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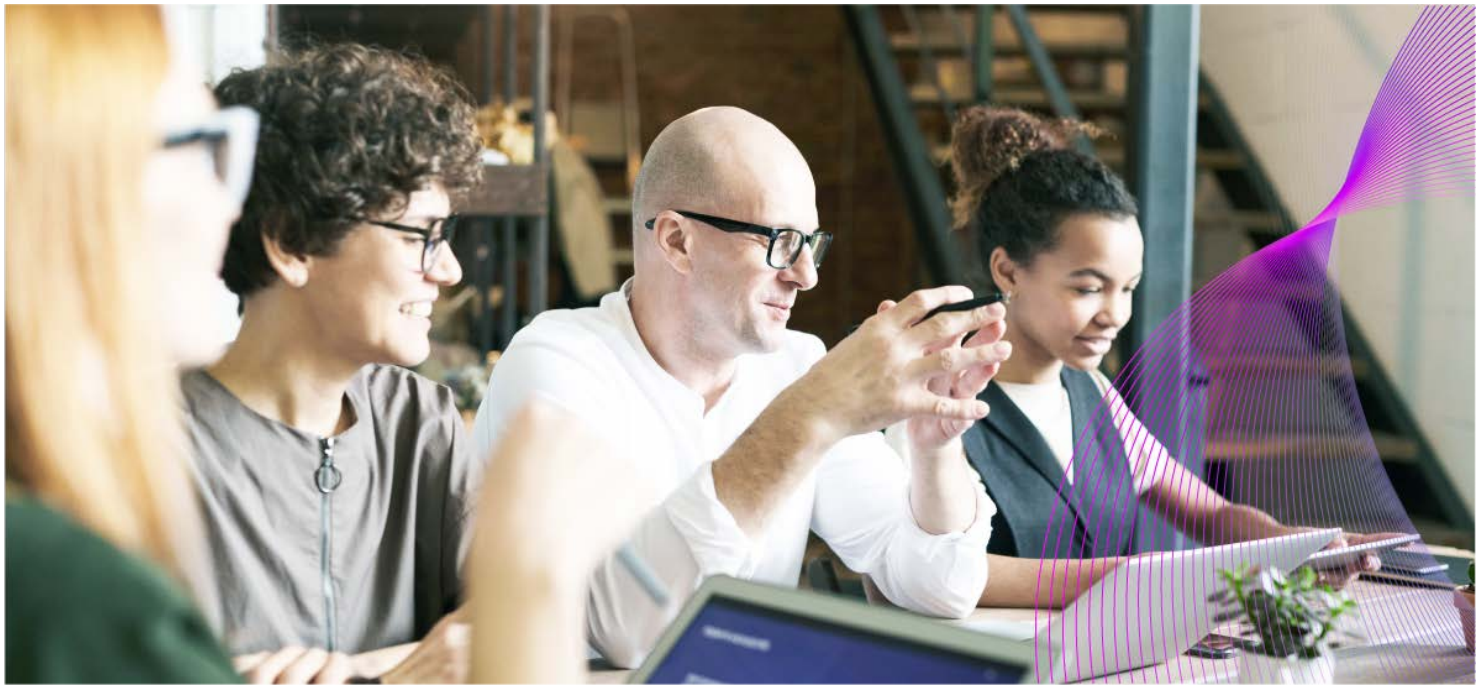
The Top Ten Challenges of Learning Leaders

The Learning and Performance Institute released the L&D Dashboard that lists the top challenges for learning leaders in 2022. The list is collated from conversations with hundreds of Heads of Learning from a diverse set of organisations. The top ten challenges offer insights into the problems all those in L&D are solving every day. In our report, we explore our response to these challenges and how we offer a potential solution to the challenges right now.

- Building an organisational learning culture
- Supporting learning in a hybrid workforce
- Embedding learning in the flow of work
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Measuring ROI and learning impact
- Leadership development
- Getting business buy-in
- Supporting diversity and inclusion
- Digital transformation
- Balancing the learning experience

Challenge #1



Building an organisational learning culture

Culture is a tricky word. It is abstract, difficult to measure, and so feels out of our reach. Yet, the right culture can be the difference between being good and being exceptional.

What is an organisational learning culture?

The CIPD suggested changing the word from culture to environment. In other words, you provide the environment where learning can thrive, and the learning culture will emerge. Andrew Jacobs from Llarn Learning recently explained this to me as "capacity and ability = capability". In short, organisational learning cultures can be created with the right capacity within the organisation and the right abilities offered by solution providers.

> "Culture is about the interaction between people. It is an emotional state, and it is the permission to believe everyone can be better."

Is culture more than this?

When dealing with processes and structures day-to-day, it feels convenient to work with the tangible of the environment. Entelechy Academy can offer you a solution that creates this positive and self-determined environment for professional development.

We can offer data points that prove engagement, and we would be measured as Level 3 on the Kilpatrick model as we inspire behavioural change. And yet, culture is more than the physical environment for learning. Culture is about the interaction between people. It is an emotional state, and it is the permission to believe everyone can be better.

How can we be better?

You can view the creation of this culture in two ways. You can believe the organisation's role is to impose a culture on a group of employees. Alternatively, you can believe it is the role of individuals to self-create this culture through shared belief and practice.

Reading this, you probably realise that the answer needs to come from a ground swell; it needs a common understanding of what a learning culture means. Learning and Development professionals can set the tone and offer opportunities, and still, it is the role of empowered employees to leap toward being better.

The important point is that the word “imposed” cannot be part of a learning culture. You can sit a manager in a room with a course on good leadership, but you can’t make her listen. And even if she listens to all the wonderful ideas explored in that training session, you can’t be sure she will apply them in her work.

Learning requires a tacit agreement between the facilitator and the learner that a positive impact is desired.

An outstanding learning culture

When we were recently assessed by the Association for Character Education (ACE), we were complimented on the great culture within our team. Entelechy Academy believes character underpins all learning, whether hard, soft, technical, or other. Therefore, it is unsurprising that we were awarded a Company of Character Kitemark.

