

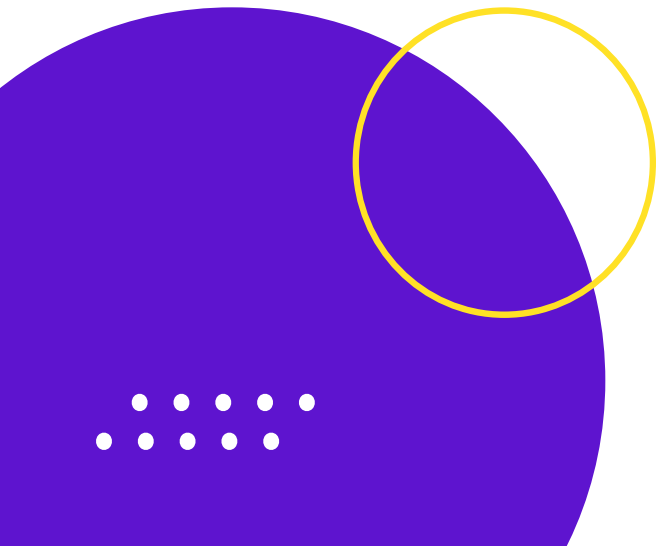
Upskilling & Reskilling Your Remote Workforce



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Executive Summary

The evolution of technology over the past couple of years has pushed organizations to adapt to a completely new working environment. The corporate world is steadily adopting the digital-first approach and this altered working environment requires new and updated skills. For example, automation has replaced jobs, manual work has decreased, and remote work has increased significantly.

Initially, companies feared that the pressure of this new work setup would be too great to handle. But over time, both the employers and employees became comfortable with the digital and remote work environment. The COVID pandemic made adopting remote work essential for companies. And today, we are on the brink of what we can rightfully call “the global work revolution.” Organizations are discovering that this new way of working could be a wonderful option for the long term.

Today, organizations, both big and small, are discovering the benefits of the remote work environment. Organizations are reimagining their work culture and trying to blend remote work into the traditional workday. But this brings another unique challenge to the table- how can companies prepare their remote workforce to achieve their goals and be successful while working away from the office?

That is where upskilling and reskilling come into the picture. By providing effective training opportunities to their employees, companies can improve their present condition while strengthening their future position.

The new world of work is about skills, not necessarily degrees.

– JPMorgan Chase & Co¹

Organizations can provide remarkable growth opportunities for remote employees by using eLearning to improve retention, increase their skill set, and create a positive experience. This paper explores the importance of upskilling and reskilling employees and how eLearning helps organizations empower their remote workforce with the necessary skills and expertise.



¹ JPMorgan Chase & Co. (2019, March 18). <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/news-stories/jpmorgan-chase-global-investment-in-the-future-of-work>

What is the Meaning of Upskilling & Reskilling Your Employees?



What is the Meaning of Upskilling & Reskilling Your Employees?

As per the 2018 World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report², almost 75 million jobs are expected to be displaced by 2022 due to technological developments, an increase in automation, and other similar factors. However, the same technological advances and new ways of working could also create 133 million new job roles that would enable employees to work together with machines and algorithms.

Thus, providing new skills to employees and polishing their existing ones is vital for every organization. Additionally, by fostering a culture of continuous learning in the workplace, employers can demonstrate that they care about their employees as individuals and make efforts to fulfill their development needs.

Currently, most organizations are looking to adopt a partial or complete remote work culture. Hence, it becomes vital for employers to prepare their remote workforce to excel in the changing corporate environment.

While upskilling and reskilling might sound like two similar terms, they are very different inherently. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, 'Upskilling is the process of learning new skills or of teaching workers new skills.' On the other hand, 'reskilling is the process of learning new skills so you can do a different job, or of training people to do a different job.'

51% of L&D experts plan to launch upskilling programs in their companies while 43% of them are looking forward to introducing reskilling programs.³

From the above-mentioned definitions, we can infer that upskilling refers to the act of teaching new and advanced skills to your workforce. It also focuses on improving the existing skill set of employees and adding to their knowledge and capabilities. It enables organizations to polish their talents and prepare them to take on senior roles with greater responsibilities.

