



Learning Strategy and Solutions

Learning & Performance Journeys

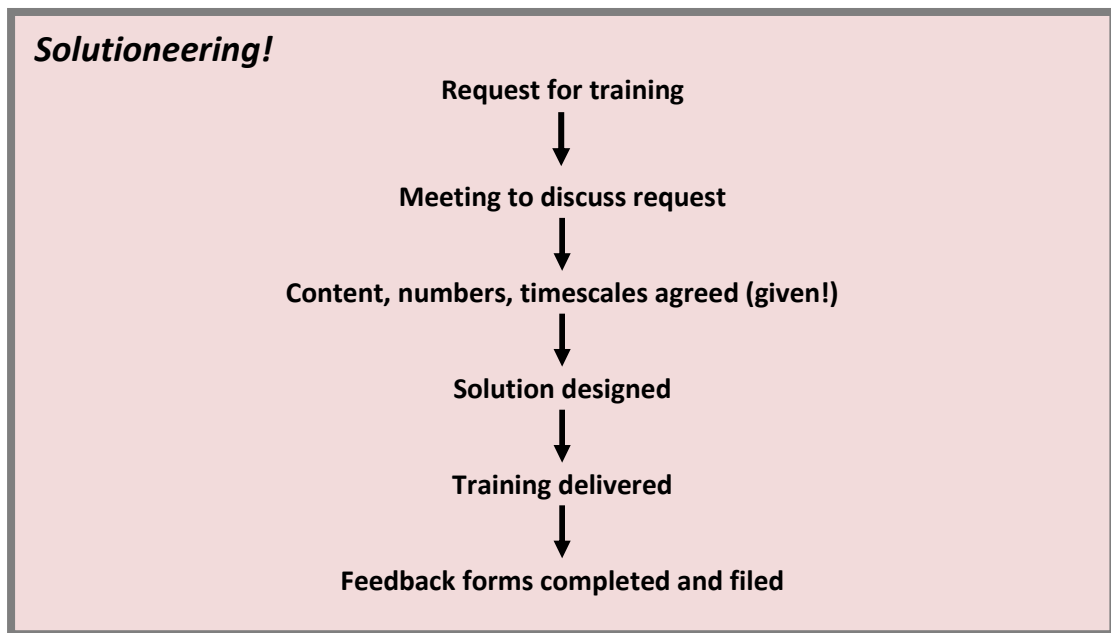
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Learning – the link to Performance

Throughout the past two decades Training has sought to 'justify' the investment in training programmes; doing so all too often from a pure training perspective. The specialist roles within training have held onto the specific training skills and knowledge of adult learning theories and evaluative techniques that focus on training to demonstrate the need for specialism.

Why then, do we see significant levels of 'repeat' training, vast expenditure on 'new' training programmes that have already been rolled out and a perception that training provision is a 'defensive' tick box exercise that has to be suffered rather than a key element in a cultural drive for improved performance and a significant performance lever that can make a positive impact on organisational results?

All too often we see the following example as the initial need analysis:



The first and most significant question we need to address before investing in any training is – 'Why do we need to?' This leads logically to the question – 'What are we expecting as a result of completing training?' Solutioneering provides a narrow and often misplaced framework for linking training to either the genuine needs of individuals or to the possibility of impact on performance.



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As we explore the link with performance we have seen through research that it is essential all parties are agreed on how any 'developmental' support aligns to the organisational vision and to the function, team and role performance expectation. The purpose of development activity and the performance expectation and intent resulting from the investment in time and money must be clear and agreed by all parties. There is a need for specialist initial consulting and 'need analysis' which is critical at this stage. It is here that we often find the lack of specialist learning & development (L&D) expertise being employed.