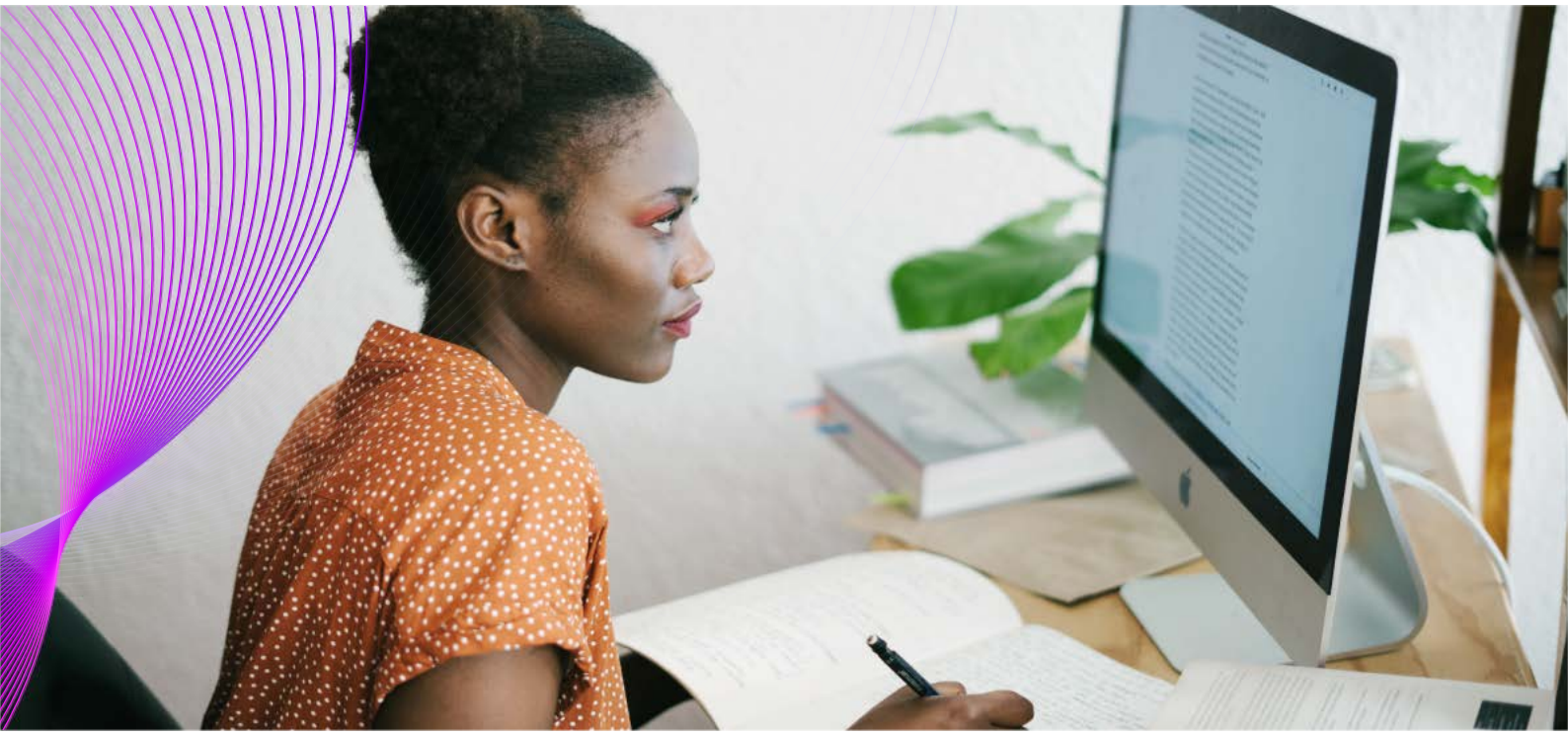
Yet, what meant so much more than acknowledging that our methodology and framework help learners develop character, is the recognition that our culture lives our values. We have an organisational learning culture that embraces our belief and our mission that to be the best company, we each have to be our best.

Our learning culture emerged from our shared agreement that we live our values.

Key Takeaways:

- Culture is emotional as well as situational.
- Working from the human up will build an organisation culture.

Challenge #2



Supporting learning in a hybrid workforce

One of the most significant legacies of the pandemic is our desire to be free to work where it is practical. If our work can be done from home, then so be it. The option is still there to go into the office should it be required.

While hybrid working practices are a must for talent retention in some professions, it creates an additional dimension of complexity for learning and development leaders. In a climate where individualised professional development plans are a must, so too is learning that can be done where the employee chooses to learn.

The complexities we face

Learning and development in a hybrid workforce would be simple if the answer were as simple as a Zoom, Teams, or Google Meet. You would set up webinars or interactive tutorials. It would be more onvenient, as you could deliver the session more intimately to a much larger group.

> “When buying an EdTech solution, you need to find one that encourages the learner to step away from the technology, find out more, and apply what has been discovered in real life.”

The problem? We are fatigued by online meetings, and there is no way to gauge if there is a genuine impact or even if anyone is listening. We crave “in real life” experiences and find the constant resort to an online session uninspiring, even dull.

A singular diet of online delivery does not cater for the choice and differentiation that all educationalists understand to be at the core of good practice. Learning opportunities need to be distinct from the long meetings on a video call of the modern workplace.

If the answer were to make all learning opportunities formal moments to gather, we would do this too. We would switch the workplace dynamic on its head, work remotely, and learn together. Something is appealing in this idea, as learning becomes an event that our teams could look forward to – or see as an expensive and distracting event from the company's daily business.

Coordinated blended delivery

The answer is equally as complex as the dilemma. The best learning and development in a future workplace will likely be a fully integrated model of blended strategies. A blended approach combines what is done online and extends it into face-to-face interactions. What is done alone on the computer is then deepened with experiences in real life.

