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Abstract

If it is basic training, then use trainers, yes. But experts and external trainers are being used more and more. S has programmed leadership courses. The staff running these courses are senior, full time guys in 'leadership' - part of the Leadership Challenge. The company has 'seen the light' - its full time position - they have good educator skills as well as subject knowledge”. People think that it’s all going to be on-line, but this stuff is often boring, coming as a choice between something and nothing! - But we are not going to go back to the days of 'fleshy' trainers only either - that’s gone. Replacing "fleshy" trainers is not just to reduce costs - often the company is distributed geographically and it is not possible to have a trainer on ever site or whatever - there are often good reasons to move to automated learning. We use conference calling, expert oriented training, train the trainer at each site, mentoring training- where distance learning is the problem then we need to look at alternatives. That’s just one example though. Trainers have no ongoing responsibility - often there are issues of keeping up to date and ongoing support. Company expertise can provide ongoing help. The Learning Challenge mentors at S are good - they don't just give you the answers but want the students to think - yes, they have educator skills I suppose. There is the question of who teaches the mentors educational skills, - yes I suppose. Andrea (Respondent No 16)

Early evidence suggests the 'knowledge and information' flood, as it is linked to the transformed workplace, has rocked teaching and learning structures for corporations. In some ways this has indeed been necessary, allowed for variations in how knowledge is transferred and learning happens, more dynamic and ‘speed to market’ in design. Exciting new tools based on new ‘kinds’ of technologies, new programs and new kinds of people are changing, streamlining corporate processes and challenging traditional strategies in teaching and learning. Structural and operational diversity has allowed market driven forces to impact the range of learning styles within organisations. Learning practitioners are experiencing new levels of ‘autonomy’ previously unfamiliar to them outside the classroom. The cross section of staff who participate in teaching at work, and new levels of sophistication in technological tools, have changed traditional views about the teaching role. These changes have in turn, influenced new corporate learning strategies.

The sheer scope of the phenomenon may also have bamboozled organisations to some degree. Anecdotal evidence suggests a 'chicken with no head' strategy for corporate learning. Some firms are using the ‘silo’ business model to decentralise in an attempt to regain control and cover learning volumes. New kinds of teaching foot soldiers are being introduced as ‘knowledge experts’ taking on coaching and mentoring roles. New learning styles appear to be evolving and there is evidence that the teaching/learning dualism, (as this involves human to human interaction) is under threat. Within corporations, working people more and more must learn without being taught, or at least without the need for another human as the interface. Some people comment that strategies and structures for teaching and learning within corporations are difficult to find. Others remark that quality and content control in teaching and learning is market driven thus at the whim of business unit heads. Some argue that these 'exciting developments' are going to be only short term as technologies are found wanting or individuals, whose role is not teaching, abandon this burden to their main task.

The inquiry seeks evidence for a shift in corporate education policy. A shift towards the autodidactic worker as a strategy for dealing with transformed workplace under continual change. The capacity for corporations to achieve rapid change in knowledge flows across global networked has impacted management capabilities for dealing with the expanding knowledge resource. The ability for employees to problem solve individually, is seen as an emerging strategy to cope. The possible emergence of the ‘autodidactic worker’ invites an investigation of education policies for corporations. Evidence needs to be gathered about whether a managerial approach ‘to all things’ includes the worker abilities to manage their own learning. The hypothesis for this paper is that managing new knowledge at work is being passed to a new kind of worker, the ‘autodidact worker’, as part of a new ‘administration’ paradigm for teaching and learning within corporations. The role of educational specialist or learning practitioner at work is being modified. The search within the inquiry is for evidence that corporate education policy has altered to accommodate the self-teaching employee as a legitimate learning strategy.
Background Readings

While the general thesis will attempt to unravel the range of issues that impact a possible new ‘kind’ of professional learning practitioner within corporations, this paper examines particular issues concerning evidence for the ‘self-taught’ employee emerging as a legitimate corporate business strategy.

The Corporate Workplace

Managerial change, including system thinking, flat structures, vision leadership, outsourcing, organisational knowledge ‘growth’ are collectively described here as business strategies. These strategies have emerged as controlling mechanisms for firms (Drucker 1988; Handy 1989; Peters 1992; Davenport and Prusak 1998) as changing business models. Currently, the most significant business change element is the global and informational environment. Effects on individual employees include an encouragement towards new kinds of work that brings new levels in tenure, influence and accountability. Workers must cope with contractual and transactional workplaces, where identities that come from new job roles can create confusion and insecurity (Casey 1995; Castells 1996; Gee, Hull et al. 1996; Gorz 1999). Such ‘new age’ employees include professional learning practitioners. Empowered, reflective, flexible and autonomous workers also includes teachers in public education, who must embrace increased functionalism and with it, changed roles and ‘accountabilities’ (Gewirtz, Ball et al. 1995; Marginson 1997; Whitty, Power et al. 1998). The general thesis study will investigate what the impact is on commercial learning practitioners who must operate within a corporate Marketplace. This paper considers whether one significant impact on learning practitioners could be a new ‘business strategy’ that encourages an autodidactic learning practitioner.

Following the ‘industrial automation’ that took place with manufacturing and mining sectors in the mid-eighties (concerned to improve the quality and quantity of product), a diffusion of information technology of the early nineties has flourished. Aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness across all processes at work - an ‘automation of business processes and procedures’ within administration and management can include new differentials for thinking and doing workers. Castells (1996) suggests that the economy of today is founded much more on innovation than production. Sophistication in computing and communications rewards ongoing ‘artistry’ and innovation over learned, fixed tasks and skill sets. The human innovator and its product ‘knowledge growth’ are the new and valuable dynamic for our civilization.

‘It (diffusion of technology) follows a close relationship between the social processes of creating and manipulating symbols (the culture of society) and the capacity to produce and distribute goods and services (the productive forces). For the first time in history, the human mind is a direct productive force, not just a decisive element of the production system’. Thus, computers, communication systems, and genetic decoding and programming are all amplifiers and extensions of the human mind. What we think, and how we think, become expressed in goods and services, material and intellectual output, be it food, shelter, transport and communication system, computers, missiles, health, education, or images’. Castells –1996 p32.

Businesses can now provide more and better services and more and better quality products, faster. There is increasing interest in employees being able to think processes rather than do tasks. What meaning then has this for working people and how might we investigate. The study postulates a direct link between these technology driven successes in ‘product and service’ automation advanced and new challenges for education and training staff at corporate workplaces.

Global effects on working people are not restricted to operating commercial transactions within national and international enterprises. They also include a new and general sense of interconnectedness or ‘networked’ job roles at work. Across employment roles, the influence workers have at all levels is known, documented and communicated. The impact on other workers, other work sites and at local, interstate and international levels, can often be instantaneous. This happens now in ways previously restricted to middle and upper management prior to technological work process automation becoming available to administration. Paradoxically however, there are increasing signs of segregation and isolation for many employees in a changing workplace.
The New Order and Learning at Work

It is not simply increased accessibility of new technologies or the availability of information in abundance that has influenced changes to workplace learning models and new identities for workplace learning practitioners, (Johnston and Chappell 2000), (Schofield, Walsh et al. 2000), (Johnston 2000) (Malloch, Cairns et al. 1998) and (Chappell 1999). It has become cliché to suggest the combined effects of globalization, marketisation, informationalism and adherence to a neo-liberal economic rationalism model has transformed areas of workplace life once well established, stable and understood by working people. Micro-economic reform has altered workplaces and influenced contemporary workplace learning to the extent where impacts on learning practitioners operating for organizations can be significant and measurable, (Watkins 1991) (Watkins 1994) (Lash and Urry 1987), (Castells 1996pp103-106).

The resulting transformed workplace, encouraged by new corporate ‘styles’, waves of ‘systems thinking’ and managerial strategies is causing confusion and alarm for working people across industries and industrial sectors. This has encouraged broad based sociological comment on this topic, (Casey 1995), (Castells 1996pp201-326), (Gorz 1999), (Gee, Hull et al. 1996), (Waterhouse, Wilson et al. 1999). These readers argue a whole range of social and cultural transformations have taken place for people at work as organizations accommodate a new economy. Changes in the order of work for example, in divisions of command, has meant middle and upper management, particularly in human resources sectors, have been reduced or eliminated as horizontal structures replace hierarchical control.

New orders in women’s work, through rights movements, medical and legal advances globalism has transformed gender ‘balances’ at work, (Castells 1967pp156-75). New orders in ‘kinds’ of workers called ‘knowledge workers’ (Gee, Hull et al. 1996pp25-43) represent the skilled staff as the new ‘intellectual capital’ for the firm. There is increased interest in capturing tacit knowledge as the new business leverage towards what is called corporate ‘knowledge growth’ and knowledge creation under the stewardship of new business strategies in Knowledge Management (Weill and Broadbent 1998pp 197- 204). There are new orders in workplace tenure as an alternative to full time work such as contract, part-time, flexi-time and casual staff are now recognised as ‘main stream’ for people at work. What has increasingly developed is a new grapple by firms to be able to service an ongoing competitive edge through innovative business strategies that means continual change in organisational development. Management strategies designed to cope with threats to management from knowledge experts and technology specialists have targeted corporate ‘learning from within’ and the ‘knowledge worth’ of the company as new means for worker control (Nettle 1996). These strategies have become intertwined with the new work order and transformations for work described above (Seddon and Cairns 2002).

Work is now a place where ‘constant change’ and continual turbulence has introduced uncertainty and anxieties for working people in recent times. Integrating new and ‘autonomous’ or ‘empowering’ workplace cultural paradigms into current community norms, for example, is no easy task because ‘community norms’ are often not part of the bargain – they are left out. Important individual and group identities become fragmented or dissolve altogether (Zuboff 1988pp402-412).

A series of these top-down business strategies, from TQM to Knowledge Management have influenced a redesign of workplace learning and training (Garrat 1990; Nonaka 1991; Senge 1992; Broadbent 1997). Workplace learning models now go beyond classroom instruction or technology learning tools in CBT, laptop, on-line learning etc., and can include self-directed learning, employee performance support, learning in teams, informal learning, facilitated learning, self-instructional learning, outsourced or mentoring as examples of ‘automated’ training and learning models (Candy 1985; Hiemstra 1985; Garrison 1987; Chappell 2000; Harris, Simons et al. 2000; Johnston 2000).

