a shortage of between 16 million and 18 million high-skill workers among advanced economies by 2020."

*So how did we get here, and more importantly, who should fix this situation? Companies and economists have all weighed in, but until now, little has been heard from the American worker.*

In a [September 2014 survey from Harris Interactive](#), American workers cite the lack of corporate training as #1 driver of the U.S. skills gap today. Both employed and unemployed Americans believe that it's employers' lack of willingness to train new employees that is the leading reason why many Americans are unemployed and job opportunities are sitting unfilled. In fact, almost one-third of Americans surveyed believe employers aren't willing to train new hires for the specific skills they need.

*Are workers' perceptions accurate?*

The data paints a clear picture of declining investment in employee training time over the past several decades. As Wharton School profes-



sor Peter Cappelli has cited, American workers received an average of 2.5 weeks, or 100 hours, of training annually in 1979. By 1995, several employer surveys indicated that [average had dropped to 10 hours per year](#), according to *Businessweek*. And the decline appears to be accelerating. Current data suggests that the majority of employed Americans receive no training at all. The Harris/Mindflash survey showed 40 percent of employees received no training in the prior two years. While a 2011 Accenture study found that 79 percent had received no employer-based training in the prior five years. [As Bloomberg reports](#), “Something is clearly broken in the labor market. In recent decades, on-the-job training has declined.” Yet, “Companies want new hires to be able to “hit the ground running,” Bloomberg continues.

Cappelli and others argue that employers believe they have to -- or are now able to -- shift the burden of skills development onto the employees themselves. The “Have To” camp points to the rapid decline in employee tenure as a root cause. Employees spend on average 4 years (according to September 2014 data from BLS) in each company, and so it's not economical for employers to invest in the development of staff that could soon be working for the competition. The “Able To” camp points to the decline in U.S. union power, the increasing transparency of the U.S. labor market via web-based tools such as LinkedIn, and the growth and value of capital inputs to productivity over labor.

#### *Training for \$1,000, Please*

Pessimists assert that these underlying conditions are unlikely to change and, therefore, employees themselves will need to pay for the training they need to hold the jobs of the future. And many American workers appear ready to do so. In the Harris/Mindflash survey, more than 25 percent of employed and unemployed Americans indicated they would be willing to invest up to \$1,000 of their own money each year for relevant skills training.

#### *Leveraging Technology to Train*

The optimists among us say that employers are rapidly leveraging technology to close their own skills gaps. Especially, some forward-thinking employers are recognizing that traditional approaches to training (e.g. instructor led, live training etc.) is often too expensive and too time consuming to produce measurable improvements in employee performance during the few years they will be on your payroll. And they are adopting Blended, Flipped (i.e. Kahn Academy-style) or truly online, on-demand, self-paced learning to get quantifiable results, faster.

**Implementing training quickly in the high turnover retail industry.** In just six months, one major U.S. retailer we work with has successfully launched 36 courses, and achieved over 2,000 course completions across its store managers and salespeople using a combination of online and live training. Another has achieved 9,500 course completions and 5,000 hours of product training this year alone via a blended learning training program.

**Training employees in new, technical skills, cost-effectively.** A metal fabrication company customer has successfully converted their ISO, Certification, Grinding, Ultrasound, RFID and Crane Operation training into web-based training. A national mobile phone and tablet repair company is utilizing online, on-demand training to train its largely remote workforce in display and digitizer replacement and assembly. Their experiences are demonstrating that using new simple-yet-powerful cloud-based training tools, companies can now successfully provide “hard skills” training courses at a lower cost and to more employees than they could using traditional approaches. Kofax

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**Companies have a hand in creating the very skills gap that is holding up work and productivity across our country today.**

Software's move to online training allowed them to [reduce training costs](#) by 80 percent and made it possible for them to provide even more training to its employees and partners.

**Partnering with educators to launch training courses for job candidates.** Companies as varied as Accenture, Goodwill, McDonalds and Snap-On are collaborating with local community colleges on course curriculums specifically designed to [train job candidates](#) with the skills they need to qualify for current and future jobs. Many of these breakthrough programs, including an apprenticeship program sponsored by the AFL-CIO, allow students to take these community college courses online, earning college credit from any location.

As shown by these examples, organizations are already taking advantage of new technologies to implement training even as they scale. As discussed in a [recent Mindflash blog](#), the Learning Management System (LMS) market is well over \$2.5 billion and grew by over 21% in 2014. Reasons for recent growth, cited by Bersin by Deloitte, include a targeted focus on reskilling employees and closing the skills gap, the ubiquity of learning content, recent advances in learning technology, and a growing necessity for supporting [global learning needs](#).

However, the best news is that these elearning solutions are proven and effective. For those employees who did receive training, the Harris/Mindflash poll tells us that 71 percent of employed Americans felt effectively trained when on-boarded to their most recent position. Additionally, 70 percent of employed Americans agree that their company's training is relevant to their day-to-day jobs.

