

Organizational Learning Paradigm Shift

Delivering learning in most organizations today closely resembles the school model. There are manuals to read, quizzes to take, and facilitators to guide the learner through skills or productivity training. Scattered about we also find classes being offered online. Typically this is not learner-centric training. Someone other than the learner decides the content of the class and the modality in which the training is to be delivered. The learner comes to the training with little or no input in what or how he/she is to be trained.

That learning model is beginning to morph with the advent of Web 2.0 tools. These tools are woven into our daily existence making information we need for our job available immediately. Need to know statistics for a marketing project? Go to the web. Need to know the company vacation policy? Go to the company intranet.



Learners are becoming more adept at quickly searching out information on their own, just give them the tools. A shift has begun away from the traditional instructional classes to a learner-centric model in which the learner can get the information needed when it is needed, just in time.

Supporting these learners with tools to gain needed information more quickly should be the learning function's first order of business. Analyze the organization's informational needs to understand who needs which type of information. Depending upon the findings any or all of the following may be indicated.

- Design an information portal tailored to the different learning needs of various job types.
- Help create communities of practice within the organization where like-minded individuals can easily communicate with one another to share information.
- Use RSS feeds and podcasts to quickly disseminate information nuggets to targeted audiences in the organization that need updated information.
- Information repositories, like wikis, are set up and contributors encouraged to contribute content useful to others in the organization.
- Blogs can catalog web links, with a few editorial notes, for an immediate table of contents on where to find information.
- There will still be room for the occasional instructionally designed class but use web conferencing to bring together people virtually for interaction and collaboration.

The days of always wrapping up content in a neat package to be delivered is giving way to a new paradigm that gives workers control and access to information when and where it is needed.