Most EdTech learning solutions are precious about keeping their learning within the application. It is seen as a failure if the learner drops off to do other things or learn in other ways. Return on investment statistics are based on time spent on an app, number of clicks, number of outcomes completed, and other fancy data points on a dashboard. It is the illusion that time in front of a teacher means you are learning. As we know from childhood in school, this can be far from the case.

When buying an EdTech solution, you need to find one that encourages the learner to step away from the technology, find out more for themselves, and apply what has been discovered in real life. The best solutions show the employee how to learn, how these issues and ideas apply to them, and know how to react and challenge the idea if it isn’t working.

Then, mix this solution into conversations with colleagues. Encourage the learners to share what they have been experimenting with in their work and what the outcomes have been. Create a culture of learning where one colleague is genuinely interested in the progress of another colleague and can share insights on how they might do even better.

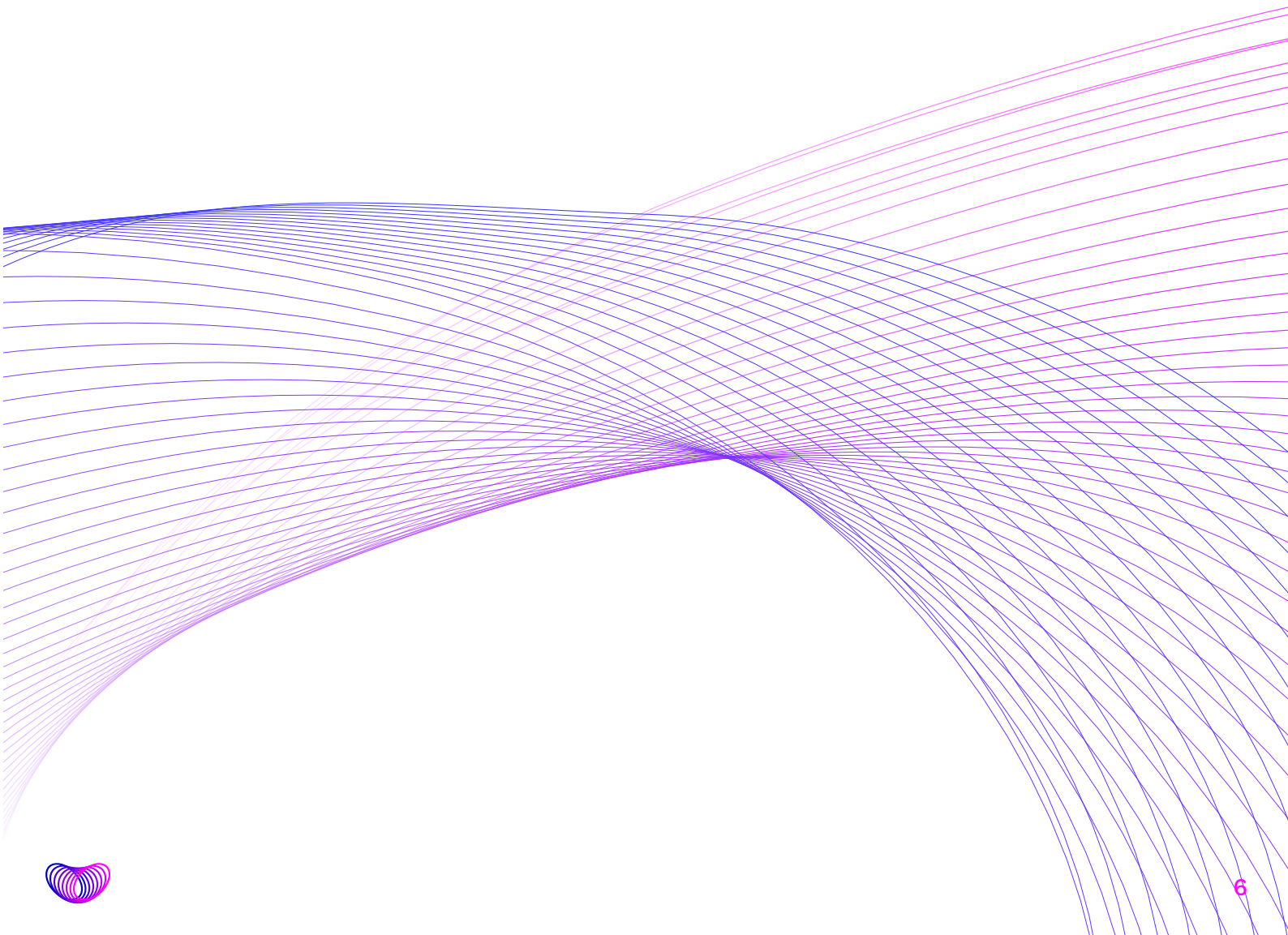
More than an EdTech solution

When Entelechy Academy set out to design a product that would solve the skills gap, we didn't presume that we knew what skills were needed or that we could provide every insight for every skill. Any project that sets out to solve a skills gap by delivering the current catalogue of skills is doomed to failure – because who can possibly predict what the skills demand will be in the future?

What did we do? We saw the solution within the individual. It is not that people do not want to learn new skills; it is that they have not levelled up the Character they need to maximise the insight that exists in the world. We love it when the learner steps away from our solution and experiments with an idea in their day-to-day work and life. Why? Because they are developing the mindset to become the solution to their own skills gap.

Key Takeaways:

- There needs to be a solution that is as flexible as the way we work.
- The best learning involves experiments while working to see what is effective for the individual.



Challenge #3

Embedding learning into the flow of work

Making every moment a learning moment is the ideal of any learning culture. In the past, there has been a false separation between learning and work, as though only the formal act of education has the impact required. In truth, often, the opposite is true. To genuinely achieve behavioural change that can make a measurable difference, knowledge must be applied within context, and further reflections encouraged. There is room for conceptual learning in the abstract, but until this learning is applied and evaluated and a new way of working created, little improvement has been actualised.

Let's talk about theory

Let's assume that educational researchers have something valuable to contribute to our understanding here. It is not to seem trite and disingenuous when saying this; it is to acknowledge that academic theory can sometimes be divorced from the daily reality of practice. Yet, there are two points of reference worth exploring.

