ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

Year 3 - number 72 Wednesday 12 june 2019

Learning organization: what does it mean to be a company that learns at the time of eLearning?

The term learning organization coined by various authors, including Peter Senge and David Garvin, reflects the attitude of a company to remain competitive in a constantly evolving world. What is the role of eLearning in all this?

There are two words that describe the characteristics of a learning organization: adaptation and innovation. The concept developed in the 1990s and has been developed in different ways. The companies that learn are those that focus on people, according to Peter Senge, as a strategy to remain competitive in the market and face new competitors and new technologies. According to the definition of Garvin, Edmondson and Gino, a company that learns is a company that knows how to create knowledge, acquire knowledge and transmit its knowledge. In this context where learning seems to have an essential role, what can be the advantage of eLearning for companies?

Why become a learning organization?

Although there is no single definition of a learning organization, there is a convergence between the different studies on the centrality of learning and knowledge. Only a company that can grasp, analyze and act on the change that surrounds it is able to adapt to a world in continuous transformation. For example, Nokia, Kodak or Polaroid were giants in the world of telephony and photography, but they failed to adapt to one of the biggest challenges of today's businesses: digitalization. An organization that learns puts knowledge at the center of its activities to achieve different goals:

- make strategic decisions for the future of the company by learning from its mistakes;
- enrich their skills by enhancing managers and employees;
- experimenting with a new approach to innovation by leveraging knowledge within and outside the company.

Therefore, becoming a learning organization requires a change in the corporate culture to be able to respond quickly even to unpredictable changes.

What is the role of eLearning in the creation, acquisition and transmission of knowledge?

E-learning is an essential tool that a learning-oriented company must exploit in order to acquire, create and transmit knowledge. The process of creating knowledge, the basis of innovation, is born of the circulation and contamination of ideas. With an LMS, a company can facilitate the participation of all team members, wherever they are and at any time.

E-learning allows you to better understand how different members of the company team learn, whether they are managers or have a more operational role. The reports on online training, periodic tests, simulations, adaptive learning are all tools that eLearning makes available to companies to analyze data on learning and adapt the content to the needs of learners.

In creating an online course for a company, the analysis of training needs is a crucial step not only for trainers, but also for course recipients. It is a time when the company challenges old acquaintances, compares them with the new reality and focuses on new systems for the transmission of knowledge.

Is it enough to open up to eLearning to become a learning organization?

According to a study by the Harvard Business Review training is an essential part of the development of any company. However, it is not enough for there to be an environment conducive to learning, to processes and to concrete learning practices: leadership is also needed that can drive change. To become a learning organization, it is necessary to act within the corporate culture and encourage formal and informal learning.

E-learning is a valuable tool to accompany companies in the process of creating, acquiring and transmitting knowledge in a systematic and strategic way. To activate this process, however, it requires a leadership capable of modifying the corporate culture by mobilizing internal and external competences that reinforce a company.