

The Process of Learning and Development

Key concepts and terms

- Bite-sized training
- Blended learning
- Coaching
- Connectivity
- Criterion behaviour
- Development
- Experiential learning
- Formal learning
- Informal learning
- Instruction
- Just-in-time training
- Learning
- Learning contract
- Learning culture
- Learning and development
- Learning management system
- Learning portal
- Mentoring
- Personal development plan
- Planned experience
- Self-directed (self-managed) learning
- Self-paced learning
- Self-reflective learning
- Systematic training
- Terminal behaviour
- Training

Learning outcomes

On completing this chapter you should be able to define these key concepts. You should also know about:

- The distinction between learning and training
- E-learning
- Self-directed learning
- Planned experience
- Transferring training
- Informal and formal learning
- Blended learning
- Personal development planning
- Training
- Effective training practices

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to define and explain the processes and approaches involved in learning and development including informal and formal learning, e-learning, blended learning, development and training. Putting these into practice through identifying learning needs, planning and implementing learning and development programmes and evaluating learning is dealt with in Chapter 42.

Learning and development defined

Learning and development is the process of acquiring and developing knowledge, skills, capabilities, behaviours and attitudes through learning or developmental experiences. It is concerned with ensuring that the organization has the knowledgeable, skilled, engaged and committed workforce it needs.

Learning

Learning is the means by which a person acquires and develops new knowledge, skills, capabilities, behaviours and attitudes. As explained by Honey and Mumford (1996): ‘Learning has happened when people can demonstrate that they know something that they did not know before (insights, realizations as well as facts) and when they can do something they could not do before (skills).’

Learning is a continuous process that not only enhances existing capabilities but also leads to the development of the skills, knowledge and attitudes that prepare people for enlarged or higher-level responsibilities in the future.

Development

Development is concerned with ensuring that a person's ability and potential are grown and realized through the provision of learning experiences or through self-directed (self-managed) learning. It is an unfolding process that enables people to progress from a present state of understanding and capability to a future state in which higher-level skills, knowledge and competencies are required.

Training

Training involves the application of formal processes to impart knowledge and help people to acquire the skills necessary for them to perform their jobs satisfactorily.

Comparison of learning and training

Learning should be distinguished from training. 'Learning is the process by which a person constructs new knowledge, skills and capabilities, whereas training is one of several responses an organization can undertake to promote learning' (Reynolds *et al*, 2002).

The encouragement of learning makes use of a process model, which is concerned with facilitating the learning activities of individuals and providing learning resources for them to use. Conversely, the provision of training involves the use of a content model, which means deciding in advance the knowledge and skills that need to be enhanced by training, planning the programme, deciding on training methods and presenting the content in a logical sequence through various forms of instruction.

A distinction is made by Sloman (2003) between learning, which 'lies within the domain of the individual' and training, which 'lies within the domain of the organization'. Today the approach is to focus on individual learning and ensure that it takes place when required – 'just-for-you' and 'just-in-time' learning.

Elements of learning and development

The elements of learning and development as explained in this chapter and Chapter 45 (Management Development) are shown in Figure 41.1.

