

Innovation in the Field of HRM (Training and Development)

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ABSTRACT

INNOVATION is a core value in the field of HRM. In the globalisation era, to compete and sustain in a long run, a business establishment must be innovative and foster the culture of innovation by tapping the competency of human resources. Many researchers have suggested that creativity makes an important contribution to organizational effectiveness for the long-term survival of organizations, because it enables organizations to remain competitive in a rapidly changing environment and achieve a competitive advantage. Thus, encouraging and fostering creativity is a strategic choice of every successful organization.

Training and development is an essential growth factor that can stimulate the growth of HRM. Several studies show that companies that master innovation have invested considerably in training and development programs. In these initiatives, employees can develop their creativity and their problem-solving skills, becoming better at adapting to change and improving their flexibility.

Learning and development are considered an important perk by the young workers. The young generation of the workforce requires new kinds of personal and professional training from their employers and isn't hesitant to leave the employers they are dissatisfied with. Encourage each individual to develop their unique talent and assert it in a stimulating working environment.

1. Introduction

We are living in the knowledge economy, **where knowledge is power**. Helping people learn, innovate and share knowledge is one of the building blocks of organizational success in a competitive world. training and Development is, thus, not merely an HR agenda but a key priority for business leaders, including the CEO. The top management is concerned about what and how their people learn, in a bid to ensure they surpass productivity expectations like never before. We therefore see CEOs investing heavily in the latest technologies to make learning more "available" and "accessible" anywhere and anytime. It is not just the top management; the everyday employee too is looking at learning differently. Rather than just another classroom training, learning is being taken seriously, and employees want to learn the way they engage in the personal lives—at the tap of a button on their smartphones. User-friendly and intuitive learning interfaces, personalized content that truly benefits each learner, and everywhere learning are just some of the new-age learning trends, driven by employee expectations.

2. Investing in Employee Engagement

Attracting and retaining young employees has been one of the biggest talent challenges to CEOs. The relationship with technology has set millennials apart from their senior colleagues. Young workers prefer instant access to information, constant feedback, fast progression and a modern corporate management style that integrates technology into daily work life. Millennials also value the opportunity to learn and develop a strong set of competence and transferable skills and consider that as a critical stepping stone that helps them to

not only advance in their current jobs but also grow in their future careers.

3. Digitizing Training

Different from the past generation, the 21st-century employees are digital natives – mobiles, laptops, and social media have always been an important part of their lives. Growing up in the digital world, it's no surprise that millennials expect access to the same level of technology at work that they are used to in their free time. 78% of millennials think that being able to access their own devices help them work more efficiently.

As tech-savvy users, young workers are comfortable with digital learning environments and consider traditional methods as outdated and rigid. 50% of millennials think they don't need to be in a classroom to learn.

However, according to a survey by Deloitte, only 40% of companies are 'ready' to transform their corporate training, only 6% find themselves excellent at providing mobile learning, and only 5% find themselves excellent in utilizing rich media like videos and audio in their programs.

4. Making Learning Flexible Anywhere and Anytime

The nature of social media has led millennials to expect instant answers and want information to be available at their fingertips (through hand-held devices). According to a research by Google, 87% of millennials tend to keep their smartphones on their side day and night.

By utilizing mobile devices, companies can make training accessible to employees anywhere and anytime and enable employees to flexibly control their learning. The small screen size and the on-the-go nature of mobile devices make mobile the best distribution method for micro learning – a way of teaching and delivering content by breaking it into short, bite-sized pieces that are easy for learners to complete and remember. Learners can for example access and complete a small training section that last from 1 to 2 minutes during their commute time. Mobile learning also makes it possible to continue training offline. By downloading the training materials to their mobiles, learners can still access the content even if they don't have the internet connection.

5. Personalizing Training Content

Personalization is the practice of tailoring and delivering individualized messages according to the wants and needs of each user. When it comes to learning, besides the demand for access whenever, wherever, and however they want it, the young generation also prefers the content delivered to be targeted for themselves. According to a survey by Bond, 55% of millennials would like access to personalized services and experiences. Another study shows that 90% of companies agree that personalized learning supports their employees' needs in continuous development.

Personalized learning also saves employees' time. Social media platforms with constantly updated news feed give millennials an expectation to absorb information fast and on-the-go.