Through their sharp decline in hours of training offered, companies themselves have a hand in creating the very skills gap that is holding up work and productivity across our country today. Fortunately, however, new training technologies are a part of the solution to make increasing investments in employee and candidate training profitable once again, due to their affordability, speed-to-market and effectiveness. And it can't happen soon enough -- we've got five million jobs to fill. **TEL**



**Donna Wells** is the CEO of Mindflash, a leading online training platform. She was previously CMO of Mint.com, the online personal finance service, where she was responsible for driving the company's growth to 2 million users from its launch in 2007 to its acquisition by Intuit in 2009 for \$170 million. Follow [@DonnaWells](#)  
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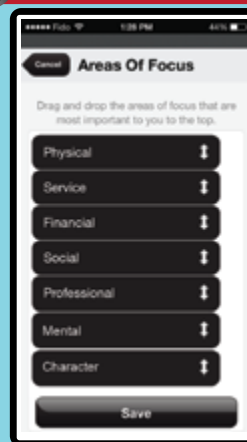






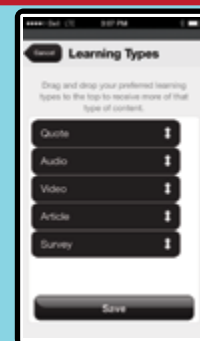
Employees choose the areas of focus they want to work on.

## 1 Choose area of focus



Employees choose how they learn.

## 2 How employees learn



As an employer, are you committed to helping your employees become engaged, better performers and motivated each and every day?

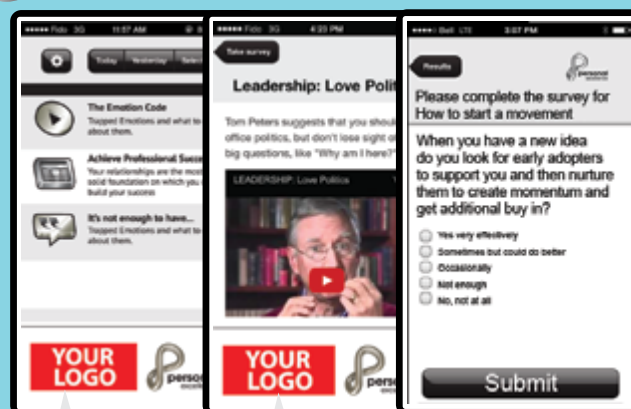
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- ✓ No software
- ✓ Pay for only active users
- ✓ In your brand
- ✓ Download statistics on employee usage
- ✓ Key Performance Indicators for employees
- ✓ Align content with Corporate Values and Mission
- ✓ Gamification, Rewards and Points allocation based on usage \*
- ✓ Quick Employee Survey and polling
- ✓ Add your custom content, or content from our marketplace.

\*Available Q2.

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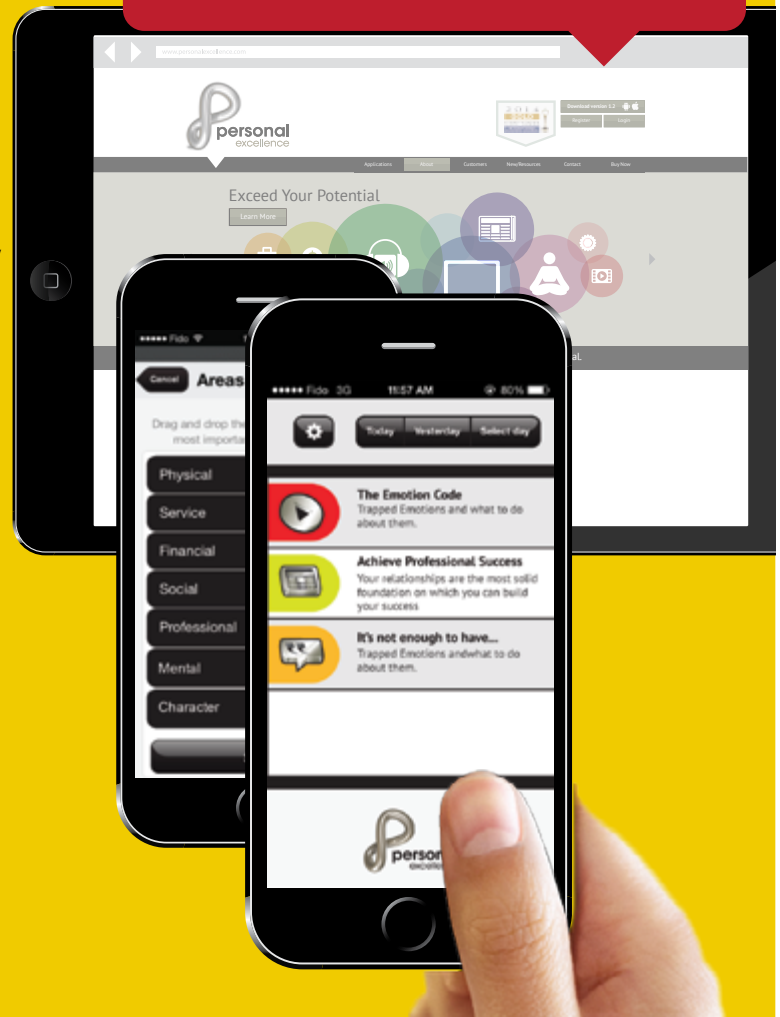
## Do you wake up each and every day and say:

"Today I am going to work on becoming a better person,  
..a better leader,  
..a better role model for my friends and family,  
..a better coworker!"?