On the other hand, when you decide to reskill your workforce, you are essentially preparing them to take on new job roles within the same organization. It is necessary when you want your employees to adapt to a new role or fill a different job position.



² World Economic Forum (2018, September 17). The Future of Jobs Report 2018.

<https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2018>

³ LinkedIn Learning. (n.d.). 2020 Workplace Learning Report.

<https://learning.linkedin.com/resources/workplace-learning-report-2020>



Benefits of Upskilling & Reskilling Your Workforce



Benefits of Upskilling & Reskilling Your Workforce

Both learning initiatives help employees to get better growth opportunities and take their careers to new heights. They also help companies to make the most of their employees' talent, improve workplace culture, and increase employee retention.

In the current tech-friendly era, it is vital to have a competent workforce that is proficient in handling advanced technology and taking care of complex tasks. As per the World Economic Forum, at least 54% of employees will need upskilling and reskilling by 2022.

Some of the most significant benefits of upskilling and reskilling your workforce are listed below:

Help Combat the Digital Divide

Technology is evolving at a rapid pace today and it's forcing twenty-first-century organizations to constantly evolve too. Lack of proper training often creates a digital divide that is hard to overcome later. Most major organizations understand this fact. That is why they are investing a significant amount of money to enhance the skills of their employees.

For example, [JPMorgan Chase](#) has made a global investment of \$350 million to prepare its workforce for the future and meet the increasing demand for skilled workers. Another example is [Amazon](#), which invested \$700 million to provide skill development programs to 100,000 U.S. employees.

We are living in the digital age where technology impacts all aspects of how organizations carry out their tasks. So, companies need to ensure that their employees are equipped with advanced tools and techniques to can carry out their jobs more efficiently and effectively.

Increase Employee Retention

Retaining employees is one of the biggest challenges that almost every company is facing. Today, employees are no longer afraid of moving away from jobs that don't add value to their personal goals and objectives.

A report from TalentLMS presented an interesting fact. According to it, over the last year, 42% of companies have ramped up their upskilling and reskilling efforts. Moreover, 74% of employees who didn't get ample skill development opportunities said they wanted to switch their companies.

LinkedIn Learning's 2021 Workplace Learning Report revealed some interesting statistics.

The Key to Gen Z's Heart is Career Growth.
% of learners globally who agreed with the statements below.

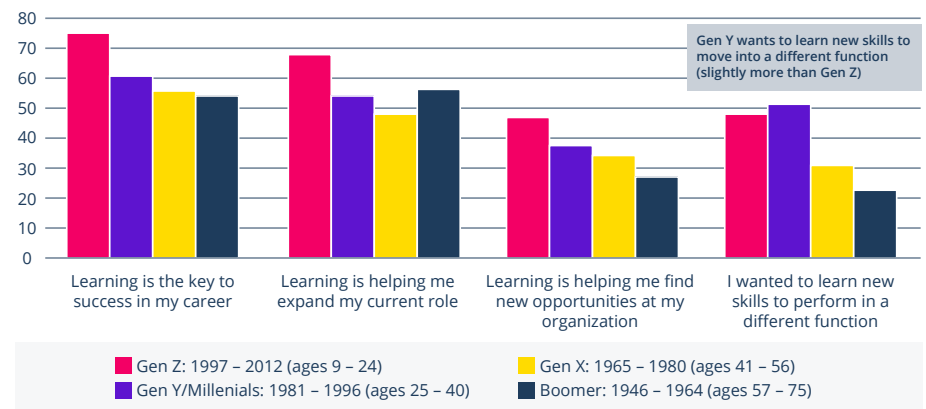


Image Data Source

This proves that modern-day employees are aware of their development needs and want their employers to take care of them. They are also ready to change companies if their current employer fails to provide them with sufficient skill development opportunities.

When organizations invest in high-quality training programs, it reinforces employees' loyalty. They believe that their employers care about their career growth needs. So, they tend to stay at the organization for longer and work harder than before. This not only lowers the turnover cost of the company but also fuels transformation and improves workplace culture.

