

# Creating a Best Practice L&D Organization

## Introduction

In today's changing business environment and challenging economy, what's the best way to get the most of out learning and development activities?

Often, Learning and Development (L&D) is the first area to get "cut" since it's not directly a profit center. However, the value of learning programs is steadfast, and particularly in rough times. When else do staff resources need to know they are important, and intrinsic to the success of the organization? The collective knowledge needs of staff are closely tied to overall individual performance results, which directly align to meeting organizational goals.

This article is directed to practitioners of L&D, HR, or a training function. However, it may provide insight for L&D recipients, too. Learn how L&D supports the business and how regularly planned organizational assessments provide for continuous improvement. (Check out the link below of a sample survey for internal reviews.)

## Improving L&D with Leveraging

If we look at how learning and development supports the organization across the enterprise, we can identify economies in how we work with internal clients. If L&D supports business functions vertically across the company, we need to identify common required processes at project start and completion. Additionally, recognizing the different needs by business unit can help tailor how to approach program planning and project management needs. L&D can create a best practice approach around project planning, implementation, and management to help streamline efforts, and allow clients to be more proactive in their learning needs and development.

A first step toward streamlining work and provided services is to identify the type of work, projects, and events typically offered to your clients. Secondly, determine around which functions or services a best practice could be implemented. For example, what constitutes a project in your organization and for your clients? The Project Management Institute defines a project as: *"..... a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service. ....it is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations."* What commonalities exist within your definition of a project where you can build on what's been created?

After defining what a project means, the next step is to segregate projects from BAU – business as usual. In other words, how we work with clients on business as usual functions may be set a part from a formal project and not need the same level of involvement or resources. Identify how and where in all you provide, you can save time through reuse of work already completed and sharing of lessons learned.

## Summary

The bottom line is that L&D must continually observe itself and evaluate its own processes and best practices in how it serves its constituents. We certainly know that at times, senior management does likewise, often when a larger "overhaul" or a reorganization becomes necessary. By always identifying your own best practices and ensuring your team is leveraging work from one another, could possibly help you in times of restructure. Remember, the L&D function that is lean yet productive will ultimately prove beneficial to the organization.

Use this link <http://www.knowledgeadvantage.biz/resources.html> to open a short sample survey. These questions can help you identify how you work as a team and where there's opportunity for leverage. Consolidating tools and processes across the L&D function that have reuse capability, will help you support your clients better, steer you toward becoming a best practice, and cut down on redundant work and inefficiencies.

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