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# E-Learning and Corporate Training

*How to reduce cost and get the most from budget*

 By Erin Krebs

**O**ur clients want to accomplish as much as possible with their e-learning budgets; we all want more bangs for our bucks. Fact is, you can do more for less *and* reduce costs in e-learning and corporate training. Here are tips from an experienced solution architect, who frames projects and budgets for clients every day. Get the most from your e-learning project budget!



I would love to live in a world without budgets. In this world, I'd work remotely from some amazing island in the Pacific, drive my red Ferrari to the local market each day to pick up fresh fish for my dinner, and never have to count calories or wonder if I'm putting enough into my 401k for retirement.

This, however, is not reality (What???), and we all live in a world with budgets and a lot to accomplish with our available funds.

In my role as a solution architect, I'm often asked, "How can I reduce costs to get this e-learning/blended learning project within my budget?" Here are some of my favorite tips:

## Manage Your Own Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs)

You can seldom produce e-learning and corporate training projects without SMEs. Experts play several essential roles: representing audience, providing content and context, and reviewing courses for accuracy and effectiveness.

If you are able to find, compensate, and manage your own SMEs, you'll drive down the cost of your e-learning project, particularly if they are already on your full-time staff. If not, your e-learning vendor-partner will have to find SMEs for you — and they charge them to you as consultants.

## Provide Detailed and Documented Content

Gathering all of the content together and documenting any content that lives in any form —including in someone's head — is a great cost saving. Package these files together and send them off to your instructional designer, reducing the need for a full-blown needs analysis to more of a concise content analysis.

## Think of Your Training Project Budget Globally

If you have different buckets of money allocated to different projects, don't always think about your projects in silos.

For example, a client I am working with is currently building three different e-learning programs. They wanted to invest in updating their e-learning template with the first program, but didn't have the funds. When we looked at the other two programs, we realized the funds were available in one of the other projects; if we timed everything correctly, we could leverage the e-learning template across all the three projects.

## Reduce Seat Time by Using Performance Support Tools

I love job aids, and I have some strong opinions on their uses, as I wrote about in ["Job Aids... And If You Need Them."](#)

A great way to drive down costs is to push content out of the formal training event, and migrate it to job aids or other performance support tools. This reduces seat time, while still providing information to your learners in a manner that can often be more effective.

## Look Across Fiscal Years

While not technically reducing the cost of your training or e-learning project overall, being creative with financing can help you find additional budget.

You may not have all the funds to develop your dream project this year, but perhaps you can split the costs between two budget years. You can do this as either a two-phase approach, or simply by timing your project in a way that splits the invoicing across the two fiscal years.

It's in both your and your vendor's interest to increase value, either by reducing costs or doing more for the same budget. **TEL**



As a SweetRush Solution Architect, **Erin Krebs** is known for her ability to work with clients to capture both the big picture and the details, and to craft innovative solutions that work. She holds a Master's degree in learning systems design and development, and is a speaker and author on numerous topics, including learning techniques for Millennials.

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# Employee Training

## How social intranet helps improve training

 By Tim Eisenhauer

**B**ringing on new employees can be an exciting experience, and in some cases it may be one of the best ways to add a fresh burst of energy to an organization.

Perhaps as a result of the difficulties often associated with onboarding, many “higher-ups” dislike or cringe at the hiring process. Choosing the right person to fit a specific role can be hard enough as it is, but things are made even more stressful when it is time for new employees to be trained.

Today’s managers are turning towards social intranet software as a key vehicle for streamlining the process of training employees. The benefits associated with focusing on training each and every new member of an organization as thoroughly as possible are immense, and there’s little to lose in the process.

### How Social Intranet Software Improves Employee Training

Social intranet software comes along with a great deal of benefits, each of which can help take a business to an entirely new level. Document management, collaboration, content creation, and scheduling are just a few processes that social intranet software can help to streamline, and the possibilities are virtually endless once you and your team get familiar with how to utilize it to a great effect.

The same can be said for improving employee training, as each and every aspect of social intranet software makes onboarding new employees less stressful than it might otherwise be.

Here are a few examples of how social intranet software can be used to make the process of bringing on new employees easier and more efficient:

- **It provides your employees a comfortable space for communication**

There are a number of reasons why some professionals have a difficult time getting used to being part of a new team, chief among them being low levels of comfort. When an employee’s comfort levels feel strained, he or she will have a hard time communicating effectively, which can lead to a host of problems that can affect the onboarding process. Social intranet software creates a comfortable virtual space in which employees can communicate with one another without the stress that is sometimes associated with face-to-face communication or emails, making it an excellent vehicle for training employees.

- **Your new hires can learn by participation**

The ways in which some managers go about showing new employees the ropes can vary quite heavily in regards to efficacy. A common approach is to provide employees with training materials and ask them to take a written test once they feel as if they’ve internalized the documentation. What many people in leaderships don’t realize, however, is that this tactic does their organization very little favors and can even serve to alienate new employees. A well-designed social intranet is the perfect platform for allowing new employees to learn by experience rather than from an informational packet, and the benefits that come along with this method of onboarding can be immensely powerful.

