

White Paper

# **The Transformation of the Workplace Training Function: the Drive to Integrate Human Resources with Business Strategy**

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As companies strive to create competitive advantage in the digital age, executives are increasingly looking to the HR function to grow beyond everyday tasks and provide leadership to ensure broader people management and development objectives are achieved.

### The Emergence of Talent Management Strategies

Boudreau and Ramstad (2007) noted that the realm of high-potential leaders is often unique and that to engage this calibre of employee requires tailored individual development programmes to ensure the learner can attain the level of competence for their role.

This recognition is reflected in ‘Talent Management’ programmes designed especially to engage and retain those employees that are considered to be in the top 10% performers (conversely, those employees in the bottom 10% may require more stringent HR interventions such as performance management plans). The CIPD’s Talent Management matrix below illustrates how high-performing employees (on the right hand side of the matrix) require tailored types of engagement that are distinct from those on the left:

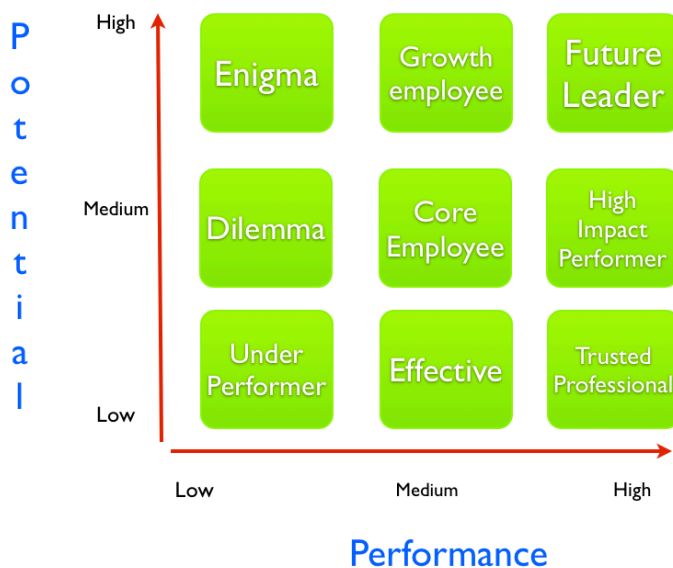


Fig 1. Source - CIPD

### Increasing Complexity of the Workplace Trainer Role

There is evidence to suggest that top-down training programmes are also expected to deliver company-wide awareness of organisation strategy, brand, customer-centricity and cultural

diversity - not the traditional remit of HR or Learning & Development managers, who need to balance these new responsibilities with cost savings and continuing development of the workforce.

Workplace trainers must blend an increasing strategic awareness with new methods and modes of message delivery to ensure that change initiatives are successful and embedded. These methods can include online learning, reward schemes, social media and other community-building activities.

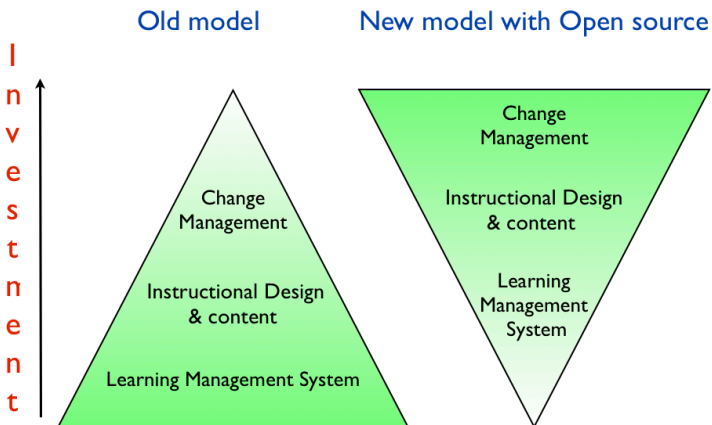
## **The Increasing Relevance of Social Networks in HR**

The emergence of open source technologies create a step change in capability for workplace learning - not only do open source solutions reduce total cost of ownership and integrate easily with other open source enterprise applications, they also provide a gateway to deliver much wider community participation programmes. Social media and CRM based marketing applications can be integrated with LMS and other web based systems, enabling access to an unlimited network of prospects. A white paper about this subject can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

## **The Evolution of Learning Technologies (i) - Open Source software**

Thanks to LMS technologies, companies can now deliver on demand learning to employees who can access 'training programmes to go' on the move or at home. However, many training managers have struggled with the implementation of their new eLearning strategy after investing in a proprietary LMS which really hasn't delivered all they had expected - they have had cost control, support, and software interoperability issues ever since. Where did they go wrong?

IT departments are becoming more educated on the risks and benefits of open source and now routinely use open source applications within large enterprise systems. As the diagram below shows, the open source model generally enables the capability to deliver more complex and far-reaching organisational change - and demands far less lifecycle investment - than traditional learning technology solutions. Budgets can be re-focused on learning content design and creation, and broader-reaching change and integration programmes, instead of ploughing resources into the LMS 'container'.



## The Evolution of Learning Technologies (ii) - Cloud and SAAS applications

Cloud hosted applications coupled with open source LMS tools such as Moodle (the world's most popular course management system) and Totara (open source business LMS) enable online 'learning communities' to be developed at very low cost.

The benefits of cloud based applications means that no major investment is required to procure and support IT infrastructure (such as server hardware / backup & monitoring systems). Instead, through a managed service on the cloud, workplace trainers can focus instead on their increasingly diverse responsibilities such as talent management, compliance / induction eLearning, performance management, employee engagement and community building.

### Further Reading

If you would like to read more about the concepts that are discussed in this white paper please go to <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Beyond-HR-Science-Human-Capital/dp/142210415X>.



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