The ‘automation’ of teaching and learning as I describe, is not simply a collection of ‘technology’ driven tools for pedagogical change at work. I do not limit the term to such areas as the virtual classroom, E-learning or the role of the personal computer as a replacement for human intervention in learning. It is not simply changes in technology that is at the core of what I chose to call ‘automated’ learning. It is rather, as though thinking itself has become an obstacle to ‘throughput’ in automated knowledge flow programs.
Whole areas of thinking at work that needs skills developed within appropriate learning reference frames for success, are being left to the workers to articulate, abandoned or eliminated altogether in implementation design programs. Informationalism (Castells 1996) has created a climate at work in which knowing is given greater value than thinking, calling into question notions of a new and innovative post-industrial workplace. It is not only ‘PC’s’ or technology gadgetry that is making a contribution to automated knowing at work. It is also the development of a new range of human foot soldiers for knowledge resource management in ‘knowledge experts’, mentors, consultants and self-tuition – the establishment of these new knowledge networks described earlier, may deny or redefine the role of the educational professional at work.

**Self-Directed Learning**

Implicit to new managerial business strategies is a demand for ‘flexibility’ (Cooke 1988) in workforces. A growing feature of this ‘worker elasticity’ has been an increased interest in forms of self-direction at work, (Long and others 1996), (Candy 1985; Savicevic 1985; Garrison 1987; Lyons and Evans 1997; Harrison 2000; van Loo, de Grip et al. 2001). Self directed learning brings new tensions in facilitation for the work-based learning professional as individual employees take on these self-learning responsibilities (Johnston, McAuley et al. 2000), (Johnston 2000), (Galagan 1994).

A model for self direction in learning is presented by Foucher (Foucher 1996) which is based on some favourable perspectives on self-directed learning for individuals and corporations, by Carré (Carr'e 1992). Carré proposed the *seven pillars of self-learning* that describes structures by which individuals may be able to exercise control over their own learning. Several other papers are cited that offer competency needs for trainers working in the self-directed learning space such as (Brookfield 1985), (Carr'e 1992), (Hiemstra 1985), (Knowles 1980) and (Schuttenberg and Tracey 1987). Research into willingness for trainers to engage with self-directed learning students comes with Phelan (Phelan 1996). Phelan researched trainers’ perspective on their role, investigating areas in which trainers believed that learners could assume some control. The study found that while learners were receptive to self-directed programs, trainers were suspicious and not prepared to allow learners to assume control, or aspects of control, in areas such as controlling the learning environment or the instructor/training role or choosing instructional methods. Phelan went on to recommend trainers engage more in self-directed learning, as learners themselves. Through this perhaps they would see greater value for the concept of self-directed learning as learning professionals.

Accepting flexibility where this includes self-direction can be more easily accommodated at the workplace if the new ideology for participation is allied with a prevailing managerialist vision. Workers need to be aligned to the corporate direction, taking on greater responsibility, greater autonomy, - a ‘think for themselves’ approach that can include self-direction in learning. Gee (Gee, Hull et al. 1996), are critical of new workplace learning practices that demands indoctrination of workers towards ‘indenture specific’ and ‘instrumental’ practices at work. Gee et al., suggests a conflict between traditional job roles and a ‘portfolio’ rationale as part of what that they call a ‘new capitalism’ contract with the corporation – the investment by the worker to the firm in all of ‘heart, mind and body’.

*If the ranks of the middle managers are to be seriously thinned, much of their knowledge, information and responsibility must be pushed down to the lower level workers. In fact it is the principle of the new capitalism to push down control and responsibility to the lowest possible level, closest to the actual products, services and customers of the business. This however requires workers who can learn and adapt quickly, think for themselves, take responsibility, make decisions, and communicate what they know to leaders who coach, supply and inspire them.* (Gee, Hull et al. 1996 pp18)

Self-directed learning is being presented as another flexible attribute through which workplace knowledge growth can happen. There is a recognition within management that workers ‘empowerment’ might contribute directly to company business leverage, based on workers own tacit knowing, not just within work groups or specific site problem solving, but across the whole corporation (Zuboff 1988). The idea that companies need to be able to offer increased levels of self-governance to employees’ stops short of empowerment. According to Gee (1996), whether visionary leadership or corporate core value leadership is used to direct workers or create worker empowerment, the prospect for workers to take a greater decision-making role, has “never been on the agenda”.

Towards the Autodidactic Worker – NZARE/AARE 2003
"In the past, the speed of business has been limited by how fast information could be moved around. But now, with digital tools moving that information at the speed of light, the only constraint is how well you use your knowledge workers--your thinkers--to react to what is going on. So, "business at the speed of thought" is about empowering those knowledge workers to reach out with digital tools and to make sure that all the best thinking gets applied." (Gates and Hemingway 1999).

Much of the rhetoric associated with worker ‘empowerment’ is closely linked to decentralisation, accountability, devolution and ‘worker autonomy’. Public service industries, as well as free market firms, seek decentralisation. With it comes increased accountability for employees couched in liberating phrases such as worker autonomy empowerment or responsiveness. However, these concepts disguise increased feudalism at work in the form of individual contracts, staff appraisals and performance monitoring or self-assessment and the adoption of individual ‘targets’.

The Autodidactic Strategy

So what are the different forms of ‘self’ education (self-directed learning, self-instruction, self-management, self-governance, self-directed education etc) to support a new ‘business’ or learning strategy for corporations? What are some signposts for a trend in this direction?

Within the international debate around changing patterns for teachers work and perceived competition between pedagogy and managing knowledge, Noble (2000) suggests that in higher education in the United States, teaching classifications are being eroded. Whole areas of worker job roles are threatened, as ‘administration’ takes a higher profile in the learning development of students. Noble (Noble 2000), sees strong links between technological transformations and a commercialisation of higher education as affecting a marginalisation of learning practitioners’ roles. He argues that the marketplace is now ‘driving’ knowledge to the extent that higher education courses become ‘courseware’ for hire or sale, and learning becomes a ‘commodity’. He sees educators – teachers, trainers and lectures going the way of skilled production workers during the period of industrial automation in manufacturing and in the direction of redundancy. He argues that teaching and learning styles dominated by technology, challenges learning practitioners independence and control over their work and professional solidarity. The art and craft of pedagogy in teaching will be lost, Noble predicts, and control of higher education will shift to administration almost completely. Instinctive skills fundamental to the educator’s craft, in oratory and timing, for example, will be lost to the video player. He effectively suggests learning and teaching is moving away from humans and towards computer, as the preferred interface.

In higher education institutions, Boud (1994) considers an increase in support for forms of student ‘self-assessment’ in power relations between staff and between staff and students. He argues it is ironic, and possibly contradictory, that while a prevailing ideology can promote accountability and definable outcomes, teaching staff must cope with new demands for risk taking, openness and liberation, in student assessment. He raises the issue of ‘balance of power’ shift in the direction of the student’s self-assessment and considers where these options offer cohesion or coercion for student in relationships with teaching staff. This is an important contribution in the context of employees taking responsibility within a corporate learning context.

Johnston (Johnston 2000), describes self-learning trends in organisational training and development at work. Individuals, or work teams are being encouraged to take much of the responsibility for their own learning within a performance management basis. In these situations, the work site, its technology and interrelationships, become the ‘basis for skills acquisition’. These are the principles around which ‘communities of practice’ are arranged. Garrison (Garrison 1987), indicates that self-directed learning is not an autonomous enquiry (Candy 1985), and agrees that success is more likely with interconnection between the learner and a facilitator as a transaction within specific environmental contexts.
Self-directed learning is best achieved and facilitated through interaction, not through isolated learning; therefore we come to this seemingly paradoxical position that self-direction is highly dependent upon quality interaction and collaboration between learner and facilitator. The crucial element in the facilitation of self-directed learning is the interdependent and transactional relationship between learner and facilitator. Self-directed learning does not mean that the learner has total control over the selection of goals, development of curriculum and evaluation of success while the facilitator serves as a resource person without and active, initiating, constructivist role in the education process (Brookfield 1986). (Garrison 1987pp311)

A move by firms for an employee ‘self-learning’ format that includes self-tuition and a self management of lifelong learning and career paths generally, is the subject of a paper by van Loo (van Loo, de Grip et al. 2001) entitled “The impact of Self-Management on Training Participation”. They argue that human resources development (HRD) practitioners have indeed moved to new responsibilities in facilitation of training and learning rather than assuming complete responsibility for employee training activities. Corporate demand for flexibility in employees has shifted worker up-skillling from a firm responsibility to an employees concern. Savicevic (Savicevic 1985), compares education, self-directed education, self-directed learning and self-instruction. While supporting the notion that self-instruction can be an individual expression of personal desires, interests and needs, Savicevic also suggests challenges for the ‘autodidactic’ employee and recognises that specific conditions need to be in place for success. These circumstances can include motivation, adequate time, environmental inducements and resources and funding. Also, the individual must have good initial levels of general education, some experience in self-instruction, mastery of working independently and the ability to accommodate varying ideological trends, working relationship and social liabilities!

Harrison (Harrison 2000), describes tensions for individuals who need to be able to align, as self-managing ‘entrepreneurs’ within an ideology that is managerial; “the same rational processes can be used in assessing strengths and weaknesses and planning for future development”. This is managerial speak for saying that as with market driven growth pressures, individual knowledge can become a commodity and employees need to sell themselves to the firm.

The project of the self is then enclosed within the positivist, technical, rational discourse of project management, where the only legitimate form of action consists of instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique (Schon 1983). This image of a ‘learner as manager’ shapes a particular narrative of what it is to be a learner, one which excludes, or at least marginalizes, discussion of the moral and political purposes of learning in favour of efficiency in meeting pre-ordained goals (Harrison 2000pp317)

Self-instruction or self-directed training is not an insignificant challenge for individual employees because it brings with it challenges in ‘self-management’. Ball (Ball 1997), like Savicevic above, suggests that some of these managerial skills and competencies such as optimising situations already current, using career planning skills, engaging in personal development and balancing work and non-work activities also need to be ‘in place’. No mean endeavour when survival means being this flexible and at the end of the day you just want to go home! For executive or business unit managers concerned with revenue gains and personnel staff keen to satisfy ‘box ticking’ career paths, self-teaching can be a significant learning and business strategy, however there are some who embrace a need to develop new learning styles.

