Turning Top Talent into Top Performers

Using HCM Technology to Manage
Learning and Development

For all that's been reported about the looming talent shortages faced by today's global enterprises, little has been done to ensure that talent—once retained—actually sticks. Indeed, although careers and learning rose to second place in rated importance, with 83 percent of executives identifying these issues as important or very important.[1] Still, only 37% of employers today indicate their organization is effective at using technology to provide employees access to career management tools and resources., something is clearly lacking[2,] That something would be a clear and simple path to the education and training essential for professional development and organizational success.

Boost Performance and Engagement with a Modern Learning Management System

Even the best job in the world will eventually lose its luster if there's no room to grow. Likewise, a job that ceases to be challenging will also likely cease to be engaging. When that happens, your employee is already halfway out the door.

So how do you stem this exodus? You do so by offering the learning and development opportunities that will allow your employees to grow professionally. And you do so not just because today's workers demand it—expecting the same kind of easy-to access continuous learning they've experienced in their own educations—but also because your business demands it. With the economy improving and technology advancing at breakneck speed, even your most experienced staff—managers, sales teams, and professionals—need to continually refresh their skills (and add new ones) if your company is to maintain a competitive edge.

Yet saddled by outdated learning management systems and not sure how to make the transition to employee-centered learning, many organizations struggle to provide the training and development options that are key to retaining talent and molding leaders.

For starters, the first generation of learning management solutions—which many enterprises still rely on—consist of little more than simple online course catalogs that launch, track, and mark the completion of classes. There's no integration with talent management solutions. And there's no way for employees to interact with educational content via the mobile devices or social media applications of their choosing. To make matters worse, many such systems are managed by training departments that have become bottlenecks themselves as they struggle to deliver disparate content through separate systems to a wide variety of employees.

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[1] 2017 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends

[2] Willis Towers Watson, Global findings report for the 2016 Global Talent Management and Rewards and Global Workforce Studies

The first step in improving training is identifying the types of learning content available. Falling into three primary categories, the offerings are remarkably broad.

FORMAL

» eLearning

» Instructor-led training

» Virtual classrooms

» Seminars

» Simulations and games

» Assessments

ON-THE-JOB

» Development planning

» Reference materials

» Performance support tools

» Customer/peer feedback

» Rotational assignments

» After-action reviews

ON-DEMAND AND SOCIAL

» Search

» Expert directories

» Books and articles

» Podcasts, videos, blogs

» Learning portals

» Forums and social networks

» Coaching and mentoring

The result: With no way to go outside the formal learning process and no easy way to upload, track, and distribute learning content to multiple audiences, workforce knowledge is going untapped and revenue opportunities are being missed. The good news? A modern, cloud-based learning and development solution that's part of an integrated human capital management (HCM) system can turn this situation around by linking investments in people to bottom-line business results, the right integrated learning management system can help you maximize talent, drive performance, and increase engagement throughout the employee life cycle. Here are some things to look for in a modern learning and development solution:

» **Centralized content management and delivery.** Your learning content maybe as varied as your workforce, but it should be accessible all the time. A good learning and development solution will provide a single point of access for online, recommended, and required learning for classroom, virtual, and on-the-job training, as well as for certifications and blended and social learning. It should also provide a place for employees to access content and share experiences via the device of their choosing.

» **Easy content creation and collaboration.** In a continuous-learning environment, everyone is an educator and should be part of a learning community. Employees not only take the initiative to improve their own skills, they actively share their expertise with others. A good learning and development solution can make anyone a content creator with a flexible interface, rapid authoring tools, and a host of content management features that allow for quick and easy content creation, management, reuse, and distribution.

» **Real-time progress tracking.** Traditional learning management systems registered when employees signed up for and completed courses, but not much more. Not so with modern integrated learning and development solutions. A good one can provide immediate insight into which users are registered for which courses, and then track their progress to ensure completion. It can even track web related learning activities like taking a quiz or clicking on a game.

» **Personalized training**. Recognizing that the sales team will require different process training than the manufacturing-floor team and that marketing workers will require different training still—in a pattern that's repeated across the organization— modern learning and development solutions make it easy to tailor content to learner. The best offer flexible interfaces—in the form of web-based portals and subportals—that can be populated with the content, administrative controls, workflow configurations, and branding appropriate to each audience area and set of external users.

» **Powerful analytics**. With no good way to measure and report on the effectiveness of learning programs, training organizations have long struggled to justify their multi-million-dollar budgets. This problem disappears with the right learning and development solution, which allows you to assess everything from learner reactions to learning acquired, as well as schedule and configure reports according to the needs of your organization and employees

Four Reasons Why: The Key Components of a Modern Learning and Development Solution

While each organization's education and development needs will be unique—and the ideal learning platform should be flexible enough to serve them all—there are a few key components that are vital to any integrated learning and development solution. The following subsections describe why you need them and what they are.

1. DRIVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: LEARNING MANAGEMENT

By now, everyone knows that engagement drives retention. But what drives engagement? According to Deloitte's "Global Human Capital Trends 2017," careers and learning rose to second place in the top trends by importance. The trick for modern enterprises is delivering those learning opportunities where, when, and how workers desire them.

For most organizations, this means moving from a "push" model of training—where employees are invited to attend scheduled training sessions—to one in which employees can access learning content continuously. Academics call this the "pull" model of learning. To those entering the workforce today, it's simply the norm—the one-click, on-demand access to tailored educational content that they've encountered in schools and businesses for years.