- **Knowledge is built and learned through conversations**

One of the major benefits of using a social intranet is the fact that it can become a veritable knowledge base over time, regardless of whether

or not that’s your intention. As conversations happen between employees, the information that is exchanged can be saved and archived within the community – as wikis, videos, articles, blogs, or any other type of content. Collaboration is key to discovering important solutions, which is why social intranet software is the perfect tool for creating content and archiving it for informational and training purposes.

- **Robust search features make information and experts easy to find**

When someone is new to a company, they need to have access to guidelines and documentation. A big problem with utilizing paper documentation to onboard new employees is that it can take a great deal of time to find what one is looking for. This is especially true when one finds himself wading through a seemingly endless pile of documentation — and everyone has been there at least once or twice in their career. Social intranet software features a robust search feature that allows employees to find what they’re looking for within seconds, which can save countless amount of time that can be spent handling more important tasks.

- **It’s easy to reach out to individuals or groups**

Sometimes, the best way to get an answer or navigate an issue that might be standing in the way is to reach-out and ask a team member for a little help. If your employees use email as their only means of communication (which happens quite often today) connecting with experts within an organization for help or assistance can be difficult. With social intranet software, getting in touch with an individual or group of colleagues is simple, quick and effective, which means the chances that communication breakdown might become a problem will be relatively slim.

- **You can train entire teams with one strategy**

One of the struggles faced by modern businesses experiencing rapid growth is how to train a team of employees in a resource-friendly way. It can be expensive and time-consuming to train employees individually, and if everyone is going to work on the same project, doing so is not typically advantageous. Training employees via a social intranet means you can streamline the process immensely and get an entire team up to speed in the same amount of time as it may take to train one or two people.

With all these benefits, it’s easy to see why, and most importantly how, companies can benefit from training employees using social intranet software. **TEL**

*The article first appeared [here](#).*



**Tim Eisenhauer** is a co-founder and president of [Axero](#) maker of Communifire, a widely popular social business platform used for implementing social intranets, collaboration spaces, and social knowledge management. He is also the author of the popular eBook, [22 Surefire Ways to Boost Employee Engagement](#), a research-backed and data-driven look at 22 practices that will help you better engage your workforces, boost company productivity, and increase employee engagement.

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# Global Learning Community

## How to build

By Andrew Brown and Aneta Sokolowska



**B**uilding learning communities might seem like a hardship; but when you know the tricks, put your focus in the right place and loosen up your imagination a little bit; it can be fun!

Best practice for growing your learning community, as one of eight ways to support global workforce with learning technology.

### 1. Align your Community with a Need

The pain and anguish of creating a community area, populating it with content, cleaning your company's user's data, populating it with users and getting the right people assigned to the right community can be for naught if there's no need for them to go there. People need to have a reason to go to that community.

I'm in a lot of online communities. For example, I go to the [Microsoft Technet Centre](#) because I need answers to technical questions – in that community they have experts eager to help, scattered all over the world, so I can post questions to a forum and get answers within a day – for free! The community also has lots of resources, all available in the library for me to browse.

I'm also a fan of computer games and will join the global communities when I get new games. These communities satisfy several of my needs. I can get advice, tips (and cheats) from them, compare how much better I am at the game compared to others, set challenges and compete in tournaments. And whilst not all of my needs are learning based, the forums serve as great learning communities and are also great marketing for the product and great feedback loops for product managers.

When I work with clients setting up communities we try and find the needs of the whole community and then try and service those needs using all the features of the community as effectively as possible.

### Promote your Community

You may need to promote the community so people know it is there. The launch needs to be known to a wide audience who can participate from the start.

Your brand agency or brand team can really get stuck in here. We have clients who have used newsletters and online events to get people to visit in that first week and use the community. Prizes and competitions can help give the community that initial buzz that helps it stick with people as a memorable event.

Don't alienate people; the champagne launch party in Alaska may mean a lot of people in Alaska love the community; but those in Australia may feel left out. You need the global community to see the investment so they will be able to give back to it.

Make sure the forums are manned, populated with good topics and questions and the chat rooms have lively engaging and relevant chat. Keep the momentum going; usage stats or something of interest in the company newsletters is a good way to keep awareness going.

### Give away Ownership to your Community

The members of the community can keep that community going; don't be afraid to let that happen. You may get some negative comments, questions or feedback but the community spirit usually wins out. The needs of a learning community will drive what it needs to do and it's better to try and service the need organically, than try and service poorly by covering everything.

Remember, the community can service its own needs if it has the tools, spirit and freedom to do so. Altruism is a nice thing – don't try and kill it.

### Reward your Community – Make them Smile

Badges; achievements; charts and dashboards. You can reward people in your learning community for showing community spirit. This can take the form of community badges that go from bronze to platinum depending on the level of involvement.