There are many approaches to performance consulting. Whichever approach is adopted it is the link with Learning that is then key to ensuring any investment in L&D activity will positively support the achievement of intent. One of the simplest mechanisms in achieving such a link is to adopt the use of an intended impact grid (adapted from the work of Robert Brinkerhoff in Success Case evaluation). An example is noted below:

Purpose/Intent		
Underlying Requirements	Critical Actions	Key Results

Initially agree and complete the links to purpose and intent. This will enable the key performance results of the entire initiative to be defined, the critical actions required of each role to achieve the results and then an exploration of the underlying knowledge, skill application, thought processes and behavioural application required to competently fulfil the critical actions. From here a gap analysis can be completed and a consideration of the following can be initiated:

- The extent of performance change required
- The cost of doing nothing
- Clarification of responsibilities
- The range of supportive and enabling activity being undertaken
- Ways of ensuring collaboration across sub initiatives
- The appropriate mix and timing of 'impact' activity
- The extent of learning required
- The appropriate mix and management of communication, direct training/coaching/learning activity and the use of measurement to reinforce intent
- The total learning and performance journey definition and implementation plan

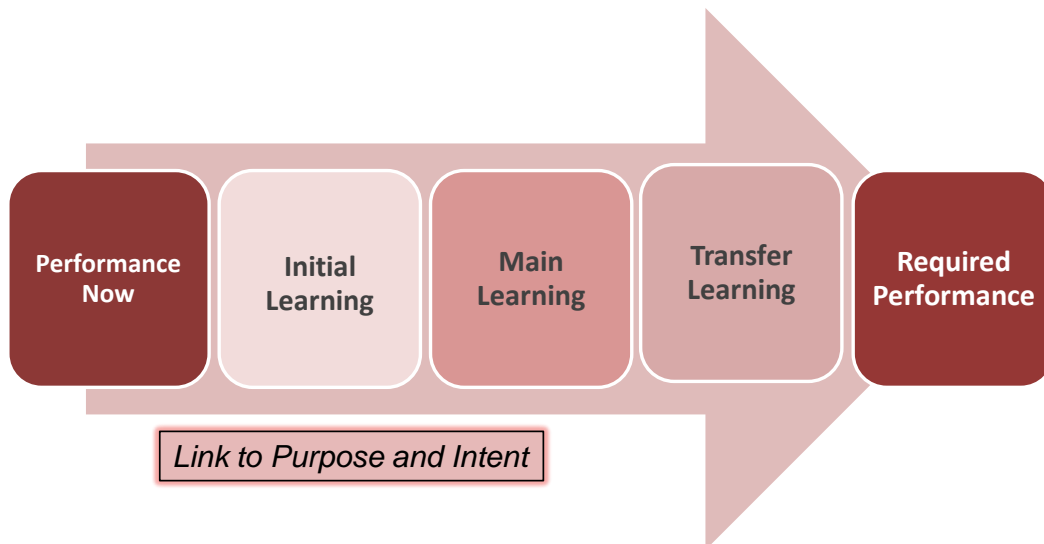


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It is the extent of the impact of the total initiative on performance that is key to sustained success and it is helpful to understand the contribution of each element in the journey to seek continued improvement. Thus we seek to appreciate the systemic factors that impact upon learning as they relate and contribute to intended performance rather than justify training.

The learning journey that supports performance change

Learning & Performance Journeys



'maximising the value of
your investment in learning'

At each stage in the journey there are a wide range of potential learning methodologies and medium available to the specialist. With each of these there are techniques, balance, emphasis, and application considerations which will reflect their appropriateness against purpose, level of individual or group on the journey and the extent of change required.