Improve Your Reputation

Employees that are up to date with the latest industry trends and insights are naturally better at their jobs. They are more confident and can achieve goals faster. They are also more proactive and can identify solutions before problems escalate.

Moreover, when a company has competent staff and refined culture, it becomes more attractive to professionals in other organizations. This improves a company's reputation in the market, making it much easier for them to retain and attract new talent.

Enhance Soft Skills

As technology continues to affect how we work, it is essential to focus on building employees' soft skills. As businesses become more reliant on automation and smart algorithms, abilities like communication, resilience, networking, and critical thinking can suffer if those skills are not nurtured.

With the growing demand for remote work and reliance on computers, the chances of employees losing their soft skills increases. Leading organizations are concerned about ensuring that their employees don't lose skills like confidence, teamwork, and effective communication while working remotely.

As per LinkedIn's 2020 Workplace Learning Report, employers give the highest priority to the following soft skills:

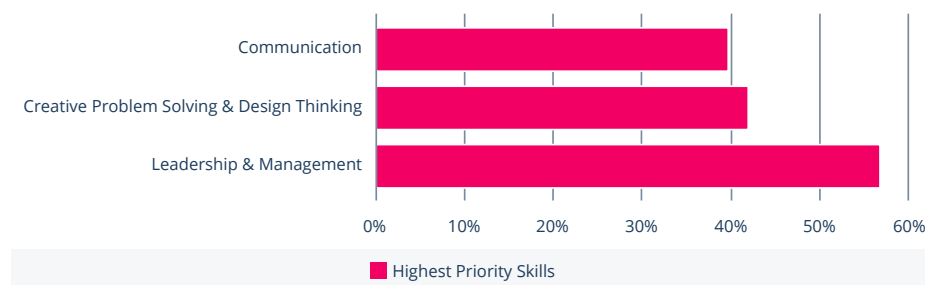


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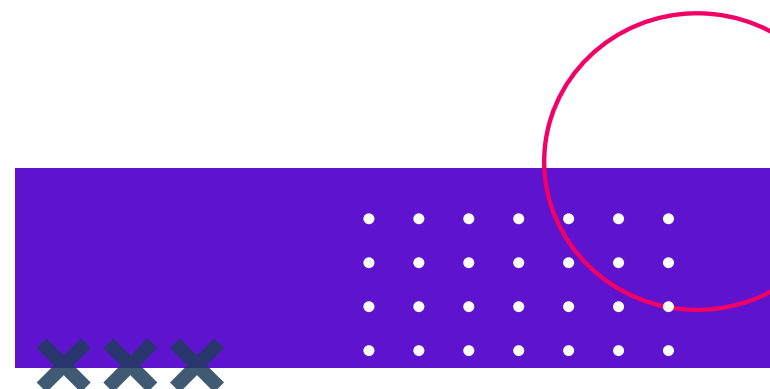
⁴ Kennard, J. (2020, July 7). Training Journal-upskilling survey <https://www.trainingjournal.com/articles/news/tj-talentlms-and-workable-join-forces-upskilling-survey>

Empowering your workforce with effective training can help companies enhance their staff members' interpersonal and analytical skills. By providing them with necessary training and development opportunities, employers can help them grow both personally and professionally. A survey conducted by Training Journal revealed that 80% of the surveyed employees accept that upskilling/reskilling training has boosted their confidence.⁴

