

On the Way to a New Learning Culture in Organizations: Giving up Traditional Models

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1. Introduction

Today, living in a digital society as we do, technological innovation expands to all social domains (artificial intelligence, big data, machine learning). It is enough to take a look at the past to find out that we cannot longer avoid major changes. As technology evolves, society also does (Castell, 2005) and with it the work activity and related processes. It is compulsory to make changes going with the digital innovation demanded by time.

Technology has enabled the emergence of new working practices (telework, robotics, etc.) that, at the same time, have led the various departments to reflect on their own work processes and their suitability. Organizations face the challenge of implementing this transformation with very heterogeneous workforces, mainly because the co-workers have very different levels of digital manipulation and therefore show very diverse resistance to change.

Technological implantation has enabled access to the knowledge from any device (mobile, tablet, PC), reconfiguring the model of traditional learning into an innovative, inclusive and digital model. In many contributions, it is proposed to rewrite the model of vocational training and to completely abandon the classical model (Acaso, 2013).

Recent studies by Deloitte (2016) show that many organizations are still sceptical about modern forms of learning. 61% percent of executives interviewed in this study stated that it remains challenging for their organizations to focus on a model of digital learning driven by workers themselves. Similarly, 66% of human resource managers have problems when it comes to engaging employees through the training provided.

At present it is common to find in the Departments of Continuing Education the not always well coordinated coexistence of courses in face to face and in online format. There are virtual courses which replace the face-to-face teaching through video recordings in conspicuous digital environments, without increasing the benefits of a virtual learning community, such as interaction, discussion forums, and the development

of PLE (Personal Learning Environment). However, the benefits of virtual training in terms of cost, time and space management are clear (Moore & Kearsley 2012).

It is time to consider whether the changes made in the organizational training environments are appropriate and to reflect about the ways these changes were implemented.

2. Methodology

We present an experience carried out by the Training Department of a Spanish multinational company. The context from which we start is a workforce of highly diverse co-workers in terms of age, education, experience and technological knowledge.

With this starting point, the company decided to undertake a pilot experience on virtual training and self-learning. This pilot process was aimed to facilitate the decision-making and planning of a potential future transformation project.

The project covered a period of 2 months (July to September 2018). This period was chosen exactly because it corresponded to a "valley" moment of activity.

The project was divided into three phases:

-Phase 1: Facilitator's selection and training process. 8 co-workers were selected and certified as face-to-face trainers and facilitators.

-Phase 2: From the beginning of the project to its completion, weekly meetings took place between the training department and the facilitator team (11 meetings). These operational meetings were designed to plan the number of learning outcomes, their format and their distribution.

-Phase 3: At the end of the project, two consecutive meetings were held to assess the experiences and exchange views.

The following topics were included in the training offer:

- Digital: Technology-based courses that addressed the impact of technology on work processes
- Skills: Courses that focused on personal skills.
- Strategy: Compulsory courses on corporate values.
- Languages: Foreign language courses.

A total of 28 courses were offered for this project: all of them were previously available in the company.

The participants in the experience were the trainers, who acted as facilitators, and the group of workers for whom the training was intended.

The training offer and the availability of virtual courses on the company's platform was announced to the employees by an e-mail with an important visual impact (postcard). The message was addressed to the entire national workforce, around 10,000 employees, which represented the target audience of this experience.

3. Results

The results obtained from the pilot test are surprising. The analysed data provide following information:

1. There was a spectacular increase in carried out and completed courses: Of the 28 courses offered, over 5000 courses were completed. Among them there were over 1000 strategic courses.

2. The satisfaction index was evaluated after all training courses, whether they were face to face or online. The results obtained in this experience showed an index of 80% courses with the highest rating of "very satisfactory".

3. The accompaniment process transformed the experience and perception regarding the online training for the users, showing an increase in the degree of satisfaction never achieved for this type of format to date.

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4. Conclusions

Post-training meetings allow for a qualitative analysis of the process and lead to conclusions about the best accompanying format, the quality of the courses offered and the combination of different styles of dynamisation.

The only innovative element in this training offer was the dynamisation of the courses by the facilitators. At the level of dynamisation, it is important to plan the process and to have a weekly follow-up group of moderators to create synergies between the different groups and share experiences and views.

The dynamisation of the courses has to be done with at least 2 moderators per course and there has to be a coordination between both of them.. The dynamization also achieves better results when different profiles of the dynamizers are combined to contrast personal styles and show differentiated interaction models. With regard to the

quality of the courses, it has been noted that virtual courses must be offered in an attractive and innovative format in terms of design.

Learning must be a well-balanced combination of education and inspiration, otherwise a course can easily cease to be attractive.

The conclusions of this pilot experience drew people's attention to the need to spend time and effort promoting a new culture of online learning and a culture of self-learning. If a company wants to change the paradigm of education, it cannot be improvised.

Keywords: Training, Digitization, HR, Learning, Dynamization

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