White (2000) challenges the notion that the human interface can be the utopia as the teaching/learning dualism comes under review. For example, he challenges Noble’s bleak vision of teachers’ new role as being at best administrative and technological - world of none classroom tuition and content that’s low in quality and high in volume and with online tuition for the masses and quality education that is reserved for the privileged. White argues that, in fact, there is evidence of the pedagogical usefulness of online instruction - “what’s the difference between selling courseware and selling textbooks”? He suggests that Noble is ill informed about the extent of web based instruction kits – Virtual reality modeling language; multi-point video conferencing; teleconferencing; digital video and audio broadcasts; interactive media, self-instruction modules; audio-text lectures; audio-slide presentations; plane text applications and computer mediated conferencing. White remarks;
Where does that leave us? It is a futile dispute that leads nowhere. There are pockets of instructional genius on the web; so too, there are samples of appalling vapidity. Just like the classroom. The classroom does not automatically confer upon the lecturer the gift of pedagogical brilliance. Internet/Web technologies are tools. They can be used skillfully or imperfectly. Whether they have been used well or poorly is a matter for individual students to decide, not Dr Noble'.

White –(2000) p 6

The Study

Methodology

Phase 1 of the thesis generally, investigates tensions among Executive Managers, HRD staff, Learning Practitioner staff and External ‘Knowledge’ Consultants for current education policy directions that influences contemporary teaching and learning environments within corporations. Notwithstanding sites selected for the study represented diverse corporate business sectors included Telecommunications, Manufacturing, Retail, Oil and Gas, Mining and Financial Consultancy, the inquiry also considers whether there may be commonalities across corporate business units about these pressures and their affects (See the Attributes Table, Appendix 1). The search for evidence around difficulties within corporate learning go to the corporate education policy itself is interpretive in approach and uses semi-structured interviews as the methodology for data collection. The data collection is thus a ‘broad sweep’ of changes in the teaching and learning machinery for the corporation. Respondents are asked about perceptions on changes in corporate education; what went before, what seems to be happening now and where, in their view, corporate learning may be heading next from an individual perspective.

A transcript of the respondent experiential perspective is developed using this semi-structured introductory conversation. The conversation begins by exploring background; experience, current job role etc., as part of a taped interview. This takes place immediately prior to referencing the ‘prompted’ conversation questions as described in the Interview Data Record – Appendix 2. Broadly speaking, questions 1 to 4 in the interview relate to the changing structures for education and training within the corporation, questions 5 to 10 refer to impacts for teaching and learning programs resulting from these new structures, and question 11 seeks insights into future trends and new responsibilities for educational directions within firms. Each transcript then becomes a ‘Project Document’ within the qualitative analysis software tool, QSR Nvivo Version 2.0.

The general thesis analysis begins by examining the data and searching for some of the key difficulties corporations may be struggling for solutions to within the learning dynamic. Are these problems sheer size, the conglomerate? Are there direct links to Globalisation or the Information Age? Are learning issues more about the marketplace and how business is done, risk? Or is it more local, structural? Is there any evidence, for example, that problems are interconnected with administration issues and a need for teaching to become an administrative function first and foremost? What evidence is there for a drive towards teaching as a ‘broadcast’ or a search for a ‘self teaching’ workforce? How has the learning environment changed, what are the effects of technology and what problems present directly through this? There is a range of problematic areas for corporate learning that feed problem confirmation in the analysis generally.

As evidence is gathered and difficult areas can be confirmed, the analysis can then question why is it this way? What factors come together? What are some implications and what judgements can be made and models developed in solution that can directly impact what practitioners will do from now. As ‘knowledge’ people, what ‘kinds’ of employee may learning practitioners need to become? As learners themselves, what kinds of learners will they need to be? As participants in the marketplace what kinds of entrepreneurs may they need to become? What about a new role in corporate strategy? Do they have a place? The thesis work is set to consider some of those. This paper considers only the particular case for a shift for them to become autodidactic workers.
Analysis Design

The design is founded on discussions with Managers, HRD staff, Learning Practitioners and External Consultants about new roles for learners and learning practitioners resulting from decision making amid new structures and strategies for corporate learning policy. Key issues (as nodes in the software) take their origin either from the literature in the field or by what respondents say. Other nodes come literally through the process of coding the transcripts. Coding can come as a singular issue or idea (Free Node – see table 1 below), or as ideas grouped around a particular conceptual frame (Tree Nodes – see Appendix 3). Together these two types form the framework for the classical qualitative analysis style of inquiry.

### Free Nodes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>External Consultants and Outsourcing</td>
<td>Discussions and debate about the use of external people to knowledge transfers to the corporation positive and negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Somehow through osmosis people just know it”:</td>
<td>InVivo node created from TransDoc_Neil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Stakeholder Conflict</td>
<td>Evidence that there may be differences in opinion about training policy direction or standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Views about Learning:</td>
<td>What respondents say about learning rather than training and how and when it happens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“we need to satisfy that need,</td>
<td>InVivo node created from TransDoc_Greg. “This could be called planning. But day to day shop floor, take it as it comes we need to satisfy that need lets try to do it as quickly as we can”..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>We sell expertise</td>
<td>InVivo node created from Transdoc_Andrea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Workplace Change</td>
<td>Clear evidence of rapid change on working environments that have the potential to confuse, great anxiety or offer greater fulfilment for employees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

It is clear that there are certain issues that can be grouped together conceptually. Issues about a learning environment as distinct from a teaching strategy describe the tree nodes. For instance, the tree node Learning Environments (Appendix 3) focuses on circumstances such as how do people meet to learn, as groups and as individuals. What is the range of ways this can happen within the corporation? Some respondents hint at an associated but as yet unheralded training environment that can be linked to learning in isolation. The analysis examines the possibility an absence of ‘fleshy trainers’ may have become the new training environment. Uncovered issues such as evidence for self-training as an learning environmental option, may also be linked to the other nodal areas I have listed such as teaching ‘styles’ or technological advances. Indeed, whole areas such as individual learning portfolios and new learning methods overlap in the coding process for this analysis. For example, many respondents spoke a lot about issues around learning portfolios as part of the learning environment. They also spoke about new learning methods in the context of the world in which practitioners must operate. Now while there can be some overlap when describing ‘learning portfolios’ or ‘learning methods’ as causal for a given circumstance, the design allocates these as separate ‘children’ to the general Learning Environment node. All of these issues (the table above and Appendix 3) form the main thesis search for areas of significant impact on professional educators that corporations present. This paper is concerned however, with the question that learning practitioners may need to be able to operate within an autodidactic environment as one of those impacting zones.

For this paper then, findings are sought according to how they may illustrate an autodidactic influence on what practitioners will do. I identify issues that I believe ‘jump out’ and can be linked to a ‘self-teaching’ paradigm. For example, one obvious free node in this respect, for example, is the node given in the sample earlier “somehow through osmosis, people just know it” and what people say around this concept will be important. Findings for possible influences on learning practitioners are thus restricted, in this paper, to this idea only. What can be said about Learning Practitioners who must operate within self-teaching surroundings?
Initial Findings – Autodidactic Worker

Introduction

Impressions for a climate in which self-teaching may become a ‘learning strategy’ for corporations begins with a comparative look at what stakeholders say about how important learning is within the firm. When attributing meaning to ‘Learning Importance’ amongst the respondents, it became clear very early this could be broadly set within three distinct perspectives. Most respondents were able to differentiate between their own personal opinion, the firm’s official perspective, and the firm’s performance in practice (as related evidence provided them) on the importance of learning for corporations (see Appendix 1). Comparative stakeholder perspectives on aspects of corporate learning yield some interesting and fundamental findings about a new place for learning within rapidly changing corporate workplaces. Currently a raft of new and exciting, if anxious and pioneering initiatives for corporate learning are being negotiated towards providing a path through problem areas. A more depth analysis on this issue, based on respondent’s comments, is considered in the findings section to follow. (See Qn1 -see Appendix 2 and Appendix 4).

Other fundamental examination includes the search for acute issues of conflict relative amongst the stakeholders. One key node in this respect is the ‘free node’ Stakeholders conflict (See Appendix 5). What does each group say that is demonstrably conflicting when describing the teaching and learning agenda for the firm? What are some of the differentials? Why are they present and why do they stand out? With this node, for example, the search is for evidence about detectable differences in opinion about training policy direction or standards (see table1 previously). Next, evidence of stakeholder conflict around budgets (see Appendix 6), and ‘new’ learning methods (see Appendix 7) are explored in the search for greater understanding about where corporate learning strategies may be headed searching amongst the nodal area for the study for clues about a trend towards autodidactic employees.

1) Learning Importance (see some respondents comments in Appendix 4)

How important is learning to your org - little, average, important, critical, … why do you say that?

Learning Practitioners

Without exception, all respondents identified as Learning Practitioners saw learning for the firm as critical or important to critical, both from a personal and company policy perspective. However there is deep frustration, almost bewilderment for them, about what occurs for the corporate learning profile in practice. According to this group, the differential between what corporations want from employees at knowledge levels and the processes in place to achieve this, are severe. Debb speaks about inconsistencies in corporate desire for “better educated workers across the board”, while at the same time witnessing virtually no strategy for following up training once project implementations end.

It’s interesting that this group is acutely aware of return on investment perspective for the firm in sound training practice (Kevin, Kay and William). However there is a solid body of cynicism amongst the group for the ways in which their organisations fail to take up what seems to them to be a clear business leverage tool (Lizy, Neil). There is frustration about actions being taken to facilitate good learning strategy, which lack a learning professional perspective (Neil), as they argue the overlap between ‘learning’ strategy for the corporation and successful ‘business’ strategies.

