

The Well-Designed Workplace Learning Experience- ***Helping employees excel***

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The average person between ages 18 and 65 spends about one third of his/her life engaged in work related activities. As a result, the workplace is the where a majority of our personal and professional development as adults occurs. As human beings, we learn in a variety of ways. Our individual learning style is shape by our perceptions and preferred method of processing. Our individual learning interest and capacity is supported (or not) by the environment in which we learn. If it is negative or critical, employees may stay and do the best they can, but they may never be at their best. Research supports the idea that positive learning experiences provide the most effective learning and skill development environment. It builds trust and motivates employees to want to learn more.

Given these truths, it makes sense for employers to be proactive providers of positive learning environments that support comprehensive and effective attitude, knowledge and skill development. This type of environment generates employees who are inspired learners and this type of learner will have a positive impact on the bottom line for your business.

Vision and Inspiration

You have a vision for the future of your business. And, you see your employees, managers and supervisors growing and developing in alignment with that vision. You are inspired to provide the resources to make that happen so that all new learning and skill development is easily integrated into the work of your business. There are many ways to offer the learning experiences needed, most of which are typically done in isolation from the others.

Examples include:

- on-the-job training
- supervisor coaching
- peer mentoring
- professional coaching
- reading resources
- observation
- virtual learning
- trial and error
- orientation programs
- workshops
- retreats
- videos
- performance management

- and more.....

What if you used a programmatic (or blended) learning approach? And, what if you incorporated into all of these approaches a learning environment model that inspires employees to be excited about learning more and doing their best? Imagine the expansion in awareness, increased confidence and ultimately greater competence your employees receive. Imagine this learning happening quickly and being more fully integrated into the work. Imagine the possibilities.

The first stage in the development of your workplace learning approach is identifying your vision. This includes the WHAT and the WHO. What do you want learned and who do you want learning it?

Bring your workplace learning approach to reality by designing and developing:

- The Subject Matter (in relation to the target learners)
- Desired Transformation (what new belief, understanding or acceptance they will take on)
- Learning Experience (what will the experience feel, look and be like for the learners)
- Purpose/Goals (what is the point of the learning you offer)
- Learning Competencies (the new awareness, knowledge and skills employees attain)

HOW you achieve the WHAT that you have envisioned is folded into the design of your workplace learning approach. There are many elements to consider in creating an effective and inspired design including who will be involved in facilitation of the learning as well as your learner's Level of Mastery in the Subject Matter. A basic outline serves as a guide toward developing the content sequence and learning strategies. In addition, you want to incorporate three distinct LEARNING FRAMES.

Attitude Built on Awareness

Recall a time when you discovered a new understanding of something you believed to be true. This is a moment when you become aware that a perception or "knowing" can be changed simply by seeing it from another viewpoint or through access to more information or new experiences. Once aware you find you feel and think differently. This results in a new attitude. With a new attitude you may have found greater openness and readiness to learn more about the subject matter at hand. This LEARNING FRAME is supported in the inspired (safe, respectful, non-judgmental) learning environment where the facilitator and learners are clear about the purpose and desired transformation.

Confidence Built on Knowledge

As you soak in the knowledge of a particular subject matter and integrate it into your life and work, you tend to feel a greater sense of confidence. With confidence you are able to take on new risks and challenges. You can stretch beyond your comfort zone. This ability enhances the awareness and knowledge learning. We design the workplace learning approach content to bring in new information that enhances the learning and allows for the building of competency in the subject matter.

Competence Built on Skill Practice

Awareness and knowledge are the materials used to build the foundation of attitude and confidence that support learners to begin to practice new skills. Each practice of the skill enhances competence and develops core skills. With competence and skill development learners are willing to take calculated risks, expand thinking and create new ideas.

Create the workplace learning environment that generates employees who are inspired learners that have a positive impact on the bottom line for your business.

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“Our desire is to facilitate learning in a way that is honoring, experiential, underwhelming, fun, confidence-building, practical, effective and inspiring.”

Resources

Learn to Inspire™ -a comprehensive start to finish learning and development model for the creation, design and implementation of inspired blended learning programs for business.

Linda McDonald & Deb Waterstone; www.learntoinspire.com

The Foundation for Inspired Learning; Peter Reding; www.inspiredlearning.org