> "Embedding learning in the flow of work is about creating a mindset that views every moment as a learning moment."

Firstly, Bloom's Taxonomy is a good reference guide for lower and higher-level thinking. At the bottom of the scale are remembering and understanding. L&D leans into these lower-level thinking skills when it provides content banks and multiple-choice quizzes. The next level requires the learner to apply the ideas understood and analyse the impact. Some L&D encourages post-course reflections that ask the learner how they have applied what they have learnt. Many employees imagine what they are meant to say.

The top levels of Bloom's Taxonomy require the learner to evaluate and create. In other words, to get to the bottom of what being better in the workplace means and to action this in their daily practice. How much formal L&D can facilitate this is questionable, even if employees are offered master's degrees.

Secondly, Adam Grant wrote a book called Rethink. It's brilliant and well worth a read. He talks about the need to learn, unlearn, and relearn. He encourages us to think like a scientist. Ask around, develop a theory of what might make us better, and then try it out. Recognise with a beginner's eyes that there might be a better way of doing something, find it, and try it. It sounds shockingly simple – but how many of us do it? How many of us believe that multiple years of experience make us superior, even when we cling to old ideas that should have been unlearned years before?

Putting these ideas together

Embedding learning in the flow of work is about creating a mindset that views every moment as a learning moment. The ingredients for this mindset are simple, though peskily tricky to recreate.

To start with, the learner needs to be curious. Every situation they enter needs to be approached with wonder. Not a child-like mindset of awe, but with an optimistic belief that there is something new about this situation that can shape us as a person to be better than before.

Next, the learner needs to be courageous. Learning requires accepting the need for growth in a world that demands we be perfect. We can say – and believe – that no one is perfect and then, in the next moment, be heartbroken by any suggestion that we might have opportunities to grow. It means we have weaknesses, right? Oh my, that feels hurtful. It takes the brave to hear these growth opportunities as just that, opportunities. These are the areas we have available to us to lean into and learn from.

Then, the learner needs to be reflective. Every action we take only becomes an experience when we wonder why it happened: was it good, could it be different, could it be better? Was this the right path to take, or do I need to correct my course? Questioning our actions and words opens doors to understanding how we could enhance ourselves the next time we encounter a similar moment.

Celebrate and reward the informal

When you are running L&D, it is easy to believe that you must organise learning events that are created for your learners. Yet, maybe, just maybe, your role is to facilitate, celebrate and reward moments of informal learning in the flow of work.

Imagine the mechanic who realised last time that if he did B instead of A, he would save the client three hours of labour on their bill; then, we must find a way to acknowledge that learning is done.

Imagine the childcare assistant who thought raising her voice with the naughty boy was right, only to find he shouted back. The childcare assistant asked a colleague who explained mirroring positive behaviour, and the next time, she spoke in a quiet voice with the boy, and the boy spoke quietly back. How can you reward the learning she undertook at this time?

Key Takeaways:

- Find a way to capture and reward informal learning.
- Make reflection on performance a core facet of your team's mindset.

Challenge #4

Improving mental health and wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing have been at the forefront of post-pandemic research. The stress of lockdown, the cost-of-living crisis, climate change, and global conflict mean many people are more fearful for the future. These concerns also mean challenges in the workplace and create increasing pressure on businesses to ensure they are looking after the wellbeing of their employees.

Where does the responsibility lie?

While conventional wisdom suggests that workforce improvement must be directly related to the company's KPIs, times change. We have gone from viewing employees as human resources to human capital, and now we are encouraged to see them as simply human. There is a growing awareness of the business benefits a human-centric culture facilitates, furthering the need for a work environment that nurtures and supports holistic development in the workplace. If this means helping people to shape the resilience, gratitude, calm, compassion, and empathy needed for the modern world, so it be it.

> "A workforce who feels cared-for and empowered to make a better life for themselves will be a more productive, loyal advocate of the organisation."

It is not to say that an organisation takes a parental role in an employee's life.

It is not that businesses are expected to change their primary mission to be caregivers to their teams.

It is an understanding that a workforce who feels cared-for and empowered to make a better life for themselves will be a more productive, loyal advocate of the organisation.

How does an organisation help employees manage mental health and wellbeing?

On a practical level, an organisation can offer advice about work/life balance, provide gym memberships, and use productivity tools that encourage boundaries between home-life and work-life. Companies can also introduce schemes that counter the adverse impacts of stress before burnout.

Yet, it is possible that learning and development provision can be more holistic and impact the organisation's performance in its primary mission. It is also possible to develop the Character Qualities in people that enable them to better self-manage their mental health and wellbeing alongside other aspects of their performance.

Within each person are innate Character Qualities that enable a person to be the best they can be. In some of us, these qualities are already present and actionable in daily life. For others these qualities lie dormant because life hasn't afforded them opportunities to explore, develop and action them.

Some of these qualities help us to self-determine our mental wellbeing. Resilience and gratitude are two essential characteristics of a mentally strong person. Persisting in spite of failure is a huge benefit in life and work. Seeing plenty where others see scarcity again builds a positive mental outlook.

Other qualities help too. Learning to be calm when calmness is required is helpful. Equally so is understanding the power of kindness, which often allows us to see the humanity and vulnerability of others at its most apparent.

Dialling up essential Character Qualities

The benefit of dialling up essential Character Qualities is that it is a proactive rather than reactive measure. You can choose to develop one of these qualities in times of challenge, and it can help you navigate your path. Entelechy Academy has designed a learning solution that facilitates and encourages this proactive evolution of character; we empower a person to equip themselves to

Key Takeaways:

- People who are more content and resilient are more productive.
- Focusing on Character is proactive and will reduce the need for reactive schemes.

Challenge #5

Measuring ROI and Learning Impact

It is reasonable to want to show that the learning solution you invested in had an impact that justified the cost. It is basic good sense to know you got value for money. If only it were simple to calculate the impact of learning and its consequences on an organisation. There would be little reason for this article, as we would be happy to lean into data such as learner engagement, course completion, and learner satisfaction surveys.

