The SIX DISCIPLINES of BREAKTHROUGH LEARNING

DEFINE BUSINESS OUTCOMES

Learning Objectives by themselves are inadequate to the task of improving performance. They are designed to communicate what is included in a training course. Business objectives are what are necessary to determine what is required for employees to perform differently on the job following the class.

The values of a well-crafted business objectives are: 1) Helps to secure management buy-in, 2) Informs the design of the interventions, 3) Required for meaningful documentation of results, and 4) Enables training team to demonstrate value.

DESIGN THE COMPLETE EXPERIENCE

This discipline emphasizes the design of a "complete" experience. This involves planning and managing what occurs before and after the training events. The goal is to take employees all the way through to the "new finish line", which is improved performance.

The goal of training should not to be complete training, it should be to improve performance. Keep in mind that training is not an end in itself, it is a tool to achieve a business outcome – improved performance.

DELIVER FOR APPLICATION

Begin with the end in mind. Start with what employees are supposed to be doing differently and craft a learning strategy to help them get there. Great learning experiences are not about the content, but about the delivery. Effective learning providers understand:
- Less is more, avoid content and time overkill
- Using a variety of techniques and approaches
- Open to non-training interventions

DRIVE LEARNING TRANSFER

This involves intentionally putting systems and processes into place that drive learning transfer back to the workplace. The company's transfer climate communicates the level of value places on new knowledge and will determine the success or failure of the learning initiative. This answers the question "Will I?". Once an employee has acquired new knowledge, will they put the effort into integrating it into their daily routine? Their direct manager has an outsized influence over whether this learning transfer occurs and therefore significant effort should be put into supporting the managers and providing them with processes by which they can encourage this transfer to take place.

DEPLOY PERFORMANCE SUPPORT

Organizations that are serious about learning transfer work to create a variety of layered support formats with which to surround their employees as they venture out applying their newfound knowledge. This support ecosystem should be an integral part of the design of the learning initiative. Because early success is an enormous benefit to learning transfer, the learning support system must be in place from the early stages of the learning initiative. Finally, the leaders must be on board for this support system to have any validity.

DOCUMENT RESULTS

In order to adequately judge the effectiveness of learning initiatives, you need reliable measurements. This discipline answers the dual questions: 1) Did it achieve the results for which it was designed? 2) Was it worth it? But first, we must ensure that we can measure performance, rather than the training itself. The measured results must be: Relevant, Credible, Compelling, and Efficient. Relevancy is the importance of the measured activity. Credibility is how convincing the data is. Compelling addresses the urgency of the results and buy-in of the leaders. Efficiency addresses the value proposition of the learning initiative.