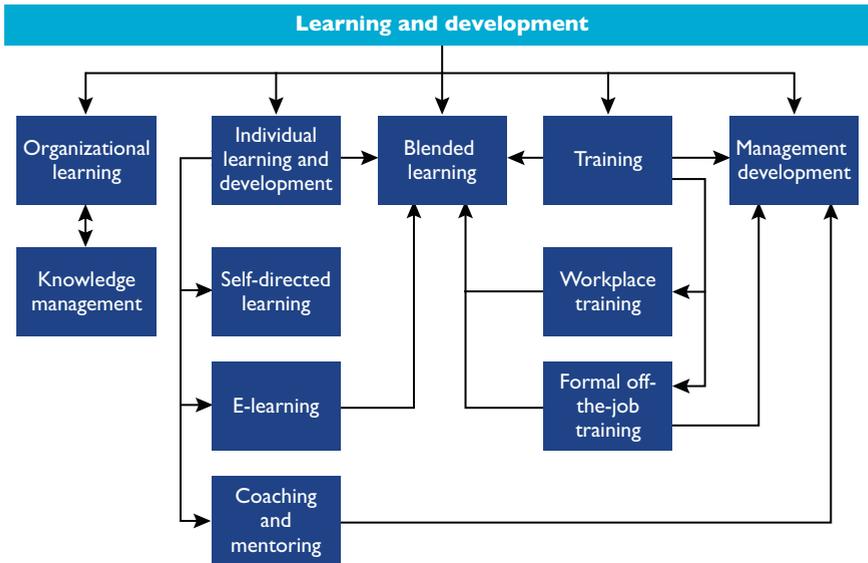


Figure 41.1 Elements of learning and development

Approaches to learning and development

Learning and development can be formal or informal and can use computer, networked and web-based technology (e-learning). Its effectiveness is increased by joining up different methods of learning and development (blended learning) and by encouraging self-directed learning. Approaches to learning and development are underpinned by theories of how individuals learn and the concept of organizational learning, which are covered in Chapters 43 and 44.

Informal and formal learning

As discussed below, a distinction can usefully be made between informal, workplace and formal learning but there is in fact a spectrum from highly informal to highly formal approaches.

Informal learning

Informal learning is experiential learning. It takes place while people are learning on-the-job as they go along. Most learning does not take place in formal training programmes. People can learn 70 per cent of what they know about their job informally.

A study by Eraut *et al* (1998) established that in organizations adopting a learner-centred perspective, formal education and training provided only a small part of what was learnt at work.

Most of the learning described to the researchers was non-formal, neither clearly specified nor planned. It arose naturally from the challenges of work. Effective learning was, however, dependent on the employees' confidence, motivation and capability. Some formal training to develop skills (especially induction training) was usually provided, but learning from experience and other people at work predominated. Reynolds (2004) notes that:

The simple act of observing more experienced colleagues can accelerate learning; conversing, swapping stories, cooperating on tasks and offering mutual support deepen and solidify the process... This kind of learning – often very informal in nature – is thought to be vastly more effective in building proficiency than more formalized training methods.

Advantages and disadvantages of informal learning

Advantages:

- Learning efforts are relevant and focused in the immediate environment.
- Understanding can be achieved in incremental steps rather than in indigestible chunks.
- Learners define how they will gain the knowledge they need – formal learning is more packaged.
- Learners can readily put their learning into practice.

Disadvantages:

- It may be left to chance – some people will benefit, some won't.
- It can be unplanned and unsystematic, which means that it will not necessarily satisfy individual or organizational learning needs.
- Learners may simply pick up bad habits.

Workplace learning

Informal learning occurs in the workplace but there are a number of specific ways in which learning can be enhanced. The most important of these are coaching and mentoring, but other methods are job rotation, job shadowing, bite-sized learning through e-learning, cross-functional or cross-site project work.

The characteristics of workplace learning were explained by Stern and Sommerlad (1999) as follows.

Characteristics of workplace learning, Stern and Sommerlad (1999)

1. The workshop as a site for learning. In this case, learning and working are spatially separated with some form of structured learning activity occurring off or near the job. This may be in a company training centre or a 'training island' on the shop floor where the production process is reproduced for trainees.
2. The workplace as a learning environment. In this approach, the workplace itself becomes an environment for learning. Various on-the-job training activities take place which are structured to different degrees. Learning is intentional and planned, aimed at training employees by supporting, structuring and monitoring their learning.
3. Learning and working are inextricably mixed. In this case, learning is informal. It becomes an everyday part of the job and is built into routine tasks. Workers develop skills, knowledge and understanding through dealing with the challenges posed by the work. This can be described as continuous learning. As Zuboff (1988) put it: 'Learning is not something that requires time out from being engaged in productive activity; learning is the heart of productive activity.'

