



Is just in time training, just too late?

Does training just before it's needed offer a better chance of ongoing adoption.

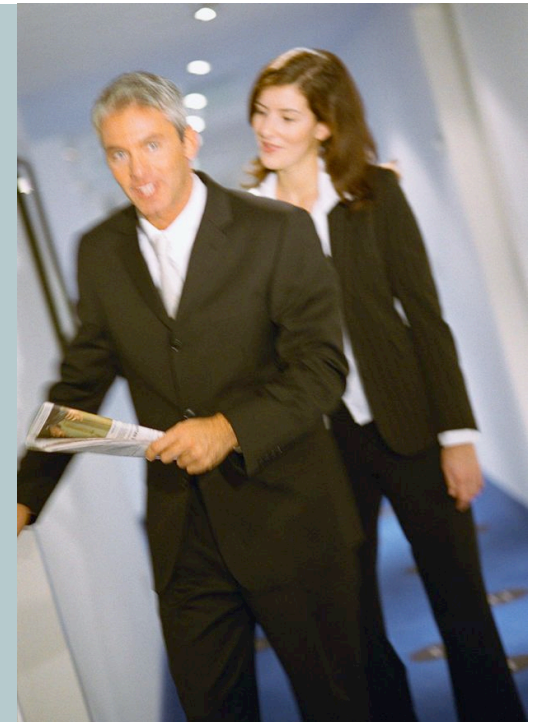
Providing the right people with the right information in the right format at the right time may be the way forward for effective learning interventions.

We all appreciate that wise word of advice at the point of application and consider it invaluable, so why do we persist in training people weeks, months and in some cases even years before they have need of the competence being discussed?

There are obvious answers to that question, many elements of a training intervention will be used frequently and quickly. Those competencies we would label as life skills and by their very nature often present the opportunity to practice them immediately.

But wouldn't it be much more effective for us to train specific skills right at the point of demand - Just In Time? Negotiation skills in the run up to a major negotiation, presentation skills just before the speaking opportunity, interview skills during a recruitment programme.

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Whilst organisations have attempted to reduce the gap between training and delivery, adopting more modular learning interventions and linking interventions with work requirements we do not see examples of truly demand orientated solutions. One of the reasons for this has to do with the need to train groups of people, but if I'm just a one off individual giving a big presentation next week, other than signing up late to a public course it will be good fortune if I can get on a course this week but more likely I'll not manage to secure any formal training. An alternative solution is needed.

So how would you do it?

We don't believe it would be too difficult to set up a whole company solution based on JIT learning interventions. We think you would need a selection of clear concise modules covering the topics that would have the most regular demand. Provide a selection of self help tools, templates and guideline resources, then top it up with a helpdesk style intervention that puts the individual in direct contact with an expert in the subject area.

The helpdesk response could go a stage further and offer the facility to review materials, ideas, presentations or anything that the delegate is using as they prepare for the delivery.

It would however require a forward thinking HR function ready to explore Just In Time training interventions, and the desire to resource the development of an appropriate range of solution modules.



It obviously does not need to replace other intervention approaches or programmes, but it surprises us that clients do not seem to be too interested in the concept. If you were pushed for time and needed some quick influencing skills for a meeting tomorrow then would you turn to a JIT solution if it was available? We think this approach could be utilised by large multinationals down to small organisations that don't have the budgets for their own in house interventions. It could bring a new dimension to skill adoption, by providing the perfect driver for behavioural change - user demand.