Let people upload and share photos and stories; link to videos or even make their own. Let people reward each other; acknowledging answers to questions as correct, is a simple but effective way of saying thank you. Make the user profile area look and feel like individual trophy room; something to check back in on to see the improvements and new rewards.

### The Cycle of Life

Remember things die; it's the cycle of life. A community's needs may become no more. Everyone may be a master with no apprentices left to train. Don't spend time servicing a need that is no longer there. You can archive a learning community when it's not needed any more.

What are your thoughts on building learning communities? Do you have suggestions? Is there something that is left out? Let us know! **TEL**

*This article first appeared [here](#).*



**Andrew Brown** is a Business Analyst and Implementation Manager at Commelious. Andrew's interest in technology enabled learning started in college where he studied the use of the internet to enhance teaching in the classroom and then took his studies to the schools of North London to put it into practice. He made a break from teaching to work on content for the educational publishing sector; pioneering several online maths and science learning portals and communities for KS4 and 5.

Connect [Andrew Brown](#)  
Visit [www.commelious.com](http://www.commelious.com)



**Aneta Sokolowska** is a Marketing and PR Executive at Commelious Solution. Aneta joined learning and development industry in 2011, and since then learning and learning technologies are half the time on her mind.

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# Learning and Development

## Changing paradigms, emerging trends

By Heera Edwin



Technology is evolving constantly; it has seeped into our lives and has become a part of us. Every part of the world, every sphere of our lives, and every industry has been touched in some way or the other by technology. When technology seeped into the learning field some decades ago, nobody dreamed that it would forever change the way the world learned. However, learning has changed – not just in educational institutions, but in the learning and development (L&D) departments of industries as well. Across the globe, industries have welcomed this disruptive technology that has changed the way people think and relate to technology.

The Indian L&D industry has not escaped unscathed by the influence of this technology. Over the last few years it has seen a transformation in the learning field. In 2012, the Indian L&D industry was worth \$3.5 billion. Today, this number is much higher and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 15-18 percent.

With India set to become the world's third largest economy by 2028, the learning and development segment is prepared to grow at a tremendous rate, and this is especially true of the corporate training segment. Indian companies are expanding operations at home and overseas, and are paying particular attention to training and retraining their employees. Today, corporates are also faced with new challenges which include a geographically dispersed workforce, diminished dependence on classroom-based training, a short attention span of Gen Y employees, and training of a workforce that is located in remote locations. Technological advancements have given learning and development a new lease of life and L&D heads are enthusiastic to incorporate these new technologies into their organizational training.

However, with a myriad of technologies solutions to choose from, how can an organization choose the best?

As per a report by 24x7 Learning, in association with Grant Thornton IIM-K, titled 'Learning and Development: Changing Paradigms, Emerging Trends', the L&D industry is fast moving away from the conventional and is more in tune with international trends. For instance, major companies prefer performance to tenure - which is in

sharp contrast to the practice followed by most organizations previously. Secondly, some sectors in particular are making the transition from traditional training to technology-enabled learning. For example, pharmaceutical and retail sectors are fast moving to mLearning because of reduced costs and increased agility.

With reference to future trends, the report predicts that software-as-a-service (SaaS) or cloud model will dominate the LMS market. Another rising trend is that of social learning which is steadily on the rise. Eighty nine percent organizations in India are expected to increase time and effort they spend on L&D of their critical workforce in near future.

One of the most interesting statistics from the survey states, "84% of Indian organizations believe that e-learning is an efficient and cost effective tool for organizational learning."

The face of today's global workforce is changing, and the world is accepting and employing eLearning because it is believed to be a simple, concise, precise and successful method that effortlessly tackles today's workforce training challenges. It is also known to be cheaper, faster and a more effective way to train employees.

“

**Software-as-a-service (SaaS) or cloud model will dominate the LMS market. Another rising trend is that of social learning which is steadily on the rise.**

With India all set to enter a higher realm in the global market, it is critical for L&D heads and HR professionals to make a conscious decision on which technology will help take their organizations forward. However, it's not just about moving forward – it's also about equipping employees with the best, most relevant and successful method of learning that will increase their productivity and thereby carry their organization into the limelight. Corporate India now has a clear vision and greater insight into how it can reach the heights it aims to reach, through its employees. After all - employees are a company's greatest asset - an organization's competitive advantage - and critical to an organization's mission - now and in the future. **TEL**

Reference

[www.24x7learning.com/reports](http://www.24x7learning.com/reports)



Heera Edwin looks at the Content Marketing initiatives at 24x7 Learning. 24x7 Learning is one of the foremost pioneers in the eLearning field. Visit [www.24x7learning.com](http://www.24x7learning.com) Connect [Heera Edwin](#)



# 2015: Learning and Development

## Priorities and plans

By Thomas Hancock and Warren

**W**e recently polled about 50 learning and development (L&D) executives around the globe to understand, for 2015, where they intend to make development investments.

### Key Development Priorities for 2015

When we asked which development issues would be most critical to address across the next 12-18 months, most L&D executives indicated building the skills and capabilities of three key talent segments:

- \* Managers
- \* Senior executives
- \* High potential employees (HiPos)

This probably isn't all that surprising to most L&D executives, but what is interesting is the degree in which building skills and capabilities of these three segments have risen in importance over the course of just one year.