Formal learning

Formal learning is planned and systematic. It makes use of structured training programmes consisting of instruction and practice that may be conducted on- or off-the-job. Experience may be planned to provide opportunities for continuous learning and development. Formal learning and developmental activities may be used such as action learning, coaching, mentoring and outdoor learning, as described in Appendix D. The organization may have its own training centre. Some large companies have corporate universities (see Appendix D)

Spectrum of learning – from informal to formal

The distinction between formal and informal learning may not always be precise. Watkins and Marsick (1993) described a spectrum of learning from informal to formal as follows:

- unanticipated experiences and encounters that result in learning as an incidental by-product, which may or may not be consciously recognized;
- new job assignments and participation in teams, or other job-related challenges that provide for learning and self-development;

- self-initiated and self-planned experiences, including the use of media and seeking out a coach or mentor;
- total quality or improvement groups/active learning designed to promote continuous learning for continuous improvement;
- providing a framework for learning associated with personal development planning or career planning;
- the combination of less-structured with structured opportunity to learn from these experiences;
- designed programmes of mentoring, coaching or workplace learning;
- formal training programmes or courses involving instruction.

Informal and formal learning compared

A comparison between informal and formal learning is shown in Table 41.1.

Table 41.1 Characteristics of formal and informal learning

Informal learning	Formal learning
Highly relevant to individual needs	Relevant to some, not so relevant to others
Learners learn according to need	All learners learn the same thing
May be small gap between current and target knowledge	May be variable gaps between current and target knowledge
Learner decides how learning will occur	Trainer decides how learning will occur
Immediate applicability ('just-in-time' learning)	Variable times, often distant
Learning readily transferable	Problems may occur in transferring learning to the workplace
Occurs in work setting	Often occurs in non-work setting

This comparison is weighted in favour of informal learning, but as mentioned above there are disadvantages. Informal learning used to be anathematized as 'sitting by Nellie' (this was when Nellie was a fairly common name) meaning that trainees were left to their own devices to pick up bad habits from their neighbours. It can be argued that formal training has its limits but at least it is planned and systematic. In fact, the systematic training movement of the 1960s

(discussed later in this chapter) was a revulsion from traditional laissez faire approaches. Informal training has a lot of advantages but as explained below, it should not be allowed to take place in a haphazard way.

Making informal learning work

- Analyse the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) required.
- Define how these KSAs will be acquired: eg initial instruction and coaching from a supervisor; demonstration, coaching and mentoring from a colleague; the preparation of personal development or self-directed learning plans; planned programmes for acquiring knowledge and skills; blending informal on-the-job learning with other learning processes such as e-learning and formal training courses.
- Ensure that line managers and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities for the provision of learning opportunities and have the skills required, eg coaching and instructing skills.
- Where a department or unit has regular large influxes of trainees, appoint a full- or part-time training supervisor to oversee all training activities.
- Follow up to ensure that learning is taking place.

The approaches describe above use a number of formal methods described later in this chapter and in Appendix D, but the essential nature of informal learning – that it is about learning through experience on-the-job – is unaffected. The more formal approaches are there simply to enhance experiential learning.

E-learning

E-learning was defined by Pollard and Hillage (2001) as ‘the delivery and administration of learning opportunities and support via computer, networked and web-based technology to help individual performance and development’. E-learning enhances learning by extending and supplementing face-to-face learning rather than replacing it. It enables learning to take place when it is most needed (just in time as distinct from just in case) and when it is most convenient. Learning can be provided in short segments or bites that focus on specific learning objectives. It is ‘learner-centric’ in that it can be customized to suit an individual’s learning needs – learners can choose different learning objects within an overall package. The main potential drawbacks are the degree of access to computers, the need for a reasonable degree of

literacy, the need for learners to be self-motivated, and the time and effort required to develop and update e-learning programmes.

E-learning programmes may cover common business applications and processes, induction programmes and, frequently, IT skills development. They are not so effective for developing soft skills such as team building, communication or presentation, which rely on interpersonal contact. But programmes can still present basic principles that can prepare people for practical face-to-face sessions, provide reinforcement through post-event reading, help with self-assessment and lead to chatroom support.

Commonly, candidates raised issues about computer access and IT literacy, cost, time and self-motivation levels. Too few candidates considered the types of learning suited to/not suited to the e-learning approach.