Both Neil and Steve introduce the question of the ‘conglomerate’ for corporations, so that managing learning programs becomes a ‘magnitudinal’ or logistics issue as much as anything else. In general, the group infers that the range and scope of what has to be known across the organisation is prohibitive to quality learning programming for firms as they are currently structured. They question the abilities of on-line learning in solution, considering such solutions only confirming management failure in understanding the interdependence of good ‘learning’ and ‘business’ strategies. (See comments by Debb, Kevin, Kay and Neil in Appendix 4)
Human Resources

HR staff tends to follow the corporate culture to some extent. What they emphasise as important in learning for their firm may be heavily linked to organisational cultural i.e., Greg describes the importance of training in new technology for his firm, using the phrase “very important”, whereas softer managerial skills are described as “important”. All of this HR group speaks about risk management and health and safety issues. The group also used expressions like “best bang for buck” or “the focus is to get people out there” when describing development of client projects (Brain) – a ‘tick the box’ mentality for staff training. Interestingly, there is also mention of new skill set in staff called “influential skills” that are linked to leadership agendas. These directing skills it seems, are moving down the corporate hierarchy so that leadership skill training must target newer kinds of workers at lower and lower ‘levels’. Kirsty talks about a “missing strategic approach” across the board on corporate training that is compounded by new global/local conflicts. These are not unrelated development when considering the self-taught phenomenon. (See comments by Bobby, Greg and Kirsty in Appendix 4).

Executive Managers

Executive Managers use terms like ‘adequate’ and ‘we have to show that’ or “we only develop things we need to operate” a lot when describing corporate learning. Paul talks about the company ‘not focusing’ on learning and training being allowed to ‘slide’. They link ‘competency based’ training with ‘average to importance’ levels in the sense that the whole corporate training strategy is on a par with the task proficiency oriented training i.e., it operating to a ‘competent’ level. So that while in policy statements the organisations may be promoting learning as critical to the firm’s survival, in practice it’s “average to important” only. Commitment to training seems to be in the hands of the business manager alone who have almost complete autonomy, having access to budgets and time considerations for their staff.

Some managers have a cyclic view of learning i.e., “we have a project running now so training is critical” (Iris). There is evidence however, that increasing numbers of middle management staff are becoming involved in teaching and coaching at work. There is also some evidence of differentials in corporate culture influences on the importance of learning for the organisation that includes the shareholder factor. While there is some enlightenment amongst those I spoke to, overall they have a transient, functionalist view of training - different strategies are given impetus according to the changing contemporary flavour (KM for example). An emphasis for this group on external support, institutional courses or via consultancy gives the impression that learning problems are being ‘passed on’ to individuals because strategic, budgetary, cultural or structural challenges present for them in developing sound learning strategies. (See comment by Ike, Mark, Paul and Stella in Appendix 4).

2) Stakeholder Conflicts (see some respondents comments in Appendix 5)

Evidence that there may be differences in opinion about training policy direction or standards.

Learning Practitioners

The learning practitioner group commented most about a lack of clarity across the formal/informal methodology divide. They were concerned about being asked to be flexible in delivery, yet also operate under rigid training regimes or to offer relevancy in training content, yet not be supported by business unit managers once the training programs are set up. Or indeed, they are not given time to set up relevant and flexible programs in the first place. The impression is that cynicism is creeping in for training staff – as though ‘informality’ in training programs is reaching a stage where training people are starting to give up on being able to achieve real and structured knowledge transfer. (Consider comment by William in Appendix 5)

Human Resources

Stakeholder conflict amongst Human Resources people was more a criticism of training systems that complicated rather than clarified staff knowledge growth. They offered a more pragmatic view of training, supporting ‘just in time training’ and competency base programs. They seemed to have a rather more functional view for training delivery seeking to always simplify programs on offer. There is here also
criticism of business managers becoming the key factor in individual staff development. They struggle with countering managerially dominated decision-making in terms of who should attend what training. (Consider Moira’s contribution in Appendix 5)

Executive Management

Overall the executive management group seems sceptical about labelling learning within the organisation as critical. Indeed they are readily prepared to link learning responsibility to individual employee responsibilities and a return on investment issue. They seemed to accept the unstructured or vague nature of the origin of many training programs (reactive rather than proactive) and accept replacement of individuals as an alternative to human resources development. There is also a seeming need to be convinced about the importance of learning where it is not directly linked to business processes and business strategies. Issues of management commitment to training programs continually needs to be re-fought each time a new business strategy comes along – it is not a given for all time. Learning is still considered a liability rather than an asset despite some of the managerial rhetoric, it seems. There is some evidence of a fear of innovation and cynicism about a lack of training program follow-up (implementing what has been learned) that filters across management and creates the differential between ‘talking’ and ‘action’. Overall there is some evidence of dissatisfaction within management across corporations about the training issue generally, over prevailing training models and what can be done. (See comments by Ike, Paul, Ron and Stella in Appendix 5).

3) Training Budgets (see respondents comments in Appendix 6)

Allocation of monies to training that can through light on conflict issues between people over training adequacy.

Executive Managers

As may be expected, executive managers readily link training budgets issues to need. However their perceptions of training ‘need’ can range from simply identifying business processes as ‘training’ in order to support government funding recovery (Government Training Levy) all the way across to acts of desperation in up-skilling programs because of acute downsizing and the need to re-establish a lost knowledge base. Even when there is a clear training need (often following boom and bust) and that need is directly linked to a new business strategy, there can still be resistance at executive management level to purchase training. This applies even amongst firms who have experience pain over downsizing.

There is also the obscure conundrum about paying for learning to do or paying to do, the extreme end of functional oriented training policy. Managers want to pay for problems to be solved, not the mechanics of coming to the solution. The links around management, cost cutting and training, can be causal it seems to training program neglect. In the end, employees are being asked to provide, or come along with, ‘solution’ instead of ‘problems’. Saves time and money. (See Comments from Ike, Mark, Paul, Ron and Stella in Appendix 6).

Human Resources

Human Resources staff seem reluctant to move outside the square too much, when considering the training resource. They seem to accept, as part of their role, to be able to assess the merits of training programs according to the prevailing budget constraints. As human resources development, this is where they operate. They seem not able to raise the levels of individual training and development beyond the needs of specific managers. Development is thus almost totally managerially determined. People spoke about a lot of money, then no money. Commitment was erratic. (See comments from Bobby Appendix 6).

Learning Practitioners

It’s interesting reading through the material on teachers and budgets. Even within corporations, there is an air of resignation and exclusion about funding the learning resource that I did not expect. There was no ‘fire in the belly’ about their situation, which is generally ‘to do more with less’ or for training always to be pushed to the rear. The separation between teachers and decision-making within organisations is never clearer it seem, than when you
ask learning practitioners about funding and what it means for them. They seem to not expect to be asked for input – they make little contribution here. So there is complaining, but no knowledge, nor involvement in the allocation processes. There are clear issues that include additional staff, increased travel or resources that are ‘cap in hand’ to the manager scenarios. There is evidence however, that money is being made available for technology advances in areas of knowledge transfer.

Mag commented of the need for learning practitioners to be ‘close to the strategy’ in order to be able to secure appropriate funding allocation. However, mostly it was resignation and disillusionment. They seem concerned with the continual demand for value for money, or even internal teachers offering services as internal consultant to the firm – selling their services. This brings with it the question of who pays for internal consultants to keep their skills up to date. Who is teaching them? (See comments from Kevin, Lizy, Mag, Neil and Steve in Appendix 6).

4) Learning Methods (see respondents comments in Appendix 7)

The place where people meet, and learning happens, can say something about its place within the corporation - Informal, on the job, seminar, discussion or user groups or ‘on your own’ learning. Can be distinct from teaching styles!

While there are a range of ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’ perspectives amongst these responses, conflict here seems much more diffused and people across stakeholder groups talk about problems in a like manner. There is good general knowledge about available variations in learning methods. For the purposes of continuity, I have retained the stakeholder separations and included responses from the external consultants group also since they may have special insights.

Learning Practitioners

As may be expected, this group seems to be more comfortable with ‘bottom-up’ approaches. They are suspicious of ‘remoteness’ in the technology aided learning environments being promoted. There is broad scepticism of on-line learning effectiveness across this group. Kevin and others describe extensively a range of environmental options including audio –conferencing, database ‘success stories’, Powerpoint slide packs, global ‘tours’, Intranet ‘portals’, some interactive software and chat rooms. Kevin argues for the firm’s ‘2 hours of Power’ as the most successful. This program was the only one on his ‘list’, which described, at its core, learning via human interaction – one that also recognises the importance of the professional educator in the process. Generally the report card on e-learning or on-line learning thus far is mixed (Kevin, Lizy, Mag and Neil) and the jury is still out. There is cynicism over the motives that form that basis of many new learning environments and Neil contrasts motivation that is market driven with a more holistically based strategy. "Is it about just giving out competencies to get more money, or is it about lifting the self-esteem of the individual?" He goes on to underscore a key feature for this paper describing learning via ‘osmosis’.

