

Will your organisation get an “A” for learning, but an “F” for value of investment?

Strengthening and evolving your company’s skill and performance level requires more than educating your employees. Without a thoughtful plan mapped around metrics, milestones and the right learning for the right people, you can rapidly get off track, lose sight of your objectives and waste your training budget. To achieve long-term benefits and positive ROI, your learning programme must have a strategic course of action plotted to identify challenge areas, integrate best practices and measure against clear end goals along the way.

Assess, Implement and Adopt

Some of the biggest mistakes companies make when engaging in outside learning and development are made because they fail to establish a comprehensive learning plan. Before any course content is even considered, your learning plan’s first step should be an upfront assessment of your company’s current skill level and true needs. Establishing this baseline will enable you to re-assess throughout the learning process and ensure that your employees are on track for individual and organisation-wide success.

Build the Individual, Strengthen the Group

Projects consist of people doing their jobs to the best of their abilities and skill levels. You may have the right person for the job, but their skill level could use improvement. Or perhaps you have a team of people doing a great job, but there is a breakdown in organisational procedure. When creating your learning plan, it is crucial to harness the strengths you have, identify the weaknesses and make sure that individuals are specifically educated in the areas they can have the most impact. Your objective is to provide your organisation with a path toward learning that is flexible and durable enough to give each individual a roadmap toward the organisation’s overall vision. Company processes and infrastructure must support the skills people are being trained for and vice versa.

“Consider your learning programme a road map. Identifying a starting point and a final destination allows you to plot each milestone, course correct as necessary, and ultimately arrive at your end goal.”

ESI International can help your company develop a customised, comprehensive learning plan to help you achieve your goals. To learn more, please contact ESI at enquiries@esi-europe.com or +44(0) 20 7017 7100.



Five Ways to Ensure You Arrive at Your End Goals

1. **Assess your company.** Find out where you are starting by benchmarking levels of best practice knowledge and current working practices together and against a common set of baselines and metrics. Use proven 'maturity models' to deliver those baselines.
2. **Align individuals with the organisation.** By investing in a structured learning programme and long-term education for the individual, you can keep motivation levels high while empowering employees to continually challenge the status quo in the interest of practice improvement.
3. **Treat the cause, not the symptom.** Dig deep to identify the actual source of an issue in order to achieve a real solution. For example: If you want to improve project timelines but there is a fundamental breakdown in processes, investing to train your staff on scheduling software is not going to help.
4. **Plan the work and work the plan.** Design your learning programme with an ultimate goal in mind. Match regular measurements and progress validation against the agreed maturity targets and revise or re-align steps as necessary.
5. **Start small and build momentum.** Companies that use pilot programmes to test training effectiveness tend to have a higher success rate than those that roll out company-wide learning from the beginning. Smaller groups help identify who needs what sooner and allow for honing learning content to best match your company needs.



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