sciendo

Scientific Bulletin
Vol. XXVIII, No. 2(56), 2023

CREATING A LEARNING CULTURE IN THE ORGANISATION

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ABSTRACT:

Any organisation, in order to develop harmoniously and cope with a changing environment, needs to be flexible and adaptable. Such an organisation is one that encourages and supports the creation of a learning culture. By encouraging and supporting employees to learn and develop new skills, organisations can create a culture of continuous learning and growth. Learning culture is more personalised and engaging than traditional culture. Organisations where a learning culture is implemented at all levels become agile, innovative and protected in the face of uncertainty in society. Another benefit of implementing learning culture is attracting the best employees and retaining them in the organisation. A strong learning culture drives motivation, satisfaction and commitment of the organisation's members.

KEYWORDS:

Organisation, learning culture, organisation members, adaptation

1. Introduction

Today, changes in society, and therefore in organisations, are leading them to look for new ways to adapt quickly to these changes. One such way is seen as creating a culture of learning at all levels in the organisation.

In an organisation where all members are open to new, to learning, the learning culture cannot be imposed and the organisation will grow and develop harmoniously. It is the learning culture that ensures that each member of the organisation acquires the knowledge they need to carry out their professional tasks.

2. Research methodology

The paper presents and analyzes, based on the study of papers and own observations, the culture of learning in the organization, the benefits that this type of culture brings to the organization and ways in which it can be transformed into an organization where the culture of learning prevails.

3. Learning culture and its benefits

Any organisation, in order to develop and survive competition, must be flexible and adapt to the continuous changes in society. An organization's flexibility and adaptability depend on the human resource it has and how it is motivated to participate in the development of the organisation. It represents a commitment to personal and professional development.

In general, a learning culture emerges in an organisation when learning is extended to all hierarchical levels and to all employees, regardless of seniority or position. Creating a learning culture requires that every employee

DOI: 10.2478/bsaft-2023-0021
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is willing to learn, share and apply newly acquired knowledge and skills. A learning culture "*refers to the environment and mindset within an organisation or community that values continuous learning and encourages the acquisition, sharing and application of knowledge and skills*" (https://www.skillscaravan.com, 2023) and "[...] *is important to implement in an organization since it has many benefits for a learning organization*" (Chanani & Wibowo, 2019).

There is currently no clear definition of a learning culture, but the simplest definition is: "*A learning culture puts the continuous development of knowledge and skills at the heart of everything the organisation does*" (Greany, 2021).

Learning culture will not be achieved 'overnight' and there is no right way to achieve it. Nevertheless, there are certain features that can be considered important (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, 2020; Greany, 2021; Jain & Martindale, 2012; Movahhed, 2023):

– a continuous process of learning;
– difficult to measure;
– the development of a culture of learning is achieved with perseverance;
– supporting individual learning and development at all levels of the organisation;
– supporting individual transformation within the organisation;
– providing time, tools and resources for all members of the organisation to benefit from continuous learning;
– involving members of the organisation in taking an active role in their own personal and professional development;
– encouraging teams to learn, share and use new knowledge in the workplace;
– stimulating the desire to learn and improve work within the organisation;
– stimulating a growth mindset throughout the organisation;
– promoting and rewarding continuous learning;
– contributing learning to shaping organisational strategy and processes within the organisation;

In any organization that prioritizes learning, there are multiple levels of learning culture (Greany, 2021; https://www.skillscaravan.com, 2023). These levels are depicted in Figure no. 1.



Figure no. 1: Levels of Learning Culture
(Source: https://www.elucidat.com/blog/
5-ways-to-create-a-learning-culture-in-your-organization/)

a) *Organisational level*

– an organisation-wide learning culture enables employees to work together to achieve the organisation's mission and goals;

– the organisation encourages a culture of continuous learning;

– the organisation helps employees to learn and develop by providing them with the resources and tools to learn;

– learning and development programmes are designed to meet the needs of employees at all levels of the organisation;

– open dialogue, challenge and reflection are embedded in values and processes.

b) *Level of teams*

– flexible organisations encourage learning within teams;

– learning culture comes in the form of sharing knowledge, experiences, skills, expertise, feedback and support;

– collaboration is encouraged;

– team members are expected to learn from each other;

– team members are given opportunities to train on projects that challenge them and help them develop new skills;

– time and resources are prioritised for formal and informal learning.

c) *Individual level*

– members of the organisation are encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal and professional development;

– members of the organisation are given both the resources and the tools they need;

– the learning culture is effective and successful when members feel supported and their personal and professional development is valued;

– a strength of the learning culture at the individual level is that members of the organisation can personalise their approach to learning by setting professional development goals.