The basic principle of e-learning is ‘connectivity’ – the process by which computers are networked, share information and connect people to people. This is provided for by what is often called ‘the e-learning landscape or architecture’, which refers to the hardware, software and connectivity components required to facilitate learning. In designing the system, consideration has to be given to ‘functionality’ – what each part is expected to do.

The main components of the e-learning ‘landscape’ are:

- The learning management system (LMS) – this provides users with access to various learning processes and enables self-paced e-learning to take place. It can also help with administration, including curriculum management, and course publishing.
- The learning content management system (LCMS) – this provides an authoring system for course or programme preparation, a collection of learning objects or modules (sometimes called a ‘repository’) and a means of sending a completed course to a delivery system (sometimes called a delivery interface).
- Learning portals – these are access points to learning information and services that enable learners to locate content.

The e-learning process

The e-learning process comprises defining the system, encouraging access, advising and assisting individual learners, and encouraging and facilitating the creation of learning communities. E-learning focuses on the learner. It provides a means of satisfying individual learning needs. But individual learning may be supplemented by participation in learning groups or communities of interest in which members both gain and share knowledge.

The emphasis is on self-paced learning – learners control the rate at which they learn although they may be given targets for completion and guidance from tutors on how they should learn. However, while self-paced learning is encouraged and provided for, the impact of e-learning is

strongly influenced by how well support is provided to learners. It is the effectiveness of this support rather than the sophistication of the technology that counts. The quality of the content is important but it will be enhanced by support from tutors or 'e-moderators'. The latter, as described by Salmon (2001), preside over the activities of a learning group in 'knowledge exchange forums', arranging contributions and information sharing and providing guidance and comments as appropriate.

E-learning programme content

E-learning programmes can be used for 'bite-sized' training, ie training to develop a particular skill or area of knowledge. Programmes may consist of generic content purchased from suppliers, but most organizations prefer customized web-based modules developed either in-house or outsourced to software firms that produce material to a specified design. The content should be constructed in accordance with the pedagogic principles set out below.

Principles for e-learning programmes

- Learners must be stimulated by the learning process.
- The programme and content should be seen to be intrinsically relevant, the method of presentation should be interesting, use should be made of graphics, animations, audio, interactive simulations, scenarios, case studies, projects, question and answer sessions and problem-solving activities where appropriate – the programme should not simply involve 'page turning'.
- Learners must be encouraged to respond to stimuli and should be engaged in the learning process.
- Learners should understand their learning goals, preferably working them out for themselves but with help where necessary.
- The programme should be constructed in incremental steps and presented in 'bite-sized chunks' or modules, each with clear objectives and outcomes.
- Learners should be able to plan their learning (self-paced learning).
- Learners must be able to measure their own progress but should be given feedback as well.
- Learners should be encouraged to reflect on what they are learning by reference to their own experience.

The content can be prepared with the help of authoring tools such as Macromedia (Authorware and Flash).

Delivery of e-learning

E-learning is delivered through websites and the intranet; CD-ROMs are also used extensively. Provision can be made for online coaching and discussion forums. The content can be delivered through PowerPoint, video and audio clips, drag and drop questions, PDF files, links to websites, and web-enabled forums and learning communities.

Blended learning

Blended learning is the use of a combination of learning methods to increase the overall effectiveness of the learning process by providing for different parts of the learning mix to complement and support one another. A blended learning programme might be planned for an individual using a mix of self-directed learning activities defined in a personal development plan, e-learning facilities, group action learning activities, coaching or mentoring, and instruction provided in an in-company course or externally. Generic training for groups of people might include e-learning, planned instruction programmes, planned experience and selected external courses. Within a training course a complementary mix of different training activities might take place, for example a skills development course for managers or team leaders might include some instruction on basic principles but much more time would be spent on case studies, simulations, role playing and other exercises.

Self-directed learning

Self-directed or self-managed learning involves encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their own learning needs, either to improve performance in their present job or to develop their potential and satisfy their career aspirations. It can also be described as self-reflective learning (Mezirow, 1985), which is the kind of learning that involves encouraging individuals to develop new patterns of understanding, thinking and behaving

Self-directed learning can be based on a process of recording achievement and action planning that involves individuals reviewing what they have learnt, what they have achieved, what their goals are, how they are going to achieve those goals and what new learning they need to acquire. The learning programme can be 'self-paced' in the sense that learners can decide for themselves, up to a point, the rate at which they work and are encouraged to measure their own progress and adjust the programme accordingly.

