



BEYOND THE CHECKBOX: HOW CULTURE MAKES LEARNING IRRESISTIBLE



Maria, a CHRO, regularly reviewed the company's latest learner engagement survey results. Despite significant investment in a new learning management system, course completion rates were low. Employees viewed training as a requirement, not an opportunity. The tools were in place, but the culture was missing. How could she shift the organization's mindset from mandatory training to a genuine desire for learning?

The need for this shift is not only being recognized by Maria, but by organizations across the learning industry. However, there are diverse challenges such as employees getting overwhelmed by the volume of training options, many of which are generic and disconnected from their day-to-day roles. Further, with rapid technological advancements, skills are becoming obsolete. There is also a lack of visible leadership support, which leaves many employees feeling that learning is not a priority for the organization.

This is the story of how Maria and several others are changing the culture around learning.

In the corporate world, learning should not be viewed as just another box to check. Cultivating a culture of continuous learning is non-negotiable and organizations must reimagine it as a strategic priority. This requires a multi-layered approach where leadership champions development, learning is personalized and engaging, and accountability is embedded at every level.

“Learning happens when people feel seen, heard, and inspired. Engagement is the bridge between knowledge and growth.”

Focus on leadership – the catalyst for learning

Model learning at the top

A successful learning culture begins at the top. Leaders should actively demonstrate the value of learning. For instance, in a monthly all-hands meeting, they could dedicate a ten-minute segment to sharing key insights from a recent campaign or customer interaction. This simple act makes learning visible and aspirational.

Link learning to business strategy

Learning initiatives should be explicitly linked to business objectives and skill development should be a strategic enabler. For instance, skilling is one of the key pillars of Infosys' strategy. Further, when a team's OKRs include upskilling in a specific area, such as AI-driven ad optimization to meet revenue targets, learning becomes directly tied to revenue goals.

Make learning aspirational

Organizations can consistently make learning aspirational by celebrating achievements. Recognizing “growth champions” in internal newsletters elevates learner motivation. Plus, providing access to advanced certifications makes employees feel that their growth unlocks new opportunities.

Ensure role-based and personalized learning

Since organizations have different functions, one-size-fits-all training programs are ineffective. Contextualized, role-based learning is far more relevant and impactful.

Learning paths by function

By developing specific learning paths for different functions, such as advanced analytics for performance marketing, companies ensure that the training provided is relevant and immediately applicable.

Skill ladders for career progression

By breaking down roles into a hierarchy of skills, organizations can define clear milestones for advancement. An employee can see a direct path from a junior position to a specialist role, with specific learning modules required to bridge the gap at each stage. Further, linking compensation to skill acquisition showcases that the company values demonstrable expertise.

Micro-learning for busy professionals

Given the limited attention span and busy work schedules, micro-learning is a practical solution to avoid losing learners. For example, the Infosys Lex platform has a user-friendly interface with audio-visual learning content limited to 15 minutes. Integrating bite-sized content such as short videos or quick tips into daily team rituals ensures that continuous learning fits naturally into the flow of work.

“Design learning for humans, not systems. Engagement begins with empathy.”

Create engaging learning experiences

Make learning fun through gamification

Gamification is a great strategy for boosting employee motivation. Leaderboards by function, badges for course completions, and small rewards like vouchers or spotlight mentions can introduce a sense of friendly competition.

Encourage knowledge sharing and community building

Fostering a sense of community is essential to enhance learner engagement. For example, the Infosys Learning Foundry in Bengaluru invites subject matter experts (SMEs) to have conversations about what they have learned. These are not formal training sessions but opportunities for individuals to share knowledge for the joy of it. This creates an environment where learners feel valued for what they know, understanding that the more they share, the more they are recognized.

Learning sprints or festivals

Organizations can implement focused learning sprints or festivals around a central theme, like "AI in Marketing." These time-bound initiatives encourage teams to apply a new concept to a real-world project, turning theoretical knowledge into practical application.

Peer-to-peer learning

Peer learning pods help break down silos and promote cross-functional learning. For example, a content writer paired with a paid media specialist can gain a more holistic view of the marketing ecosystem.

Live learning circles

Weekly "Show and Learn" circles provide a platform for employees to demonstrate new tools, campaign hacks, or innovative frameworks. These live sessions encourage knowledge exchange, spark curiosity, and make learning a collaborative experience.

Ensure accountability and momentum

The role of managers in driving learning

A learning culture thrives with accountability, and managers play a pivotal role in driving this momentum. When managers take active interest in their team's development, it has a profound impact on their productivity. Managers must incorporate learning check-ins into regular one-on-one meetings.

Recognition and structured challenges

Structured initiatives like "Skill-of-the-Month" challenge, where everyone picks one learning theme and teams present short case studies on how they applied it can encourage continuous learning.