6. Simple and Intuitive

No one has the time to invest hours in skill upgradation at a time when work deliverables take priority. Learning should be such that the employee logs in quickly, learns quickly and can refresh his or her knowledge just as quickly and effectively. Simple, intuitive user interfaces where the employee can figure out navigations himself or herself, are the norm today. Attention spans are low and employees want instant gratification even when they learn. The answer is to create beautiful and seamless experiences without glitches.

7. Customised Content

Role-based learning is in vogue, as employees wish to learn what helps propel their careers. Learning is becoming more self-directed, with the choice of what and how to learn shifting to the employee. Accordingly, the content too must be personalized to the role, locations, career aspirations, personal interests and so on. Only then will employees take interest in learning.

8. Social and Collaborative

The age when individual employees logged into their system to gain knowledge individually is slowly dwindling. We can see the rise of knowledge management as a core learning and development area, with social learning platforms and portals helping employees share and express their learnings. Learning communities, peer-to-peer learning sessions, social

media-like learning platforms are some of the ways to make this happen.

9. Needs Assessment

Not all of your employees have the same level of understanding, preparation, skill or experience. They also have individual expectations, each of them based on their particular career path and aspirations. Your job is to find out what your starting level is and where they want to get. Naturally, it's also your job to correlate those goals with the company's objectives, what you need your employees to know and the level that they are expected to reach to ensure performance. One of the top 3 reasons why employees leave a company is the lack of development opportunities. Keep an eye on your team's Happiness Index. Use Hppy to ask questions and poll employees, inviting them to also send anonymous feedback with their honest needs and expectations. This process will also help you gain employee commitment and ensure their willingness to participate in the programs because they want to, not because they have to. After all, you'll be delivering information that they want to obtain because it will help them grow further.

10. Crafting the Curriculum

Based on the results of your needs assessment, you have a clear starting point of how the agenda for your training and development program will look like. Using your strategic overview of what employees want and need, what the company wants and needs and how it all links together, you can start drafting your curriculum. Start with your company's objectives, such as stimulating innovation and initiative. Set overall objectives for the entire program, as well as specific objectives for each individual block or session in the agenda. Involve your management body in this planning process to make sure that their needs are also met and incorporated in the objectives you've set. Be careful not to fall into a common trap and educate too broadly. 91% of companies usually rely on standard, enterprise-wide ethics and compliance instructional programs, preventing employees from receiving targeted information to help them in their day-to-day work. To keep employees in the loop and make sure you're on the right track, you could send an initial draft for feedback. The same goes for the management team, constantly ask for feedback and suggestions from their part as well.

11. Preparing and Delivering the Agenda

Decide on who will be delivering the sessions: internal staff, external guests or both. Having employees and management involved in delivering sessions can be a great way to improve work relationships, foster engagement and share knowledge. It depends on the objective for each session. Together with your speakers, go through the entire flow of the curriculum. Discuss the best ways to deliver your sessions. I'd recommend combining several methods, such as the use of lecture and audio-visual techniques; hands-on methods, like on-the-job training and behavioural modeling; and group-building methods such as team training and adventure learning. A mixture of these different methods can enhance the creative, problem-solving, and people skills of employees.

Passive learning, where employees are expected to just sit back and listen to a number of facts presented to them, is considerably less effective than active learning, where they get a chance to get involved and use what they've learned.

12. Feedback and Follow-up

After all the hard work you've put into organizing and delivering this program, it's sometimes such a relief to be over with it that you stop there. As tempting as that might be, it's also a dangerous mistake. You need to know how the program turned-out, what the success rate of every objective is, what improvements can be made in the next edition and, most importantly, how people feel. Here's where Happy comes in most handy: it gets the pulse of every employee, the general state of your team and can also provide you with critical feedback. Honest, anonymous feedback that you can use to assess the success of the program and plan your future steps. If your primary objective for this training and development program was to stimulate innovation, your follow-up strategy should be a clear action plan that does just that: stimulate

innovation. Come up with activities and projects that build on the information delivered and create an active learning environment, where employees can push their creativity to the maximum.

13. Conclusion

New-age learning is not just about knowledge dissemination, it is about creating an engaging and immersive learning experience. L&D professionals must turn to the latest technology to be able to deliver on this learning need. Innovation in learning is what will help create a "learning organization", as proposed years before by management guru Peter Senge. A training and development program is the best way to encourage innovation and creativity in your company. It's also a great way to retain your best talent and push your company's growth. Make sure you follow these essential steps: needs assessment, designing a curriculum, preparing and delivering the agenda, getting feedback and following up on it. Most importantly, constantly communicate with employees, and build the program to fit their necessities.