RESEARCH

RESEARCH

RESEARCH

RESEARCH

Issue
2

THE LPI RESEARCH COMPANION

Guiding you through the maze of L&D research

Learning &
Performance Institute

THE LPI RESEARCH COMPANION

Research, research, research!

There are so many organisations issuing research into L&D trends and topics that it can be hard to keep up.

Where do you start? Which reports have the data you're looking for?

This is where the *LPI Research Companion* can help, by cutting through the noise and giving you the most relevant highlights and action points from the very best research the L&D industry has to offer.

In this issue we look at the following four reports, published in the last few months:

Learning to Lead. The Digital Potential
Chartered Management Institute and Oxford Strategic Consulting

The Secret Learning Life of UK managers
GoodPractice and ComRes

2015 State of the Industry
Association for Talent Development

Embracing Change: Improving Performance of Business, Individuals and the L&D Team
Towards Maturity

As a learning professional, if something catches your eye we would encourage you to explore these reports more fully.

So let's delve in...

LEARNING TO LEAD. THE DIGITAL POTENTIAL.

About the research

This online survey of 1,184 CMI members was conducted by Oxford Strategic Consulting in 2015. It asked managers about their current use and experiences of digital in management development and where improvements could be made.

Eye-catching findings

Managers are not overly impressed with current digital approaches to management development. Worryingly, 80% say their organisation fails to use digital to improve the quality of management development. Bear in mind that leadership and management development represents a considerable part of learning budgets and you begin to see the scale of the challenge.

That said, 84% of managers say that digital learning will make training budgets go further. And 72% say they will use digital learning to take control of their professional development. This suggests they are on the side of L&D.

But listen to their needs. Managers want technology to provide more personalised learning experiences (73%) and help develop networks (56%). And they still like face to face too – only 18% believe digital will totally replace face to face training.

But beware, the relevance of learning experiences remains an issue as 37% say development is poorly aligned to organisational objectives.

(contd.)

Managers represent a great opportunity for L&D to make digital learning work. If it works for them, and this research shows they want it to, then it is likely they will become advocates for digital learning amongst their teams.

Like their teams, managers want bite-sized, personalised learning. They want it to be practical. They want to connect, learn and share through peer networks and they want to receive answers to questions in real time.

They also expect to find the right content at the point of need and in the coming years they want to have increasingly personlised learning experiences which adapt to their changing needs.

So, there it is – a shopping list of what managers want from digital management development.

LEARNING TO LEAD. THE DIGITAL POTENTIAL.

http://www.managers.org.uk/~/media/Files/PDF/Digital-Learning/Learning_to_Lead-The_Digital_Potential.pdf

THE SECRET LEARNING LIFE OF UK MANAGERS

About the research

GoodPractice commissioned a telephone poll of 500 UK companies of 250-plus employees. The survey asked managers about learning in the context of overcoming unfamiliar challenges, rather than just asking them how they learn.

Eye-catching findings

GoodPractice says the phrasing of the questions – overcoming unfamiliar challenges – unearthed some unfamiliar results. This is an important point – this research is not about learning per se, it is about performance and how managers deal with unfamiliar challenges.

When managers are faced with these challenges, almost 90% turn to colleagues for help. Roughly 75% search the Internet, 70% use on the job support and just under 70% use an external website. Internal online resources are used by just under 60% and just over 30% use internal training.

This is where L&D needs to look in the mirror and ask itself if it is designing learning for *how* people actually learn. Just like the CMI report we have already discussed, this report shows that managers want speedy responses so turn to the web if no colleague is at hand. But far more worryingly, it is the learning resources provided by the organisation that are way down the priority list. And that's where L&D spends its budget.

Good practice also asked about the effectiveness of resources and found that conversations with colleagues came out top at 90%, followed by on the job support (over 85%), internal training (just under 80%), external website (over 75%) and external training (over 70%). Internal online resources were in bottom place at just under 65%.

Managers do value what L&D provides, it's just that they don't find it at the point of need.
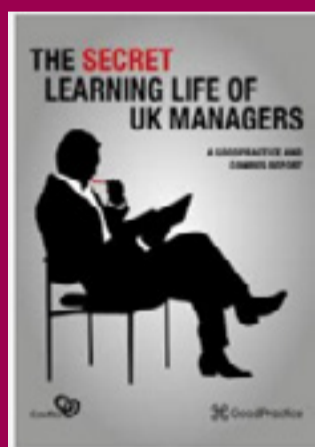
When faced with an unfamiliar challenge, ease of access and speed of result are the two biggest influencers in managers' choice of resource. The perceived efficacy of a method is less of an influencer. Training scores highly in regards to efficacy (almost 80% rate internal training as effective), but languishes bottom of the list in terms of usage when there is an unfamiliar challenge.

Managers have greater faith in external search engines and websites than either internal online resources or e-learning provided by their organisation. They say there are more effective and efficient.

This research is a wake-up call for L&D. Use this data to challenge how you deliver support for managers in your organisation. Look at how online resources are being used within the organisation and also what impact current online learning resources are having and use these insights to start designing resources and learning experiences that meet their needs.

Remember, the way managers learn will not differ greatly to the way their colleagues learn. However, if they have great online learning experiences they will become your advocates and potentially help engage their teams around digital learning too.

