**Learning techniques**

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The Covid-19 pandemic fundamentally changed the way organisations work. Nearly two years into the pandemic, many organisations continue to work from home or use hybrid working models wherein some employees work remotely and some from the office.

With more employees working from home or remote working, there is a need for new models of learning and development that have the flexibility of digital delivery while improving upon the impact and outcomes of traditional models.

LinkedIn Learning’s Workplace Learning Report 2021 states that most organisations will continue to shift budgets away from instructor-led or face-to-face training to online learning. To meet the demands of full-time employed learners who require flexible, collaborative, and digital solutions, learning and development (L&D) needs to evolve from the traditional classroom model to online training solutions which deliver highly effective and scalable training solutions to senior leaders and entry-level executives alike.

One such solution gaining momentum is ‘flipped classrooms’. Unlike in a traditional classroom model, where learners passively listen to a teacher’s lecture and then apply this knowledge independently while doing their homework to consolidate learning, in a flipped classroom approach they absorb new knowledge in their own time, typically using online materials such as activities, videos, and texts and then activate their newfound knowledge in class, working with their teacher and classmates, using real-life examples, critical analysis, peer review, group work, and feedback.

This enables learners to engage with subject matter at a deeper level, which the traditional model expects to be done alone, without teacher guidance. Research and our own extensive experience with a flipped classroom approach have shown that through this model, learners can achieve as positive, if not better, learning outcomes as they do with traditional models, while keeping costs low. For instance, online blended learning courses – such as myEnglish – offer more than four times learning to trainer effort while delivering a 95 percent self-reported improvement in communication and soft skills.

This model also helps scaffold learners with and instil in them 21st century skills, or what are also known as core skills, such as, critical thinking, self-management and independence, collaboration and teamwork, and digital literacy.

This past year, online learning has not only proliferated but also been demystified. Both training managers and trainees have realised that certain myths associated with online learning are not true. Therefore, it is not surprising that the LinkedIn report also states that L&D professionals expect budgets to grow and continue to shift to online learning as CEOs continue to prioritise learning in their organisations.

Myths that trainees don’t stay motivated enough to complete online courses and online learning is not interactive or not as effective as a face-to-face training programme have not just been addressed by innovations in online pedagogy and technology, but are effectively a thing of the past.

For learning and development professionals, C-suite executives or senior leaders and educators taking decisions about human resource development, online learning models are a genuine boon as they offer better learning outcomes, scalability, and cost efficiency. Online learning is not solely a phenomenon of the pandemic; it is here to stay.

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