This time last year<sup>1</sup>, 35% of our poll responders ranked building the skills and capabilities of these three segments as most critical to address across the coming 12-18 months.

However, in our most recent poll<sup>2</sup>, nearly two-thirds of poll responders (64%) indicated that it was critical to develop managers, and more than half (53%) said the same for the senior executive and HiPo groups.

### Optimizing Your Development Investments

We've extensively researched development challenges and best practices specific to each of these three segments to help L&D executives optimize development investments in the New Work Environment: **Managers**

Employees are facing a rapidly changing and increasingly interconnected work environment, making the individual contributor who executes their work with oversight only from a manager or team leader a thing of the past in most organizations.

These widening employee networks create many opportunities for employees to learn from each other, yet most organizations continue to envision coaching as a one-way relationship between a manager and direct report.

It is essential that organizations broaden their view of coaching to include peers and direct reports; this allows for in-the-moment coaching that better serves employees' increasingly time-sensitive and diverse learning needs.

This also allows managers to focus on:

- \* Coaching employees on soft skills, not just job tasks;
- \* Connecting employees to additional sources of support; and
- \* Delivering coaching content that aligns with employees' daily work.

### Senior Executives

Organizations are increasing their investments in leadership development — both in absolute terms and as a proportion of overall L&D spending. Despite this, leadership development programs are falling. Failures can be traced back to the New Work Environment: senior leaders are managing more stakeholders, more global responsibilities, and more diverse responsibilities than they did three years ago.

Traditional leadership development focuses on Targeted Application — the ability to apply one's competencies to specific, known work situations. This approach is incomplete for today's requirements. The new work environment calls for Adaptive Application — the ability and mind-set to apply one's competencies to new, different, and unexpected work situations. Leading L&D functions:

\* **Foster an adaptive leader mind-set** — Instead of just building leader competencies, they develop the ability and mind-set to apply

competencies in an environment of constant and hard-to-predict change.

\* **Enable leaders to practice adaptation** — Instead of building deep expertise in handling specific situations, they enable leaders to practice adapting to new and unfamiliar situations.

\* **Activate performance support networks** — Instead of relying almost exclusively on the manager to support the leader, they equip leaders with an extended support system that includes their peers and teams.

### HiPos

The majority of organizations have a HiPo development program, but few programs succeed in improving key metrics such as HiPo performance, bench building, and business results.

Less than one-half of organizations report that their development investments have improved HiPo performance.

Over two-thirds state that their development investments have been ineffective at building a pipeline of successors.

We've identified three pitfalls that organizations commonly face when developing HiPos:

\* **Incremental skill building** — Organizations provide opportunities for incremental skill building, but fail to provide the high-risk learning experiences and support required to build future skills.

\* **Event-based networks** — Organizations connect HiPos to networks within formal development experiences, but do not provide 360-degree career support systems.

\* **Discontinuous development** — Organizations focus on event-based development, and fail to create sustained career development experiences.

To overcome these pitfalls, the best organizations engage in, what we call, 'three S' of HiPo development:

\* **Stretch\* HiPos beyond their current roles.** Design development opportunities that challenge HiPos to move beyond their comfort zone.

\* **Support\* HiPo development through 360-degree relationships.** Senior leaders are key; their attention to HiPo development can improve employee potential more than manager or organizational attention.

\* **Sustain\* HiPo career development by continuously reassessing their needs.** This also will help to remove employees who do not meet progression goals from the HiPo pool. **TEL**

*This article first appeared [here](#).*

### References

1. CEB Learning & Development Leadership Council's 2014 L&D agenda poll had an n of 74 and respondents could select up to 3 of 21 available response options to the question "Which of the following issues will be most critical for you to address across the next 12-18 months?"
2. CEB Learning & Development Leadership Council's 2015 L&D agenda poll had an n of 47 and respondents could select up to 8 of 20 available response options to the question "Which of the following issues will be most critical for you to address across the next 12-18 months?"



Thomas Hancock and Warren Howlett are senior directors at CEB, a member-based advisory company.

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Presentation 9-1-1: Your Survival Guide To Writing And Speaking Like The Pros!	Dec 8 2014	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	<a href="#">Register</a>
Building A Social Network Strategy To Engage Passive Candidates	Dec 8 2014	2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	<a href="#">Register</a>
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# Designing Partner/Reseller Training

## 9 must-consider topics

 By Gauri Reyes

 Online training is an effective way to arm your partners and value-added resellers with knowledge. It's scalable — you can train thousands at once while retaining your own corporate brand in the training materials. A highly trained, extended sales force can increase your revenue through increased sales of your products and services. And, you can sell your online training courses themselves to your partners and resellers, should you choose to do so.

When creating an online training program for your partners and resellers, consider the following topics:

### 1. Convey the Company Culture

Your partners and resellers are effectively an extension of your sales force. As they are often in front of your end customers and are effectively representing your products and services, expose them to your company culture, norms, behaviors, values, beliefs, and vision. The more you align your culture with theirs, at least when it comes to reselling your products and services, the more you can ensure a unified, positive experience to the end customer.

