

# Impact of Innovative L&D Practices on Organizational Performance-A Post Covid study

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## **Abstract:**

*The purpose of the study is to examine the impact of innovative Learning and Development practices on Organizational performance. Innovative L&D practices involve extensive trainings, good mentoring, Change Management Principles and creating a Learning and Development ecosystem in the Organization. It is about establishing the Learning culture, designing a Learning plan and setting up the Learning operations in Organizations. The present paper focuses on detailing the L&D practices being implemented by Companies for their blue collared employees at manufacturing facilities and effect on their productivity. Models of evaluation like Kirkpatrick and ROI have been used in order to assess the Training outcomes and behavioral changes are being recorded.*

**Keywords:** L&D, Organization performance, Learning Ecosystem, Training ROI, productivity, workforce, Learning culture

## **Introduction**

Learning & Development in any organization is central to ensuring that employees are able to successfully meet the challenges of their jobs and that they are properly aligned with the business goals. It directly impacts the company's bottom line by enhancing employee's productivity, delivering them the right spirit and enhancing their KSA variables (Knowledge, Skills and Attitude). The significance of L&D has skyrocketed in the last decade, and companies are realizing its contribution not only in people factor but in various processes of organizations. Initially seen as a branch only responsible to provide formal trainings to employees, the importance of L&D has risen to such an extent that it now provides the necessary impetus to organizations for formulating their strategies and navigate their business ideas. L&D specialists are assiduous in their quest to bring more novelty, contemporary practices and innovation to the business in order to maximize growth and productivity. That's the reason, nowadays L&D strategies are directly aligned to the company's Vision and objectives so that the focus could be more on measurable results.

The most recent global pandemic going by the name of 'COVID -19' has shaken everybody's confidence and people have only one question on to their minds, "When will this monstrosity be completely over?" This is the perfect example of a 'VUCA' world, what we have been discussing about since long. The whole world is in a situation of extreme volatility and uncertainty. Fear has engulfed everybody, and this labyrinthine situation has left everybody flustered and befuddled. Because of the recent 'Lockdown', people are engaging in social distancing and are stuck in their homes. Employers have asked employees to work from home but amidst all this there is one thing which is really significant that's employee experience and communication.

Effective communication and improving employee experience during these kinds of times is really important to ensure that the show is indeed going on. After the conclusion of this torrid phase, the people again have to muster some courage and bounce back with double the force. So, a potent communication strategy during this

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period is extremely crucial for trust building and developing connect. L&D can really play a big role in giving a frontline employee experience and designing a good communication strategy.

“It's all about creating right employee experience and allowing employees to feel this full force of trust during crisis”

## **Research Design**

The study focuses on five Manufacturing unit located in the city Noida. A sample study of 50 employees have been taken and detailed study is being done on their behavior and productivity. Training and Development intervention has been designed as per the language and other barriers and constraints. Hypothesis is being built that there was a considerable change observed in the behavior and overall productivity of these employees. The time span has been one year for the study.

Here are few interventions which were planned for the employees.

### **Online Employee Engagement Practices.**

“An idle mind is the devil's research and development department”. In order to prevent the lackadaisical approach of the employees' minds during this break, they need to be constantly engaged so as to make them more active, stress free and most importantly, Positive. It's very important that their engagement results in fruitful outcomes for the employee as well as the employer. Some guides and tips pertaining to employee engagement practices must be given in order to make them busy and connected throughout this phase.

Certain online quizzes, weekly innovative ideas, thought sharing sessions and some creative online workshops can be designed in a synchronous or an asynchronous manner to make them disciplined and adept to their respective functions and job profiles. They can be asked simple but thought-provoking questions like “What measures have they been taking these days in order to make this break productive at a personal as well as at a professional level?”

And why to limit these exercises to the employees? The results of this method will be equally good, if not better, if this method is employed among other stakeholders too. The main objective is to keep them constructively occupied and to shield them from the outside negativity that is currently surrounding our planet.

### **A Work from home guide**

A work from home guide during this period can be provided to the employees so that they can utilize their time fruitfully. Reporting officers play a huge role in designing some creative and innovative job tasks which can engage the employees and fetch useful outcomes for the organization as well. Employees should be advised to work smartly rather than wasting their valuable time on tasks which are seemingly irrelevant. Some creative and idea generation can be sought for keeping them on track and on the job even though they are not present in office.

### **People well-being guide**

An employee's wellness; both physical and emotional, are of utmost importance to the company. That is the sole reason modern organizations are spending an extravagant amount of time in advising and orienting the employees to inculcate good food habits, follow proper sleep patterns, maintain optimum fitness levels and raise their happiness quotients. L&D needs to work upon in the light of these:

- Issuing some 'Health Advisories' for maintaining personal hygiene and healthy habits.
- Providing some easy-to-follow Fitness tips.
- Reducing their stress levels by sharing some stress relieving practices like yoga, and also advising them to integrate habits such as consuming natural herbs, using music therapy etc.