Make Organizational Changes Easier to Handle

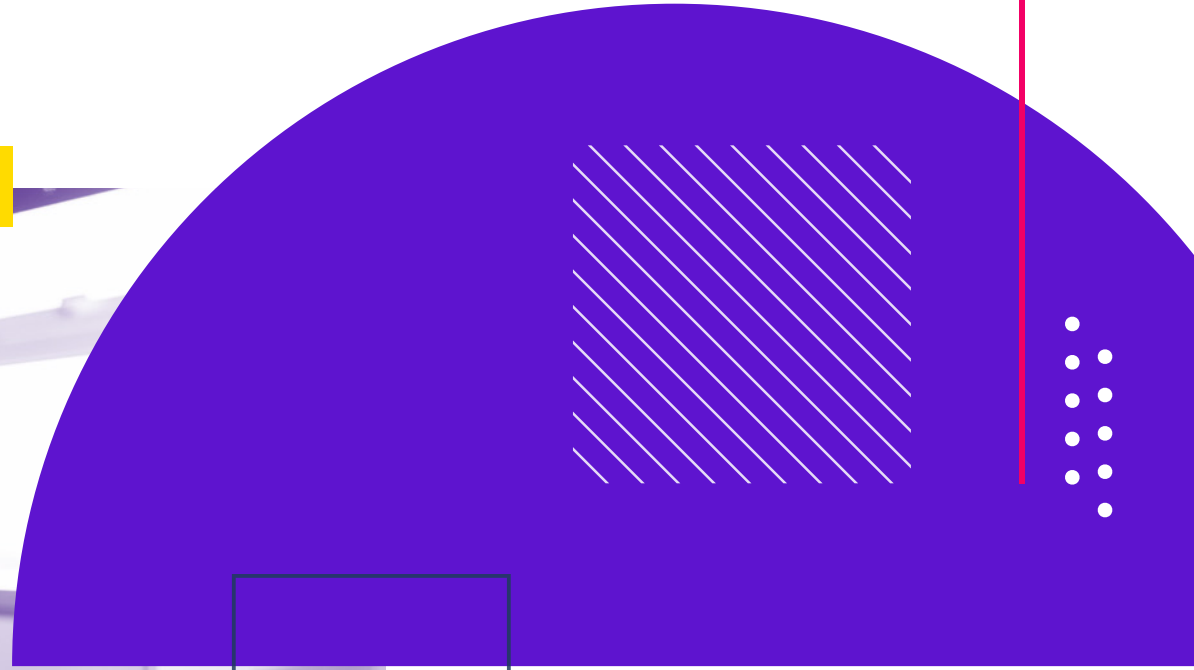
Nobody can avoid changes—not business, not markets, and not even the economy. We can only be prepared for them, and that's what upskilling and reskilling helps organizations do. Research by Training Journal showed that almost 68% of organizations invest in reskilling and upskilling programs to help employees handle changes within the organization.

By improving the existing skills of their employees and providing them with newer and more in-demand skills, organizations can avoid the negative side of changes. When employees are equipped with advanced knowledge and abilities, they become more confident while adjusting to new work environments. Instead of feeling clueless or helpless, they are prepared to face future challenges.





What Are the Essential Tools & Requirements for Successfully Training Your Workforce Remotely?



What Are the Essential Tools & Requirements for Successfully Training Your Workforce Remotely?

The coronavirus pandemic caused an acceleration of automation and economic uncertainty that made many question the division of labor between humans and machines.

Thus, it's important to focus on providing necessary training to your workforce. Training a remote workforce can be tough and requires additional measures and patience to get right. Organizations need to dedicate time and create solid training strategies to create a good L&D program for remote employees. Additionally, employers need to invest in the right tools and eLearning skills to effectively carry out employee training programs.

When employees are away from their workplace, digital tools become their best learning companion. This section will explore the requirements and the most in-demand tools that make providing remote training easier for employers.

Essential Tools for Successfully Training Your Remote Workforce

Investing in the right eLearning tools is crucial for the success of your L&D initiatives. Most organizations have an extensive catalog of tools and platforms that they use for online training. If used in the right way, these tools can be very effective in replacing traditional training programs.

Some of the most widely used eLearning tools are as follows:

Video Conferencing Tools

Video conferencing software has taken over the world in the past year and a half. Imagining remote work without a good video conferencing platform is next to impossible. These platforms provide a personal touch that is hard to find in messaging or phone conversations.

By leveraging video conferencing tools, trainers can connect with the learners when they are not in the same room. They can talk to them face-to-face and walk them through important training procedures. It also becomes easier to train multiple people together via a video conferencing platform.

With organizations dealing with Covid, easy-to-use video conferencing products, like Zoom, have soared in usage and dramatically altered how organizations henceforth choose to communicate and collaborate.