### 2. Opportunity Registration & Dispute Resolution

If you work with multiple resellers, your resellers could potentially compete for the same opportunity with the same end customer. Avoid sticky issues and reduce inter-reseller conflict by covering topics related to how to register customer opportunities, rules of engagement, and how to resolve disputes when two or more partners claim the right to call upon a customer.

### 3. Ask for a Performance

Make partners prove that they're ready to go in front of your customers. You can stipulate that partners complete a minimum set of courses, or a series, before they are allowed to resell your products/services. You can set-up training-based certifications and accreditation to give them the official stamp of approval that they're qualified to sell for you. Also, consider asking your partners to complete a "homework assignment" to prove that they're ready to hit the ground running. For example, ask a partner to present a product pitch to you (via video, for example) to prove their sales-readiness.

### 4. Position Top-producers as SMEs

If you have certified or named partners who have shown loyalty and dedication to your company by achieving a target sales number or other goal, consider positioning them as the "in team" as part of your reseller rewards structure. Beyond providing wholesale discounts, financial rewards or other perks, ask these top-producers to be your subject matter experts (SMEs) for other resellers. And, when possible, ask these SMEs to create additional online training modules for you, to add to your repertoire of reseller training content.

### 5. Ping Partners on their Training Needs

What do your partners want to better understand your product/service? What do they need from you in order to effectively partner with you? What existing training content needs to be updated to reflect the rapidly changing marketplace? In addition to phone, email and face-to-face conversations, add online training to your tool bag as another method to gather feedback. Incorporate quizzes and surveys in your online training and open up two-way communication through online collaboration tools to ensure that you are creating compelling training content and supporting your partners' ability to sell your product and services.

### 6. Reduce Churn Rate

Process efficiency is imperative, both internally and externally. Look for ways to streamline communication and reduce the need for lengthy

conversations, questions, and problem-solving sessions. Comb through the list of frequently asked questions by partners and resellers and create training content that addresses all questions. Provide clear instructions on who to call when, how to escalate issues, how/who to engage for specific types of questions, and where to find needed information on your website. Weave all these points into engaging, informative training and you've got a module that addresses a true business need.

### 7. Promos, Incentives, Offers... Compliance

Ideally, online training will be completed by every one of your partners or resellers, resulting in 100% compliance. Promotions, incentives, offers and other perks help towards increasing training completion rates. Consider adding a training module that covers these perks (formal certifications, continuing professional education credits, prizes, giveaways, rewards, volume discounts, etc.) to ensure that all your partners are aware of the rewards of completing (and learning) your online training offerings.

### 8. Positioning and Messaging

Conveying your product positioning and messaging to your partners is required. Create training content that covers what to say (who to target, etc.) to successfully sell your products and services, and what *not* to say (who *not* to target, etc.). Likely, this type of training will require frequent updates, so work content upgrades into your program plan.

### 9. Your Products and Services

Sensational training on your specific products and services is the crux of any partner or reseller training program. Product training is often the most boringly-delivered training content of all. But, without real product knowledge, at least functionally if not technically, partners or resellers will not be able to consistently deliver effective sales presentations in the field. Pull out all the stops to create unforgettable online training on your products and services.

### Reduce, Reuse, Recycle — Create a "Green" Training Program

Part of the value-add of online training is the ability to reuse content. If you view your partners and resellers as an extension of your workforce, chances are that a significant portion of your online training for your internal employees can be repurposed for your partners and resellers. Conversely, partner and reseller training (training on products, internal escalation paths and dispute resolution, and company culture, as examples) could be reused for internal employees.

Also, portions of your partner and reseller training might be appropriate for your end customers. If you've created excellent training content for one group, maximize your benefits by repurposing that content for other groups.

What topics do you find invaluable in your training programs for partners and resellers? What order would you list the topics (from least to most conventional use of training for these groups)? **TEL**

*The article first appeared on online training platform [Mindflash's](#) and [The Daily Mindflash blog](#).*



**Gauri Reyes** is a talent developer and learning leader with extensive experience in roles ranging from software management to managing the learning function in organizations. She has now added to her digital audit trail the admission that she is wary of her own digit audit trail and what it says about her, but hope that the admission encourages others to participate in the conversation. She is Principal Learning Strategist and CEO at Triple Point Advisors and Founder of the YOUth LEAD program.

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# Why Leadership Training Fails

## Six reasons



By Natalie King and Cynthia Kivland



Six Reasons Why Leadership Training Fails

About \$12 billion is spent annually on leadership programs, specifically on top leaders of the organization (Jack Zenger, *Forbes*, 2012). However, only 20% of the skills or knowledge taught in leadership training programs is transferred into new leadership habits.

“Leadership theory can be interesting, even intellectually stimulating, but at the end of the day, theory is not of much value. We’ve found, and numerous studies over the decades have documented, leaders learn most of what they know about leading from leading.” (Mike Miller, *Secret of Teams*, 2011)<sup>(8)</sup>. Real learning happens when leaders actually practice and apply the learning!