Self-directed learning is based on the principle that people learn and retain more if they find things out for themselves. But they still need to be given guidance on what to look for and help in finding it. Learners have to be encouraged to define, with whatever help they may require, what they need to know to perform their job effectively. They need to be provided with

guidance on where they can get the material or information that will help them to learn and how to make good use of it. Personal development plans, as described later in this chapter, can provide a framework for this process. They also need support from their manager and the organization with the provision of coaching, mentoring and learning facilities, including e-learning.

Development

Development takes the form of learning activities that prepare people to exercise wider or increased responsibilities. In development programmes there is an emphasis on self-directed learning as described above, personal development planning (together with learning contracts) and planned learning from experience.

Personal development planning

Personal development planning is carried out by individuals with guidance, encouragement and help from their managers as required. A personal development plan sets out the actions people propose to take to learn and to develop themselves. They take responsibility for formulating and implementing the plan but they receive support from the organization and their managers in doing so. The purpose is to provide what Tamkin *et al* (1995) call a 'self-organized learning framework'.

Stages of personal development planning

1. Analyse current situation and development needs. This can be done as part of a performance management process.
2. Set goals. These could include improving performance in the current job, improving or acquiring skills, extending relevant knowledge, developing specified areas of competence, moving across or upwards in the organization, or preparing for changes in the current role.
3. Prepare action plan. The action plan sets out what needs to be done and how it will be done under headings such as outcomes expected (learning objectives), the development activities, the responsibility for development (what individuals are expected to do and the support they will get from their manager, the HR department or other people), and timing. A variety of activities tuned to individual needs should be included in the plan, for example observing what others do, project work, planned use of e-learning programmes and internal learning resource

centres, working with a mentor, coaching by the line manager or team leader, experience in new tasks, guided reading, special assignments and action learning. Formal training to develop knowledge and skills may be part of the plan but it is not the most important part.

4. Implement. Take action as planned.

The plan can be expressed in the form of a learning contract, as described below.

Learning contracts

A learning contract is a formal agreement between the manager and the individual on what learning needs to take place, the objectives of such learning and what part the individual, the manager, the learning and development function or a mentor will play in ensuring that learning happens. The partners to the contract agree on how the objectives will be achieved and their respective roles. It will spell out learning programmes and indicate what coaching, mentoring and formal training activities should be carried out. It is, in effect, a blueprint for learning.

Planned experience

Planned experience is the process of deciding on a sequence of experience that will enable people to obtain the knowledge and skills required in their jobs and prepare them to take on increased responsibilities. This enables experiential learning to take place to meet a learning specification. A programme is drawn up that sets down what people are expected to learn in each department or job in which they are given experience. This should spell out what they are expected to discover for themselves. A suitable person (a mentor) should be available to see that people in a development programme are given the right experience and opportunity to learn, and arrangements should be made to check progress. A good way of stimulating people to find out for themselves is to provide them with a list of questions to answer. It is essential, however, to follow up each segment of experience to check what has been learnt and, if necessary, modify the programme.

Training

Training is the use of systematic and planned instruction activities to promote learning. The approach can be summarized in the phrase 'learner-based training'. It is one of several responses an organization can undertake to promote learning.

As Reynolds (2004) points out, training has a complementary role to play in accelerating learning: 'It should be reserved for situations that justify a more directed, expert-led approach rather than viewing it as a comprehensive and all-pervasive people development solution.' He also commented that the conventional training model has a tendency to 'emphasize subject-specific knowledge, rather than trying to build core learning abilities'.

The justification for training

Formal training is indeed only one of the ways of ensuring that learning takes place, but it can be justified in the following circumstances.

Justifying training

- The work requires skills that are best developed by formal instruction.
- Different skills are required by a number of people, which have to be developed quickly to meet new demands and cannot be acquired by relying on experience.
- The tasks to be carried out are so specialized or complex that people are unlikely to master them on their own initiative at a reasonable speed.
- Critical information must be imparted to employees to ensure they meet their responsibilities.
- A learning need common to a number of people has to be met that can readily be dealt with in a training programme, for example induction, essential IT skills, communication skills.

