

# Making Sense of the Learning Ecosystem

A discussion with ATD Suncoast  
August 19, 2021. 6pm ET

Mike Pino



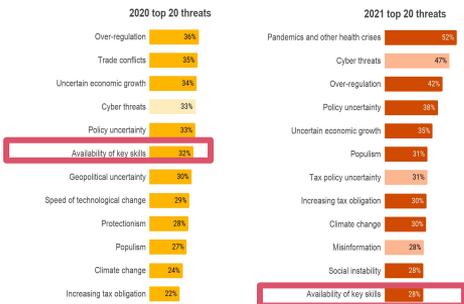
# The Context of Change

Global CEOs recognize the opportunities and challenges of growth are increasing...



Note: From 2012 to 2014, respondents were asked, 'Do you believe the global economy will improve, stay the same or decline over the next 12 months?'

... but recognize that availability of key skills is still a top challenge over the past 2 years



Some Materials for Discussion

Employees want opportunities to develop...

# 68%

are ready to learn new skills or completely re-train in order to remain employable in the future

... but access and availability to develop key skills is at best uneven

Older workers (54+)



All workers



Younger workers (18-34)



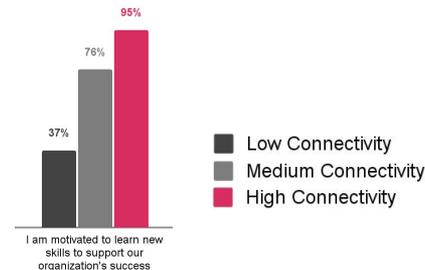
Q: Is your current employer giving you the opportunity to improve your digital skills outside your normal duties? Respondents who said "no opportunities at all" .. n=32k

Even when they get these opportunities, the harsh realities of the pandemic...

# 41%

Indicated that the pandemic **made coaching and development of skills** more difficult than before

... has impacted development because of the drop in connectivity through culture



This data suggests that learning and development (L&D) inside an organisation needs to be...

**Responsive.** Quickly deployed and adapted to business performance needs

**Measurable.** Tied to proficiency and readiness metrics, with some clarity on time-to-deliver

**Personal.** Able to address individual motivations, expectations and adapt to changing needs

**Social.** Integrated into team and business culture and communities

# These changing realities are pushing L&D to change in order to support the organisation's need

## L&D functions will shift from...

*Programmatic focus - **execution against plans** handed down from the top*

**Functional management**

***Protective reactions** when presented with issues, leading people to hide problems*

**Difficulty addressing problems**

*Over planning, development and testing **before sharing** – “making it perfect”*

**Focused on delivering to plan**

***Work only on delineated areas** like requirements, coding, testing, etc.*

**Functional roles fit to static processes**

*Delivery teams **fail to acknowledge and push back** on unreasonable scope and/or timelines*

**Emphasis on priorities set to plan**

*Limited customer focus - work **delivered is not clearly linked** to business value, but the output of the learning process*

**Performance tied to learning output**

## To an agile approach incorporating performance needs

**Accountable and empowered teams**

*Clear **accountability for decision making**, including empowering individuals much lower in the organisation*

**Problem-solving attitude**

*An attitude that **welcomes transparency** to surface and resolve issues/problems*

**Focused on delivering to need**

*Iterative work in **progress is continually reviewed** – “learn fast” with an eye on business results*

**Multi-expert teams to deliver**

*Work in teams with **skills across all relevant areas**, functions and platforms*