Social Collaboration Tools

Social collaboration tools make it possible for your employees to stay in touch with their peers. In the traditional training setup, learners can easily talk to their counterparts in case they have questions or suggestions since they are in the same room or building. This is not possible when learners are taking lessons miles away from each other.

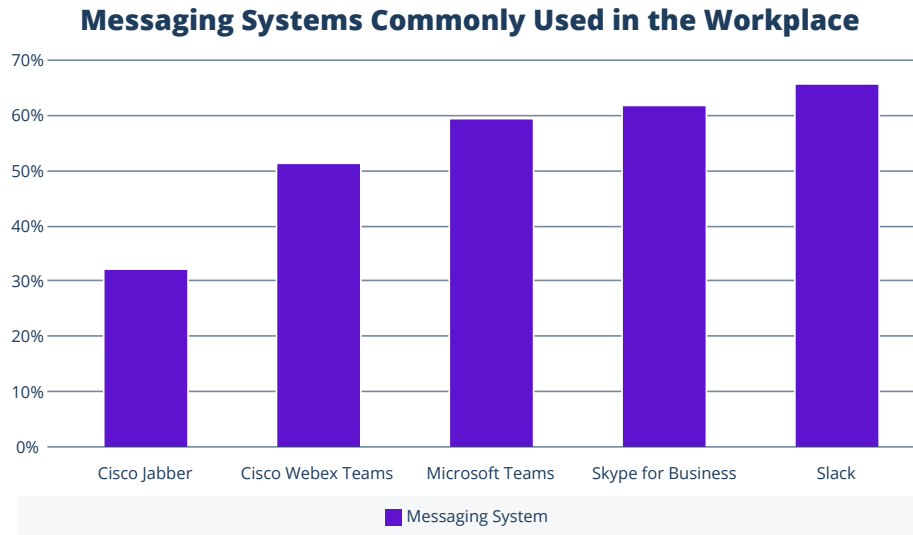
Fortunately, social collaboration tools allow learners (or anyone for that matter) to communicate seamlessly. These tools give your trainees a chance to discuss assignments, projects, and lessons with their fellow trainees virtually, facilitating instant messaging, file sharing, and several other features.

Some of the most in-demand social collaboration tools are:

- » Slack
- » Microsoft Teams
- » Skype for Business

What Are the Essential Tools & Requirements for Successfully Training Your Workforce Remotely?

As per Mio's 2019 Workplace Messaging Report, the following are the most popular collaboration tools used by organizations globally.



[Image Data Source](#)

Gamification Software

Companies invest a significant amount of money and resources to upskill and reskill their workforce. And so, they'd naturally want to generate maximum results. However, people's attention span has significantly decreased, which is why keeping eLearning courses engaging for a long duration has become a challenge for companies.

To make online learning interesting and help learners retain information for a longer period, organizations leverage gamification platforms. These tools not only make learning more fun but also create a sense of healthy competition. This motivates the trainees to perform well and do better than their counterparts. They also promote team building, social connections, and compliance in the workplace.

Learning Management Software (LMS)

Investing in a good learning management software (LMS) is vital to conducting virtual training. It provides organizations with a platform where they can host their training modules, quizzes, and upload video and audio files. LMS also offer features like message boards, skill tracking, certificate tracking, mobile learning, etc. All these components allow trainees to learn together without any hassle.

Learning management software breaks down the whole online training process into simpler pieces. This makes training more manageable and easier to understand for your remote workforce. Further, organizations can curate all the training content in one single place. This makes it easier for learners to find and access whatever they require.

There are estimated to be 600-800 LMS that primarily serve the corporate learning space and separate and distinct 600-800 LMS that primarily serve the academic (K-12, college/university) market. And, each of these LMSs has niches that they best serve.

Learning Authoring Software

As organizations respond to upskilling and reskilling requirements, it becomes essential to provide custom training to their employees. eLearning authoring tools enable expert-level course development, frequently with WYSIWYG ("What You See Is What You Get") interfaces and templates that non-technical training professionals can successfully use.

With authoring software, look for a choice like Lectora⁵, which features many templates and resources for new instructional designers, but also allows advanced developers to add JavaScript and CSS.

