Developing talented people in an age of innovation and transformation

A Kallidus whitepaper

Contents

Introduction

In a progressively complex and challenging global marketplace, factors such as increased competition, shifting customer expectations, economic and regulatory pressures, and the emergence of new technologies have transformed the way organisations operate, requiring strong leaders now and for the future.

But today's workforce expect more: growth and development opportunities are considered a must-have in any role. And if the right opportunities aren't on the horizon, they won't hesitate to move on. So how can organisations ensure they're identifying high potentials quickly, offering meaningful development opportunities to attract and retain talented people, whilst also aligning talent management with key business goals to sustain long-term growth?

Innovation and transformation are set to become key differentiators in talent development, and this paper looks at the importance of developing robust talent management processes and provides insight into how organisations can deliver more impactful training and employ a proactive, collaborative strategy for the future.

Technological transformations

The full potential of using smart technologies to develop more complex skills is now being realised, with more and more organisations now understanding how technology can add significant value to the learning experience. The 2015 CIPD L&D survey[1] reported that three in four organisations are now using learning technologies as part of their people development strategy, yet just a quarter of respondents feel confident in their ability to harness the power of technology to increase the effectiveness of L&D interventions.

While keeping pace with new technologies and implementing and integrating them effectively across a diverse workforce can prove challenging, the latest methods of collaborative, interactive learning and talent management technologies also provide a vital opportunity to drive strategic performance improvements across the business. From streamlining employee learning and providing better analytics to enabling businesses to track and source top talent, the latest technologies are creating new opportunities in employee development and enabling forward-thinking business to drive performance success.

Streamlining and simplifying business processes with new technologies can help organisations to operate with agility: the key to rising above the competition in today's global marketplace.

The ability to respond rapidly and flexibly is key, and agility in people management requires deep systems integration across core learning, performance and talent management processes. The greater the integration, the more seamless the processes and user experience will be, and the better the insight for making more informed decisions about the business.

According to Bersin, organisations with fully integrated systems achieve 29% higher scores in employee

Organisations with fully integrated systems achieve:

29% higher scores in employee engagement

26% higher ratings in leadership development

41% higher scores in creating a pipelines of viable successors

(Bersin, 2010)

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[1] CIPD (2015). Learning and Development survey 2015

engagement, 26% higher ratings in leadership development, and 41% higher scores in creating a pipeline of viable successors; all critical factors in creating a solid and sustainable talent management strategy.[2]

Responding to a changing regulatory landscape

Today's business environment is evolving at an exponential rate. However, according to the latest research from Deloitte, only 40% of leaders feel their organisation is 'ready' or 'very ready' to address transformations or accelerations in learning and development, down from 75% in 2014.[3] The key to successfully navigating this dynamic business landscape lies in making better choices in response to change. Despite this, many leaders have reported concerns about the ability of their current technology systems to respond flexibly to ongoing changes in regulation and legislation.[4]

Ensuring mandatory training is delivered in a timely and concise way so employees can absorb, apply and comply immediately is essential. New regulations continue to enter the workplace, including legislation which dictates that managers will not only be held accountable for their own shortcomings but for employees involved in regulated activity under their management. In response, organisations must not only be much stricter in the way they deliver mandatory training, but in how they track and report on all forms of learning compliance.

Whilst in some cases, this means increasing the resources devoted to compliance and regulatory functions, many are taking advantage of learning management solutions to simplify the reporting and evidencing of learning compliance by ensuring accurate data is available on demand, and also to streamline the entire L&D function across their organisation.

Having the ability to report effectively and respond rapidly is essential, and along with easy access to real-time employee information, investing in a robust learning management solution minimises costs and administration, reduces duplications, and enables accurate data to be stored and shared securely. It can provide more powerful management information and better analytics, and having access to more timely information ensures businesses can react quickly to stay ahead in a constantly changing, complex, regulatory landscape.

Driving employee engagement and developing future leaders

At a time of increased transparency, corporate culture and employee engagement have risen to the top of the agenda. In today's Glassdoor era, company culture and operations are now laid bare, and this is both helping and hindering the ability for organisations to attract and retain talent. The power has shifted from employer to employee, and strategies for engagement and retention are now more important than ever before.