A modern learning management system brings this type of education to the enterprise by offering a centralized platform for delivering everything from formal to informal training, expertise sharing, apprenticeships, coaching, just-in-time training, and more. Easy to configure and use, such systems are accessed through web-based portals that can be customized to address the needs and business objectives of each group in your organization. Perhaps best of all, they provide the detailed reporting required to let you measure and demonstrate the impact of your learning initiatives.

2. FACILITATE LEARNING: CONTENT MANAGEMENT

As any educator knows, teaching involves more than just dumping a pile of content on learners. At most enterprises, the process starts with developing and parsing training materials and then continues with tailoring that training content to a variety of audiences, keeping it up to date for compliance and certifications, and making it accessible whenever and wherever learners are ready to receive it.

For organizations with no centralized, integrated learning management system, this has proved difficult. Faced with the double-edged sword of needing to deliver fresh and relevant content to every group and department across the enterprise but not wanting to reinvent the wheel each time they do so, many training and HR departments have been frustrated by their inability to reuse existing content easily or inexpensively.

A modern learning and development system with a strong content management component changes that scenario by providing a raft of course and content creation tools and a flexible interface that make it easy for instructors to produce and distribute training materials appropriate to a wide range audiences. And because all of these

Only 33 percent of American workers are engaged at work. At the other end, 16 percent of employees are actively disengaged—they are miserable in the workplace and destroy what the most engaged employees build. "The remaining 51 percent of employees are not engaged—they're just there"

STATE OF THE AMERICAN WORKPLACE-GALLUP PANEL: 2017

» Easily publish user generated
content to employees and
managers

» Create media rich tutorials
comprised of video, formal
learning, documents or external
sources

» Learn anywhere, anytime on
your chosen device

» Managers and administrators
can prescribe learning to their
team and track progress

» Automate learning assignments
to learner groups based on
business rules

» Embed learning in HR and talent
processes (contextual learning)

» Blended learning plans

» Scalable and secure Oracle
Cloud infrastructure

» Personalized content

» Centralized learning delivery,
management, and tracking

» Easy-to-customize user
interfaces—no coding required

» Actionable insights into learning
initiatives and employee
development

» Revenue stream from e-
commerce

training tools and materials are hosted in a central location, access is instantaneous and learners can see the updated material immediately. But it doesn't stop with the training materials you create using your own system. The right learning and development solution will also let you import training content created with third-party tools or acquired from external content vendors. The latter, especially, comes as a boon at a time when instructional content—including the massively popular massive open online courses (or MOOCs)—is popping up everywhere. Your employees will want to take advantage of it all; now you can lead them to it.

3. PROVIDE INSIGHT: REPORTING AND ANALYTICS

While it may seem ironic that a discipline built around delivering insights would be unable to deliver any meaningful insights into the impacts of its own offerings, such was the case in the beginning with eLearning. This is because the first generation of learning management systems provided little means of tracking learners' progress, improving performance, or determining which learning activities were the most effective. As a result, HR and training departments were left struggling to justify multi-million-dollar education budgets with little hard data to back up their efforts.

Over the years, learning management systems improved and detailed information on eLearning activities became available. However, HR organizations were still unable to do much with this data because they lacked standardized reporting tools for use across the entire HCM suite. In the absence of such, all of this valuable eLearning data was being viewed in a vacuum.

The best modern learning and development solutions bring context back into the equation with enhanced reporting systems that collect and integrate data from throughout the HCM system and learning and videos are embedded throughout the HR processes. For an example, an employee views his/her paycheck, and they can click on a video that explains the details on that paycheck. With such systems in place, organizations can finally see how their investments in training are paying off in performance, succession planning, goal achievement, organizational readiness, talent acquisition and more.

4. FILL SKILLS GAPS: LEARNING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The great paradox of talent management today is that although global unemployment numbers remain high, organizations are still having a difficult time filling key positions. Experts pose a number of explanations for this skills gap—including advancing technology, an education system that's failing to keep pace, and the changing workplace—but the fact is, to address the problem, enterprises need to stop pointing the finger at others' failings and take a good, hard look at their own employee development programs.

This is because without clear insight into internal growth opportunities or access to the training that will allow them to move up the corporate ladder, employees are likely to become disengaged. When this happens, your most important source of skills and talent will dry up as valuable employees seek opportunities elsewhere.

A modern learning and development system that's implemented as part of a complete HCM solution helps solve this problem by combining learning data with core HR data and business intelligence to deliver training and development programs that can be tailored to individual career paths while also aligned with organizational goals.

With such a system in place, employees get the tools they need to map their professional development; managers get the data they require to identify and fill skills gaps; and the leaders of the future emerge as both employees and managers gain insights into how current competencies fit with future job requirements.

Make Training Matter: Cultivate Your Talent and Expand Your Workforce with a Modern Learning Experience

Building the workforce of tomorrow requires taking a good, hard look at your workforce today—and then offering the training and development those employees need to take their skills (and your business) into the future. This means providing educational content that's tailored to learner, delivered to the device of the learner's choosing, and consumed on-demand. It also means offering a centralized learning environment that's flexible enough that administrators can easily adapt it to the constantly-evolving (and highly specific) needs of each audience and content area.

Oracle Learning and Development provides just such a solution. Oracle's Learning Cloud helps shift the corporate learning paradigm to one that enables employees at all levels to participate in learning communities, collaborate, leverage system-generated recommendations and learn contextually regardless of their location.

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