You Can Win When You Help Employees Learn More and Learn Better

written by vickyp | January 22, 2016

Employee learning and development is essential in today's rapidly changing marketplace. The ability to ensure your employees knowledge and skills are up-to-date in a variety of areas, from legislative requirements including health and safety to functional job knowledge and skills, personal self-management and relationship management and more can help your organization remain competitive.

According to a 2015 Deloitte survey of business leaders called "The Global Human Capitol Trends Survey" 80% of the business leaders indicated learning and development was at the top of their list in important workplace needs. The majority of these leaders also reported that their organizations were not doing enough to meet the challenges of employee learning and development.
As you look to make plans to address your own employee's learning and development needs there are a few training and development components to consider.

1 – Efficiently Organize Your Employee Learning Opportunities
Today your organization may spend a lot of time identifying, planning and organizing training and development opportunities for your employees. With more legislative requirements for the workplace and the expectation that your organization ensures employees are trained and the training is tracked HR has to stay on top of many of details. When designing learning and development training for your organization keep in mind the following details:

- Create a training calendar for at least 6 months into the future and update it regularly
- Survey your employees and the industry to identify trends; consider broad training needs including technology, employee health and wellness, personal issues such as financial management and so on, in addition to job requirements
- Identify training providers including in-house training and external trainers and seek out a variety of training opportunities from different methods and sources.
- Design curriculum that is fully accessible to individuals with disabilities, people whose first language is not English, employees who work remotely and

employees who learn differently. Different methods of deliver that include hands on, computer aided, individual and group learning in combination can help increase employee learning and retention of learning; Create content and provided it to employees in multiple ways including in video and webinars and more to improve training effectiveness.

- Consider whether a LMS (Learning management systems) such as Moodle, Blackboard, Google Classroom or many more are worth your time and investment.
- Design a process /resource that allows employees to populate information, share links and discuss information.
- Create a role for someone to manage, curate and respond to learning and development information.

2 Embrace and Encourage More Self-Learning

One trend for the future, thanks in large part to technology, will be more self-directed or self-created learning. Frequently there is relevant training information and resources readily available through many sources including professional organizations and found online.

- • Identify and enable your employees to learn by identifying what they need to learn and communicating this to them regularly and formally. Make the identification of new information and skills part of regular performance meetings and generally part of the ongoing conversation in the workplace.
  • Actively encouraging employees to keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date by taking responsibility for independently finding and participating in training. If possible offer financial incentives such as partial fees rebates or partial time off, or employ 'gamification' process where employees gain points or badges for new learning.
  • Encourage employees to share ideas about learning and share tools and resources they find including on internal social networks, a shared group or Wiki page or physically within the workplace on bulletin boards.

3- Consider The Application of Science: Analytics and Neuroscience

Stay on top of gathering analytics and applying what you are learning about your workforce's training needs and results using big data and review the data on neuroscience to help you better deliver training in your workplace.

- Gathering analytics is an important step in delivering learning. The more data you gather about the impact of training the more you can use the data to help with your understanding of where to spend your future time and money.
- Track how often, what and when your employees engage in learning opportunities to determine what learning works and with whom.
- Try to connect learning with performance by tracking learning and performance. Gather information from your employees related to their self-learning including if they take personal learning opportunities to develop new skills such as meditation or fitness classes and not only technical skills training. If you are tracking data you might see a pattern of performance improvements from employees who all took similar classes or gained new skills and insights.
- Neuroscience has demonstrated that the brain is always learning and that the experience around learning is very important to retention of learning. Consider the learning environment and information from the latest scientific research on learning when designing and delivering training opportunities.

4 – Go Mobile and Social
As neuro-science says, the environment of where we learn impacts how well we learn.

As employees are busier and more frequently on the move their ability to access on demand training will be practical. The 'Go Mobile and Go Social' side of learning will impact how training will be rolled out and the impact it will have.

- Design a variety of training experiences using mobile and social technology. Training modules that allow for someone to spend as little as 2 minutes on a defined topic at a time can be effective tools for training. We know that repetition and clarity impact learning. With mobile training you enable employees to review training where and when needed. Send reminders or links to employees just before lunch or at other times when they may have 2 minutes to gain knowledge or a new skill.
- With social and mobile you can also enable employees to share and discuss what they are learning. Providing the opportunity for a richer discussion and a little repetition. Not all learning needs to be social but you may find the ability to engage with other colleagues in social is important.

If you are delivering training the way you always have delivered it consider what new ideas you can implement or tools you can apply today to improve learning and development tomorrow