Buddy system for knowledge sharing

A buddy system, pairing senior and junior team members for shadow learning, helps with knowledge retention and practical application. This also encourages mentorship and peer support.

Continuous engagement with subtle nudges

To keep learning top-of-mind without being intrusive, organizations can use subtle nudges such as automated reminders or prompts in communication channels. These help maintain visibility and encourage consistent engagement.

Measure, reward, and evolve

Building a foundation with data

To make any learning initiative successful, it is critical to track engagement, measure its impact, and adapt accordingly. Key metrics to monitor include course completion rates, the number of active learners per month, and, most importantly, the tangible impact on business results such as post-learning improvements in campaign performance.

Recognize and celebrate learning wins

Celebrating wins is as important as tracking metrics. When a team successfully applies a new skill to a campaign, their achievement should be spotlighted in town halls or internal dashboards. This demonstrates the practical value of learning to the entire organization. For example, the 100 Days Learning Challenge initiated by Infosys 100 days before the new year helps form a community of learners who start building new competencies and feel transformed as they enter the new year.

Close the loop

A learning culture must be a living system. Regularly collecting feedback from employees on what works and what does not is essential for closing the loop. This allows the organization to evolve its learning paths and delivery methods, ensuring they remain relevant.

By integrating leadership, personalization, engagement, accountability, and continuous improvement, Maria transformed the organization's culture. Lifelong learning became an attitude, resonating throughout the company.

To move from principles to predictable outcomes, organizations need a simple way to operationalize culture. At Infosys, that operating system is the “7Cs”— a pragmatic framework that links participation to proficiency and, ultimately, to performance.

The 7Cs represent seven key focus areas in the learning ecosystem at Infosys. Each area evaluates a specific aspect of learning progression.

Coverage

The learning platform and its content should provide ample opportunities for everyone to learn. It tracks how many people have started their learning journey.

Consumption

This determines how many learners are actively progressing in their learning journey and how much time is being spent consuming content.

Completion

This focuses on whether courses are being completed and assessments are being taken or they are left unfinished.

Competency

Competency building can be evidenced by evaluating changes in how learners handle daily tasks and the feedback they get from their managers.

Celebration

This ensures that learner achievements are recognized. Rewards like points, milestone badges, and other acknowledgments are part of this focus area.

Certification

Learning is put to test here. This focus area checks if learners are answering questions or solving case studies to earn certifications.

Conversion

The final C aligns competencies with the skill hierarchy. It assesses the impact of learning on overall business growth.

By addressing these focus areas, the 7C strategy can help validate learning progression and determine its effectiveness.

Looking into the crystal ball

As organizations continue to evolve, the future of learning will be shaped by advancements in technology, making learning more dynamic, adaptive, and impactful. Here’s how these advancements will transform the learning landscape.

AI as the core learning engine

AI will evolve into a true learning partner, offering real-time coaching, adaptive feedback, and personalized learning paths tailored to individual roles and skill gaps. Generative AI will automate content development, assessments, and localization, slashing design time by up to 70%. Further, AI-driven analytics will directly link learning to business outcomes, enabling organizations to make data-backed, ROI-focused decisions.

From courses to skills – The new learning currency

The future of learning is skills-first. AI will help organizations move beyond static course catalogs to dynamic, skills-based frameworks that map learning to job roles and career growth. Skills will become the new currency of the workplace, with AI providing clear pathways for rapid reskilling and internal mobility.

Learning embedded in the flow of work

Learning will be seamlessly integrated into the flow of work with digital adoption platforms, in-app guidance, and AI assistants. This will transform learning into a continuous, contextual experience that aligns with employees’ daily tasks.

Hyper-personalization at scale

AI-powered platforms will deliver hyper-personalized learning journeys, offering curated content, micro-learning modules, and role-specific training. Personalization will extend to career aspirations, preferred formats, and individual learning speeds, ensuring that training is relevant and deeply engaging.

Immersive learning – The future is hands-on

Technologies like AR/VR and the Metaverse, combined with AI, will create immersive, hands-on simulations for mastering complex skills. These safe, interactive environments will foster innovation and practice, while gamification and AI-driven adaptive challenges will enhance engagement.

Data-driven impact – From insights to impact

Advanced analytics will shift the focus of learning measurement from completion rates to behavioral change and business KPIs. Predictive insights on skill gaps, readiness, and performance will enable organizations to make informed decisions, ensuring learning initiatives are both impactful and aligned with strategic goals.

All in all, building a learning culture is not an initiative, it is an identity. When leaders model curiosity, when learning is embedded in daily work, and when AI amplifies every learner’s potential, organizations unlock something far more powerful than skills — they unlock momentum. A culture of learning is a culture that adapts, evolves, and ultimately thrives — no matter how rapidly the world changes.

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