Once you're armed with the right software and tools, you can start planning out your remote learning strategy.

⁵ eLearning Brothers. (n.d.). <https://www.elearningbrothers.com/create-learning/lectora>

Requirements to Successfully Upskill & Reskill Your Workforce Remotely:

- 1. Ease of Use:** Organizations need to ensure that the learning materials are easy to access and understand. The information should be written in clear language so that trainees don't have to waste time deciphering its meaning.
- 2. Engagement:** Distractions are everywhere and combating them becomes more difficult in an online learning setup where learners are constantly distracted by notifications, texts, and hundreds of other things. So, to make their online learning programs effective, organizations should focus on competing with these distractions. They should adopt innovative eLearning methods, like gamification and virtual reality, and make their courses more engaging and harder to ignore.
- 3. Feedback Loop:** Another important requirement for successfully upskilling and reskilling your remote workforce is providing regular feedback. Just providing them with the course materials and videos isn't enough. You need to add constructive feedback into the mix. Employees need to know how well they are progressing and what they could do more to improve their performance. Therefore, delivering regular feedback to the trainees is vital for the success of your training and development program.





How Can eLearning Help Companies in Providing Effective Training to Their Remote Workforce?

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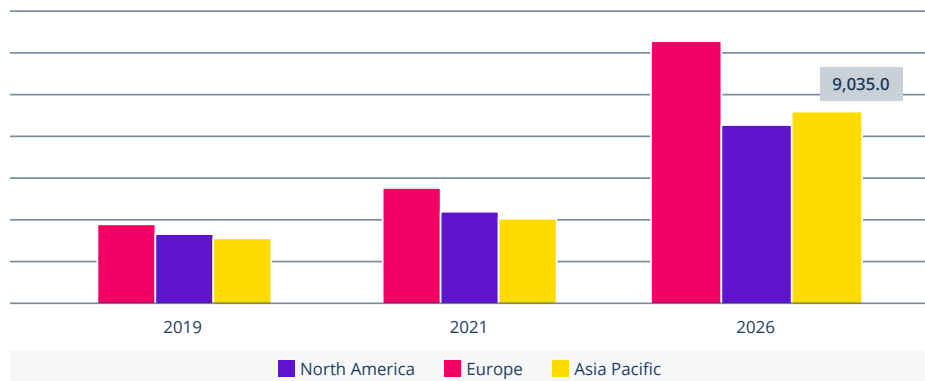
How Can eLearning Help Companies in Providing Effective Training to Their Remote Workforce?

eLearning has seen a tremendous rise in its popularity over the last few years. It not only reduces training costs but also enhances the effectiveness of organizational learning. As remote work becomes more popular, more and more companies are going to find the benefits of eLearning in providing training to their employees.

LinkedIn's 2020 Workplace Learning report states that 57% of L&D experts expect to spend more on online learning globally.

The following graph represents the projected growth of the global LMS market in the next couple of years.

Future Projected Growth of LMS Market
(USD Million)



[Image Data Source](#)

Currently, virtual training is seen as the best option for providing disruption-free training to your remote workforce. It gives learners the chance to access the course content at their own pace. In this section, we will explore how organizations can leverage eLearning methods and platforms to effectively upskill and reskill their remote workforce.

Organizations Can Use eLearning Platforms for Providing Micro-learning Lessons on Specific Topics to Trainees

Organizations can use eLearning platforms to give employees smaller lessons on basic topics more frequently. They can enhance those lessons with infographics, short videos, audio, etc. These are especially useful when trainees are learning about a complex topic and need to revisit the basics multiple times. Bite-sized lessons on specific topics are a great way to help employees to grasp or revise a concept quickly and retain it for longer.

Online Tools Facilitate Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is one of the best ways to train your remote workforce. When employees are away from their office, they don't get enough chances to collaborate with their peers. This can often cause a sense of isolation.

eLearning helps organizations effectively deal with this situation. Most eLearning platforms enable learners to interact with their trainer through discussion forums, webinars, instant messaging, etc.

