

HR Insights

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PROTECTING TOMORROW...TODAY.

How to Make Learning and Development Programs Enticing

Workplaces are currently facing a variety of challenges. One of the most pressing concerns is employee voluntary resignation; many entry-level, retail and hospitality workers are quitting in record numbers. However, this problem is affecting virtually every industry.

Certain employers are combatting this trend by emphasizing how much value they can bring to their workers beyond a simple paycheck. For some workplaces, these efforts entail promoting career growth with learning and development (L&D) solutions.

Yet, an L&D program will only succeed if employees are eager to participate. This article outlines how employers can prioritize L&D efforts without compromising productivity.

Understanding the Value of L&D Programs

A quality L&D program promotes a growth mindset and an independent pursuit for knowledge. In other words, these programs can allow employers to cultivate an environment that helps support employees on their learning journeys. When employees don't have development and career advancement opportunities, they may feel unchallenged or unmotivated in their roles.

L&D efforts have the ability to be a powerful attraction and retention tool for organizations, but also offer other benefits. These efforts can positively impact workplaces by:

- Closing worker skill gaps
- Keeping up with workplace demands
- Increasing employee innovation and creativity
- Boosting employee productivity

While L&D programs have been shown to benefit organizations and their workers, they can only do so when implemented effectively.

Making L&D Programs Enticing

Simply having L&D programs in place isn't enough to guarantee success; employees must also want to participate in these initiatives. After all, workers will still be responsible for their day-to-day duties. Therefore, L&D efforts must be attractive and useful enough to garner employees' voluntary interests.

Below are some ways employers can help foster successful L&D solutions:

- **Demonstrate purpose**—Employees will be more drawn to participate in an L&D program if they know it will benefit their careers or personal growth. As such, employers need to communicate exactly how their L&D initiatives can help workers. These benefits may include:
 - Qualifying employees for other responsibilities
 - Gaining certifications and, subsequently, higher wages
 - Honing soft skills

- Obtaining relevant career experience
- **Make L&D programs attractive, not mandatory**—Employees should be drawn toward L&D efforts, not pushed. A mandatory program may promote resentment rather than genuine interest, eventually leading to burnout.
- **Consider microlearning solutions**—Instead of prolonged learning sessions, microlearning involves bite-sized curricula that employees can pick up and set down as their schedules allow.
- **Differentiate L&D efforts from training**—While similar, L&D programs aren't the same as employee training, the latter of which is typically mandatory and required for certain roles. Rather, L&D solutions are a voluntary way to grow skills, knowledge and abilities that can be applied in a number of circumstances.
- **Avoid micromanagement**—Employees should be drawn to L&D opportunities as a way to enrich themselves personally or professionally. Constant prodding from managers to complete assignments can undermine employees' motivation and progress.

The above tips can help employers establish L&D programs that may work for their employees, but they are only a starting point. Ultimately, employers will need to settle on L&D initiatives that resonate the most with their workers' unique needs and interests.

Conclusion

Pursuing L&D efforts can be a worthwhile endeavor for employers and employees alike. Amid the current job market, it can also be a powerful attraction and retention tool.

Reach out to Ollis/Akers/Arney Human Resources Consultants for additional workplace guidance.

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