

# On-the-job performance support revolutionising workplace training

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8 Oct 2014

On-the-job performance support solutions have emerged as an alternative to classroom-based training and e-learning for companies that want to drive higher return on investment (ROI) from new business systems and processes.

Companies are looking for new ways to drive better results from their business process and systems training, as low ROI from training and education is emerging as a major pain point for companies as they battle with tight budgets and a difficult economy.

Added to this, many businesses feel that they are not getting the value they expect in terms of on-the-job performance for the time and money they invest in training.

That's why many businesses have invested heavily in performance management tools and e-learning systems in the hope that these would automate their talent development and management pains away. But instead, many of these systems are being underused because they have not turned out to be a panacea for the challenges of training and performance management.

## On-the-job training beats boredom, motivation and time factor of e-learning

What's more, e-learning has not always delivered the expected results because people often don't have the time or the motivation for self-paced learning. Workers also often get bored in e-learning programmes and usually only retain a fraction of the skills and knowledge imparted to them.

Against this backdrop, many organisations are starting to look at on-the-job training as the best way of marrying the learning process to the practicalities of the workplace.

We are seeing many of our clients look specifically for tools that will help them align their staff to the business strategy and that will equip them to use the systems and follow the processes they need to do their jobs well.

## Force users to practice new skills

Real-time, on-the-job learning is the most effective form of education, training and upskilling because it forces users to practice their new skills. Real-time learning breeds intelligence, which will improve performance. It is also rooted in a real-world work context that the learner understands.

Increasingly sophisticated performance support tools and techniques have made it more viable for organisations to conduct more of their employees' training on-the-job. Unlike static e-learning reference materials and online help, such solutions are relevant and simple to use.

One of the most important benefits of on-the-job performance support is that it trains people in their live work environment, bringing the material to life for them. Another is that it can be cheaper than e-learning or classroom-based training.

## **Collaboration and sharing is key**

In addition, performance support tools can be used to help create a culture of collaborating and sharing knowledge. For example, staff could share thoughts and ask each other questions through instant messaging or online bulletin boards.

With performance support tools, organisations can create knowledge assets that allow them to transfer knowledge in efficient, practical and relevant ways. So if someone leaves, it will be relatively easy for someone else to learn how to fulfil their role.

Performance support systems can also relieve middle management of much of the stress of needing to coach and train staff as they provide the sort of on-the-job support that once relied on someone sitting next to an employee to walk him or her through the system and processes.

So it's clear that the face of training is changing, at least when it comes to up-skilling employees in new systems and processes. This is based on an overdue shift from focusing on theoretical training towards facilitating real-time learning that drives better workplace performance in a tangible manner.

## **ABOUT IVANNA GRANELLI**

Ivanna Granelli - a teacher by training - moved into the corporate world as an IT trainer at SAPPI and First Paper House between 1991 and 1993. She decided in 1994 to create a business that combined her twin passions for education and technology and established Can!Do with the vision of helping companies to unlock the business value of their ERP systems through end-user training.

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