“Quite often, well the people come to learning only when they have a real problem, and they just look at it in terms of whether it’s a major change project, or new systems implementation etc., quite often the learning aspect is neglected (laughs), it’s not even budgeted for and there is an expectation that somehow rather than running the alignment with the development (the training people), it seems to be an ‘after though’ …we’ve got these systems administrators, we’ve got one week to do it. So you are saying it’s contractual but the delivery is up to you? No, it’s not even that…its the almost a neglect of everything …it’s just assumed that you put a new system in and somehow through osmosis people just know it…so that the actual fact that people need to be trained up on it?…it’s an after thought…it can happen by itself automatically?  yeh and then there is frustration …oh, why can’t you do it”? Neil

Steve describes an increasing need for entrepreneurship in learning practitioners and the insular nature of his role. William suggests that people may be giving up altogether on formal training strategies altogether and now rely on ‘natural social interaction’, essentially ‘bottom-up’ approaches as knowledge is shared.
Human Resources

Change management generally, and confusion about learning strategy is a difficult area for this group and they tend to be tightly tied into administrative considerations. Bobby points out the challenge this brings on in individual, pro-active or ‘empowering’ directives for learners. Others commented on methods for knowledge capture, e-learning or administration items such as electronic individual portfolios, chat rooms, on-line discussions etc. Kevin and Moira of this group, stresses once more the key role of the business unit manager as the fulcrum upon which can rest a ‘resourceful’ staff. See below;

“We do induct people, we do have programs around that…but the quality of the induction largely rest with how well the particular manager does that. And how resourceful the individual is and so on…but that’s not professional at all, so that would be something we don’t do as well as we could” Kevin

“So actually the on-line is becoming a big part of peoples’ learning. Are people using this easily enough? Yes, people are using it. Does that allow you to set up individual learning profiles? It’s pretty much self…we recommend that if you are looking at a certain area, then this is the module you should do, but we don’t set up a profile. But you still believe that it is fairly …in constant use? Yes, if people want to tackle an area that they haven’t tackled before, it’s a good way to start and see and assess your needs in the area. How do you get feedback? Feedback is mainly through the report about who has used it, who has completed it, and who has passed it and so … do you get any oral feedback? Yes and the feedback is really varied. Most staff like it as the basis to have a go at a certain area, do some basics in a certain area. They don’t see it as a way to become an expert. They don’t feel comfortable with. …they would probably feel more comfortable with a more formal process of learning, like going to a training course or getting coached from one of their supervisors or a mentor”. Moira

Executive Managers

Generally the managerial perspective on training strategies is ‘top down’ although there are signs that new voice is being given amongst them to ‘communities of practice’ initiative that can include learning as it happens, ground up. There seems to be a lot of discussion and activity for the informal training environment. Ike describes training as “more coaching than training” and “even our computer courses are one-on-one”. He describes some on-line lessons that everybody can use – solving simple takes as “not very well used” – oodles of end user lessons for the ERP the firm uses, but “the uptake is very low”. He suggests that training strategies are designed according to “whatever bobs up” while there have been some successes in long-term management training programs. So what is the problem with individuals and on-line training, he asks? Individual are blamed for program failures, attributing ‘attitudinal’ problems to strategic malfunctions. Ike wants more emphasis on self-paced training while at the same time talks about the importance of the human element. There is emphasis of pressure on individuals to organise their own learning practices. Mark makes some key points about a shift for employees to be thinking about the process than simply performing tasks, when he describes the new need for employees to understand company ‘processes’. Paul describes the ‘magical’ nature of some new learning methods as though people can just become ‘instant experts’ from training, requiring no follow-up to programs, while Ron stresses the importance of the human interaction in learning environments and describes ways in which on-line approaches can loose control of the corporate learning as an overall company strategy. Finally, Stella describe a key change in the corporate learning environment that she describes as the drive for individual responsibility as part of a ‘change strategy’ for organisations.
Concluding Remarks

The respondents in all categories were keen to present their thoughts on learning for their firms. There were several occasions, across the groups, where respondents either inferred, or stated outright, that they welcomed the opportunity to talk on these things. The overall impression was a sense of frustration at one level and feeling of neglect or abandonment at another. Recognizing the significance ongoing learning presents for the success of the organisation, while simultaneously acknowledging the tenuous nature of strategies in support, paints a depressing picture for many across the stakeholder groups. There is resignation that a strategy based on workers ‘teaching themselves’ may have become a genuine corporate learning strategy. All respondents wanted to discuss their learning environment. There is a sense of desertion not only with day-to-day function, but also in terms of ongoing tenure. The notion of the ‘autodidactic’ employee was neither implied nor expressed, either in the prompt questions, or as subsidiary questions orally. Yet on the evidence thus far, either as a planned strategy or simply as the only ‘realistic’ alternative, this kind of employee may have become part of new learning environments for the corporations canvassed.

The subject of learning importance was a significant area of variance across the groups. There are recognisable inconsistencies within the views expressed. The management policy position is that corporate learning is at least “important to critical”, however this falters in practice. Performance in this area is described as “average” and strategies in solution are difficult to identify. This is not to say that there are not some excellent teaching and learning programs and people operating the space. Overall, strategies for corporate learning either top-down or bottom up, often reach a ‘use by’ date. In some areas, corporate learning ‘strategies’ have been abandoned altogether. See some of these effects on stakeholder perspectives in Appendix 8.

Inconsistencies occur in expressions of how important learning is, are uncovered, opening the way for vagueness in training agendas - a trend towards self-learning workers becoming the default option (See Appendix 9). There are conflicting positions amongst these key stakeholders about how to proceed in this circumstance. For example, despite corporate rhetoric about the importance of learning in practice, strategies are often periodic, just in time, adequate or within corporate health and safety risk management dimensions, offered to task competency levels. The quality of programs on offer can be affected by such factors as ‘speed to market’ or ‘the sheer size of the enterprise’ or even its ‘corporate culture’. Corporations are moving to on-line services in training fulfilment, but again an overall plan here seems vague and uptake is poor. There is a recognition that teaching in ‘leadership’ skills may be moving still further down through the organisation suggesting new levels of autonomy amongst workers not previously associated with corporate problem solving. ‘Influential’ employees (knowledge workers) are thus required to know more about company process with new ‘leadership’ areas for corporate learning infiltrating shop floor or ‘task-oriented’ domains of past times. Doing tasks competently is necessary, but no longer a sufficient, it seems. Employees need to understand the corporate processes more. The new drive is for the thinking worker and when learning strategies are either task centred, vague or not present at all, then the situation for self-teaching employees can be anxious.

Making conclusions about genuine areas for stakeholder conflict this early is problematic. Comments are selected against particular nodal zones, according to the researcher’s perception about the dominant meanings being expressed. Findings for this paper are a ‘first pass’ and subsequent reviews in coding for each respondent may reveal overlaps, or points overlooked, when coding and assessing transcripts. The body language and general demur of the respondents was not positive across the groups even when they were describing successful programs. Each of the stakeholder groups expresses different causes for neglecting key training issues, but overall there seems to a general lack if clear direction or confidence about what was being offered strategically. The overall effect is thus a shifting of the problem into the ‘too hard’ basket or opening the way for individuals to be asked to ‘go it alone’ or become ‘empowered’ - more responsible for their own learning than was the case in the past.
Budgetary perspectives suggest that the ground is now fertile for teachers in workplaces to become more self-reliant. There is evidence of learning practitioners now needing to sell their services internally. The lack of real strategic planning is evident in the fluctuating nature of the budgetary allocations for corporate learning. Funding ‘appears from nowhere’ whenever ‘whiz-bang teaching tools’ become available. Hiring of teaching people (“fleshy trainers”) is a ‘last resort’ for most business unit managers. There are stories of blanket refusal by business managers for training programs that they themselves have agreed upon following internal needs analysis assessment surveys they themselves commissioned. Managers under budgetary constraints, HR staff ‘box ticking’ programs and Learning Practitioners left outside the funding decision-making loop, yet convinced of the importance of their craft as a leverage for corporate business does not present a cohesive backdrop for the management of learning nor the development of adequate strategies to cope.

The appearance of a lack of any general learning strategy or plan stated in the evidence may however be the result of looking ‘in the wrong places’. It may be what these results are showing are new ways in which people will learn at work that are accumulating to become, in fact, an intrinsic corporate strategy. An autodidactic strategy is difficult to identify because it’s ‘unspoken’, implied in many ways. Ways for assessing creditable learning programs, the learning practitioner function and indeed the learning styles at work are all undergoing a deregulation phase. White (2000) is correct in suggesting that the classroom alternative will not be able to solve the conditions corporations face for learning today. Executive managers have a sense of this, so it is not that they are abandoning the search for strategies to cope. Past failings are well known and accepted by the managers I spoke to. Education strategies seemed to be ‘free-wheeling’, a sense of searching for better ways. The ‘do it yourself’ corporate learner may thus be a growth industry as changing workplaces deny the possibility that there can be a singular corporate learning strategy. In fact, the evidence supports a range of corporate strategies into the future. There are fewer and fewer ‘constraints’, a kind of deregulation on how people may go about transferring knowledge or learning at work. One outcome can be that working people, learning in isolation, will take a legitimate and growing place in the learning agenda. The conditions under which this can happen are being put into place as part of some new corporate learning strategies are still being worked out. Not the least of those will be the need for a move away from managerial dominance of the individual training directions. New bottom-up strategies such as ‘communities of practice’ and ‘learning forums’, may also play a part however, since these particular strategies tackle the real and paradoxical notion for self-direction and interaction in learning described by Garrison earlier.

Throughout this paper an expression often used relates to different ‘kinds’ of ideas around learning. This goes to the hub of the new corporate condition. There are indeed different ‘kinds’ of everything – different ‘kinds’ of managers, new ‘kinds’ of workers and workers roles, a range of different ‘kinds’ of corporate structures and new and different ‘kinds’ of learning environments and new and different ‘kinds’ of technologies etc., so that a new ‘kind’ of worker, the autodidactic employee may be part of the new workplace transformation. The autodidactic worker is a significant area of study in the context of new ‘kinds’ of learning practitioners and how that interaction can happen; hence it’s inclusion as part of my general thesis on the impact of corporate learning on learning practitioners.

