

Assessing Learning Requirements

Description:

This tool provides a description of a learning organization and a learning assessment tool.

How it can be used:

Being a learning health organization is more than having a vision, offering incentives and providing a variety of training. It is also about knowing the health system context and understanding its employees' competencies and skills. Essentially, a learning organization creates an environment where employees are encouraged to become learners.

Consider the features of a learning organization and use the assessment tool to help you understand your employees better. This will help you plan your organizational training needs and establish priorities.

Employees who enjoy learning are fostered in a learning organization. But what does a learning organization look like?

- Employees are skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge.
- The organization cultivates tolerance, supports open discussion, thinks holistically, and operates systematically.

There are three building blocks or characteristics that an organization must put in place to become a learning organization.

1. A supportive learning environment with four distinguishing characteristics:
 - a. Psychological safety
 - b. Appreciation of differences
 - c. Openness to new ideas
 - d. Time for reflection
2. Concrete learning processes and practices:
 - a. Knowledge must be shared in systematic and clearly defined ways
 - b. Sharing can take place among individuals, groups or the whole organization
 - c. Knowledge can move vertically and laterally within the organization
3. Leadership that reinforces learning:
 - a. Leaders actively question and listen to employees
 - b. Leaders prompt dialogue and debate
 - c. Employees feel encouraged to learn

Organizations that are deliberate and strategic in their approach to employee learning are seeing improved organizational effectiveness. They are benefiting from improved recruitment and retention of employees, higher employee satisfaction, and overall improvements in operational performance. How does your organization compare to the description of a learning organization?

A training needs assessment tool can help you determine the general competencies and behaviours of your employees. This provides useful direction when planning learning activities and prioritizing training resources.