Transferring training

It has been argued (Reynolds, 2004) that: 'The transfer of expertise by outside experts is risky since their design is often removed from the context in which work is created.' This is a fundamental problem and applies equally to internally run training courses where what has been taught can be difficult for people to apply in the entirely different circumstances in their workplace. Training can seem to be remote from reality and the skills and knowledge acquired can appear to be irrelevant. This particularly applies to management or supervisory training but even the manual skills learnt in a training centre may be difficult to transfer.

This problem can be tackled by making the training as relevant and realistic as possible, anticipating and dealing with any potential transfer difficulties. Individuals are more likely to apply learning when they do not find it too difficult, believe what they learnt is relevant, useful and

transferable, are supported by line managers, have job autonomy, believe in themselves, and are committed and engaged. Transfer is also more likely if systematic training and 'just-in-time training' approaches are used, as described below.

Systematic training

Training should be systematic in that it is specifically designed, planned and implemented to meet defined needs. It is provided by people who know how to train and the impact of training is carefully evaluated. The concept was originally developed for the industrial training boards in the 1960s and consists of a simple four-stage model, as illustrated in Figure 41.2:

1. Identify training needs.
2. Decide what sort of training is required to satisfy these needs.
3. Use experienced and trained trainers to implement training.
4. Follow up and evaluate training to ensure that it is effective.

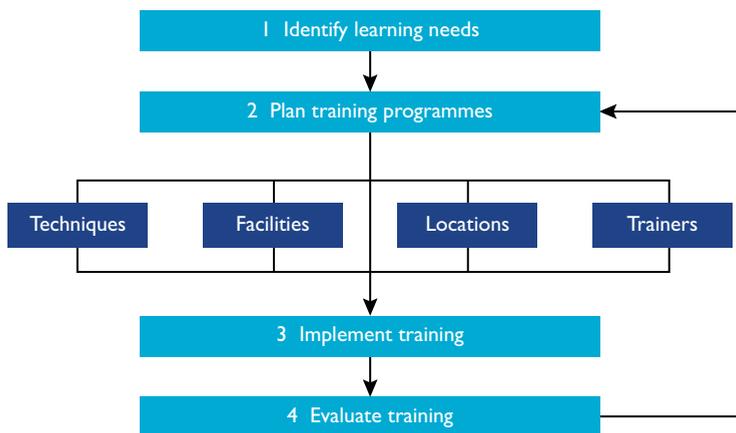


Figure 41.2 Systematic training model

Just-in-time training

Just-in-time training is training that is closely linked to the pressing and relevant needs of people by its association with immediate or imminent work activities. It is delivered as close as possible to the time when the activity is taking place. The training will be based on an identification of the latest requirements, priorities and plans of the participants, who will be briefed on the live situations in which their learning has to be applied. The training programme will take account of any transfer issues and aim to ensure that what is taught is seen to be applicable in the current work situation.

Bite-sized training

Bite-sized training involves the provision of opportunities to acquire a specific skill or a particular piece of knowledge in a short training session that is focused on one activity such as using a particular piece of software, giving feedback, or handling an enquiry about a product or service of the company. It is often carried out through e-learning. It can be a useful means of developing a skill or understanding through a concentrated session or learning activity without diversions and is readily put to use in the workplace. But it can be weak in expanding individuals' intellectual capacity and holistic (or 'whole view') understanding of the business – essential qualities to enable employees to respond creatively to the challenges of today's knowledge economy. It can also be facile and too restricted and relies on the support of line managers, which is not always forthcoming. It is best for training employees in straightforward techniques that they can use immediately in their work or to complement, not replace, longer courses or developmental processes.

Types of training

Training programmes or events can be concerned with any of the following:

- manual skills, including modern apprenticeships (see Appendix D);
- IT skills;
- team leader or supervisory training;
- management training;
- interpersonal skills, eg leadership, team-building, group dynamics, neuro-linguistic programming;
- personal skills, eg assertiveness, coaching, communicating, time management;
- training in organizational procedures or practices, eg induction, health and safety, performance management, equal opportunity or managing diversity policy and practice.

