

Blended Training Concept: Hands-on and Micro Training through Bring Your Own Device

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Abstract

Employees are a precious treasure of an organization. A primary issue of every organization is how to enhance the competency of employees. The author purposes a new concept for blended training by integrating online micro training-chunking content into small parts lasting not more than 10 minutes and hands-on training through bring your own device concept. This blended training will fit individual employee's training needs because they can access knowledge topic anytime, anywhere without leaving their work place.

Keywords: Blended training, Micro training, Bring your own device

1. Introduction

Employees are the key to success for sustainable organizations in facing the rapid changes in the competitive world while maintaining employee dignity and pride. This is consistent with the balanced scorecard (BSC) and Development Strategies model. According to one of the four perspectives of BSC model, “learning and growth perspective”, organizations need to develop an effective training model to educate employees which strengthens the value of the organization. (Kaplan, S. and Norton, P., 2007)

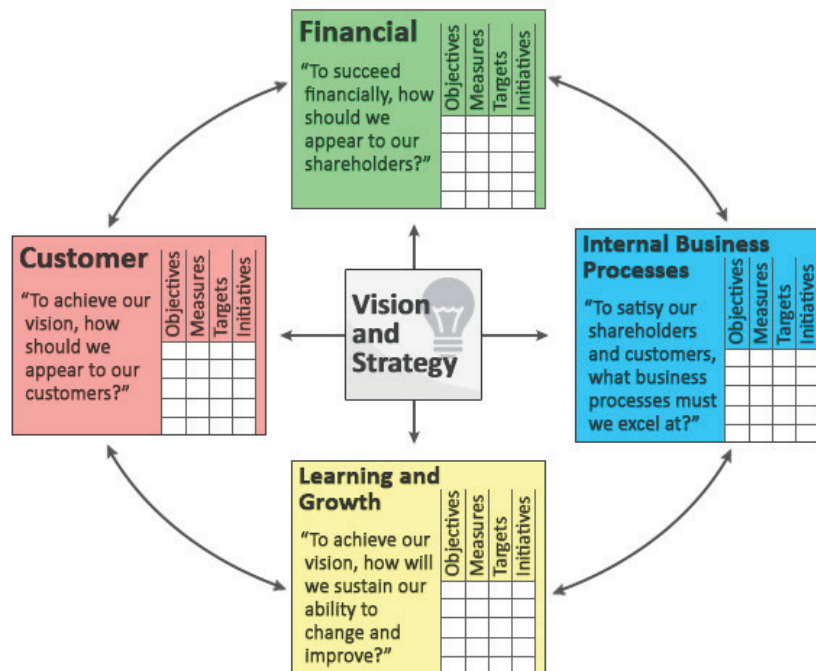


Figure 1: Four perspectives of the Balanced Scorecard.

Source: <http://searchfinancialapplications.techtarget.com/>

Organizations need to develop employee competencies in line with the core competencies of the organization to enhance the competitiveness of their enterprise from within their own organizations. Executives must evaluate the results of training to ensure it is worth the investment. According to the IBM Network of Global Training Providers survey which reported the characteristics shared by the best practice for training in the leading companies worldwide comprised of eight performance areas: (IBM Training building skills for a smarter planet, 2014).

- 1) Train all employees throughout the organization to ensure the organization can conduct staff replacement quickly for a vacant position (Fully training the team).
- 2) Training regularly to develop the competencies of its workforce (Provide ongoing training).
- 3) Capturing knowledge in the form of documents or digital media, such as video, to prevent the outflow of knowledge as employees leave the organization (Document processes).
- 4) Training new employees who have been promoted. Train employees who change position to understand the development of their competencies to be consistent with the values of the organization (Train consistently).
- 5) Create a training system that is highly effective for new employees who come to work in a position of frequent turnover (Train efficiently).
- 6) Companies with branches all over the world, must plan the training for all oversea branches constantly, never stopping (Train globally).

7) Enhancing modern technology as a tool for training to increase the convenience and ease of learning for employees in training (Train conveniently).

8) Thoroughly training employees with knowledge that will enhance the value of the enterprise by educating customers and the supply chain of the organization (Explain thoroughly).

