Make Training Stick in Your Company!

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It happens to the best of us. All the positive intentions in the world, the eagerness to attend the training, the a-ha's gained during the session, and all the commitments made to CHANGE. Then what happens? We face 367 emails waiting for us, 12 voicemails, a line at our desk, and deadlines to be made. We take our list of commitments, put it in the corner of our desk, and before we know it, everything we learned and wanted fades away. Sound familiar? It takes conscious effort, strategy, and a little hand holding to help facilitate change.

What can the Learning & Development / HR Professional Do?

- ***How can you build in natural reinforcement?*** Consider the skills and mindsets that will be learned in the session. How can these be woven into the culture, performance expectations, etc.? The best training is going to not just stand alone, but be part of a holistic strategy and is one of many parts that work together to create the whole. This "whole" should align with your company values and business objectives. *
- ***Educate Learners and Managers*** on the tips below. Put together a 1 page job-aid that you send to the Learners and Managers before *and* after a training session to remind them of the key steps to take. Better yet, have a training class on how to "Make Training Stick!" We've done this at the kick-off of major company training and it was a huge success. We have to learn, how to LEARN!
- ***Create a "Taking Action" sheet*** that is distributed towards the end of the course to the learners. In this Taking Action sheet are program-specific ideas of actions they can take in the next 7, 30, 60, and 90 days. Incorporate this into the program and have them commit to a few actions (in addition to any they came up with on their own). It's critical to have a few actions they take in the first 7 days while retention of the material is high. Research shows if they go a week without doing anything, well…it's as if they never took the course!

Sample Taking Action Worksheet:

Taking Action

Directions: Select and commit to actions in each of the areas. These actions will be your first steps towards deepening your learning and applying the course concepts to your work.

Next 7 days	☐	**Set up a One-on-One with your Manager, using the One-on-One form** to debrief the course and review this Taking Action worksheet. Share your commitments, set goals, seek direction/support you need to make it happen, enter a Goal into CareerConnect around applying Situational Leadership II.
	☐	**Share the model with your team** and how you plan to use it. Situational Leadership works best when we are open and transparent about it. **Explain the concept of D2** with your team ensuring them that it is "ok" to be D2 in your department. Introduce the One-on-One form to your directs and encourage them to use it at their next One-on-One with you.
	☐	**Hang the color model** in your area so others can see it.
	☐	**Have a D1 Partnering conversation** (both formally and informally.) As you are learning this new skill, utilize your Performance Planner to help you prepare for this conversation.
	☐	**Have a D2 Partnering conversation** (both formally and informally). As you are learning this new skill, utilize your Performance Planner to help you prepare for this conversation.
	☐	**Review the key goals/tasks of your direct reports** and determine if you have been giving them the appropriate leadership style. If you have been

- **Provide the Manager with a guide** on what was learned in the course and how they can support the employee when returning to work (e.g. ask questions about the class, set a few goals, etc.)

What can the Learner do?

Before Training

- Have a "pre-training" one-on-one meeting with your Manager. Share what you hope to learn in the session and ask for support in maintaining commitment to attend. If you were assigned this training (versus signing up yourself), this is an opportunity to understand what your Manager hopes you get out of the training.

During Training

- During the session, stay focused, take notes, and write down "a-ha's" and actions to take after the class. Don't count on yourself to remember!

After Training

- Prioritize actions and take them one at a time without feeling pressure to apply everything from the course all at once.
- Share actions and goals with your Manager after the class and ask for any direction or support needed to turn these new ideas into true skills.
- Teach others about what you learned – this shares the knowledge with others, helps deepen your learning, and creates accountability for you to apply what you learned.

What can the Manager do?

Before Training

- Have a pre-training one-on-one with the employee, understanding the course objectives and sharing what you hope s/he learns. This, along with a post-training meeting, have been shown to have the biggest impact on the learner applying his or her new skills.
- Protect the development time – limit in-class distractions, anticipate coverage plans, don't assign a major deadline the day after the training.

After Training

- Have a post-training one-on-one with the employee, discuss what was learned and action items and goals associated with the training. This, along with the pre-training meeting, have been shown to have the biggest impact on the learner applying his or her new skills.
- Follow up on action items regularly to emphasize the importance and hold the person accountable.
- Provide ongoing feedback as the person is trying out the new skills on what is going well and any adjustments that need to be made.

*Need help in taking your training to the next level and making it a part of a comprehensive Learning & Development Strategy? Reach out to us for help!

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