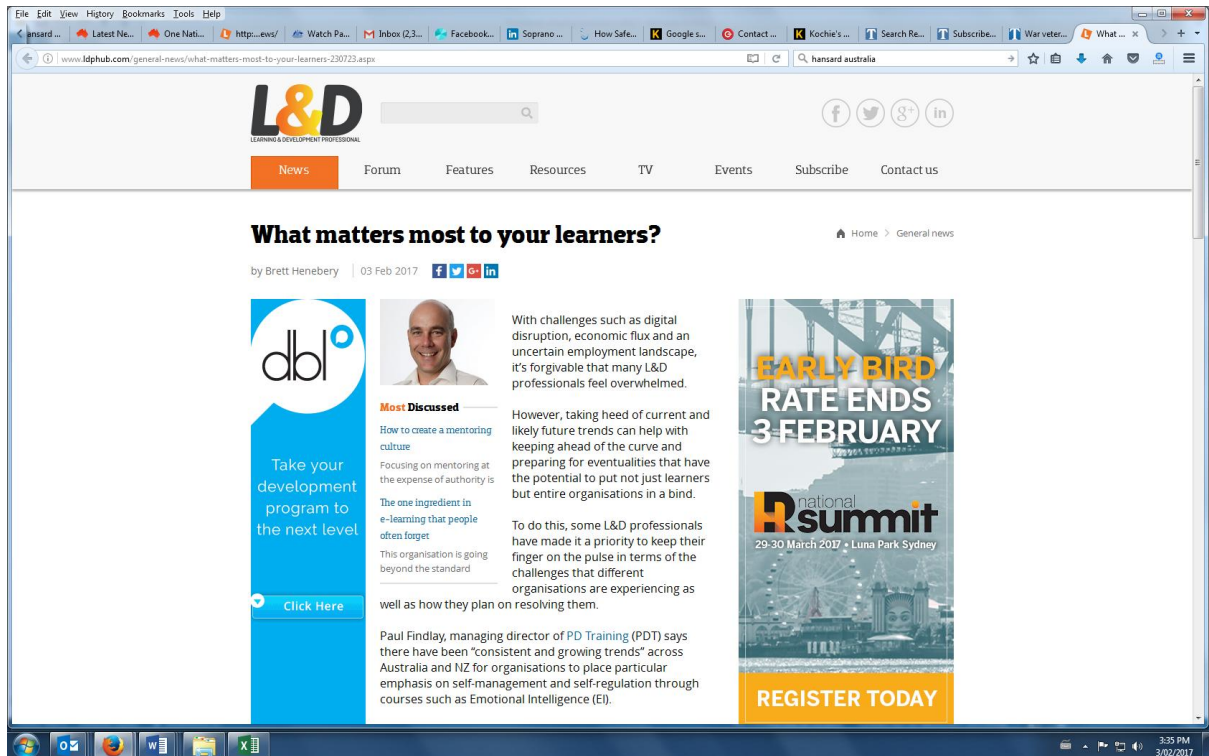


Learning and Development Professional



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What matters most to your learners?

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by Brett Henebery 03 Feb 2017



With challenges such as digital disruption, economic flux and an uncertain employment landscape, it's forgivable that many L&D professionals feel overwhelmed.

However, taking heed of current and likely future trends can help with keeping ahead of the curve and preparing for eventualities that have the potential to put not just learners but entire organisations in a bind.

To do this, some L&D professionals have made it a priority to keep their finger on the pulse in terms of the challenges that different organisations are experiencing as well as how they plan on resolving them.

Paul Findlay, managing director of [PD Training](#) (PDT) says there have been “consistent and growing trends” across Australia and NZ for organisations to place particular emphasis on self-management and self-regulation through courses such as Emotional Intelligence (EI).

“Good leaders learn that to change culture, motivation levels, drive and commitment of their team members, the most effective way is to focus on changing the behaviours they personally bring,” he told *L&D Professional*.

“The reality is that people make commitment and give their energy to the people and causes that they want to follow – you can only influence ‘want’ by showing them something they choose to follow.”

Findlay said that once those core alignments are in place, it is a relatively simple matter of teaching ‘how’, and the big sticks and/or incentives become less important.

“In short, good leaders know that exerting influence and conjuring dedication and commitment is achieved by being the best you can be, and thereby giving inspiration to people to follow,” he explained.

“These same leaders know that to scale and amplify the commitment, dedication and energy, the most effective way to do it is by providing the workforce at large with the same awareness and ownership over what they bring, and how it affects the quality of work life [and beyond] of their colleagues, customers and suppliers.”

Findlay pointed out that while the course titles are different, a large amount of the underlying content messages and takeaways in courses – such as leadership, communication skills, conflict resolution and customer service – have been modernised over recent years.

“There is a stronger emphasis on self-awareness, regulation and consistency – which are provided in the context of the techniques and scenarios in the course for the topic in question,” he said.

“[ORANGES](#) is the perfect example – built expressly to help people develop better self-leadership across many aspects of the inner psychology. It is the purest form of helping people bring their best to their work, their life and to the people around them.”

Calculating ROI on L&D

Another trend Findlay is noticing across the industry is a strong push to quantify the ROI from training.

“Every other piece of the business has had to increasingly rationalise and justify,” he said.

“Every department, happily including the L&D Managers, are wanting to demonstrate the return from time and money invested in human capital beyond the simple induction and oversight of staff.”

Findlay said fortunately for PDT, ORANGES is based on hard returns, and their systems and processes have been refined over the last 5 years to be able to demonstrate business impacts simply and effectively.

“We feel like the development time over the years has placed us in the box seat,” he said.

Future-gazing

When it comes to L&D trends, Findlay said they are, and should be, “a reflection of humans’ needs” as a result of the commercial environment at large.

“The big changes that L&D will need to meet are keeping people engaged in increasingly distributed free flowing workplaces, managing virtual teams, helping people feel connected to a cause when they work in isolation and will become increasingly metric driven,” he explained.

“The event horizon I am watching is the need to retrain people from truck, taxi, uber and train drivers, to brick layers, scaffolders, pizza maker and delivery people, retail shop assistants, more factory workers. The second industrial revolution is coming along with the tech revolution and many jobs will cease to exist.”

Findlay said the challenge is what to retrain workers in, who will pay for it, who will be on the front-foot to drive pre-emptive economic restructure – and just as importantly – how to discover the variety of new roles needed to fill a void for such a large cross section of society.

“It's foreseeable that a large percentage of our current workforce will be redundant within a decade,” he said.

“L&D needs to step up, and equip them with creativity and an optimistic attitude that helps them think creatively and laterally to avoid becoming a statistic of lifelong redundancy and unemployment in a different world.”

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