McCall, Lombardo and Morrison argued that 70% of employee competency development will come from hands-on job experience, working on tasks and problems, about 20% is from feedback or working around good and bad jobs, and 10% from attending courses and from reading (Lombardo, M. and Eichinger, W., 2006). This means that the performance of most employees (70%) comes from learning in actual practice followed by doing well or poorly in actual job conditions (20%) and the rest is from classroom training (10%). As we can see from the eight characteristics above, number 1.7, "Enhancing modern technology" is a tool that can help make training easier and more convenient (train conveniently), and it should be seriously considered in this digital age; McCall & et al.'s conclusion has been proven over the years. Emerging new technology could well increase the portion of performance from class room training plus mobile training technology.

For this reason, the author purposes the concept for the blended training model which combines work based and class room training together with an enhancing digital training ecology by mobile and micro training through wireless networks. As we know the development performance of employees comes not only from classroom training alone, but also by many learning experiences. This concept utilizes both online and offline wireless internet-based technology via smart mobile devices. This proposed concept could be used as a guideline for small and medium enterprise, SMEs and entrepreneurs in Thailand, to improve their training to help survive in present tough competitive business environment.



Figure 2: Illustrates the use of online training through smart mobile devices

Source: Kumar, K., 2016

2. Blended Training Concept: Hands-on and Micro Training through Bring Your Own Device

2.1 Why is blended training important?

There are many articles written about the blended training. The meaning of "blended training" is from a training model which is composed of more than one training methodology. The most effective model nowadays is face to face and online training-blended model. Blended training is important because it can enhance productivity in an enterprise. This is consistent with Ashford University's research which indicated that 78% of respondents from their survey agreed that online training together with face to face increased productivity of employees (Ellis, F. And Kuznia D., 2014). The reason why blended training can improve effectiveness of employees are:

1) Blended training will balance the instructor led training (ILT) and online training because both forms can

fill the weakness of the other. The strong points of ILT are, the trainee can ask questions and clarifications of the instructor in real time and perform hands-on for actual experience. And concepts, theory and procedures can be a self-taught through video media provided on an online system.

2) Blended training makes training much more flexible. For classroom training, employees are pulled from their work routine to attend training causing overall production performance to decline. For online training, there is no need to pull employees from their job. Training can be implemented through online media anytime and anywhere. The trainees can go online for their lesson of interest anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: 24/7.

3) A blended training system that combines the appropriate technology with face to face training can be tailored made for individual trainees whose learning styles will vary from person to person. This system can close the competency gap of individual employees. Data from IBM Smarter Work Force survey found that 84% of employees can get the training they need, and 75-80% of management believes that effective training is a key to success in handling various type of projects in the organization. Improving the skills of staff involved in creating the values of the organization can increase the organization's productivity by 10%.

4) A blended training system can deliver knowledge quickly and efficiently. Imagine if an organization has produced a new product or service. Sales staff can understand the features and benefits of this new product quite easily and quickly through digital training content which has been up-loaded online. Salespeople can learn through the smart mobile equipment by performing live learning, asking questions or sharing experiences with a trainer via web conference.

2.2 What is micro Training?

Figure 3 is a graphic of the modern learner in the digital era which indicates that employees in an organization spend only 1% of a 40 hour work week, in learning equating to only 24 minutes per week. This means that only 4.8 minutes each day is devoted to the development of knowledge within their professional area (Bersin, J., 2016).

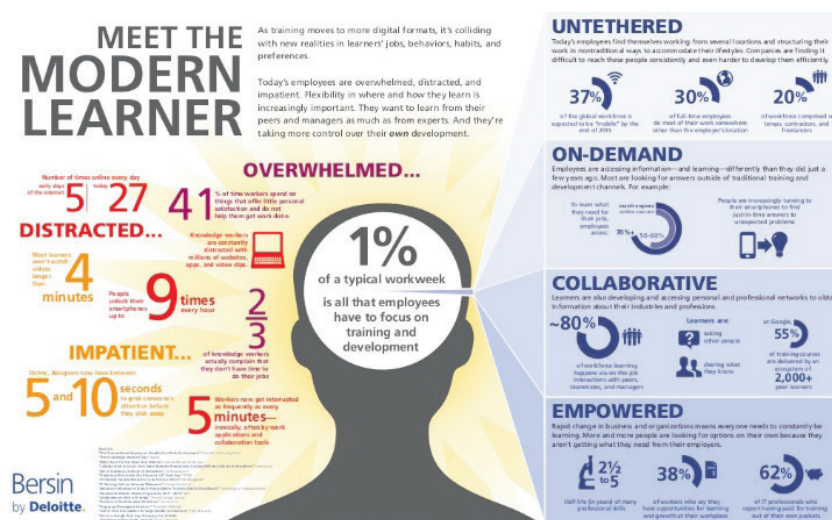


Figure 3: Learning modern (Modern learning)

