

Practices to Embrace Lifelong Learning

There is renewed interest in educating employees to maximize productivity and creativity. With this renewed focus on learning comes a new generation of products and services that focus on knowledge delivery and retention. The explosion of content coupled with the need for enterprises to move fast has created a demand for new solutions that address the needs of a dynamic workforce.

The millennial generation, which is generally defined as those between the ages of 18 and 34, already accounts for approximately 50 million workers in the U.S.—25 percent of the workforce according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics—and that number will increase dramatically in the coming years. This group will increasingly look beyond formal education to develop, sharpen, and learn new skills.

All employees, but millennials in particular, are going to need ongoing education to succeed in their careers. In fact, in a 2014 CareerBuilder report, 81 percent of hiring managers said it was at least “somewhat difficult” to fill open positions due to lack of skills, and 61 percent said they had hired a person who was not fully qualified for their role. While some of the most critical skills gaps persist throughout career stages, many are manifest in entry level positions, where new college grads most often look for work.

Despite their educational investments, students report finding a job to be a big challenge. Nearly half of all graduating students say college did not prepare them for the working world, and 83 percent don't have a job lined up when they graduate.

The disparity between education obtained in college and being prepared for work is all the more concerning considering that there are more online and informal learning resources than ever before (podcasts, MOOCs,

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books, boot camps, YouTube, conferences). All of this knowledge being acquired through these different mediums amounts to lifelong educations.

Despite the fact that learning is constantly happening and the pace of it will only increase, organizations struggle to keep track of it all, measure it, and make it count. There is a gap between the need to learn and the way to maximize learning.

One of the leading companies that is helping individuals and organizations maximize learning is Degreed.

In fact, Aragon Research recently named Degreed a 2016 Hot Vendor in learning. Degreed was awarded this distinction because of its ability to deliver a wide variety of learning content and quantify all of the learning taking place within an enterprise. The company focuses on the continuous, personalized delivery of learning opportunities to individual employees and enterprises. The company recognizes and quantifies a huge variety of learning methods ranging from online courses to podcasts.

Degreed offers programs for both employers and individuals who want to track their education. But what's particularly compelling is that Degreed's programs let employers see what their employees are currently learning, whether the knowledge is coming from ILT classes, online courses, books, videos, articles, podcasts, or elsewhere. Through a better understanding of their employees' interests and skills, enterprises can help their workers reach their maximum potential.

Degreed connects a variety of internal and external learning resources, ties development opportunities to specific skills and roles, and tracks individuals' progress through both formal and informal content. The company's mission is to make all of people's lifelong learning matter by creating a new way to measure expertise—not just a list of formal education completed.