Effective training practices

Effective training uses the systematic approach defined above with an emphasis on skills analysis. The purpose of the training should be clearly defined in terms of the behaviour required as a result of training. This can be expressed as a statement along the lines of: 'On completing this training the participant will be able to...'. Defining expected behaviours will provide the basis for evaluation, which is an essential element in the achievement of successful training.

The process of learning and development – key learning points

The distinction between learning and training

Learning should be distinguished from training. ‘Learning is the process by which a person constructs new knowledge, skills and capabilities, whereas training is one of several responses an organization can undertake to promote learning’ (Reynolds *et al*, 2002).

Informal and formal learning

Formal learning is planned and systematic. It makes use of structured training programmes consisting of instruction and practice that may be conducted on- or off-the-job. Informal learning is experiential learning. It takes place while people are learning on-the-job as they go along.

E-learning

E-learning provides for learning via computer, networked and web-based technology. The process comprises defining the system, encouraging access, advising and assisting individual learners and encouraging and facilitating the creation of learning communities. E-learning focuses on the learner. It provides a means of satisfying individual learning needs.

Blended learning

Blended learning is the use of a combination of learning methods to increase the overall effectiveness of the learning process by providing for different parts of the

learning mix to complement and support one another. A blended learning programme might be planned for an individual using a mix of self-directed learning activities defined in a personal development plan, e-learning facilities, group action learning activities, coaching or mentoring, and instruction provided in an in-company course or externally.

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Personal development planning

Personal development planning is carried out by individuals with guidance, encouragement and help from their managers as required. A personal development plan sets out the actions people propose to take to learn and to develop themselves. They take responsibility for formulating and implementing the plan but they receive support from the organization and their managers in doing so.

The process of learning and development – key learning points (continued)

Planned experience

Planned experience is the process of deciding on a sequence of experience that will enable people to obtain the knowledge and skills required in their jobs and prepare them to take on increased responsibilities. This enables experiential learning to take place in order to meet a learning specification.

Justifying training

Training can be justified when:

- The work requires skills that are best developed by formal instruction.
- Different skills are required by a number of people, which have to be developed quickly to meet new demands and cannot be acquired by relying on experience.
- The tasks to be carried out are specialized or complex.
- Critical information must be imparted to employees to ensure they meet their responsibilities.

- A learning need common to a number of people has to be met.

Transferring training

Training can seem to be remote from reality and the skills and knowledge acquired can appear to be irrelevant. This particularly applies to management or supervisory training but even the manual skills learnt in a training centre may be difficult to transfer. This problem can be tackled by making the training as relevant and realistic as possible, anticipating and dealing with any potential transfer difficulties.

Effective training practices

- The purpose of the training should be clearly defined.
- Every opportunity should be taken to embed learning at work.
- The training techniques used should be appropriate to the purpose of the course and to the characteristics of participants.

Questions

1. From a colleague who has just transferred into the learning and development department from the people resourcing department: 'I am getting confused. Please would you explain to me the difference between learning, development and training and why it is important to distinguish between them.'
2. You have been asked to contribute to a learning and development seminar on the theme, 'Informal learning is all very well but aren't we in danger of leaving it all to chance?' Draft your outline contribution.
3. Your postgraduate HRM course supervisor has set you the following task: 'Explain why the concept of e-learning was greeted with such enthusiasm a few years ago as the ultimate answer to learning, yet many people believe that it has not lived up to its promise. Refer to any evidence from research or known practice or your own experience to establish the extent to which this belief is well-founded. If it is, what can be done about it? If not, what lessons can be learnt from those who have successfully used e-learning?'
4. From the HR director to the head of learning and development: 'We must develop coaching as a key learning and development process for middle management. Use an evidence-based management approach to identify ways in which we can ensure that coaching is carried out to high and consistent standards.'
5. Look into the concept of blended learning. What does it mean? What are its advantages and disadvantages?
6. Critically evaluate the concept of a learning organization.

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