Crossroad of Innovation: Changing the Story of HR Training

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The Problem

Human resource professionals and their organizations identify major challenges with current HR training. Those challenges include high costs, non-engaging content, and lack of retention. Most companies struggle to force a "one-size-fits-all" training approach on an employee base that is anything but standardized. Traditional face-to-face teaching methods are often too expensive, especially when they require an increasingly mobile workforce to gather in one location.

Because of the lack of engaging and effective content, HR training tends to be treated as a series of boxes to be checked and is accompanied with minimal follow through. Therefore, an employee's newly gained knowledge doesn't always connect to real-world applications, which can undermine performance and profits.

"In an age in which ideas and knowledge drive the economy, people are the chief currency of every business. With up to 80% of a company's expenses coming from human resources, it is vital that the workforce be engaged and empowered to enable productivity. Yet according to the latest edition of Gallup's annual engagement survey, only 32% of the U.S. workforce is engaged, with 50.8% not engaged and 17.2% actively disengaged."
(Sargent, 2017)

The Why

HR training problems and employee disconnects have increased dramatically during the past decade and have reached a crisis. Why are there such major disconnects between current training and today's employees? There are many reasons "why," but two stand out. (1) Most HR training approaches were designed in the 1990s and first decade of the 21st century and they mainly involve a face-to-face approach. (2) Those that are offered online are not tailored for the mobile experience that is called for today. To really understand "why," one must consider the status of mobile devices and technology, as well as how workers and society have grown to use them over the past seven years.

In the spring of 2010, Apple introduced the first iPad. Few employees owned a smartphone and even fewer used mobile devices or social media to communicate socially or for work. As of the spring of 2017, over six billion smartphones had been sold worldwide (1.5 billion in 2016 alone) and nearly all of today's workers own their own smartphone. In addition, there are over one billion tablet users worldwide; most US workers own and use a tablet. US workers now spend over 5 hours per day on their mobile devices engaging in personal-centered and not job-related content.

The impact of these dramatic changes on society and workers has been profound in positive and negative ways; for example, on the positive side compare how social media and smartphones were used during the recent hurricanes and their aftermath to how people tried to communicate in previous national disasters. One of the negatives is that organizations are experiencing a disengaged workforce as shown in the Gallop survey. To change this negative, all training and specifically HR training must be designed to be learner-specific and

relatable to each worker's personal- and job-related duties, experiences, and needs with the concept of engagement woven throughout. Unfortunately, most HR training solutions do not even remotely address the needs of today's digital workforce and this helps foster a disengaged and often disenfranchised workforce. Simply put, if your HR and other training does not address the needs of your digital learners, you may not be reaching them at all!

What HR Professionals Tell Us They Want for Their Employees

The field of Human Resources is at a crossroads of digital learning and HR professionals understand this. Today's companies need solutions that meet the needs of their "always on" employees. Specifically, HR professionals want training solutions that are (1) Designed to reengage a disengaged workforce; (2) Mobile; (3) Scalable to multiple locations across the world; (4) Time-efficient, creating more opportunities to focus on the job; (5) Customizable to reflect the culture of the organization; (6) Cost-effective; (7) Easily integrated into their existing HRIS systems; and (8) most importantly—engaging for employees in learner-centered and job-specific ways and designed to help them retain information.

The Solution

We have been creating online digital solutions since 1999. Our training solutions are crafted to meet each need mentioned above and more. First, our training solutions engage people with a story-based approach. People are naturally drawn to stories. They have long been effective tools for learning everything from rules, to new concepts, to one's path in the world. Stories put a face to an idea and add life to a lesson. People will remember an adventure more than a lecture.

We extensively use video case stories to teach concepts for soft skills (e.g., leadership) and compliance topics. Using story in our training modules helps participants better remember and, more importantly, apply the content because it is engaging and relatable. In addition, our training is built on the concept of micro-bursts; users can complete most segments of our training modules in approximately 15-20 minutes. Furthermore, our training is continually updated to ensure we are using best practices based on the latest research and the ever changing world where your employees live and work.

Our training solutions are easily integrated into any HRIS system and can be delivered on a desktop, tablet, smartphone, and other mobile devices. Employees may engage with the content at any time and in any location. This also makes our training scalable and time-efficient because employees do not need to be in the same location or participate at the same time to engage in the training.

Our training solutions are customizable. At no additional cost, we can integrate your corporate graphics, colors, and / or logo. For an additional fee, we can customize the training even further. For example, we can create customized case stories that are specific to your industry or organization. Lastly, here's how our training is cost-effective. We only require a one-time, up-front charge, so there are no monthly subscriptions. Then, once you purchase the training, you may use it with all of your employees with no additional "per-user" fees.

If you would like to explore the power of learner-center HR content, visit our Web site at: 21cls.com and click or tap, *Sample Leadership Module – Crucial Conversations*.