**Priorities flexed to needs and capacity**

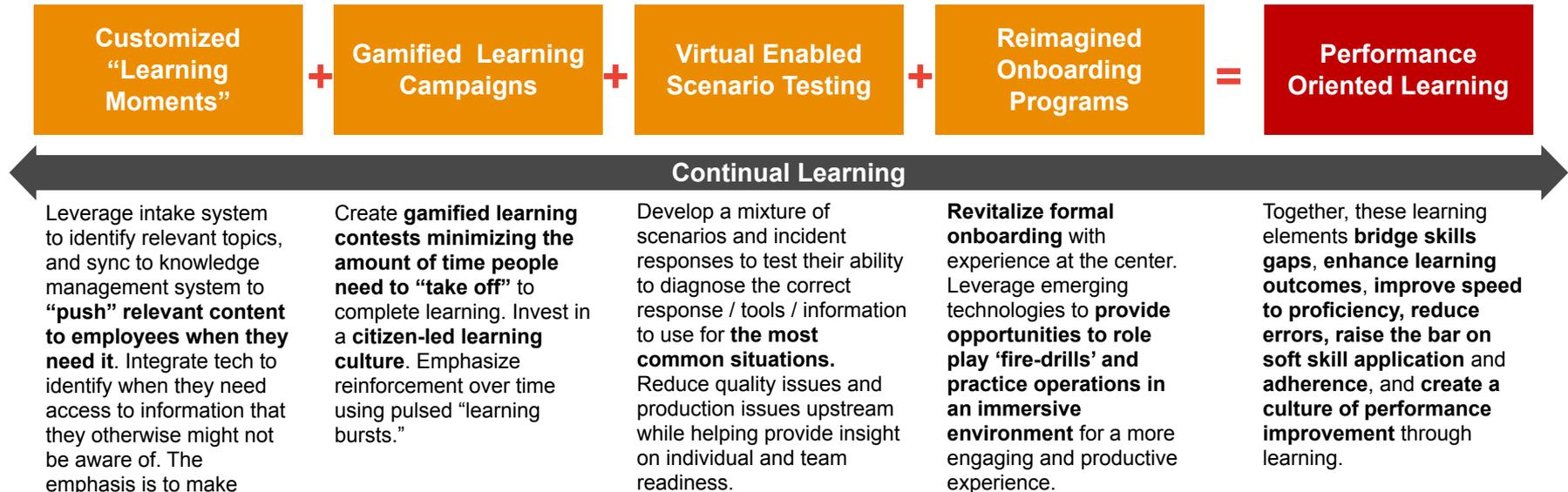
*Jointly **prioritize work and forecast completion** based on historical progress*

**Performance tied to business outcome**

*Clear **linkage of work outputs to delivery metrics** and business value OKRs/KPIs*

# The best way forward? Adopting continual\* learning, with reinforcement and practice

Insights from neuroscience related to priming expectations, interleaving, and reinforcing over time have pushed L&D toward a focus on delivering the right experience at the right time, for individual *and* collective performance — with a way to measure proficiency and readiness



How do you adopt continual learning that is responsive, measurable, personal, and social?

# A Brief Side Note on Learning Ecosystems...



As HBS Prof Theodore Levitt used to teach, people don't go to a store to buy a 1/4" drill bit; they go to buy a 1/4" hole

 HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL

**WORKING KNOWLEDGE**  
Business Research for Business Leaders

Topics ▾ Latest Popular

16 JAN 2006 RESEARCH & IDEAS

**What Customers Want from Your Products**

by Clayton M. Christensen, Scott Cook and Taddy Hall

---

Marketers should think less about market segments and more about the jobs customers want to do. A *Harvard Business Review* excerpt by HBS professor Clayton M. Christensen, Intuit's Scott Cook, and Advertising Research

A learning ecosystem is the **collection** of people, processes, data, assets, systems, and tools **used by an organisation to develop skills and competencies** in people **to produce a business capability** needed by an organisation's client or customer for a desired outcome.

*Every organisation has a learning ecosystem, just like every business has a culture — whether people have been tending to its development intentionally or not.*

PS, this definition uses [Rose Benedick's article "Learning Ecosystems: What Are They, and What Can They Do For You?"](#) as a starting point, but is significantly altered.

# The shift requires changing how you approach the ecosystem

*When looking to develop performance in a learning ecosystem, you need to address the MIKE.*

The MIKE in an ecosystem is the **Motivations**, as understood by individuals, **Incentives** as arranged by supervisors, teams, and structures, the behaviors needed to drive the orientation toward **Knowledge** and skills, and the **Environment** (technology, processes, policies, and ways of working)



**Individual Competencies**

## Engaging & Harnessing Individual Motivation

**The importance of shared reality.** Learning strategy supports scaffolding individuals in self-directed, proactive learning to find individual meaning and growth in group purpose.

