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Good versus Evil - Is There a Winner in Training versus Learning

Rebecca Arsham
WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff

Learning Objectives

- Learn why training is denied and learning is approved
- Learn how to create a successful company-based learning strategy
- In the paradigm of employer versus employee, discover who is responsible for the ownership of training and learning
- Learn how an internal user group or community of practice can promote training and learning

Description

Are you still using the same workflow processes and software techniques from 5 or even 10 years ago? We work in a fast-paced technical world where the use of advanced software techniques and processes can be the difference between winning and losing a project. What is your company doing to stay current with technology beyond purchasing the software? Do you have a training/learning strategy in place? And if so, is it embraced by the department leads, project managers, and end users, and, most importantly, is it endorsed by upper management? In this session we will discuss learning trends and how you can develop a training/learning strategy that will reap benefits and garner the seal of approval from both management and staff. We will discuss how internal user groups and communities of practice can play important roles in communicating and deploying a training/learning program. Examples will be from a multi-office company with global office locations.

Your AU Expert

Rebecca Arsham is the corporate CADD training manager for WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff, one of the world's leading architectural, engineering, and construction management organizations. As the corporate CADD training manager, she is responsible for the development of the corporate-wide CADD training program for the 11,000 global employees that use Autodesk software products. Rebecca also has extensive experience in the development and integration of the "community of practice" approach to promote staff engagement, specifically in regards to knowledge sharing, adoption of new technologies, and career development. You can email Rebecca at Arsham@pbworld.com

In regards to training versus learning, learn why training is denied and learning is approved

Perception! There are a lot of factors in play, at least within my organization. For the most part I would classify our company as a 'Training Culture', it has been there since I started in 1995 and I am sure long before then. As you research the subject you will see there is a place for the traditional training model. But with the traditional training culture comes the perception of 'Too Expense' 'Negative impact to projects'. The term learning doesn't seem to have the bad rap that training has. Many companies are moving to a 'Learning Culture', mine included.

I think there is a place for both. In my role as the CADD Training Manger I have started to use both terms together in my communications. '...the training and learning resources available to your staff are...'

Fortunately - There is a paradigm shift happening, when we started our focused CADD Training program in 2005 we knew it was important to provide a consistent way to offer training events to our staff for low to no perceived cost. We threw around the term 'blended' learning at that time, but had trouble defining and assembling a program that gave us everything. In fact looking at our first attempt at a 'blended offering' is laughable now. Luckily staff demographics and technology have played a part in fine tuning our offering over the years. The good news for you is that the current options are huge and with a bit of work you can put together a learning strategy to match your company and staff needs and budget.

What is most important for you as you start to put together a learning strategy document that will eventually be presented to management for support and funding is to understand the company perceptions of training/learning. Who believes what, what is your end goal and how are you going to educate people on the benefits of establishing a plan.

A few terms that you need to understand and should be very intentional when using the terms. Always present a consist message. Here are my word definitions

Training

- Training is an "event"
- Training is something that is done to a person
- Sending staff, project teams to an organized, scheduled session
- Training is something they receive
- Some managers view training events as boondoggles

Learning

- Individuals generally set out to learn
- When people want to learn they are fully engaged
- Learning is what an individual does
- Often times it is 'Just in time'

Educate

- This is what you will do through your communications



These definitions may seem to be like minor points with little differences, but I have found that by being completely consistent in the use of these words we are educating our management and staff and are eliminating some of the initial confusion out of the equation.

Training Culture	Learning Culture
Learning is...	Learning is...
Instructor-Centered	Learner-Centered
Event Based	Continuous
Centralized	DeCentralized
Siloed	Shared
All About Delivery	All About Results

Individuals generally set out to learn something while training is something that is done to a person.

Learning is what an individual does; training is something they receive

Historically engineering firms engage in training staff - the paradigm shift is that everyone is learning ALL THE TIME!

As I mentioned before – I think there is a place for both training and learning.

We still offer Instructor led (centered) events – particularly for staff learning a new software application. However, having learner-centered content like eLearning is important. Offering both options allows staff to pick the style that best matches their learning style.

While events are good – having learning resources available 24/7 is critical to keeping production on projects moving forward.