Research has shown that more than half of today's workforce are unlikely to recommend their employer to their peers,[5] highlighting the importance of measuring and driving employee engagement in the workplace. Creating a culture of openness will ensure organisations build trust and engender staff loyalty across the organisation. If employees understand and live by clear, professional values in the workplace, they will become ambassadors for their company and will be competent and proficient in their approach to work. Not only will this help attract the right people, but nurturing and retaining talent within the organisation will be simpler and easier through a more engaged workforce.

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[2] Bersin & Associates (2010). Talent Management Factbook 2010: Best Practices and Benchmarks in US Talent Management.
[3] Deloitte (2015). Human Capital Management Trends 2015.
[4] Deloitte (2015). Global risk management survey, ninth edition: Operating in the new normal: Increased regulation and heightened expectations.
[5] Bersin by Deloitte (2014). Research conducted with Glassdoor.

Staff engagement must be driven by an organisation's leaders, and this shift in culture needs to be demonstrated from the top down. Therefore, it has now become essential for organisations to employ an effective approach to leadership development. The right leadership is key for sustainability, and whilst an employee may be a star performer, they may not necessarily be right to lead the organisation. Growing numbers of organisations now consider recruiting candidates who may not have key experience but are recognised as showing high potential. Leadership development is a strategic and long-term business imperative; taking this approach and equipping inexperienced but capable leaders with the skills required by the organisation can help build a stronger leadership pipeline.

> Highly engaged companies can hire more easily, deliver stronger customer service, have the lowest voluntary turnover rates, and be more profitable over the long run
>
> (Great Place to Work® Institute, 2015)

Creating the right performance culture

According to Deloitte's 2015 Human Capital Trends, culture and engagement remain the number one issue for employers around the world.[6] They also reported that just 10% of business leaders feel performance management is a good use of time, and only around half feel that it positively affects employee engagement and performance.

An effective performance management strategy is essential for any organisation, particularly in terms of driving cultural change, embedding organisational values and optimising business outcomes, and the time has come to encourage a more holistic view of L&D to ensure employee behaviour is sustainable.

In today's rapidly evolving modern workplace, a year is a long time to wait for a performance review. Therefore by fostering a culture whereby peers and colleagues give continuous, constructive feedback on performance rather than a biannual appraisal exercise will not only allow leaders to find out what motivates employees to perform well, but will help to better identify what support and development they need to reach their full potential.

With a shortage of key talent, it is essential that businesses look for more effective ways of engaging and retaining talented employees. Showing staff how they fit into the bigger picture and how they are contributing to the success of the organisation is one of the best ways to engage staff and 'sell' the value of learning. Once individuals understand their own contribution, they are far more likely to take an active role in their performance and progression, even to the point of 'self-coaching' and driving forward their own career development.

Embracing the future of learning

In a rapidly evolving business environment, and particularly across knowledge-intensive industries where extensive training is often required within limited timelines in order to meet regulatory compliance, a cost-effective, efficient means of delivering employee learning is essential. However, today's workforce are now demanding a more personalised, modernised learning experience, and with many employees now becoming increasingly aware of the latest developments in technology, expectations around workforce learning and development are at an all-time high.

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[6] Deloitte (2015). Human Capital Management Trends 2015.

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Whilst learning on-the-go is an effective means of delivering relevant learning at the right time and therefore accelerating knowledge transfer, only 6% of organisations would rate themselves as excellent at providing mobile learning,[7] and less than one in four feel comfortable with today's digital learning environment.[8] Bite-sized learning via mobile devices is inevitably where workforce learning is headed, and the widespread benefits of staff being able to learn and develop anytime, anywhere and at the point of need is a key business benefit.

Getting to grips with mobile learning initiatives from the outset is key. The growing trends of 'Bring Your Own Device' or 'Choose Your Own Device' are becoming increasingly popular among younger generations, and embracing these changes and instilling a mobile-ready culture is essential for future-proofing any L&D strategy. However, it's also vital that business leaders also ensure that all generations across the organisation engage in mobile learning initiatives, and consistency and continuity are now key factors in securing employee engagement with multi-device learning.

It is also now vital for leaders to ensure that compliance learning does not become just a tick-box exercise. It is easy enough to validate learning with qualifications and regular testing, but to instil behavioural change for the long-term, learning must explain the consequences of non-compliance in an engaging, thought-provoking way that resonates with each and every learner. To ensure that employees understand what they are being taught and why, learning through application and scenario can be highly effective. Immersive, interactive, media-rich content has been proven to engage learners and achieve results, particularly around creating effective behavioural change. High-impact impact and engaging content helps employees to actually absorb their learning, and means they will be ready to apply what they've learned in the workplace more effectively in the future.

