

Eight Rules For The Learning Team

Say you want to train someone to run in a marathon, or maybe to swim in an Olympic Games. The task for you as a trainer or coach is always a tall order. Of course, this load can be lessened by importing ready-made talent, and many a sports team has done exactly that. But even in this case, the differentiating factor lies in the ability of an effective coach or trainer.

For experienced learning and development professionals, this is the ability to create pathways for success.

The learning and development practitioner who understands the strengths and weaknesses of talent, designs a robust curriculum, carries out the training diligently, and motivates well beyond the self, is the training leader who can deliver the most impact.

Below are eight traits that learning and development professionals should possess in order to do their jobs, not just well, but with excellence.



- Make it measurable

You can't be certain how successful you are until you are able to quantify your impact. Make sure there is a clear, measurable goal that is linked to success. Whether it is for behaviour change or a specific result, it must be clearly stated from the outset.

Some ratings can be considered as well. These offer meaningful and realistic expectations as to how much change or progress has been made, and if any

adjustment is needed. Having said that, goals can be inspirational as much as they are measurable. It all depends on how they are being translated.

- Have a growth mindset

A growth mindset is the ability to see beyond what is usual. For a learning and development professional, it means enabling others to think likewise, to help people go beyond and challenge the limit. This either breaks or disrupts the usual cycle that may otherwise hinder growth.

For example, flipped classroom, activity-based learning, and self-discovery coaching become increasingly important for sustained performance. Moving toward a growth mindset culture requires intelligent questions and a "strive" mindset culture.

- Check the unconscious bias

Many of us are unaware of how we look at a person or judge a situation. By being conscious of the unconscious bias we have, we mitigate the risk of misjudging the potential of talent. Do not rely on just one profiling tool or just your personal experience to gauge someone. They may not be parallel with potential.

- Leverage on emotional intelligence

In all aspects, emotional intelligence is the norm. It doesn't change through time, work or place. It only matters when you know how to apply it effectively in varied situations. It is not just about empathising with the feelings of others – it is also about being honest about your own weaknesses and not being afraid to share them with others.



Being vulnerable at times is a great way to build trust. You are more authentic, relatable, and credible. This will also empower others to try harder and work toward success, knowing that failures and weaknesses at times can set us back.

- Bring energy and enthusiasm

Infectiousness is the key. Both energy and enthusiasm are equally important to a learning and development professional. It is not about age, but rather the manner and the way things are done that can be changed with your energy – and with persistence. It also reflects a believable model for others to follow.

- Have a great support network

Create an environment where you can tap on the support of others easily, whether it is with your peers, colleagues, or people outside of work. Attend forums that may not necessarily pertain to learning and development. This will help you develop an ability to link concepts and ideas beyond existing frameworks, which may be important for future successes.

At the same time, getting yourself out of the comfort zone in an area that you are not familiar with always produces a different level of thinking which can make the difference between success and failure. As Albert Einstein said, “No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it”.



- Ensure good facilitation and coaching skills

I can't stress enough that a great learning and development professional should have these two key skills. Coaching ability is important for both the groups and individuals you work with almost every day. It enables the best to be able to coach someone without having them even feeling that they are being coached.

Facilitation skills can be used in a variety of situations, including in meetings, training, and engagement activities. As we mature, things can get a lot more serious, desk-bound, and goal-oriented. Facilitation skills bring out the best in others using various techniques and approaches, much like coaching, which is on a more personal basis.

- Automate routine tasks

Do not sweat the small stuff, but still remain detail-oriented. Use tools to your advantage: to save time, cut costs, and automate routine tasks. For example, use macros on Excel to automate tasks such as attendance tracking, and other bigger tools like Power BI to visualise data into useful insights. They are important for tracking progress and provide you the clarity to introduce appropriate learning interventions where the gaps are.

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