In reviewing the research, standards or best practices of effective leadership training include an interactive approach of role play and required practice. Accountability partners, or groups, are another standard that provides a process to review and record progress or setbacks. The use of pre and post-360° surveys is also a standard in leadership training programs to measure other’s perception of their leadership style. Using evaluation methods such as Kirkpatrick’s tools, KPIs or Balanced Scorecards is an often-used best practice in leadership programs.

Training coupled with mentoring, coaching and peer review are considered important for training transfer. Another standard is self-selection, which shows that those who self-select to participate are more motivated to practice new behavior. Finally, one other standard mentioned is a leader’s self-discipline to practice new habits daily.

Training guidelines have also been developed by the Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations (Cherniss, Goleman and Emmerling, 1998)<sup>(8)</sup>. As more organizations seek to develop emotional and social competencies in leaders, best practices were reviewed and 22 guidelines were established specifically to four developmental phases: preparation, training, transfer and maintenance, and evaluation. Examples of “gold standards” noted in the report are to maximize the learner’s choice, encourage people to participate, gauge readiness, build in support and provide opportunities to practice.

In summary, experiential interactivity, self-selection, practice, support and pre and post measures are the common standards required to impact real leadership change, especially if this change involves acquiring new habits.

It is clear that companies will continue to invest time and money in developing leaders, even when the return on investment and standards vary. The key question is: What are the common reasons leadership development programs fail to return a higher investment evidenced as permanent change?” The Liautaud Institute completed a comprehensive research review and concluded that there are six core reasons why leadership training fails:

- No long-term measures prove the permanency of training
- Lack of management support
- Leaders don’t walk the talk
- Most corporate training use Level 1 metrics
- The absence of need for audit and correction
- The absence of pre-screening measures to measure the compatibility of the trainee to the training or the training to the culture

From our research, developing leaders to inspire engagement that yields exceptional business outcomes will require more than attending a good or even exceptional training program. Unlearning the old and adopting the new behavior includes accepting the reality that a leader will have successes and failures. This high-level train-

ing requires an evidence-based process and continued emotional support until the new behavior becomes a habit.

So, how do you avoid a leadership training program failure and a loss of training investment dollars? You start by requiring a training program that requires top leadership support; continual practice as part of that ongoing training; accountability and measures that reports both progress and setbacks. A program that creates permanent behavior change teaches vulnerability (for connecting the group) and authenticity (for building relationships) that corrects and supports experiential learning.

As excerpted from Jack Phillips’ and Ron Drewstone’s book, “How to Measure Training Results”, most observers of the field have indicated that for performance practitioners, three things must be in place: 1) Training and performance improvement initiatives must be integrated into the overall strategic and operational framework of the organization. They cannot be isolated, event-based activities, or unrelated to the mainstream functions of the business. 2) There must be a comprehensive measurement and evaluation process to capture the contributions of human resource development and establish accountability. The process must be comprehensive, yet practical, and feasible as a routine function in the organization. A partnership relationship must be established with key operating managers, these key clients are crucial to the overall success of the training function.

The existing trend of ‘no-measures’ and short leadership courses may be changing. In 2010\*, a study proved the effectiveness of evidence-based leadership training, taught over a two-year period. That teaching program is now used by several leadership organizations to allow their CEO members to safely share personal, family, and business experiences, and learn from each other. These groups are continuing to meet once a month. Beginning in 2014, several companies and hospitals joined a consortium hoping to develop their own ten-week ‘evidence- based’ leadership course with short monthly follow-up meetings to audit changes from pre and post measures. That training hopes to record a continuing impact and increased effectiveness over one year. If the measures prove effective, they have all committed to spreading that training throughout their companies. **TEL**

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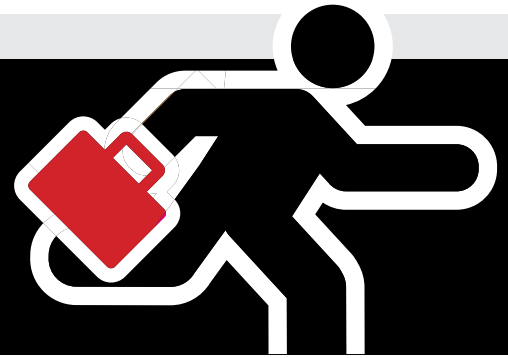
**Cynthia Kivland** is VP, Learning and Organizational Effectiveness, at The Liautaud Institute. Cynthia has a Masters in Counseling Psychology, doctoral studies in organizational psychology, credentials as a Board Certified Coach, Master Licensed Counselor, Graduate Emotional Intelligence (The Liautaud Institute) and Certified Leadership & Talent Management Coach. Cynthia launched learning and organizational consulting services for The Liautaud Institute.  
Call 312.442.0900



**Natalie King**, PhD, is Principal Researcher at The Liautaud Institute, overseeing all initiatives pertaining to leadership development and Emotional and Social Competency. She also serves to build key partnerships with Human Resources professionals in companies grossing over 100 million in revenue. Her speaking expertise include Leadership, Motivational, Self- Esteem, Career Development, Dealing with Trauma, Scientific Talks, Goal Setting, Work-Life Balance, Entrepreneurship, and Volunteering  
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