**Help them belong, or they won't be long.** Personalized Learning paths, DEI, ESG course curation to create connection.



**Business Performance Metrics**

## Integrating Behavior and Assessment Data with Readiness

**Link experience and recommendation to predictive models with behavior and performance data.** Use of performance readiness metrics to assure knowledge, skills, and mindsets are linked to collective, business outcomes.

Link data insights to path and asset recommendations, so that feedback results in practice and reinforcement.



**Enterprise Capabilities**

## Emphasizing Performance in Individuals & Teams

**Building team capabilities.**

Performance outcomes require modular elements to be integrated in practice and reinforcement in the flow of work rather than self-contained courses. Measurement needs to include teams as well as individuals.



**Learning Culture Motivators**

## Activating Growth Mindset

**Exemplifying and Multiplying Motivational Behaviors.**

The signaling from senior leaders needs to link with the work that comes from bottom-up efforts to exemplify and multiply. Colleagues need to discover their purpose and meaning in these efforts. And the organisation needs to reinforce continual learning with rewards and incentives.

8

# Learning Ecosystems sustain hybrid work and employees' future, growth.

It involves more than technology and is critical to enable success.

## Individual Performance Development

- Learning strategy focused on developing the key characteristics of a high performing organisation — that encourages self-directed, proactive learning
- Future technology ecosystem to enable continual learning in humans and continuous in machines

Skills for the future of business

L&P D future state Capabilities

## Learning & Performance Development Capabilities

- Adaptive L&D org/Hybrid models
- Experience based content strategies enabled by outcomes based analytics
- Digital marketing to enable a culture of learning

## Learning Ecosystem

It's more than just technology

## People Analytics aligned to Business outcomes

- Integrating assessment and behavior data with the learning data to predict skill gaps
- Performance readiness metrics used to assure knowledge, skills, and mindsets are linked to collective, business outcomes

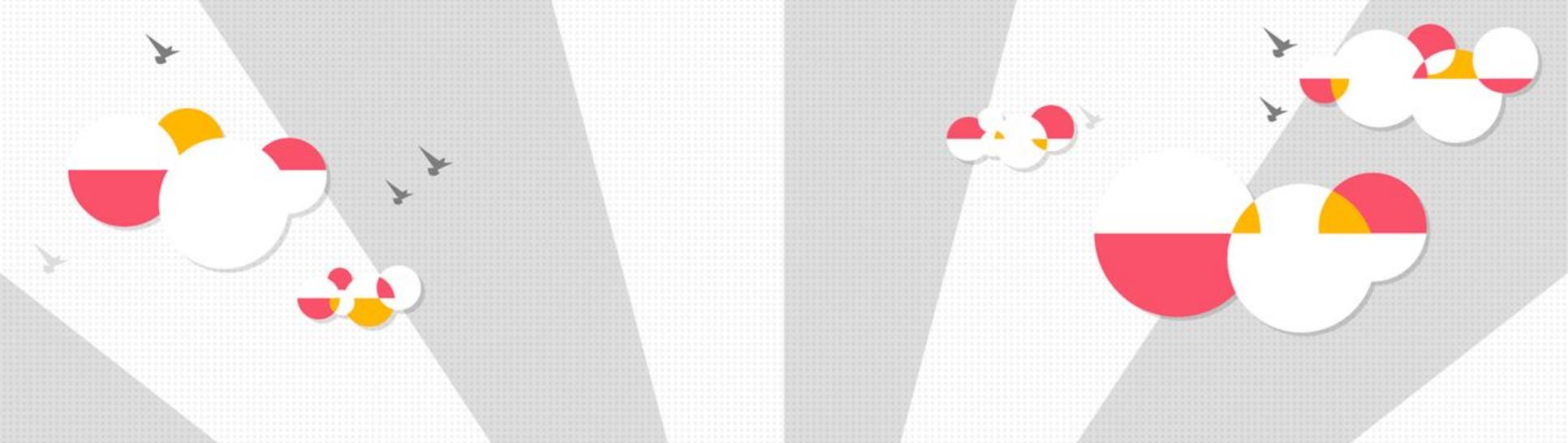
Business performance metrics

Learning culture, policies, rewards

## Integrating with the HR ecosystem

- Fluid and responsive rewards and incentive strategy for learning enablement
- Agility to account for external learning and mixed workforce models

# Open Discussion



Thank you for joining us today.