Managing compliance effectively across a global workforce

According a recent workforce study by PwC, the budget for compliance and related activities rose by 45% between 2013 and 2014, and compliance staffing also increased significantly by 47%.[9] Across all industries, business is becoming more global and complex, and significant investments are now being made in order to effectively deliver and measure compliance and keep employees up to speed with the latest legislation in international territories

It's been reported that up to 90% of businesses see technology enabled learning as the answer for delivering compliance training.[10] Online learning can not only provide a cost-effective alternative to face-to-face and classroom training, but also has a clear advantage in terms of the ability to roll out learning and development programmes to all employees at once, regardless of their location.

However, there are inevitably some barriers to overcome when delivering online compliance training to a multinational workforce. Simply transferring existing training programmes overseas is not always effective, even in countries where English is commonly spoken. Translation of learning into different languages can be a key challenge, therefore it is vital that leaders establish an approach to translations from early on and determine which languages will be required for their audiences.

Demonstrating a respect for language differences among global workforces is key, and considering factors such as languages reading left to right and elements of authenticity within the language and content – such as wording, metaphors and cultural references – ensures the learning will be audience-appropriate and engaging.

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[7] Deloitte (2015). Human Capital Management Trends 2015.
[8] Bersin by Deloitte (2014). The next evolution of learning content.
[9] PricewaterhouseCoopers (2014). State of compliance.
[10] Towards Maturity (2013). Reinvigorating Compliance Training.

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Multinational organisations are more likely to be using the following technologies than those operating in single countries:

• In-house social media (60% vs. 35%% of those in single countries)

• Virtual classrooms (46% vs. 26%)

• Podcasts (46% vs. 34%)

They are less likely to be using:

• External social networking sites (25% vs. 34% in single countries)

• 'Off-the-shelf' e-learning (56% vs. 69%)

(Towards Maturity, 2013)

It is also important to remember that in rolling training out to a global workforce, leaders shouldn't be looking for total uniformity. Increased diversity also means increased learning styles, and research by Towards Maturity has showed that multinational organisations are more likely to be using in-house social media, virtual classrooms and podcasts when compared to organisations operating in single countries.[11] This shows that as well as a need to take into account factors such as poor network connectivity and multi-platform adaptability, it is essential that leaders ensure they develop a varied and engaging learning programme to meet the diverse needs of a global workforce.

Conclusion

In today's dynamic, competitive business landscape, there is now an increasing need for all organisations, regardless of size or sector, to focus on addressing the key challenges associated with increased regulations, globalisation and customer expectations, all while preparing for future growth through the development of robust talent pipelines.

In an age of innovation and transformation, creating a sustainable, cost-effective learning and development strategy which engages employees on all levels is essential for finding and developing the right leaders to drive the business forward. Responding to change is critical, and organisations that adapt with speed and agility and have the right people in the right roles at the right time are most likely to succeed in a growing, global marketplace.

Whilst technology can create significant challenges for many businesses, it is also becoming increasingly important in securing a competitive advantage. Creating the right corporate culture and putting the correct systems and processes in place can offer a unified approach to attracting, identifying and retaining global talent and developing a high performance workplace that is prepared to meet tomorrow's challenges head on and drive long-term growth.

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[11] Towards Maturity (2013). Reinvigorating Compliance Training.

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Checklist: Do we have a proactive and sustainable strategy for developing talent?

- [x] Do we have the strategic insight to anticipate change and drive competitive advantage within our business environment?

- [ ] Do our people know what they need to achieve to progress within the business?

- [ ] How well prepared are we to fill internal leadership roles quickly and flexibly?

- [ ] Are we supporting our workforce in acquiring new knowledge and skills through a continuous learning culture?

- [ ] Are we recognising and rewarding good performance and ensuring there is a culture of trust across our workforce?

- [ ] Do we have a continuous, cyclical performance review process in place to drive employee engagement and development?

- [ ] Are we using talent mobility and other creative initiatives to motivate and develop leadership talent and close skills gaps?

- [ ] Are we embracing initiatives such as mobile learning and addressing the diverse learning needs of our workforce?

Learn more

Contact Kallidus to find out how we can support your talent development strategy

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