The complexity of causation

Impact, for most businesses, cannot be defined in such straightforward terms. Most managers want to see a causal connection between learning and company performance. Therefore, customer satisfaction surveys, sales data, and productivity numbers feel like a better measure. Yet, it isn't easy to draw a straight line between the learning solution and these outcomes because organisations are constantly introducing other strategies to improve performance. It is this complexity that means most organisations and learning solutions have yet to fully resolve ROI requirements. Here we explore some of the ways you might be able to draw a straight line between a solution and an organisational outcome; it all comes down to definitions and assumptions.

> “Metrics gathered from learning cannot focus on time on the system or the number of videos watched. Instead, you need to find a way of reporting the amount of challenging learning undertaken.”

Breaking down the problem

1. Begin with recognisably powerful learning methods.

It sounds like common sense; however, it is often overlooked when assessing the viability and efficacy of learning solutions. Yet, if the learning methods are based on years of credible research, then it is likely that the approach will be effective.

However, it is less effective if the learning is based on passively reading, listening, or watching materials followed by a series of multi-choice questions. Such knowledge acquisition has a limited impact on the application of the ideas, so little difference is made to the learner's abilities. In the modern world, a content bank poses a significant cost to businesses, both to design and deploy, as well as to keep evergreen. And when it comes to ROI, it has only a minor impact on performance.

A learning solution must encourage active learning strategies and require a critical mindset. It needs to support the learner in applying the ideas in context, evaluating the outcomes, and adapting the approach where necessary. Learners need a mindset confident enough to see failures as a moment to superpower themselves and the resilience to sustain this attitude when the evidence suggests they should give up.

2. Find a way to reward active, transformation learning.

All learning solutions include passive and administration elements. Learners usually find these parts the least inspiring, but also the most comfortable. There is little challenge in pressing play on a video and a sense of satisfaction in uploading made-up activity logs onto the LMS.

Therefore, the metrics gathered from learning cannot focus on time on the system or the number of videos watched. Instead, you need to find a way of reporting the amount of challenging learning undertaken, which you can assume has an impact.

How about offering an experience points system? When the learner opts for passive and administrational tasks, give them a low score. When the learner takes on active learning, where there are inherent challenges, offer them a higher score. The metrics reported will show the overall learning score per participant and allow organisations to see the breakdown of how the learner got to this total.

3. Use reflective assessments and reward even more for these.

Accountability in learning tends to raise the level of engagement. There is no need to sign up for endless qualifications to achieve this. You do not need to pay for formal learning qualifications when you can reward the learner for informal learning. To get the most out of your learning solution, an organisation needs to encourage learning every moment of every day.

If the learner undertakes an informal learning journey and then completes a reflective assessment, you can reward them for this effort with badging that becomes a metric of commitment to the learning process. If the learner is required to find third-party validation of their improvement, this also provides a representation of direct and noticeable impact.

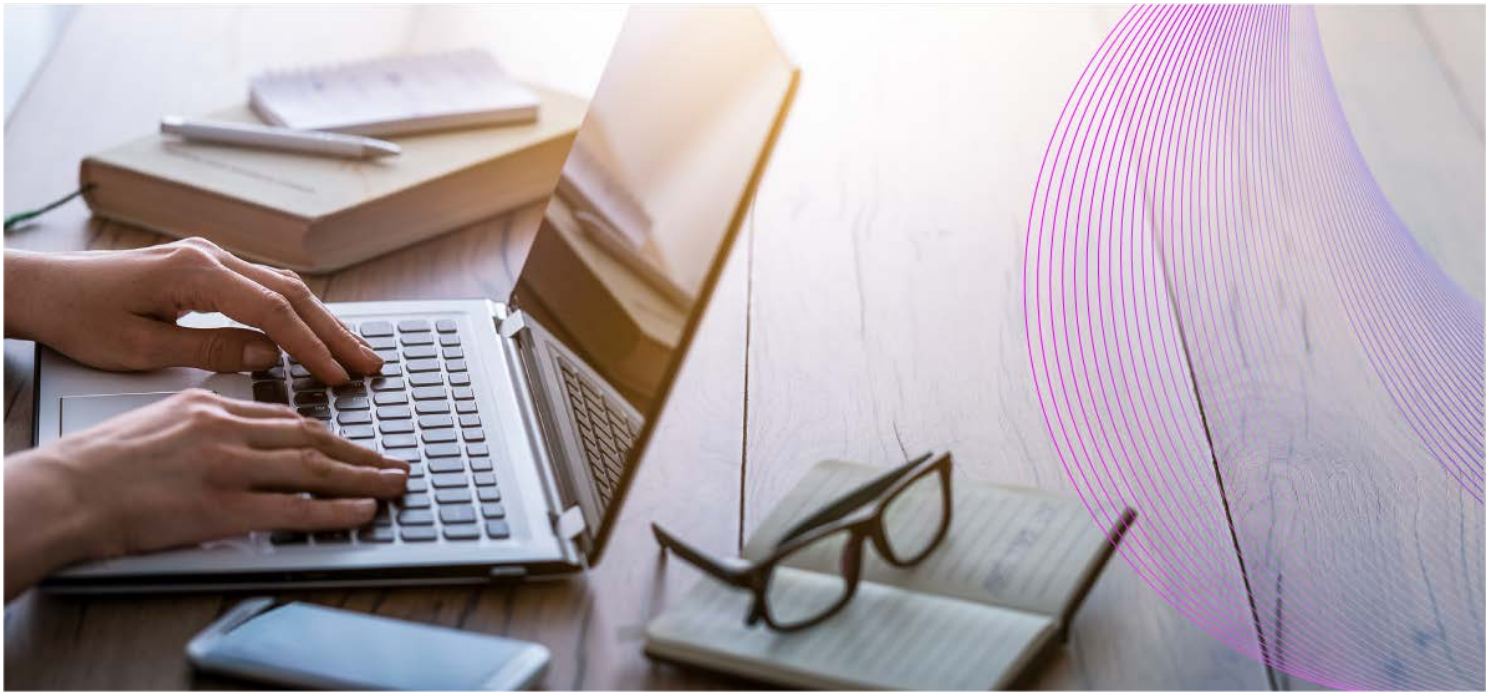
Conclusion

There are ways of better evidencing L&D ROI. Collating passive, active and reflective learning metrics as a measure of both user engagement and effectiveness of the learning completed provides oversight of whether the learning is more likely to have a meaningful impact.

