
An electronic information letter by BNH Expert Software.

Counting What Counts

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*"If confusion is the first step to knowledge, I must be a genius."
-Larry Leissner*

Globalization, technology and demographics are affecting the way organizations are running their businesses and in-turn workplace learning and performance. "Success in today's economy depends more than anything else on knowledge and learning" - a view shared by both senior executives and HRD professionals. The problem, however, arises in the way the results are being measured. From senior executives perspective, training is a strategic investment that is expected to create opportunities and increase the competitive advantage of the organization. HRD professionals, on the other hand, "often value people development for its own sake rather than something that should be linked to business strategy."

The critical issue is to decide on what to measure. Although a number of intermediary tools - including participants' feedback, testing and observation - is used to measure the effectiveness of learning initiatives, ultimately, the only meaningful measure is the impact on the organization's bottom line - i.e., what changes in business results can be expected as a result of the training effort?

To achieve this objective, we should examine why employees are being trained in the first place. If we have done our homework, a training course "which is a solution" should have been designed to address a specific performance deficiency "the problem", and the results of the training program "performance indicators" (which may include, employees productivity, retention, revenue, customer services, etc. - versus skills/competencies) should be well defined. Consequently, the impact of the training program should be easy to measure. If for any reason potential gains "performance indicators" cannot be defined, then the need for training - whether instructor-led or eLearning-based - should be questioned. In Peter Drucker's words, "if you cannot measure it, you cannot manage it."

To learn more on how to align training with business goals, you may download the white paper from BNH web site.

Contributions

Contributions, on what worked and didn't - including practical tips, advice, white papers, case studies, articles, reviews, online seminars, software tools and research reports - are welcomed. Please send to bahlis@bnhexpertsoft.com. Full credit will be given to author.

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