



DELIVERING EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE AT EVERY CHANGING MOMENT

SURVIVE & THRIVE WITH PERFORMANCE SUPPORT

Talent management is a discipline focused on driving organizational effectiveness. There was a day when all a company needed to do to prosper was hire, manage and incent the right talent. Clearly, that's not reality now. The financial tsunami that struck planet earth in 2008 brought about an unpredictable, unrelenting and unforgiving environment of change. In its aftermath, companies lacking the capacity to anticipate and adapt ahead of their markets have either failed or are failing.

To survive and thrive in this new reality, organizations must be able to learn at or above the speed of change. They must continuously undergo new skill cycles to prepare for new competitive cycles — constantly re-tooling in order to maintain their competitiveness.

Consider your current talent management practices in light of this critical capacity. What are you doing to develop dynamic learners, who are rapid, adaptive and collaborative in how they learn, unlearn and relearn? To what degree does your organization encourage personal learning strategies that minimize the probability of employee skills becoming automated (deeply rooted) unless those skills merit becoming so? How effectively are your employees at learning on the run? Are you supporting them at every moment of their learning needs? And, when change appears out of nowhere, are your employees able to independently assess their current readiness to perform, identify what skills and knowledge they need to cast aside, and then determine how to assertively adapt to the conditions around them?

At the heart of organizational effectiveness today is the capacity of its people to learn at, or above, the speed of change.

PERFORMANCE SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Organizational learning agility absolutely cannot happen unless talent management practices aggressively hone in on developing and sustaining this kind of dynamic learning. The first step in doing this is to establish a performance support infrastructure that enables and sustains learning agility. It is through this infrastructure that dynamic learners can instantly access just what they need, in the form they need, to help them perform effectively at every changing moment.

A performance support infrastructure is an orchestrated set of technology-enabled services that are embedded in the workflow, and that provide contextual access to just enough information to enable ongoing effective performance.

Performance support is embedded based upon two principles: the proximity and immediacy in which dynamic learners can physically and digitally access what they need to perform effectively (within two clicks and 10 seconds). Time to effective performance hinges on the degree to which performance support is embedded in the workflow.

Contextual access also impacts speed to effective performance. Dynamic learners require access to the same information via different circumstances or settings. For example, a primary context in which dynamic learners may need to call upon performance support is when they are in a specific workflow process. The most logical way for them to access what they need would be according to that process.

Once dynamic learners get to the information they need to perform, they need to be able to immediately interpret and apply that information to their performance moment of need. Effective performance support needs to provide dynamic learners just enough of what they need, when and where they need it, in order to immediately begin to perform.

In “The Sun Also Rises,” Ernest Hemingway’s character, when asked how he went bankrupt, replies: “First gradually, and then suddenly.” This is a consistent pattern for companies that lack the ability to learn at or above the speed of change. Managing talent is about delivering effective performance at every changing moment. This requires embedding a performance support infrastructure into the workflow that can deliver immediate, intuitive, tailored aid to employees at every working moment of need; anything less puts a company at risk.

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