Key Takeaways:

- A formal qualification does not equate to immediate impact for the business.
- The time spent learning does not mean as much as the quality of the learning.

Challenge #6



Leadership Development

Developing the next generation of leaders is a priority for most top organisations. Creating a succession plan is essential if continuity of excellence is possible. Therefore, developing a learning solution that prepares the talented to become the next leaders is an important output from an L&D department.

Fortunately, leadership courses are not rare. Thousands upon thousands of leadership courses are listed on Google. There is also a wealth of literature available through Forbes, HBR, and others, which allows keen employees to self-learn and prepare for the time when they get a promotion.

Yet, despite the choice available in this area, leadership development still appears in the top ten concerns of L&D professionals. Why? Well, the higher you go in an organisation, the less your technical abilities matter. As you ascend the leadership ladder, it is more and more critical that you have the exemplary character to make the most of the talent, processes, and structures in the organisation.

> “Developing the right qualities to become a leader is one of the founding principles of Entelechy Academy.”

Therefore, completing another course on delegation or reading an article on project management is not a guarantee of a successful leader. There is acknowledgement in the L&D sector that a solution is required, and the coaching and mentoring that might be effective is often cost-prohibitive.

Developing the right qualities to become a leader is one of the founding principles of Entelechy Academy. David C.M. Carter, Founder and CEO, is a renowned mentor to CEOs internationally and wrote a bestselling book, Breakthrough, exploring his approach. David's vision was to democratise this mentoring, offering the same high-quality learning throughout an organisation rather than only at the top-most levels.

What David found is that it is the person behind the leader that creates success. If a person is their best self, they can also bring the best out in others. If a leader learns to be kind, compassionate, empathetic, as well as visionary, strategic, and influential, then the art of leadership emerges.

Here lies the fundamental truth that has been missing from leadership training to date. It is not about the uploading of tools and techniques. Leadership training is about the development of the human being required to inspire others to follow them.

Key Takeaways:

- Being the person with the qualities to lead is more important than understanding the technical requirements of leadership.
- You need your leaders to be people of exemplary character.

Challenge #7

Getting Business Buy-In

Buying the best learning solution and getting that learning solution to work are two very different challenges. Our approach is to show you how our character-based solution works, so you experience why it is the best learning option for you and your teams. It's learning, but not as you know it.

> "We can provide impact metrics to show committed learning time that has been completed in the flow of work."

Answering the relevancy questions

Step one in deploying any learning solution is to answer the most common question: what's in it for me? This is true of the learners themselves and the people in the C suite, who might want to ensure any solution supports, not detracts from, productivity. It is commonly accepted by facilitators that you have to inspire people to learn, rather than impose learning upon them.

As a provider of a learning solution, we must help you answer these questions and be the person who inspires engagement. We go beyond, "Oh, I see the point," to "Oh, right, I want to do this."

Working out how to fit it in

The problem with learning is that it tends to be an add-on. We would all love it to be at the centre of our organisations, manifested in a learning culture, but realistically it is something that often gets in the way. This is caused by a reliance on formal learning opportunities, gathering people in a central location and delivering an experience. The connection between learning and daily work activity is not always explicit, which is what makes our proposition unique. Central to our proposition is learning, both in the flow of life and work.

Our learning solution is designed to be done on the commute to work or in the line for the coffee shop. It is the 5 minutes before your next meeting or the 15 minutes during lunch when you have some time to pass. Our tagline reads “daily acts of evolution” because this informal learning solution happens a little every day.

Our learning solution also builds a conscious learning mindset, so every moment is a learning moment. Our learners do more than evolve their character; they also develop the skillset of lifelong learners. Much of the learning is done in the execution of action plans, which are the work the learner needs to complete.

Proving the value

The key phrase for business buy-in is ‘evidence of impact’. Does the learner have a positive effect on the business and its employees? Most learning solutions provide metrics to help you curate reports and feedback on engagement and completion rates. You may also be able to evidence how a specific learning input resulted in a particular business outcome. However, constantly justifying the expense of L&D will be an ongoing challenge, as there are always many other demands on company expenditure.

While we cannot make the finance department more relaxed with the purse strings, we can provide impact metrics to show committed learning time that has been completed in the flow of work. We can also offer all of this for an incredibly low per-learner subscription.

Our value goes beyond a business case or a profit and loss chart. Our learning solution gives the message to your talent that you value them enough to want to develop them as people, as individuals. When you consider the cost of churn, it might be that our value is proven before you look at our other impact data.

Conclusion

With our sales support, consultancy, and broader support materials, we aim to offer a package that sets us apart in helping you get crucial business buy-in. It is a matter of pride for us to say our product has made a difference.

Key Takeaways:

- Make everything the business does all about learning.
- Demonstrate impactful learning to loosen the purse-strings.

Challenge #8

Supporting diversity and inclusion

When you delve into the meaning of diversity and inclusion, it always comes back to the uniqueness of the individual. There is an explicit requirement to understand the needs, values, and beliefs of everyone within your organisation and to allow these human beings to become their best self.

Supporting diversity and inclusion can be seen as a set of behaviours. On this level, it is easy. We follow the rules of decency, and the people we are responsible for, feel valued. We ensure our digital product comes with double A accessibility, and we know we include all learners.

Yet, the personalisation of learning, which acknowledges the full diversity of the people we work with, is much more complex. Here we explore how Entelechy begins with the human being and celebrates their uniqueness.

What does it mean to develop a human being?