Despite speaking to a range of corporations across different industrial sectors, one has the feeling that issues are similar. It was as though I was performing a singular case study on issues for learning instead of 5 quite separate firms. I conclude with these comments from respondents who also spoke of magical or osmosis models for learning. I believe these comments (next page) illustrate the nebulous sense for some current corporate learning strategies, opening the way for the autodidactic employee. Paul is an executive manager of long standing working for a UK organisation manufacturing in Australia, and Neil is a learning practitioner also of long standing working within an Australian National Communications Organisation. See their unsolicited remarks below;
I don't think that the senior management mentor enough to develop these types of systems. I think that if you run the courses, people get shown technical skills and somehow, it's all magic from there. For instance, we took middle management away and we did three day courses over three months so that each person went away three times for three days and went through extensive training in change management. No follow-up to what they are doing? That model is classic process redesign, if you pick up a book in process re-design that is what you get. We trained them all in fine detail. We even structured it so that they even had all the forms to fill in. So it was quite formalised, and yet, when they came back to the factory, they walked away from it. Now, our group tried to mentor it, we tried to use those (theoretical) models as a kick-start to get other work done and the management did not support it. They spent a fortune, I don't know how much it cost?…

Paul

Well a lot of it's really...you need a strong personality to drive it ...I think this is always the case. Quite often, well the people come to learning only when they have a real problem, and they just look at it in terms of whether it's a major change project, or new systems implementation etc., quite often the learning aspect is neglected (laughs), its not even budgeted for and there is an expectation that somehow rather than running the alignment with the development (the training people), it seems to be an 'afterthought' …we've got these systems administrators, we've got one week to do it. So you are saying it's contractual but the delivery is up to you? No, it's not even that...its the almost a neglect of everything …it's just assumed that you put a new system in and somehow through osmosis people just know it…so that the actual fact that people need to be trained up on it?...it's an after thought…Neil

It turns out corporations need not be too concerned about trend towards the autodidactic employee. Self-teaching is an intrinsic human experience. This is ultimately how we learn. Strategies for learning are really only different means by which we facilitate the ‘autodidactic’ potential in us all. They represent the fundamental condition for education. Corporations need to reconsider their obligation to build credible learning environments in accommodating the changing nature of workplaces, but strategic neglect and surrender to technology is not an option.
### Appendix 1- Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Learning Importance</th>
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<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil</td>
<td>Learning Practitioner</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>Executive Management</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron</td>
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<td>Oil and Gas</td>
<td>Global</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>Oil and Gas</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stella</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Average to important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>Learning Practitioner</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In Practice**
- Critical
- Important
- Average

**Personal View**
- Critical
- Important
- Average

**Policy**
- Critical
- Important
Appendix 2 – Prompt Questions

Subject's Background:

Question 1: How Important; Why?
How important is learning to your org - little, average, important, critical, why do you say that?

Question 2: Knowledge Sharing?
How is knowledge shared – who is doing the teaching (formal classroom teaching, formal instruction, coaching, mentoring, knowledge experts, outsourced, self-instruction, informal)… may there be multiple staff roles within this?

Question 2A
Do you have a training department?

Question 3: What's New/Changed for Training?
Can you tell me about any aspect of how your organisation manages its learning that has changed/is new. What was before, what has changed and why? (Modes of delivery, external)

Question 4: How has Managing the Knowledge Resource Changed?
How does the management of corporate knowledge transfer and learning generally evolve or change? Who/What decides (purchasing, contracts etc); IS, HR, Training staff, CIO, CEO, CKO?

Question 4A
What phase in the corporate learning cycle are you in, from analysis, planning, implementation, measurement etc.?

Question 5: What is the place of learning in the organization?
Can you describe, in diagram form perhaps the place or seat of learning within your corporation’s structure. What do you estimate your org spends on the knowledge transfer and learning area as a percent of total expense budgets- <1%, 1-3%?

Question 6: What are the main reasons for the training you do?
What are the primary sources of education and training (reasons) e.g. ‘roll out’, maint, HR, help desk, management training, new lines, new corporate structures etc.?

Question 7: What are some Key Training Achievements?
In your view, what has been the organisation’s most successful and significant achievement in managing its learning and why was this?

Question 8: What are some New Training Initiatives?
Given these successes, what is in place now for learning and teaching at work that is new?

Question 9: What are some Training Challenges?
What areas of managing learning at work have not worked so well and what have been some of the obstacles?

Question 10: What makes the training Difference?
What makes the difference in your view between good/effective management of learning programs and those that go wrong?

Question 11: What are some new trends in strategies for learning?
Going forward, how do you see teaching and learning at work contributing to the growth of the corporation…what major new strategies must be in place ……what is important, from now, in managing learning and teaching for the corporation? ….(technical, network management, managerial, flexible, certificated, processes, Industrial relations, business strategies, KM, skills based, holistic, end user software training, outsourcing).
### Appendix 3 - Tree Nodes Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.0 Parent Node</th>
<th>General Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing Training Policy</td>
<td>Changes in training policy can include conflicts and challenges amongst stakeholders about corporate culture, processes and task oriented training, corporate risk and training budgets generally, due to changing corporate business practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Nodes</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Corporate Culture</td>
<td>Claims about the 'ways that things are done' as a corporate 'way' that generates debate between people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Training Budgets</td>
<td>Allocation of monies to training that can through light on conflict issues between people over training adequacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Competency and Process</td>
<td>Company process and practices can infiltrate training agendas taking them beyond task competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Risk Management</td>
<td>Safety training, legal requirements that can be a debate about minimum standards training. Corporate Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 The Marketplace</td>
<td>How Market forces influences the training debate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.0 Parent Node</th>
<th>General Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>Evidence about confusion and challenges for stakeholders, as both professional and non-professional educators experience impacts for this role.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Nodes</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Role Identity</td>
<td>Confusion and challenges for new and 'multi-rolled' staff who must participate in knowledge transfer at external consultants, peers (supervisors, leading hands), facilitators and learning practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 New ‘kinds’ of training programs</td>
<td>The ongoing debate about newer training programmes such as processes oriented training, learning forums (teaching peer -to peer) or in knowledge transfer knowledge management, mentoring, coaching etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Training ‘need’ and training phases</td>
<td>An elevated or compromised position for teachers as, for example, where they need to take into account annual reviews, IR issues, ‘just in time training’ and be aware of learning ‘cycles’ for the firms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Communities of Practice</td>
<td>Sharing knowledge through discussion groups and forums. Acceptance issues, measurement issues. Best practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.0 Parent Node</th>
<th>General Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing Learning Environments</td>
<td>Seeking evidence that a changing learning environment is creating tensions for the teaching/learning dualism towards the self-learning employee. Global/local issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Nodes</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Teaching Styles</td>
<td>Evidence and issues around a shift from the traditional classroom training towards other styles such as mentoring, consulting, coaching, peer -to peer ...Organisational descriptions...can be different to how individuals learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Technology Change</td>
<td>The influences of new technologies such as e-mail, Internet, Intranet, CBT, chat rooms and other multi media uses have altered the learning environment at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Learning Methods</td>
<td>The place where people meet and learning happens can say something about its place in the corporation. Informal, on the job, seminar, discussion or user groups or ‘on your own’ learning. Can be distinct from teaching styles!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Learning Portfolios</td>
<td>Evidence of links to annual assessment, individual training programs or industrial relations buy in. An elevated or compromised position for teachers as, for example, where they need to take into account annual reviews, IR issues or ‘just in time training’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix 4 – Learning Importance**

**Executive Management**

Well, I’ve selected important. *This is your selection, or the company’s selection? This is my selection, and I think it varies across the company. I don’t think that everybody regards it this way. When you say ‘across the company’, what does that mean?* Across business units, not everyone would regard ongoing learning as being as important as business systems regards it. Some business units would have a shop floor ‘learn what you need to know’ approach. So it is a variable across the organization. Philosophically, I think the executive is quite in tune with lifelong learning, with ongoing learning and there are policies that support that, but in practice it varies depending upon people’s willingness to allocate parts of their budgets and parts of people’s time to undertake it. So I’d stick with my average to important rating. 

*I see it as average, I think we probably got the same level of importance of learning as any other company. I would say that this company is when does Paul see it?* 

*Yes, pushing down the knowledge, because it used to be just me. Now at least there are others who are now ready to take on more. The management systems contacts or representatives are now prepared to take on more.* 

I see it as average, I think we probably got the same level of importance of learning as any other company. I would say that this company is when does Paul see it? 

*No, I think the company see it. Depends …if you went to senior management and said, what do you think of learning. They would say, “vital, critical”. Right, but if you then said, how do you demonstrate that in the organization, they don’t demonstrate, … the behaviour does not demonstrate… they say one thing, but they do something different.* 

*So from a practical point of view, I think our performance is average, although senior management would say where we see it as a critical part of the business …but when does Paul see it, you’re saying where the company actually put it and where the rhetoric say they might put it, but I’m asking Paul where he puts it?* 

*I think it’s absolutely crucial; you’re not going to keep the organization moving.* 

**Human Resources**

*Why learning is important?* the fact that we have a huge product range and we all need to understand not only our products but our customers. We are a very complex business so learning is important to deliver knowledge around customer and product. *(i) there is also the issue of the rapidity of change in our business and our organization and in the Marketplace, so learning is important to keep up to date. *(ii) because we have quite a large in-flux and out-flux of workers, it is absolutely vital.* 

*I don’t think too many of the ‘actions’ have moved to critical, but they have moved to important.* 

*Stella* to get the learning right in our area, cos…am, I think we’ve got… as with everything, there is a fair bit of pressure on budgets and cutting costs and all that sort of thing. So, as far as I’m concerned anyway, if we can get the learning right that we’re going to get people who know most about what people are after and we’ll get the best sort of bang for buck I think that, as I said, there are probably more critical things in the short term, getting people out there on projects, got a lot of projects out there so the focus is to get the people out there. 

*Bobby* we have acquired millions of dollars worth of capital into new technology. For every new piece of equipment or process you bring in, you have to up-skill, develop people to be able to utilise effectively and a lot of our training, which is on the job, from the shop floor point of view, is based around processes which are in turn based on these new technologies. 

*Greg* Yes, the people who are netted, because what we found that was that people in that salary range generally are missed out on real leadership opportunities for learning and yet what they are required to do in their job is leadership, and it’s often ‘influencing’ skills and yet they are often stopping at that level, because the jobs stop in each country at that level… So, the strategic approach is missing, since for everyone like that there’s ‘underkill’ where people get nothing for two years. So I can think of some people who end up in the ‘wrong’ department where their manager says “there is no money” to send these people on training programs, and for the two or three years that you happen to sit in that department you get nothing, because is so cost conscious.

*Kirsty*
organizations are wanting people to multi-skill, they usually want their general workforce to be more educated anyway, you know. I mean we have all this health and safety regulations, now especially in the mining industry, and in the workplace, if nothing else, people have to be more educated just to understand some of the terminology that these people are thrown at..............................................................and this is where companies implementing programs take a very limited view...they see training as a project responsibility and that's it...and when the project ends they never have anything in place when the project ends how are they going to keep that knowledge current?

Debb

some parts of the market where other companies are selling more of a particular product that we are ...so you have got to look for ever edge you possibly can, and one of them has got to be a well trained sales force. ..............................................................................................................