They can also collaborate with their fellow trainees and share their thoughts, knowledge, opinions, and ideas. This gives them a sense of community, which promotes engagement and boosts their motivation. eLearning platforms also allow mentors to guide learners in every step through live video sessions.

eLearning Allows Employers to Leverage Gamification in Their Training Programs

Gamification is emerging as a great way to boost the engagement and motivation of your remote workforce. eLearning enables organizations to incorporate gaming elements like leaderboards, scores, power-ups, and incentives into learning modules. This makes training more fun and engaging.

For example, companies can award badges, certificates, or merchandise to employees who successfully complete their L&D program. Organizations can also design incentives for trainees who dedicate the most hours to their training.

By including gamification in their L&D programs, companies motivate trainees to perform better than everyone else. Another advantage of gamification is that it allows learners to assess their strengths and weaknesses on their own and improve their performance.

eLearning Allows Organizations to Track the Learning Progress of Employees

When you train your workforce remotely, it becomes essential to track their progress. Understanding how far along the trainees are and how well they are performing is necessary for the proper implementation of the learning program. It also helps training leaders to bridge learning gaps.

A great benefit of leveraging eLearning is that it allows training leaders to collect, analyze, and review the training statistics. Employers can use their LMS to track and analyze training records, keep a track of their progress, and log learners' participation. This crucial data empowers organizations to use these valuable insights and allows them to improve L&D programs.

Companies Can Make Training More Innovative by Utilizing Elements like Videos, Podcasts, Audios, and Quizzes

Whether organizations want to sharpen the existing skills of their employees or empower them with new ones, being creative is important. Just providing learners with Word documents and PDFs won't be enough.

eLearning enables organizations to utilize innovative elements to enhance their learning modules. Companies and training experts can use videos, audio files, podcasts, and more to enrich their modules and make them more interesting.

Embedding videos and audio files in training lessons are also a great way to present a topic or explain a procedure virtually. Further, videos have more chances of attracting and retaining a learner's attention than plain text.

Utilizing eLearning is Also a Great Way to Collect Employee Feedback

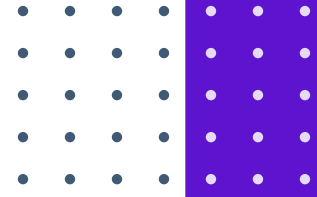
In this technological age, everybody is accustomed to sharing their opinions and making their voice heard through social media platforms. Employees expect the same from their employers. Modern-day employees want to be heard. They expect their employers to listen to their feedback and turn them into action.

Virtual learning makes listening to employees' feedback several times easier. Employers can use tools like Google Forms to collect information about the learners and ask for their feedback on training initiatives. Asking your remote workforce for feedback has long-lasting positive effects. When employees think that their opinions are being valued, they tend to be more engaged in the learning program.

Moreover, their feedback can give organizations a whole new perspective. Employers can use employee feedback to improve their training techniques and close the learning gap seamlessly.



Concluding Remarks



Concluding Remarks

Employee skill development has become the need of the hour. It not only provides companies with a highly skilled workforce but also maximizes productivity and increases ROI. In the words of Jamie Dimon, Chairman, and CEO of JPMorgan Chase & Co., *“The new world of work is about skills, not necessarily degrees.”*

As technology continues to evolve at a rapid pace, modern-day organizations need to adopt digital tools to train their employees and stay ahead of their competitors.

LinkedIn’s 2020 Workplace Learning Report states that 51% of L&D experts plan to launch upskilling programs in their companies, while 41% of them are looking forward to introducing reskilling programs. Furthermore, the company’s 2021 Workplace Learning Report revealed that 59% of L&D experts recognized these programs as their top priority in 2021 and beyond.

Remote work is here to stay. And so are eLearning and virtual training. Both trainees and trainers are convinced about the efficacy and benefits of eLearning for developing workplace skills. Adopting eLearning tools and techniques might seem overwhelming at first. However, leveraging them for your training programs is imperative for the success of your organization.

Organizations need to embrace these eLearning skills and techniques to create better training programs. The sooner companies start leveraging these techniques, the better their L&D initiatives will be.



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