

Staying Competent and Competitive With Learning Agility

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In a technology-driven world where our work is always changing, challenges are constant, complex and unpredictable, competition is intense, customers are demanding, information is in abundance, and span of attention is limited, it is essential to develop learning agility, gain new knowledge and skills, and apply them quickly for a greater good. Organizations must create learning environments, facilitate knowledge sharing, and motivate its workforce to pay attention and learn something new every day.

Learning is a continuous process and the purpose of learning is growth of mind, thoughts, and ideas for innovation and improvement. Updating, adding and multiplication of knowledge are a must for a thought leader and knowledgepreneur. Continuous learning is the key to achieving our full potential, it has the potential to transform us. The ability to obtain, assimilate and apply the right knowledge effectively is an important skill necessary to transform organizations. Our ability will no longer be judged solely by qualifications gained in the past, but will also be assessed by our capacity to learn and adapt in the future.

Knowledge Today- Gone Tomorrow?

Adult education experts feel that nearly 40% of what the students are learning today will be obsolete a decade from now when they will be working in jobs that have yet to be created. Therefore, your ability to adapt to change and proactively make efforts to learn new skills and stay current will make crucial difference to where you find yourself five or ten years from now.

The workforce has changed- it's a pipe dream to expect that you're going to stick with one employer for your entire life. Today, the average person changes jobs 10 to 15 times over the course of their working life- this means that adaptability and continuing education are more important now than ever. The modern employee has to be able to capitalize on learning and past experience to work in a variety of places maximizing multiple different skills.

Likewise, changing jobs more often means that employees must be able to market themselves as competitively as possible. This means that the modern employee must be reflective of his or her own strengths and weaknesses and willing to improve on those weaknesses in order to avoid your career coming to a screeching halt.

As if it weren't enough that you need to be prepared for multiple employers or even careers, technology is also evolving at a rapid rate. Especially for those working in a field that relies heavily on technology, continuous learning and agility is critical for success. In many cases, going the extra mile to learn new technologies or software can demonstrate initiative to get noticed in a good way.

Adaptability for a Modern Work Environment

A 2008 research study titled "Growing Global Executive Talent" by the Economist Intelligence Unit

identified three traits that will be increasingly important in the years ahead: ability to motivate others, ability to work in various cultures, and the ability to successfully facilitate change. This highlights yet again the importance of being agile while also taking extra efforts to learn and understand your surroundings.

Learning and agility are not just important for the individual interested in shifting careers, but also for people who are interested in being promoted within their current company. As individuals grow in a position or career, they are expected to take on more responsibility working directly with others.

Improving Knowledge: Taking the First Step

A challenge for the person who wants to begin the quest of learning new knowledge and improving existing skills is in knowing where to start. A good way to consider this is by thinking about what would happen if you left your current position tomorrow. What steps would the person following after you take to improve things? This can provide you a window into what's lacking and where you can improve on it. Taking these steps on your own, and implementing plans for change is a great way to improve your own self-image.

Initiative and drive are difficult to measure, and yet many people can identify a person who possesses these qualities. How do those people take bigger goals and break them down? How does their commitment for initiative show up in their everyday life? Don't be afraid to get inspired by taking a page from someone else's book. Using your own passion and experience will allow you to become a more agile, respected, and knowledgeable individual in your workplace and in your personal life.

Contributed by Rakesh Malhotra, Founder of Five Global Values (www.fiveglobalvalues.com) and Author of "Adventures of Tornado Kid, Whirling Back Home Towards Timeless Values".

Passionately determined to uncover the mystery of human behavior. His fascination with the influence of core values on human behavior stems from a career which has seen rise from an entry-level sales job to that of a seasoned CEO. Having worked, lived, or traveled to more than 40 countries, he has been able to study performance and human behavior across all cultures. Follow me @FiveValues -