Kevin

It's critical because I think we can improve business from it...we can increase shareholder return if we can train our people in the best process.

Kay

I don't think that the company believes it is as important as I, and a few other people do. But that is usually the case. It's training that suffers in the budget, training that always gets pushed aside and ...they just don't see the value of it. And I think that the reason for that is because you don't sort of tend to see instant results for training, like it's not a proportional thing. Like if you paint a wall you see instant results, if you make a configuration change to the system it's instant, you are going to see it and you are going to be able to input into the business. If they don't see instant results, quick results ...that's my belief.

Lizzy

, how important is it and its critical .It is critical. However, how significant is the action to facilitate learning is a different issue. So the learning is important...what we are doing about it is all over the place...pause ...do you want to explain that There is continual reorganisation for the corporation which means that talent competence, experience etc., is going out the door...it seems to be that...even though the approach seems to be to target redundancies...it doesn't...there doesn't seem to be a great deal of logic. Neil

just get the job done. We're not interested in this sort of ...and......the niceties are you've got to motivate you people, we can talk about learning organizations etc., and keep them motivated to learn etc., that's fine...but that's secondary. I mean, there are some critical ideas or competencies that people need. We need to focus on getting those. What we tend to do is we have all these issues of privacy,...and on-line courses that people hate doing because they are boring. I really can't see the value of them...and also people find creative ways to get around actually doing the programs anyway. They go and print our the answer sheets etc......................But the proof is in the pudding. You have got to say well in the end, is it achieving the end result? Is it achieving it efficiently, economically etc.? I would say in a lot of cases it isn't. We have a lot of tools we have an Intranet, and there is so much stuff on the Intranet...that it's just rubbish, you can't find it, it doesn't mean anything. It's not even communicated very clearly, and this is the data that should be used to build the knowledge basically. is it boring because there's no person there? I think they try to target large numbers...so it's a big organization...but despite the size of the organization, I'm just amazed at the insular approach ...people...I've found in the time that I've been here. Look it may have been the areas that I've worked in before coming here, and I acknowledge that, but if you came up with something that was different...and wasn't as per the status quo, it was deemed to be not suitable for the organization. A really closed mind. It amazes me. People come in here with 'state of the art' programs that they have ...and it's amateurish...what standards are we measuring ourselves by? Neil

Well the way we approach things is mechanistic. The complexity of the business makes it natural almost for people to try to reduce the boundaries to a level where you are comfortable and can function. Otherwise the background noise in the organization just comes up in team activities that we do. The background noise in e-mails, global imperatives and all the nonsense around it is such that you go deaf, if you don't withdraw the boundaries to the extent that you can actually manage your life and your job. There is, in the businesses, a great deal of pride in the job that they do, and tightly so. Sales, IT, Learning, HR, whatever it happens to be, but everyone brings it back to their core skills and those three other ones...personal, affective interaction and culture around craft skills as a core. They would say each of these other three as satellites around craft skills are important, but are they critical? Steve

We have a ... there is kind of an inconsistency introduced here because while T has a particular view of learning and development, the T research requirement is somewhat stronger and have to be somewhat more flexible and so in essence sometimes there is a lot of tension with us trying to address our needs within a corporate framework.

William
## Appendix 5 – Stakeholder Conflict:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Paragraph(s)</th>
<th>Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Practitioners</strong></td>
<td>Section 5, Paragraph 84, 593 characters.</td>
<td>William</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRL used to be organised along those technology boundaries and then shifted to being aligned to customer boundaries, so these disciplines were a mechanism trying to maintain the knowledge sharing etc., across those new silos. They have largely stopped functioning over the last year of so. Some people see that as because we have become better at sharing the knowledge naturally, other think that its because people just can’t be bothered and it has all become just too hard. Personally I think the form of that knowledge sharing is happening without the need for formal disciplines anymore.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Human Resources**           | Section 10, Paragraphs 105-107, 1075 characters. | Moïra |
| Given these successes, what is in place now for learning and teaching at work that is new? |
| It’s the fact that the competency framework is consistent across locations, and businesses for IT. If you go anywhere in IT, in S you will have the same competency framework. It’s got senior acceptance and sign off. That’s why I think it successful. Just achieving that… “this is what we are using, this is going to be important for you”. It’s not just about managerial support, it’s about everyone agreeing across different countries, different businesses. It’s more about that than management support. Management will obviously support their own area, but it’s this support across the group that is important. |
| Have there been times when getting all to agree has been difficult? |
| Yes, I think that because S was more segregated, so you end up having 5 different models, it becomes too complicated, no one keeps them up to date, or actually sometimes they are too detailed to be able to use. So now we’ve gone to an area that we can keep up to date, people will use. |

| **Executive Management**      | Section 3, Paragraph 27, | Ike |
| In an office environment it is regarded as average to important, depending on which part of the business you are talking about. It is not critical, because what does it mean? Does it mean that you are going to get better employees? Well maybe. Does it mean that you are going to pay them more money? Well probably not. You might have better retention of key people if you offer that as one of the non-salary incentives. |

| **Executive Management**      | Section 3, Paragraphs 23-25, | Paul |
| I think probably got the same level of importance of learning as any other company. I would say that this company is where does Paul see it? No, I think the company see it. Depends…if you went to senior management and said, what do you think of learning. They would say, “vital, critical”. Right, but if you then said, how do you demonstrate that in the organisation, they don’t demonstrate… they say one thing, but they do something different. So from a practical point of view, I think our performance is average, although senior management would say where we see it as a critical part of the business. |
| but where does Paul see it, you’ve said where the company actually puts it and where the rhetoric says they might put it, but I’m asking Paul where he puts it? |
| I think it’s absolutely crucial; you’re not going to keep the organization moving and you not going to be able to get the dynamics … |

| **Executive Management**      | Section 3, Paragraph 27, 354 characters. | Ron |
| So there is a real danger for us in constantly changing things, rather than saying oh, I’ve learned all that I need to learn for the moment. I’ll lock that into an operational standard and I’ll do it. Some parts of S have been obsessed with innovation and have never reached stability. So there is a balance between innovation and efficient operation. |

| **Executive Management**      | Section 5, Paragraph 53, 332 characters. | Stella |
| I don’t know if anyone has spoken to you about our employee opinion survey (EOS). The finding with this survey suggested that training was the major thing that got the most canning in that survey of any area. The fact that there is not enough opportunities, so there is a lot of dissatisfaction about the model. A lot of push back. |

## Appendix 6 – Budgets:
Towards the Autodidactic Worker – NZARE/AARE 2003

Learning Practitioners

…but even so there are huge cut backs on what we are spending money on, so that seems to be one of the first things to go. But how can we be effective in a high tech and rapidly changing industry of we are not getting that ongoing learning?

To a degree, I don't think that the company believes it is as important as I, and a few other people do. But that is usually the case. It's training that suffers in the budget, training that always gets pushed aside and ...they just don't see the value of it.

I was on the map and staid on the map. I suffered cuts the same as all the other departments, but I certainly wasn't wiped out. I want it so was good. I think I am tacked in tight with strategy, because I've made it really important that we align what I'm doing with company strategy.

But it's interesting ...in every organization, it's very disproportionate. The way in which the training dollars or the opportunities are handed out are very disproportionate. Well I think it's got a lot to do with whether you have a manager who is a broad thinker and thinks a bit more long term or sees potential in people and pushes to really fund development or one that is ...well it's really just theory X theory Y isn't it?

They said no, we don't think it's worth doing. When they were asked why they did not think it was worth doing, some said we don't want to pay more for a program that we think is already expensive and we don't want to spend any extra time collating rats an stats nor any more money doing it. Other comments that came out were; “well, I don't think you can measure that sort of thing and I don't think it will be valuable for us”. So it's a mind change that we are talking about here.

Well our real focus within the group is to come up with ideas as to how can we use the limited budget we have to best get people armed, how can we use information as to what people are required to do etc., and take it from there.

...I am as far as we had to come up with something internal and relying on our people to do presentations which has not been proved that it will work so if we had proper funding, it is an issue, yes.

...Going forward, I think the company is trying to get down to the bones as far as resourcing is concerned. So it's going to be so important for people to know as much as they can and share the knowledge so they don't get caught out like happened to so-an-so six months ago or we were in all sorts of trouble.
Executive Management

There is another aspect which is not within HR, which is the management excellence program, …but it’s never got too far down that path partly because of ‘who pays’, who is responsible, who is to control, who pays to set it up, who is going to monitor it?
………………………………………………………………………..Ike

Do you remember the training guarantee when 5% of sales had to be for ‘training’. People stuck all sorts of things into that. The other side of that was that a lot of the bigger organizations recognised a lot of things as training and recorded them as such, which you might or might not argue were marginal. I mean, you are taking learning and training in it’s broadest sense and saying that even coaching in the workplace is training or learning and I agree that it is, but many business were having to do this to make up the 5%, which they had not considered as training before really, I suspect……………………………&e

When we implemented locally here, we build into our budget training contracts, time for training, the expense, but in some respects, it made the budget harder to justify because the perception in headquarters was that you don’t need this. So you loose a lot of flexibility if you like and then that creates a bit of tension.
…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..Mark

I think it is a crucial part of the organisational development. But the organization at present is probably not putting in the resources that it ought to be doing, and it’s not focusing at present. We are doing a lot more that we used to, I’d have to say. But what we are doing now is technical training. So if you actually go to our training people they’ll talk about, about skills training, how to drive a forklift or how to start this conveyor, that type of thing. ………..Paul

Oh yes, well it’s always an internal conflict about how much you spent doing the job as opposed to learning about how it is to be done. So initially some people said ok, lets do some training courses. So some training courses were built and then people said “oh, I haven’t got time and it’s too expensive $200 per student”. People in the businesses (managers) who were offered this said “look that $200 for one hour and one half to learn about something is too expensive”. “But more importantly, I’m not really sure I understand the benefit I’m going to get and I’m not too sure I’ve got the time to spend on it”. So, in other words, the trade off between the cost to the end user and the perceived value.
…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..Ron

Yes, and it gets back to that old thing about leaders looking for people who will come to them with solutions. So don’t come with a problem, come with a solution. So the think about learning and KM is; we don’t have any money, so you need to come up with some smart, creative and innovative ways about what else can we do. It’s not just about paying money. Sometimes you pay a hell of a lot of money and what you get aint good. What can we do, given the current constraints. Let’s not just sit back and say “Oh! Wow is me”.
…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..Stella

Appendix 7 –Learning Methods:
you get someone who has the product knowledge expert who can talk in acronyms all the time, and again the sales staff, their eyes just glaze over if you get too technical for them. So part of the context of the 2 hour sessions is we also try to bridge that gap a bit. ...how do you do that? What we do is, when we first started we were part of a larger group that had a number of sales experts, some of whom were internal, but a lot of them were externally recruited that not only had a fair bit of product expertise in some areas, but also were also sales people themselves, so they could put in the right context. We would develop the slide pack there was a few of us in our team have some adult education background, so we could help make sure that pack was developed in such a way that it was delivered in the right terminology, but we would also do a 'train the trainer' session for the people doing the delivery to make sure they had that bit of background knowledge. By being able to focus on a target audience, I think we have been doing some pretty important stuff, and the stuff we have already talked about, 2 hours of power etc., we have done a few different e-learning techniques most of which we have just trialed without being overly successful, and very expensive. Two hours of power, I would say has been successful face-to-face training because focused on target audience, short time frames which meets their needs and that happens.