Learn how to create a successful company-based learning strategy

What are your Company's directives on employee development?



For example....Our goal is to develop a scalable learning environment that enables employees to learn anytime and anywhere with a focus on management strategies that provide clear avenues for growth.

Use your firms Vision and Mission statement

Our goal is to encourage employee development through mentoring and career development

Refer to these statements in your learning strategy proposal, they can often be found in a company's Vision and Mission Statements.

For example I went to a few company websites...

HMM - We embrace change and continuous improvement. We seek sustainable outcomes for our stakeholders and the environment. We actively support the development of our staff and our professions.

Skanska – ‘...employees should always be learning new techniques and skills. A Skanska career means you are in a perpetual forward motion

HMC Architects - Professional development - Whether you're fresh out of architecture school or a seasoned pro, we provide and encourage opportunities for you to grow and prosper.

Compose your opening statement to include the Vision and Mission text.... In support of the company's dedication to developing a scalable learning environment that enables employees to learn anytime and anywhere we are pleased to submit our CADD Learning Strategy for consideration.

Why do you need to create a CADD Training and Learning strategy if there is already a directive in the Vision and Mission Statement or a HR statement?

We found that while the company was committed to training and learning, HR (which is where training and learning is housed) had no idea how to manage, assemble resources, promote and advertise our complete CADD Training Program. They are experts on LMS tools and can certainly be a resource and partner to you, but when faced with a question on whether to have staff start with AutoCAD, MicroStation, Civil 3d or another product they do not have the bandwidth to keep up to date. Which is why in addition to a funded a CADD training and learning program our strategy includes the funded position of CADD Training Manager.

This is very similar to the conversation you may have had about software installation... IT installs all software – why does your company need a CADD Manager? In part because while IT can install the software they do not often have the bandwidth to understand the customization needed after installation and before an employee can productively use a product. There are rsc files, ctb files, folder structures, families, the list goes on...

Know the Facts and include them in your justification

In an article in 2012, Forbes Magazine reported organizations that implemented formalized learning systems versus training classes outperformed the competition by 3:1. These companies provided coaching, on-demand training and performance support tools which allowed employees to learn and apply content on the job. This type of program is much more successful than simply training people on a curriculum. While training classes may have a place in organizations, high-impact learning practices are



proving to be more effective to the organization's bottom line and achieving mission. SOURCE: <http://www.advancedbusinesslearning.com/the-difference-between-training-and-learning/>

What Training and Learning Resources do you want to include in your strategy?

Live online and onsite formal training	Internal Resources
Autodesk Authorized Training Center	Lunch and Learns
AAI or ACI Instructors	Autodesk Resources
CEU/PDH credits available	Webinars
Completion Certificates	EP Coffee Corner
eLearning component	What's New Presentation
eLearning Vendors	User Groups and Communities
AU Online	Internal and external
Knowledgebase	Recorded Videos
YouTube	User Transcripts
Again – do your research	

Components of the Learning Strategy

Executive Summary

Just what the title says

Briefly outline the purpose of the document

Background and Chronology

Tell your Story!

What was done in the past?

Was there upper management support?

Was this a local, regional, global program?

What were the pro/cons to the existing/past approach?

Autodesk Overview (we also have a Bentley Overview section)

Describe the learning resources that you utilize now and would like to use in the future

Onsite Training Option:

Describe your ideal scenario for onsite training

What do you want to use for onsite training events?

Do you have an existing relationship with an ATC or reseller?

Can you negotiate a package deal with ATC or reseller?



Online Virtual Classroom Option:

Describe your ideal scenario for live online training

Is this offered by the same company as the onsite

List the benefits of this format over onsite

eLearning Option:

Describe your requirements for including an eLearning vendor

What does an eLearning tool need to have to meet your needs?

Videos/hands on exercises/eBook/Live Support/in product tools/LMS/user transcripts/workflow resources/Certification Prep?

Include results from an eLearning vendor comparison, or propose conducting a comparison

User Certification Preparation:

Is Certification a goal for you company?

If so, what is your plan to prepare staff?

What type of budget will be needed to certify staff?

