

# Impact performance through training-make it more than just another “TO DO”!

Training and development efforts are a critical component to a successful performance management strategy and ongoing learning opportunities to motivate employees. Ask just about anyone if they want to learn and you will likely get a resounding, “Yes!” Why then, does completing a training activity often become a thorn in the side of managers and employees alike?

There are many factors that can impact the value of training within your organization and unfortunately turn learning opportunities into tedious “to do’s”.

If learning is more of a “must-do” than a “want to” in your organization, take a look at the factors below to see what could be standing in the way of creating stronger links between training completion and performance achievement.

## I WANT MY LEARNING NOW...

The landscape of how people gather knowledge and information has changed dramatically and employees want to have on-demand access to resources, as well as peer input or best practices in the moment they need it. Simply telling employees what they need to learn is going to leave them feeling underpowered and unenthusiastic about the content.

Employees need access to self-directed and peer-to-peer learning opportunities in addition to “formal” training structures. Additionally, managers need the ability to easily access and assign training to provide prescriptive solutions when coaching or giving feedback so that it is relevant to the achievement of goals and objectives. If resources are not readily available or relevant to performance success and goal achievement, even the best training content will fall short.

## ..AND I WANT IT FAST!

The use of devices has changed things. The new rapid demand and rapid delivery method of gathering information, many say, is the major cause of the human attention span decreasing by 4 seconds since 2000 –to an average of 8 seconds, according to a recent Microsoft study. Learning needs to be packaged in a way that allows individuals to consume small bits of information at a time so that the brain can process it better. Graphics and video are an integral part of delivering information in micro-chunks, and interactive components such as quizzes or games are far more engaging for learners than more traditional text. When possible, learning assets should be mobile-friendly; people aren't as likely to be on desktops as they used to and they use their phones and gadgets to gather information, so they should have easy access to their learning with fast loads and in small chunks.

## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

We all know that learning by doing is the way to go. Just take a look at the suggested guidelines around how humans learn

- 5% of what they learn when they've learned from lecture
- 10% of what they learn when they've learned from reading
- 20% of what they learn from audio-visual
- 30% of what they learn when they see a demonstration
- 50% of what they learn when engaged in a group discussion
- 75% of what they learn when they practice what they learned

The reason that practice is so powerful is that it gives opportunity to make mistakes, which in turn forces concentration. In a world where our attention

spans are getting shorter, we need all the help we can get with concentration, therefore, opportunities to immediately practice is pivotal but often overlooked. Delivering live or virtual lectures or assigning online content alone will only take training so far. Hands on practice time should be a standard component of your training philosophy and an environment of trial and error should be allowed in order to maximum learning to take place. And, by making learning mobile-friendly, employees can access information and practice in real life settings.

## **DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO!**

Finally, one of the best ways to ensure strong links between training and performance is to provide ongoing coaching. Coaching does not mean hovering over someone to tell them exactly how to do something or point out what they are doing wrong. Coaching is the practice of engaging in a two way conversation to provide support, occasionally give advice, and most importantly, ask thought provoking questions to help the other person learn and grow in order to have more impact.