Kevin

No, no. We may have been getting the same help desk calls from the same person over the same things and over again and that's how we determine where we need to go. So we changed in that respect because we have got an on-line training tool which everyone loves and is user friendly.

Steve

Major new strategy will be the e-learning. It will also be along with the e-learning putting in a learning management system so that all our course leaders, all our enrollments all our course histories, because one of the things I have to maintain is training and development database. I have to keep track of all this, which is another reason for me to get an assistant. So we are going down the path of e-learning.

Mag

Learning Practitioners

What we tend to do is we have all these issues of privacy...and on-line courses that people hate doing because they are boring. I really can’t see the value of them...and also people find creative ways to get around actually doing the programs anyway. They go and print out the answer sheet etc...But the proof is in the pudding. You have got to see well in the end, is it achieving the end result? Is it achieving it efficiently, economically etc? I would say in a lot of cases it isn’t. We have a lot of tools we have an Intranet, and there is so much stuff on the Intranet that it’s just rubbish, you can’t find it, it doesn’t mean anything, it’s not even communicated very clearly, and this is the data that should be used to build the knowledge basically.................................Neil

When we go around we need to keep track of contact with the different HRM’s, there are some that I could say we could be more proactive with, but it comes down to time. A lot of the time it’s just you as an individual. So there is the proactive element, there is the element where it walks in, the like what you’ve done elsewhere, that might be for a process, or it might be for an individual solution, we need a course in X. The businesses will not spend time doing a T&A, because generally they don’t have the experience and they don’t want to spend the money. We have the expertise to do it but we also have a cost. We need permission to enter the business and do a needs analysis for them, which means they need to see the value. Recently, when we produced the S Leadership Advanced program, it’s a 4 to 4 and a half-day residential program for middle management on leadership, the business managers were asked do you also want level three evaluation and level 4 evaluation, real transfer of knowledge and return on investment. They said no, we don’t think it’s worth doing. Steve

.....used to be organised along those technology boundaries and then shifted to being aligned to customer boundaries, so these disciplines were a mechanism trying to maintain the knowledge sharing etc., across those new silo’s. They have largely stopped functioning over the last year of so. Some people see that as because we have become better at sharing the knowledge naturally, other think that its because people just can’t be bothered and it has all become just too hard. Personally I think the form of that knowledge sharing is happening without the need for formal disciplines anymore........................................William

I understand from another that learning has moved from being an external unit to being run within separate silo’s. Yes, so that instead of having a centre of excellence for the corporation, they have just dissolved people across the business units, but the problem is trying to link them up, people in one area doing the same thing as people in another. So it’s really up to the individual to use this, say ok, next month there’s this sort of training, ill suit me. And again putting trust in the individual that they will not go to about 20 different training. With our nomination procedure, its good in that you may only allow 40 people to nominate but you can run again and with feedback (crap presenter, etc) we learn too about what to run, or do something else. ........I’m talking about within our 200 people that might have an arduous who knows something about billing and that’s his area and some might have done a few projects with billing and quite interested in it. These guys may never have spoken before, the analyst doesn’t know the direction, there might be a project manager who has done a few of those, if you can get these three guys talking well we feel that we can get knowledge spread there and this helps to get people together and trigger things up and encourage innovation and so on.

Bobby

Resource

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Appendix 7 –Learning Methods (Cont):
Does Lizy get involved in manufacturing training as well? She has done some, more with an emphasis on computer applications training than on other process type stuff. There are a series of workplace assessor trainers in the plants. They work for C, who in turn work for L. Knowledge sharing is quite a spider’s web I suppose, so there is a lot that happens that is not tremendously formal. So while it may not be formal, a lot of the training is more coaching than training, we don’t do very much classroom training. Mag and the courses that she organizes have the classroom training emphasis, rather than the courses that other people organize which are workplace related. So even the computer coaching that we give is much more oriented towards ‘one-on-one’ coaching than classroom training.

Ike

In the case of our e-end user lessons in SAP, although we have portfolio of lessons, and there are ‘oodles’ of them. They are segmented into like customer service, purchasing or whatever, but the uptake has been very low. We’ve deliberately made them ‘bite-size’ lessons so people can do them. What’s standing between people doing them and not doing them? We have the same problem with Excalibur On-line help. So is it logistics or problem there? No, I think it’s as much attitudinal as anything. We’ve set this stuff up to be deliverable to their individual PC’s so they can sit there at lunchtime or whatever, and do two or three lessons or whatever. Or if they knew that they were coming up to something they were going to have to do fairly frequently they could go and visit those lessons after work. But, logistically I suppose you could argue there, they don’t have the time or the impetus to do those things.

Are you able to get someone to go through with them, sit alongside?

Well we do do that to some extent, but it’s pretty hard for us to justify people’s time a lot of the time and there is an attitudinal thing as well which is “oh, I already know about all of this and if I can’t do it, if I stuff it up, I’ll just call the help desk”. This is precisely what we are trying to minimise of course. So that’s that one.

What we tried to do. We talked about people in here being very task oriented. In the training we tried very heavily to structure the training around process orientation. So in the training we first went through the process. So we broke the training effectively down by function. Said ok, “this is the process we will use, these are the actual steps that you are going to see training today. This is where they fit the process”. We made the process available on the Intranet to Management people, but I would say that that was not very successful. It was not taken on board by the organization. The culture was not there. So I still think that there is a lot to do in changing the culture to be more process focussed. We got the system running etc.

………..Mark

I don’t think that the senior management manage enough to develop these types of systems. They think that if you run the courses, people get shown technical skills and somehow, it’s all magic from there. For instance, we took middle management away and we did three-day courses over three months so that each person went away three times for three days and went through extensive training in change management.

…………………………………………………………….Paul

An example of what was that we thought that would be able to improve people’s knowledge about desktop PC’s by having an online intelligent system where people could say, “how do I configure my printer” and what we have found was that it was not as it was at all successful. People far and away believe that the best method of learning is to talk to someone, talk to a human being. So in some ways you could say help desk is partly about fixing things that are broken and partly about helping people learn. Things that are technically difficult. …………..I think that sometimes when people mandate ‘rolle-out’ training, it does not work. So if someone says’s ok, everyone has to have this training without people buying into it, it wastes time and money. Does this happen a lot?

It does not happen a hell of a lot, but it’s: … people just don’t turn up. There was training about financial systems. People said well I’ll go along if I have to, but people just did not turn up. You know, you can lead a horse to water etc. Similarly with our desktop stuff, we created some training which we thought was pretty good but there has not been buy into the program. Similarly we provide an online problem solving system which has extremely low usage. Wasted a lot of money. You need to Pilot test often in some ways.

…………………………………………………………….Ron

Absolutely, and it’s pushed the responsibility back to the individual. This is my view. Probably if you asked the leadership team, they would also say that it’s a corporate and a personal responsibility, it’s a shared responsibility. But the actions are speaking louder than words. I think at the moment that they have pushed it right back to the individual. I think it’s a change. You need to validate that. I’ve only been here 8 months, but I believe it’s a change.

Stella

Executive Management

Appendix 8 – Learning Importance and the Autodidactic Trends

While there is some enlightenment amongst those I spoke to, overall they have a transient,
Executive Managers

Human Resources

Learning

Practitioners
Appendix 9 – Conflicting Perspectives Driving Autodidactic Options.

Stakeholder Conflict

Managers:
readily prepared to link learning responsibility to individual employee responsibilities and a return on investment issue.”

Practitioners:
“formal and informal; “flexible and rigid”; “relevant but no support”

Human Resources:
They offered a more pragmatic view of training

Practitioners:
as though ‘informality’ in training programs is reaching a stage where training people are starting to give up on being able to achieve real and structured knowledge transfer.

Managers:
Learning is still considered a liability rather than an asset despite some of the managerial rhetoric, it seems.

Budgets (Managers)
Even when there is a clear training need (often following boom and bust) and that need is directly linked to a new business strategy, there can still be resistance at executive management level to Managers want to pay for problems to be solved, not the mechanics of zoning.

Budgets (Human Resources)
Development is thus almost totally managerially determined. People spoke about a lot of money, then no money. Commitment was erratic.

Budget (Learning Practitioners)
The separation between teachers and decision-making within organisations is never clearer it seems, than when you ask learning practitioners about funding and what it means for them. They seem to not expect to be asked for input – they make little contribution here. So there is complaining, but no knowledge, nor involvement in the allocation processes.

Learning Methods
Bobby points out the challenge this brings on in individual, pro-active or ‘empowering’ directives for learners.

Paul describes the ‘magical’ nature of some new learning methods as though people can just become ‘instant experts’ from training, requiring no follow-up to programs.

Neil contrasts motivation that is Market driven with a more holistically based strategy. “Is it about just giving out competencies to get more money, or is it about lifting the self-esteem of the individual?”

“Learning is Critical”

“Learning is Average to Important”

“Learning is Important to Critical”

“Learning is Critical”

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