Phani Madhav said that "Micro Learning refers to the delivery of e-learning content in the form of information morsels. The content is divided into several 5 to 10 minute online learning modules, each addressing a learning objective comprehensively" (Madhav, P., 2016). Employee's learning time is quite a short, about 5-10 minutes, to obtain the content that answers their learning need. When employees have learned all relevant modules they will have assimilated the whole of the content to be learned. Content created in organizations is geared towards product training, training and preparation for production, training software, and so on. The advantages of training

through an integrated micro training course development concept as follows:

- 1) Provide training to meet the needs of each person (Customization and the learning curve).
- 2) Store knowledge in the media as a small video. This makes it easy to understand (Knowledge retention-videos and micro training).
- 3) Small content size which can be used on portable devices; a way to learn comfortably (E-training content can be delivered better on mobiles).
- 4) Content can be updated quickly and easily, because each content module is small (Information can be improved easily).
- 5) Creates a bond between the employees and the organization. Employees will be motivated to enhance the performance by being fully self-interested (Learner engagement levels can be improved).

Micro training, however, has restrictions for use. First, although one objective is to learn the content in a short time, trainees also require time to review (study) knowledge by themselves again, apart from the time at the work place. Secondly, micro training may not be suitable for knowledge acquisition that requires hands-on activities (skill-based training) or knowledge with complex content types, such as training to play a musical instrument, training project management or training for welding/machining and so on.

That is why an integrated training system, blended training is needed to maximize benefit to the organization. Training can be conducted by integrating micro training to enhance the performance of employees in the organization.

2.3 What is bring your own device (BYOD) concept?

The development of digital hardware and software, has allowed the rapid improvement of smart portable devices in terms of quality and capability which can overcome past obstacles such as too small screen size, short battery run time, various incompatible operating systems, small memory, and slow data transfer rate. These restrictions have disappeared. Now the price of smart mobile equipment is reasonable, working people in an organization can afford to have their own devices and use them for training purpose. This is so call bring your own device concept (BYOD). According to the BYOD to school paper presents some of the varying BYOD models, their nuances and the considerations that accompany them. 1-to-1 access to technology is challenging traditional ideas about teaching and learning, and the arguments emphasis that BYOD decisions need to be education-based, not purely technology-based. They need to deliver tangible benefits for student learning. (Madhav, P., 2016) So, it is a good opportunity for executives in both enterprises and SMEs to develop blended training and change their policies from prohibiting their employees to use smart mobile phone, to allow them to use it for online training under the campaign BYOD to join an organization online training platform.

3. Conclusion

How effective it would be if we use technologies like wireless internet, mobile application social network such as YouTube, Facebook, Line, and Twitter which are easy to use in daily life regardless of age, gender, education level and social status, together with BYOD concept. Then blended training concept can provide the training content using both face to face and online micro content training through an employee's smart mobile device, BYOD concept.

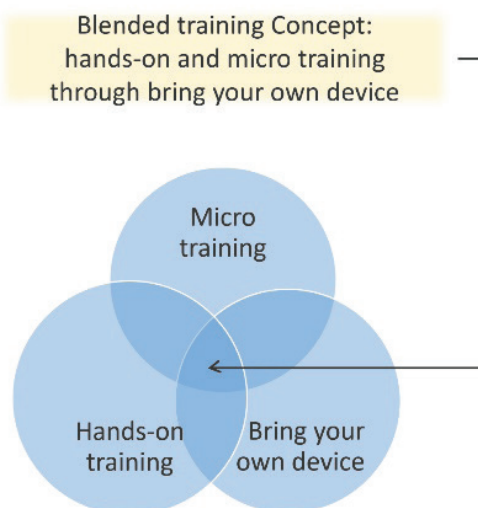


Figure 4: Blended training concept: hands-on and micro training through bring your own device (BYOD)

This blended training concept can increase opportunities for trainees to learn without the restrictions of time and place because it already runs on the platform that they use in their daily life. This will encourage employees to use their own devices to decide by themselves to learn any interested topics that they need without leaving their work place. This blended training concept should achieve mutual benefit between employees and organizations, leading to employee engagement development for sustainable progress in the future.

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