Organisations that adopt a culture of learning at all levels enjoy a number of benefits, including (Greany, 2021; British Council, 2023):

– prepare organisations for disruption and change;

– adapt quickly to change;

– increasing creativity and innovation;

– effective problem solving;

– decreasing turnover of organizational members;

– high efficiency, productivity and profit.

4. Ways of creating a learning culture in the organisation

Developing a learning culture in an organisation is not a simple process, and it takes energy, effort and time, because "*it is about change, and change is rarely easy*" (Bedford, 2021). Learning culture "*needs the right environment to grow*" (Bedford, 2021), "*can be developed if there are supports in forms of motivation, learning opportunities, and facilities to its members*" (Chanani & Wibowo, 2019) and "*the long-term results are remarkable*" (O'Neill, 2023).

Creating a learning culture in the organisation requires a long-term commitment from the organisation and its management. By implementing learning methods, organisations can create a culture of continuous learning that supports employee development, improves organisational performance and drives organisational growth. Table no. 1 shows some of the ways in which organisations can create a learning culture (Greany, 2021; O'Neill, 2023; https://www.skillscaravan.com, 2023).

Table no. 1

Ways of creating a learning culture in the organisation

The learning culture in the organisation can be created through ...	***It can be achieved by ...***
... Evaluating the current learning culture	... surveys, focus groups and employee interviews; ... conducting a SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for improvement.
... Defining learning objectives	... aligning learning with the organisation's goals and objectives, which should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).
... Developing a learning strategy	... highlighting the steps needed to achieve the learning objectives; ... including the types of learning programmes, delivery methods and resources needed to support the learning culture.
... Providing access to learning resources	... giving employees access to a variety of accessible learning resources in line with the organisation's learning objectives (training programmes, e-learning modules, books, articles, etc.).
... Encouraging lifelong learning	... providing easy access to formal learning and offering a wide range of learning programmes; ... incentivising employees to complete learning programmes; ... helping members of the organisation to personalise their learning and how they will apply what they have learned in the workplace.
... Promoting lifelong learning	... promoting a growth mindset by encouraging experimentation, innovation and giving employees the opportunity to share their knowledge and experience; ... constantly connecting members of the organisation to up-to-date information that can help them in their work.
... Identifying underdeveloped skills	... supporting employees in the learning process and focusing on developing underrepresented skills.
... Developing a broad portfolio of learning options	... giving employees the choice of how, where and when they learn;
... Creating a pleasant, comfortable learning environment	... ensuring a relaxed atmosphere within the organisation, which allows for interaction and exchange of ideas and information between members.
... Experimentation, evaluation and adaptation	... trying out new approaches to learning, evaluating the impact and results achieved by the members of the organisation and adapting the new approaches to the learning requirements of the members of the organisation.
... Feedback and recognition	... providing feedback and recognition to members of the organisation who engage in continuous learning.
... Measuring the impact of learning culture on organisational performance	... tracking variables - organizational member engagement, productivity, organizational member retention rate.

(Source: Authors' contribution)

It is very important for organisations to prioritise the continuous learning and development of the members of the organisation, both in their area of work and in acquiring new skills. In today's business and society, due to change, new technologies, market trends and fierce competition, existing knowledge and skills can easily become outdated and useless.

5. Conclusions

When the learning culture becomes the responsibility of all members of the organisation, the organisation can focus on its development and on the things that really matter: addressing pain points, tackling and solving problems, dealing with business partners, focusing on achieving performance through learning.

The learning culture encourages critical thinking, promotes open communication, and emphasizes the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing among members of the organization. People are encouraged to share their knowledge with each other, and learning is seen as a collective effort.

In order to create a sustainable learning culture, employees need to be supported in the learning process and oriented towards improving their professional knowledge and developing new skills.

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