

Buckle up, HR: L&D is about to get really exciting - HR Executive

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Executive Summary

This article addresses the transformation of corporate learning and development (L&D) in the post-pandemic workplace, arguing that traditional, standardized training models are being displaced by personalized, human-centered approaches. The authors' main argument, conveyed through practitioner perspectives from a webinar hosted by HR Executive, is that hybrid and remote work have fundamentally altered employee expectations and organizational learning needs. Key evidence is anecdotal: a medical client case study involving flexible, self-directed learning paths; observations from chief learning officers at EY and Allencomm; and commentary from HR author Lars Schmidt and a consultancy COO. The article highlights several emerging practices — including open-source knowledge sharing, data-driven L&D justification, and the integration of human skills such as resilience and empathy into professional development. It concludes that L&D transformation requires a multi-year cultural shift, greater agility from HR professionals, and the dismantling of organizational silos. No empirical studies are cited, and all claims are grounded in practitioner opinion gathered from a vendor-associated webinar context.

Key Insights

1. Post-pandemic hybrid and remote work conditions are driving demand for more intentional, personalized, and modality-flexible learning design rather than standardized off-the-shelf training.
2. L&D is increasingly being positioned as a talent attraction and retention tool, with organizations using learning strategy to compete in tight labor markets.
3. A fundamental shift is underway from closed, siloed learning environments toward open-source, peer-shared learning cultures — described as one of the biggest transitions between legacy and modern L&D.

Practical Takeaways

- Organizations developing flexible learning programs that allow employees to self-direct their learning paths — as illustrated by the medical client case — are attempting to balance structured onboarding with autonomous upskilling for experienced workers.
- L&D and HR professionals are being expected to develop data literacy sufficient to demonstrate measurable business impact of learning programs to senior executives who control training budgets.

Critical Analysis

Strengths: The article captures a timely and widely observed directional shift in L&D practice, drawing on credible senior practitioner voices (CLOs from EY and Allencomm, an HR author). The spectrum model of academic versus human learning offered by Goldhamer provides a useful conceptual lens. **Limitations:** The article presents no empirical data, no cited studies, and no quantitative evidence to support its claims. All assertions are based on expert opinion gathered at a vendor-associated webinar, which introduces potential selection bias. The single case study (medical client) is unnamed and unverifiable. The five-year culture change timeline offered by Goldhamer is asserted without supporting evidence. **Biases:** The article was published by HR Executive and references an HRE-hosted webinar, creating a promotional framing. Allencomm, whose CLO is prominently quoted, is a commercial learning content provider with a commercial interest in the narrative of increasing L&D investment. The overall tone is optimistic and forward-looking without critical counterpoints or acknowledgment of organizational constraints beyond brief mention of funding challenges.

Organizational Practice

Several organizations are described as developing flexible, self-directed learning programs that allow employees at different skill levels to choose their own learning paths and modalities. Employers are extending onboarding infrastructure to support reskilling and upskilling. Some organizations, notably EY, are integrating human skills such as resilience, mindfulness, and empathy into formal professional development programs. HR teams are also beginning to adopt data-driven approaches to demonstrate L&D business impact to senior leadership.

Strategic Implications

The article points to a potential repositioning of L&D from a compliance-driven cost center to a strategic talent attraction and retention asset, which carries implications for how PMS frameworks integrate learning metrics alongside performance outcomes. The emphasis on open-source, peer-driven learning suggests a move away from hierarchical knowledge transfer models toward networked, team-based performance development. The call for data fluency among L&D professionals indicates growing pressure on HR functions to connect learning investment to measurable performance outcomes — a convergence that may influence how performance management systems are designed and evaluated.

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