## Lockdown manuals

A complete lockdown manual needs to be adumbrated and circulated among all the employees and stakeholders which details out the following:

- Clear cut dos and don'ts for this lockdown.
- The 'Advisory' to be followed as already suggested by the government.
- Any other suggestions which the organization considers feasible to incorporate.

The intention behind all these initiatives is to effectively navigate the fears of the employees, and to develop a proactive communication with them. Such practices will make sure that 'Work from home' situation too can make an employee think of a million ideas which bring in synergy and results in the long run.

Well, all these things seem to be pretty small, but it's always the little things that make big things happen. It is rightly said, "If you cannot do great things, do little things in a great way". No matter how small or unimportant what we are doing may seem, but if we do it well, it may very well ignite a spark among us, that will lead us to better things during this nightmarish situation.

## Results

The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient analysis revealed positive relationship between the main variables of employee training and employee performance. This was achieved through testing the relationship between the independent variable-Employee training -and the mediator variables - effective leadership, effective communication, and quality of work, employee motivation and job satisfaction - which strongly influenced the dependent variable of Employee performance.

Table 1 – Pearson Correlation analysis summary

	Variables	P value	Correlation Coefficient	Accept/ Reject
ET with mediators	Effective leadership	0.000	0.687**	Accepted
ET (IV)	Effective communication	0.000	0.735**	Accepted
	Quality of work	0.000	0.777**	Accepted
	Employee motivation	0.000	0.685**	Accepted
	Job satisfaction	0.000	0.726**	Accepted
EP with mediators	Effective leadership	0.000	0.866**	Accepted
EP (DV)	Effective communication	0.000	0.874**	Accepted
	Quality of work	0.000	0.826**	Accepted
	Employee motivation	0.000	0.895**	Accepted
	Job satisfaction	0.000	0.834**	Accepted
Between ET and EP		0.000	0.667**	Accepted
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level				

(ET – Employee Training, EP – Employee Performance, IV – Independent Variable, DV – Dependent Variable)

Source – Compiled by the author

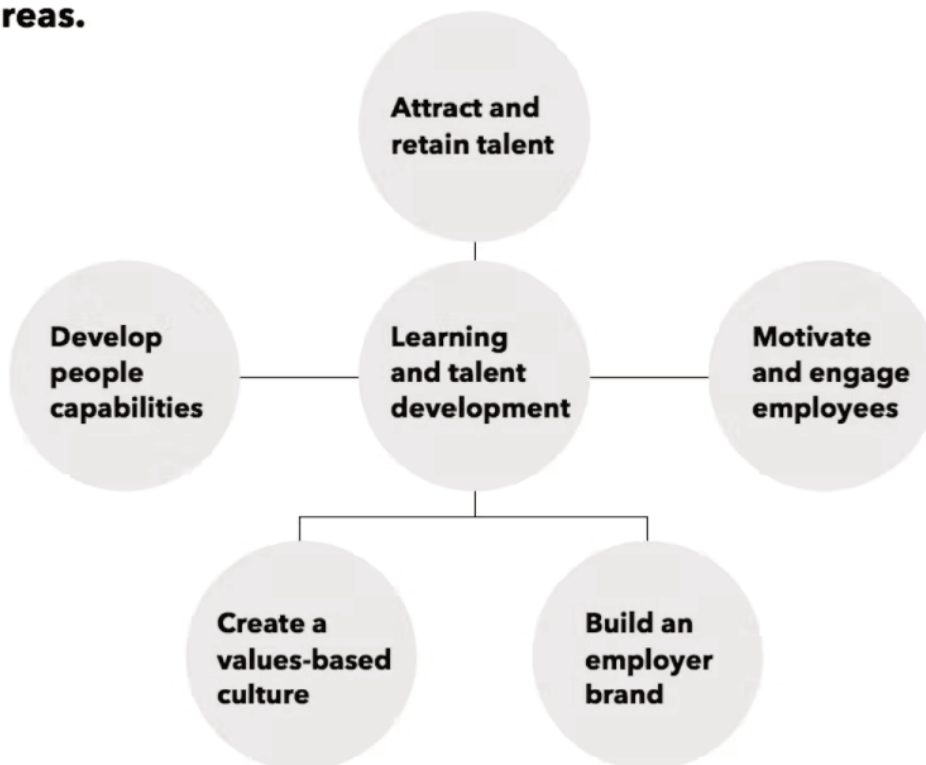


The Pearson correlation between the main variables of employee training (ET) and employee performance (EP) is +0.667, significant at 0.01 level, indicating a fairly strong relationship between.

### Findings and Suggestions

Learning and Development has a huge impact in employee performance and productivity. Exhibit A depicts the various effects which L&D can create in an organization. The benefits and value of training and development act like a domino effect; leaders feel competent and can efficiently influence employee performance; skilled and engaged employees result in high job satisfaction, commitment, and thus retention; workforce improvement and engagement benefit an organization's overall Wellbeing.

#### Exhibit A: **The learning function of an organization has a strategic role in five areas.**



Source: Adapted from Nick van Dam, *25 Best Practices in Learning & Talent Development*, Raleigh, NC: Lulu Publishing, 2008

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