THE SECRET LEARNING LIFE OF UK MANAGERS

http://www.goodpractice.com/ld-resources/the-secret-learning-life-of-managers/

About the research

This report by the US-based Association for Talent Development report provides insights on the influence of learning and development initiatives in 336 global organisations employing on average 18,926 employees. It quantifies L&D spending across a number of measures including spend per employee and spend on internal and external resources.

The data paints a picture of a relatively slow moving sector with face to face delivery declining, technology enabled learning increasing and mandatory training content and industry specific content taking up a large chunk of content spend.

Eye-catching findings

The good news here is that on average, organisations spent just over 1.7% more on employee learning than in 2014 with £864 being spent on learning per employee.

Not surprisingly the research shows a 3% increase in learning delivered through technology with a slight decline (4%) in classroom-based learning, which still accounted for 51% of learning.

Technology continues to impact on learning delivery with 41% of learning hours delivered using technology-based methods compared with 38% of hours used in 2013.

The research splits learning expenditure into three areas: internal services (learning department's staff salaries, travel costs for the learning staff, administrative costs), external services (include consultants and services, external content development and licenses, and workshops and training programs delivered by external providers), and tuition reimbursement.

(contd.)

In 2014, 60% of direct learning expenditure went to internal services, 27% went to external services, and 13% was spent on tuition reimbursement. These are similar to the percentages from previous years.

The data also shows what learning content organisations are investing in. Managerial and supervisory, profession- or industry-specific, and mandatory and compliance make up 34 percent of all content. Outside of that, new employee orientation accounts for 8.1%, sales 7.6% and interpersonal skills 7.3%.

Data on learning delivery shows that the traditional instructor-led, live face-to-face classroom remains the number one delivery mechanism (51% of learning hours), down from 55%the year before.

In terms of technology-enabled learning, self-paced online delivery was the most popular choice (19% of learning hours). This was up two percent on the previous year and was followed by instructor-led online classrooms (10%). Mobile accounted for just two per cent.

What to act on

This report will be incredibly valuable for any L&D professional looking to benchmark how and where they spend their training budget.

The trends highlighted in this research are also worth following. The slow decline in face-to-face training continues whilst self-paced, online learning is becoming increasingly popular. Technology enabled learning and how it can best be adopted by the organisation must be the focus for any L&D professional in 2016.

2015 State of Search Industry Report

SEMPO Research Committee

2015 STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

https://www.td.org/Publications/Research-Reports/2015/2015-State-of-the-Industry

$499 to download

About the research

Using the results of its benchmarking activities, Towards Maturity's research draws on the practices and experiences of 600 plus L&D professionals from 55 countries and 1,600 learners. The report also explores the lessons that L&D leaders can learn from the top 10% performing learning organisations, what Towards Maturity call the 'top deck' those in the top 10% of the Towards Maturity Benchmark Study.

This is the 13th year Towards Maturity has run its benchmark report.

Eye-catching findings

There are a lot of important and very challenging statistics in this report. Overall, the picture is not good. L&D teams are having little impact with 70% failing to improve business productivity and only four out of 10 organisations achieving increased efficiency as a result of their training strategies.

There are some pressing challenges facing L&D leaders. Even though technology enabled learning provides huge opportunities to develop engaging learning experiences, peer learning and just in time resources, 63% say that the cost of set up, development and maintenance costs are a barrier.

So what's the answer for those teams struggling to make an impact on the business? The report has some answers. It provides data on the top 10% of performers in the benchmark and shows what those organisations are doing to create impact. Top deck organisations report improvements in productivity (12%), employee engagement (21%) and a reduction in costs (16%).

(contd.)

Learning & Performance Institute

The majority of top deck organisations (94%) consider the course to be just one option for building skills (53% average) and 86% adopt approaches that support learning in the flow of work compared to 47% on average.

These teams also have a consumer driven approach to supporting staff with 86% reporting they are proactive in understanding how their learners learn (30% on average) and 76 percent involving staff up front in learning design (35% average).

What to act on

This report provides two important data sets for L&D. First it shows where organisations are now in their adoption of technology enabled learning and second, it provides insights into how top performing organisations are creating impact through learning.

So, use the benchmark data to help understand where your organisation sits in relation to peers. Understand the challenges, what is working and what isn't.

Then use the top deck data to understand what works for the most effective learning organisations. They have done the heavy lifting for you – they know what works and you can use that to kick start your learning transformation.

Ultimately, this report shows that the most effective teams are those that embrace a fundamentally different approach to learning based on finding new ways to support business learning and business performance as part of the organizational and individual workflow.

EMBRACING CHANGE: IMPROVING PERFORMANCE OF BUSINESS, INDIVIDUALS AND THE L&D TEAM

http://www.towardsmaturity.org/article/2015/11/05/embracing-change-improving-performance-benchmark/

CONCLUSION

If this report were to be summarized in one word that word would be 'change'. Each piece of research discussed here shows how workplace learning is changing – both at an organizational level in terms of spend and delivery methods and on an individual level, looking at what learning experiences managers would like to see.

Both research reports into how mangers solve problems and how they want to learn provide evidence and focus on the learning needs and preferences of employees, as does the Towards Maturity research. Surely that has to be at the heart of any effective learning strategy?

Yes, learning must always align with business need but how learning is designed to support performance and deliver business impact is in the hands of the L&D team.

Hopefully these reports will help in shaping learning strategies that will have significant business impact.