Does the ATC you are aligned with offer Autodesk Certification exams?

Can the cost of Certification be rolled into the cost of live courses or be a part of the offering from an eLearning vendor?

Recommended Moving Forward

Summary of what you included

Clear statement of what you want moving forward

Cost Budget

References

Case Studies

In the paradigm of employer versus employee, discover who is responsible for the ownership of training and learning

Both! As the corporate landscape changes from a training culture to a Learning Culture, employees must realize the responsibility for professional development is their own, and not that of the company.

Employers need to Champion/Fund/provide the infrastructure

Gone are the days when the company will exclusively send a group of individuals away to a training class or sequester a group in the conference room for a week to attend a “formal” training class. Instead, companies are providing resources such as Communities of Practice, Online Training Subscriptions, You



Tube, etc to allow a person to learn what they need when they need to learn it, commonly known as “just in time” learning.

With information at our fingertips for everything we need to know it should be the goal of your Learning Strategy to provide all the components, in an organized way. This will make tracking easier... the corporate need to report of ROI.

When Employees take ownership of learning they become empowered.

When you develop a Learning Strategy you are guiding the learning process and resources to match company goals.

Paradigm Shift - So when we refer to a paradigm shift it means we want to identify the current condition in this case misconception, educate staff/management on the new norm; shift the thought process and take action to allow for the new way of learning. This is the creation of your Learning Strategy.

You are dealing with a paradigm shift with the move from Training vs Learning, but also with Employer responsible for employee development versus the new norm where employees seek out learning and take ownership.

Learn how an internal user group or community of practice can promote training and learning

Engineers, designers and drafting staff have always participated in knowledge sharing.

Early work environment for most Generation X (1960s to early 1980s) included the drafting room which was our first real community of practice, older staff training/mentoring younger staff.

Office environment for a Generation Y (1977 to 2004) employees at the beginning their professionally career often included cubicles - Likely networked within the single office - eventually on a wide area network. Formal training in classroom environment, budget and management approval was required and at time not guaranteed.

And now... Generation Z (1995 to 2014) may start their career in an office environment likely still physically sit in cubicles but their workstations are portal stations to the world. Computing devices are becoming more and more mobile and even the highly technical software we use can be used on these mobile.

Now what? We have talked a lot about your Learning Strategy and its benefit to employees and to corporations. We have also addressed the paradigm shift from offering training events to embracing continuous learning in a corporate environment.

So fast forward to the point where you have a blend of training, learning and resources compiled and approved – How do you get your message out?

Get your message out!

Develop a communication plan. Have a schedule for everything. Have a schedule for everything - email blasts, webinars, Newsletters, podcasts. Be realistic in your scheduling of events. For instance it is better to offer a bimonthly webinar sessions then to cancel half the scheduled events because you or



the presenter are too busy or unprepared. SAY WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO – AND DO WHAT YOU SAY YOU ARE GOING TO DO. Be realistic with schedule

Research communication implementation plans. Think globally – Outlook can help. Research communication implementation plans, there are optimal times to send informational emails out – consider the middle of the day in the middle of the week for your email blast versus Friday at 5pm

Audience Driven Videos

Create messaging at different zoom levels; meaning the management message can be short and concise written to address managements concerns about schedule and budget, highlight the positive.

The learner message can contain specifics about the learning resources along with URLs to valuable content.

Sample Presentation for Management

Introduction/Agenda

Growing With Company

What's in It for You

Outline Blend of Training and Learning Resources

List How Company Can Take Advantage of Learning Resources

Goals for Learning from Management View

Measuring the ROI

Recognition Program

Sample Presentation for Employee

Introduction/Agenda

Growing With Company through Continuous Learning

Why You Should Care About Training (WIIFM)

Learning Content Available to Employees

How to Access Learning Content

Streamline Learning

Sharing Your Achievement

Conclusion

Understanding the differences between Training Cultures and Learning Cultures and what currently exists in your company is your starting point. You can then start to frame the discussions to make changes and improvements to the way staff receive training and how they can access learning resources. I have provided an outline that you can use to start creating your learning strategy document and we have discussed how implementing the learning strategy can be a win for the company, project managers and employees.

