

In today's hyperconnected and technologically-driven work environment, successful organizations must constantly plan, respond and adjust to ever-changing market conditions in order to maintain a competitive advantage. By taking a "business first" approach to learning, organizations can capitalize on their training investment by developing adaptable, data-driven learning solutions that deliver on shifting business objectives.

to rethink your learning strategy, it's time to make it a point to routinely and consciously review and modify these strategies to meet changing business needs.

To understand and obtain drivers of business results, learning organizations need to have access to measurable data. A data-driven learning strategy is critical for learning and development. Essentially, better data leads to better design decisions and in turn creates better results. This means establishing a baseline approach to identifying and developing a learning strategy by gathering and linking together sources of quantitative and qualitative data that is traceable between all aspects of the business.

Below are several benefits and strategies to developing a data-driven learning strategy.

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FOCUSING ON STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Offentimes, it can be challenging to prove training has a positive return on investment. As a result, many organizations are hesitant to spend the time and financial resources to implement strategic training programs. However, to be successful and competitive in today’s business environment, organizations must ensure that their training investment generates a business impact and increases the bottom line.

Learning leaders view training as an essential element in enhancing the performance of the business. But in order to determine how effective a training program is, learning and development professionals must identify what an organization needs and does not need. A data-driven learning strategy that focuses first and foremost on strategic alignment to business objectives connects business expectations and the learning outcomes needed to reach or exceed strategic goals.

According to Training Industry CEO, Doug Harward, an overwhelming number of professionals (79%) in training organizations view strategic alignment as the single most important process capability. In recent years, learning leaders have made the gradual shift to a business-centric learning approach by ensuring training programs meet organizational goals before addressing how learners access the training itself.

Identifying business objectives and defining performance success metrics establishes a solid foundation for implementing a successful data-driven learning strategy.

IDENTIFYING PERFORMANCE SKILLS GAPS

Collecting and measuring data analytics is not a new concept to learning and development professionals. The challenge is obtaining the right data that links to improved performance. The abundance and influx of information that is constantly collected as a result of big data technology has helped organizations identify business problems, and at the same time, become increasingly aware of the performance skills gap.

As a result, organizations have started to shift the way they approach corporate learning initiatives by addressing the way knowledge is delivered and consumed. It has become necessary for organizations to be proactive and stay one step ahead of the challenges that may arise. Successful organizations understand the importance of gathering the right type of data, analyzing behavior and using predictive analytics to decrease the gap between training and the applicability of learned knowledge on the job.

Adopting a data-driven learning strategy takes into consideration business goals, past experiences and performance outcomes, and enables organizations to create high-impact learning strategies and solutions that ultimately lead to better decision-making capabilities and proficiency.

INCREASING SPEED TO PROFICIENCY

There’s a difference between an employee who can do their job and an employee who can do their job proficiently. Data-driven learning strategies provide a solid foundation to build awareness and skill in the workforce. Implementing efficient and effective learning processes that not only address performance skills gaps, but enhance productivity is key to capitalize on an organization’s investment in training.

A one-time training event does not lead to an increase in speed and mastery of the skill. It takes a combination of training, reinforcement and application to gain true proficiency. Based on data-driven learning strategies, designing the learning process to develop proficiency means ensuring skills are applicable and transferable on the job. This means designing and creating evidence-based training solutions that have the ability to transform organizations through effective and adaptable learning strategies.



Companies that heed the need to increase speed to proficiency stay relevant in today's competitive market.

USING METRICS TO PREDICT AND VALIDATE THE DIRECTION L&D SHOULD TAKE IN TERMS OF TRAINING

At the end of the day, it comes down to business results. How does an investment in training affect business performance and the organization as a whole? A data-driven learning strategy is a critical component that enables L&D professionals to tailor learning outcomes to meet business expectations.

The goal of any training program is to establish a standardized solution that increases efficiency and effectiveness. Implementing a measurement strategy, gathering data and utilizing it to better align performance and learning initiatives is essential to get the most out of your training investment.

By using qualitative and quantitative data, organizations have better insight into the development needs of their workforce. This insight will allow learning and development to build better programs that target the right objectives, saving time and resources. Ultimately, better performing



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employees lead to greater business outcomes, satisfaction and success.

TAKING AN ACTIVE APPROACH

It's all about staying one step ahead of the competition. Organizations that take a "business first" approach to learning understand the importance of being proactive, adapting and adjusting to meet the demands of the marketplace today. A data-driven learning strategy enables organizations to design models to quickly realign and adapt to changing organizational realities, better encourage employee engagement, build a strong organizational culture, develop innovative leaders and drive exceptional performance.