Learning and development professionals rightly focus on the impact of the initiatives and solutions delivered. Success hinges on whether the person can do something better than before. Diversity and inclusion are challenging on this level of “doing”, as people become a product and the focus is on capabilities.

What if, instead, we view our employees as human beings? Each person in an organisation has a unique combination of qualities. If these qualities become the focus of learning and development, the idea of difference becomes a matter of common sense – of course, we are all different.

> "To properly deliver on diversity and inclusion, we must celebrate differences and see it as common sense that a human being is unique."

It doesn't matter what these differences are; it is accepted that this uniqueness is what makes people effective in many different ways.

Instead of looking at people and seeing gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, etc., we should look at people and see someone who is confident, expressive, visionary, compassionate, and more.

From theory to practice

All this sounds wonderful, as issues of diversity and inclusion are naturally encompassed when celebrating that our difference is at the core of being human. In practice, this sounds unrealistic and probably open to challenge by those ensuring compliance within an organisation.

Let's imagine a scenario where you are presented with ten people and must select one for an important project. You are given their CVs, and using best practice, you do not look at the identity markers. Instead, you contact people who have worked with these individuals before and ask what they are like. You want to know about their character. You want to know if this person will deliver for you.

Why should learning and development be any different to this?

A person in your organisation wants to be the go-to option for your project. Help them develop the character that you need. At no point will the demographic details of this person need to come into play or their presumed capabilities. Instead, you only know they desire to have the character to deliver for you.

Reframing our perspective

It is challenging to think that professional development can move away from the idea of capabilities. Yet, the truth is, to properly deliver on diversity and inclusion, we must celebrate differences and see it as common sense that a human being is unique. Then, if you want these human beings to do their best for you, you need to help them develop the character that would make them the stand-out choice for your next project. When you reframe training from doing to being, your learning and development cannot be fairer.

Key Takeaways:

- If you work with the individual on a human level, diversity becomes an irrelevant conversation.
- Providing an equitable opportunity to develop is a fundamental of equality.

Challenge #9

Digital Transformation

Digital transformation profoundly impacts Learning and Development, as the training modality has evolved from traditional classroom experiences to one facilitated through the internet. While the promise of greater convenience and efficiency of delivering through a Learning Management System felt like a step forward, the truth was far from satisfactory.

Completion rates via digital media were low, and the causal link between engagement with the training and impact on the business was challenging to establish. The reality of digital learning has yet to live up to its potential.

Here we explore some flawed assumptions about digital learning and how we have addressed these in our solution.

> “Believing that the only valid learning is course-based, divided into modules, and done on a zoom call or at your desk, is to miss opportunities for genuine learning.”

Content consumption is not learning

It is tempting to believe that offering a series of articles and videos is the provision of learning. Such acquisition of knowledge has its place when ensuring your workforce is compliant.

Yet, learning through content is far from adequate when it comes to talent development and the evolution of more skilled employees. There is a significant gap between knowledge, the application of this knowledge, and the evaluation and creativity of higher-order thinking.

Entelechy doesn't provide content. We are a digital solution without articles and videos on our Character Qualities. Instead, we take responsibility for the evolution of these higher-order thinking skills, which means the whole world of content is available to your team.

While we understand there is a place for exploring the ideas of others, we see this as only the start of the digital journey undertaken by our learners. Content is always going out of date and is costly to keep evergreen; yet, the internet fills up with it every day without cost. Learning how to responsibly and effectively access this material is far more potent than renewing your LMS's content.

Leaning into formal learning away from the workplace

The use of digital resources has also largely followed the model of what we believe learning should be. The physical classroom is replaced by the digital space, which is seen as transformational. It isn't. Believing that the only valid learning is course-based, divided into modules, and done on a zoom call or at your desk, is to miss opportunities for genuine learning.

The genuine transformation that digital learning offers is that it can be with you as you work. It is not something you have to do when you are away from your daily activities. If you use an app such as the one offered by Entelechy, learning is available wherever you have your mobile phone.

In short, we believe that learning is most effective when it is a part of everyday life. It is the small informal moments of reflection or conscious action that can change behaviour in the workplace. Our app offers a structure that guides the learner towards the mindset that makes this possible.

Testing what has been taught, not learned

LMSs rely heavily on multi-choice questions or self-reported completion of training. It is usual for a certificate of completion to be automatically completed on the passing of this test, and there is an assumption that the learning has been done.
It isn't very accurate to believe that testing what has been taught proves that something has been learnt. There is a significant gap in effectiveness between being prepared, and learning something.

Entelechy has created a system of assessment that asks the learner to reflect on the takeaways for the future application of the learning. We also ask that there is some form of third-party validation of the impact of learning in the workplace. We additionally offer accountability and close the feedback loop by asking the learner to submit a reflection on the learning journey. The learner is asked to demonstrate understanding of how they can continue improving even more.

We use digital technology to connect humans and ensure that learning is a shared experience. There are so many ways we can use this modality imaginatively, and receiving validation from an external source is just one way.

Conclusion

When Entelechy sees the word transformation, we see it as an opportunity to learn differently. Merely taking the learning of old and putting it on the internet is not an imaginative use of technology. We offer an app that guides the learner to learn a little every day, and which encourages experimentation with, and application of, learning outside of the app itself.

Key Takeaways:

- The technology doesn’t do the learning, the learner does.
- Technology brings imaginative approaches to learning but should not be mixed up with the learning itself.

Challenge #10

Balancing the Learning Experience: Blending Modalities in this Post-Pandemic World

Let's face it; we are all sick of Zoom, Teams, and Google Meet. We all adapted spectacularly to the pandemic and evolved a way of working and learning online that has changed how we live our lives. Yet, it has also left us fatigued by time in front of a screen. So, when considering what learning solution to present to our colleagues, we think twice about offering an online experience. People crave contact with people, and learning is a social activity.

Therefore, the challenge for learning and development professionals becomes more complex. There is an understanding that online is more convenient and cheaper. However, there is an acceptance that other modalities are more powerful and offer a more significant impact.
Here we explore whether a potential answer can come from acknowledging the power of informal learning. What if everything was learning, and employees didn't even have to stop their work.

