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Critical thinking: how to promote it with corporate training

Why critical thinking is important and how to develop it in the company with online courses with three practical examples.

According to the World Economic Forum, critical thinking is one of the skills most in demand by companies and also one of the most difficult to find. As with other soft skills, there is a tendency to think that critical thinking is an innate quality that cannot be acquired. In reality, like all soft skills, it can be learned and developed, even in a business context. To understand why critical thinking is important for businesses, let's start with its definition and see practical tips on how to develop critical thinking with online training.

What critical thinking means

Critical thinking is the ability to evaluate facts objectively and make appropriate decisions to solve problems. This skill encompasses several, such as analytical skills, logical reasoning, programming.

The peculiarity of critical thinking, and the reason why it should be an integral part of corporate culture, is that from this rigorous and almost scientific process comes the ability to break the mold, think and go where no one else has gone; in a word, innovation.

Since the birth of critical thinking (with Socrates as a classical reference) the objective has been to determine facts by asking questions. Today, with a global workforce and marketplace, critical thinking helps identify problems and possible solutions that are not obvious or determined by a stance. We're back in the innovation business. That's why critical thinking is important: it brings creativity and innovation to potentially global problem solving.

Critical thinking in online training

In corporate training, there doesn't necessarily have to be a course titled "Critical Thinking." Instead, it is essential to try to develop the critical spirit of employees, with a targeted approach and exercises. Here are some examples.

Practice critical thinking in a branching scenario

When using the branching scenario in online courses, the course flow changes and takes a different turn depending on the answers given and, therefore, the decisions made by the students. To take it a little further, you could provide an exercise where students are the ones who have to design a scenario. They will have to exercise their critical thinking to ask themselves different questions and imagine what the possible solutions and their consequences might be.

Promote critical thinking with discussion forums

Discussing a problem with colleagues, superiors, or partners helps them come up with new ideas and insights, weighing the pros and cons of each proposed solution. This can be done in the discussion forum of your **LMS, learning management system**, or by providing an exercise in the virtual classroom. In this example of synchronous training, students can be divided into small groups or pairs, depending on the number of participants, after debating an issue in the plenary session. The job of each group will be to step into the shoes of a group that has different ideas and present the issue from their perspective.

Critical thinking and experiential learning

Finally, **simulation technologies** can be used in the design of an online course to immerse employees in a realistic situation. Again, the learner may be asked to take on a different role than they have in the company. He or she will have to make

decisions, evaluating the facts before them, from a different perspective.

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