

Towards a new Culture of Learning - #culturaprendizaje

Inspiring principles for the work of the future: The culture of learning as a strategic axis for intelligent organisations.

Aimed at people with responsibilities in the management of organisations and work teams, both in public and private institutions.

Learning is at the heart of human survival. Throughout history, we have adapted to change thanks to our capacity for learning, not only individual learning but above all collective learning. We are intelligent because we accumulate and apply knowledge and learn quickly in community. That learning includes an emotional dimension and not just a rational one. We seemed to have forgotten it, but COVID-19 confronts us with two unquestionable truths. The first is that the present situation can be attributed to the fact that we have attached truly little importance to learning. It is not the first time in history that we have suffered a pandemic and there was also a history of warning of a catastrophe like the one we are suffering from. The second one is that our civilization is totally dependent on knowledge: developing a vaccine is the safest way out of the crisis. The main asset of an organisation that wishes to contribute with sustainable value is the knowledge of its collaborators and therefore this knowledge must be rigorously managed. It is time to admit that an economic model that prioritizes production and short-term results leaves no space for learning, nor does it consider other non-tangible assets such as the environment or inequalities. That must change, it's imperative and this could be our best chance. Learning and sharing knowledge are the best tools to reach any goal.

This is not a new diagnosis. Over the past few years, several initiatives have come up encouraging organisations and society as a whole to focus on people and knowledge, which means moving from training to learning as soon as possible. This call has reached a still insufficient percentage of organisations. Today we are learning first-hand that we are all interconnected in a global planet with finite resources. A world in which knowledge expires faster and faster because of unpredictable changes. The only alternative to adapt to the new reality is to learn at least at the same speed as the environment changes. It is essential in this context for people and organisations to be able to unlearn and learn to learn. Developing a learning culture demands a leadership able to foster organisations based on knowledge sharing and collaboration among its members.

In this situation of much uncertainty many organisations which used to compete are investing resources in collaboration, innovating in more liquid organisational models. Many people are showing unprecedented levels of commitment and attitude. But this is not enough. Society as a whole and organisations in particular are compelled to incorporate learning as a core part of their strategy, values and work processes, understanding that learning is part of them, not only to overcome the present

situation but also to anticipate future challenges. The aim is to place learning on the same level as production or commercial activity. We are all responsible for making our organisations smarter after this crisis. We have seen, for example, that in a short time some people and organisations have been able to work from home and we have overcome some of the obstacles associated to digital transformation. It is therefore our responsibility to keep this legacy alive. An organisation or society that does not learn is doomed to disappear. Those in leadership roles, those responsible for managing the assets of their organisation, have a key role to play in order to ensure their ability to learn and transform. It's not the future that's at stake, it's the present.

The following principles are a call to be aware of the urgency of organisational learning today and now. They also list a series of actions to make sure it happens.

Principles

Today, more than ever, we must draw lessons from what has happened...

- **Leaders** and organisations must re-think and/or redesign and **innovate their value proposition**, to align it with **the globally established social commitments** and sustainable development goals (SDG's), being learning an essential lever for their achievements.
- This **learning** is a **long-life learning**. It is a right and duty of every person. It can be applied to all the activities that we carry out at an **individual, collective, organisational, and social level**. Neither individuals nor organisations can move forward without learning.

...highlighting the collective intelligence of organisations, ...

- In order to solve our current problems and to anticipate future challenges for our organisations, we need to take advantage of **all** the knowledge and **collective intelligence that we treasure and have accumulated**.
- A new approach to work and a new attitude towards work, in which learning is part of **work**, and knowledge becomes a **common good**. This **engages us** to develop a **culture of learning** as part of the **strategy of the organisation**.

...to create, through learning and knowledge, a new reality...

- The culture of learning **should integrate all people**, inside and outside the organisation. It must contribute to consolidate its values, to develop skills and to **promote new ways of working**.
- To promote and facilitate learning, organisations must:
 - Identify and prioritize **key learnings** that bring value to the organisation.
 - Create a **framework of shared responsibility**, with shared and **inclusive** leaderships able to promote mutual trust, collaboration, and **experimentation**, ensuring the practice of the lessons learned without fear and **learning from mistakes and successes**.

- Ensure **learning and development dialogues** with all people, to exchange experiences and information, to generate mutual commitments, highlighting the importance of different perspectives for their innovative potential.
- **To provide us with spaces, resources, content, and time**, that allow us to reflect, share and replace behaviours with **new creative and innovative ways of doing things**.
- To promote **critical and diverse thinking** as well as the creation of **intelligent alliances** with other organisations, in order to learn from their experience and also to promote **competitiveness**.

... that we are committed to making possible.

- All people with management responsibility or **leadership capacity must help and work with** the whole of our **organisation to learn to learn, to unlearn, to innovate, to collaborate, to develop** all their talent and to deploy all their personal, technical, relational and digital skills...
- We must encourage **learning strategies** and **continuous development** in our teams in order to **implement changes** that contribute to increase **the value proposition** of the organisation, oriented towards the **SDG's, and multiply its impact on society**.
- This should lead us to **generate organisational learning models that are people-centered**, supported by **technology** and encouraging networking to **manage new knowledge** within the organisation.

It is our commitment.

And what about you ¿Do you commit yourself?