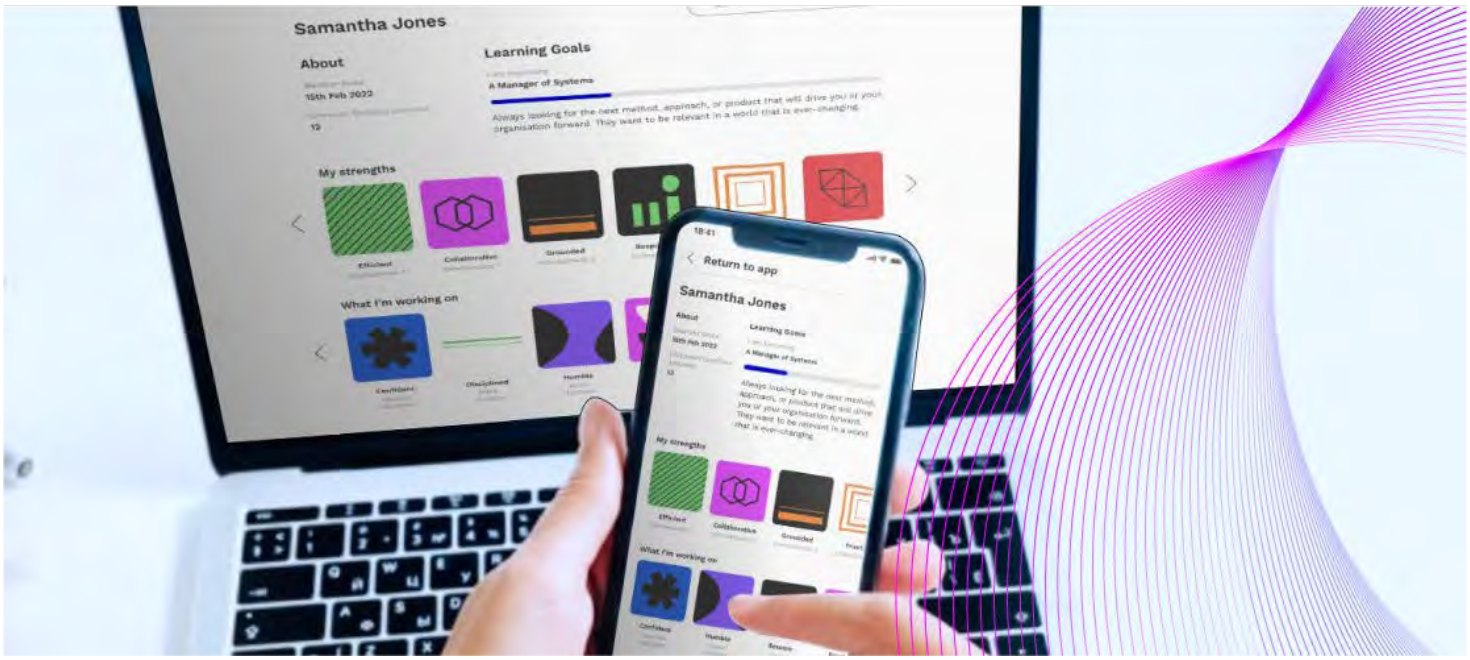
Informality as the balance of learning

When we set everything up as a formal learning activity, it becomes an event. We expect our participants to shift their mindset into learning mode and soak up the wonderful lessons delivered. More likely, the learner struggles to maintain concentration through the learning, is glad when it is over and wants only to attain the certificate of attendance.

Formal learning and development activity allow you to tick a box and say you have delivered the stated training, and then the emphasis is on the employee to action this. It is also easy to mix up

your offer here by sometimes getting people into a room together and requiring them to access a tech solution via your LMS.

However, balance in learning truly comes when the learner chooses to shift between a moment of formal learning and carrying this with them informally as they live or work. Ideally, we need the learner to identify themselves when learning is required, undertake the work to improve knowledge, set about putting an experiment together to apply this in practice, and have the reflective mindset to consider if this is working.



The Entelechy Experience

When designing our learning solution, we chose technology as our modality. We have an app, and we have a web platform. We created a self-directed solution, where the learner travels through the steps of our learning journey and pops out the other end a better person than they were before.

Yet, we were brave when creating this app. Typically, an app aims to lock the learner in. Everything they need for their experience is within the confines of the screen — the ultimate imbalance. Humans don't learn this way.

So, we have created a formal journey and we show the learner how to go away and see how it works out for themselves. We encourage five or ten minutes on the app at a time, and we ask the learner to carry the ideas of the app around with them during their day. So, rather than commit to educating learners, we have committed to helping the learner to develop themselves.

Our solution balances the tech with the in-real-life experience, because we do strange things such as telling the learner to speak to someone who knows more about something than them. We suggest they put together an action plan, then put the phone down and put the plan into action. We even have plans to extend the Entelechy experience to events where people meet other people who have a common desire to make the most of their humanity.

In short

When learning isn't a wholly formal activity, and you commit to nurturing the evolution of a learning mindset, the issue of balance becomes irrelevant. Learning is not categorised as a separate activity but as part of everything our employees do.

Key Takeaways:

Promoting ongoing informal learning means everything is a learning experience.

Learning done in real-life will always feel more relevant.

Conclusion: Challenges Solved

Entelechy Academy works to disrupt what has gone before to deliver what is needed now.

Our learners focus on their Character, which is necessary for all learning to be effective. As they focus on their Character, they learn how to develop themselves personally and professionally, creating the mindset of a lifelong learner.

We do not replace formal learning, which still has its place in delivering technical and knowledge-focused skill development. We enhance the learning done in traditional settings by encouraging the learner to be the person who is looking to evolve a little every day.

ing some intractable problems that feel unsolvable. We allow for learning in the flow of work, the flexibility to learn at home and work, support everyone as individuals, and develop the traits needed to be excellent leaders.

If you are interested in a conversation about character-based professional development, email us at hello@entelechy.academy.