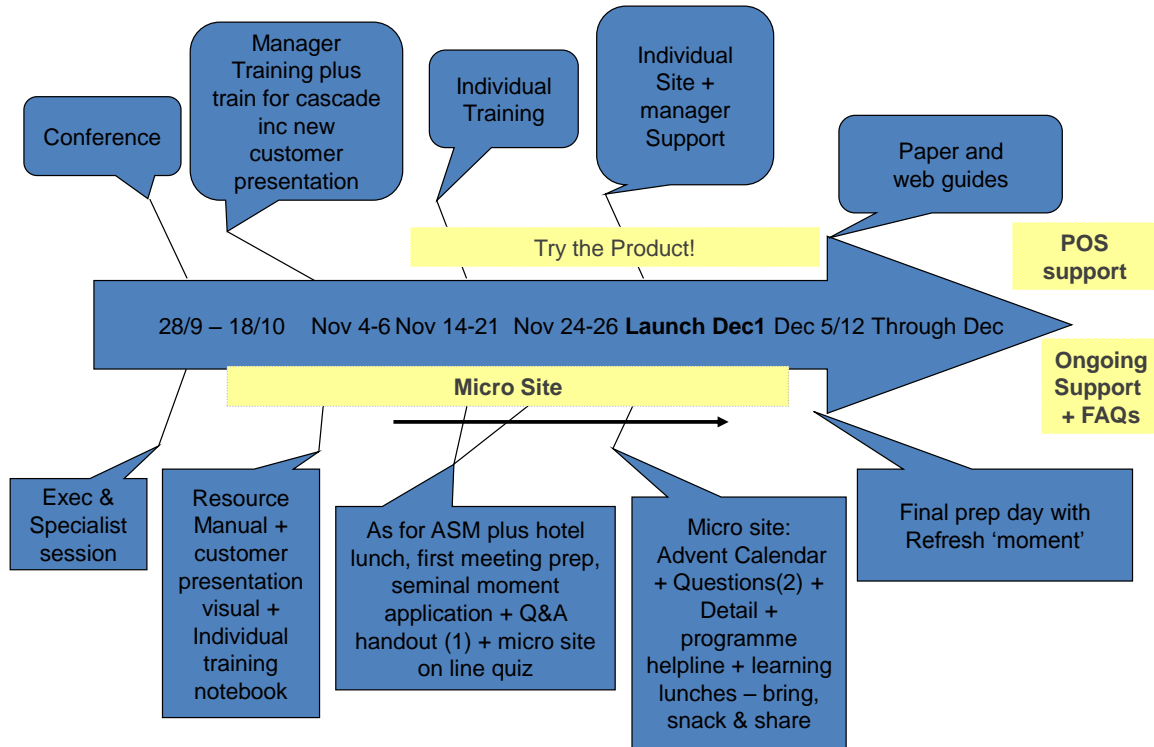


Examples of Media Choices

<p>Face to Face - Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses – ranging from 1 day to extensive co-ordinated programmes over a longer period of time • Workshops / seminars(in-house) / lectures – in house, external expert or academia led / ‘lunch groups’ • Team learning – meetings; exploratory or facilitated • Presentations • Conference / exhibitions / seminars (external or internal) • Team coaching sessions 	<p>Face to Face - Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching - on the job, off role / Mentoring • Drop – in ‘surgeries’ • Buddying • (Counselling) • ‘Informal individual and team - knowledge and skill realisation’
<p>Technology based training / coaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E learning – including immersive • Internet and intranet hosted knowledge sources • Virtual classrooms, video-conference, webinars • Performance Support mechanism as process and framework development • Teleconference, tele-class, phone/ skype based support • M learning • Video / DVD / CD • Podcasting • Audio 	<p>Co-ordinated Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-based projects and assignments • Action learning sets and study groups • Planned ‘job’ experience in Maidenhead • Individual study – reading books, libraries, case studies, research, educational qualifications, • Visits • Self awareness tools and support • Voluntary work, Community work

The specialist L&D contribution is leveraged when the objectives relating to each intervention or activity relates clearly to the intent of the overall initiative and purpose of performance expectation. The content and emphasis within the learning journey will be enhanced by collaboration with wider associated action e.g. links to reward, performance management, organisation design, policy, risk management, etc. and their co-ordinated intended impact and contribution to the realisation of strategy.

Learning Journey for New Product Launch



In this example, utilised for the launch of a new product, we can see the coordination and collaboration between the Executive, Product Development, Product, Sales Management, Training, Marketing, Customer Service, and IT Support teams and the responsibility for learning resting with the individuals and their line managers. Through the provision of a range of learning opportunities the L&D team co-ordinated contribution and worked with all contributing functions to ensure that the techniques utilised within each component opportunity were appropriate to the extent of change required. It combines a mix of communication and training using specialists in each discipline to ensure the agreed intent is achieved.

Learning and Development functions exist to support the wider organisation to achieve levels of performance that ensure the achievement of vision, purpose and strategy. With this clarity then measures relating to contribution, the management of the function and the build of learning and performance journey opportunities can be focused appropriately. Specialists can ensure the best balance and techniques are framed to achieve intent and the perception of L&D as a true performance lever be realised.