SUCCESSFUL
CORPORATE LEARNING TWEET

**Critical Skills
All Learning Professionals
Can Put to Use Today**

BILL CUSHARD and MITCHELL LEVY
FOREWORD BY JANE BOZARTH

BOOK 02

A THiNKaha® BOOK

#SUCCESSFUL CORPORATE LEARNING **tweet**
Book02
Critical Skills All Learning Professionals Can Put to Use Today

Book Excerpt

By Bill Cushard and Mitchell Levy

Foreword by Jane Bozarth

THiNKaha®

Critical Skills All Learning Professionals Can Put to Use Today

BOOK EXCERPT Table of Contents

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This is the Table of Contents (TOC) from the book for your reference. The eBook TOC (below) differs in page count from the tradebook TOC.

Foreword by Jane Bozarth

My biggest challenge for the past five years or so has been helping people see past the hype and on to the value of social media in the workplace, with some days more successful than others. The value of collaborative learning and shared knowledge is inestimable, and we finally have tools that help us learn and live out loud. Surfacing this learning via social tools, rather than burying it in databases and emails, makes it transparent and multiplies the value for the bigger audience now privy to it. My favorite tool for general learning and sharing is Twitter, and over the years I have developed a large Personal Learning Network (PLN) of kind, smart, funny people who respond to requests for help or information in a heartbeat. I often say, "Google gives me links, but Twitter gives me answers."

It's always fun to see someone practice what they preach. In this compilation of tweet-sized tips, my own PLN member and frequent #lrnchat participant Bill Cushard offers useful, pointed guidelines for everything from designing instruction to building an effective personal learning network. What's covered here proves that you can do a lot with 140 characters, offering ideas with both depth and potential for application. And, if nothing else, the Twitter character limit forces you to cut the chaff and get to the wheat already. Enjoy.

Jane Bozarth
Author, *Social Media for Trainers*

Section I: What Does the Business Really Want?

Section 1
What Does the Business Really Want?

Of all the critical skills we present in this book, understanding what the business really wants is the most vital. It is these skills that will keep you in the game and provide you a foundation to evolve with the business as it changes. When Bill was a training manager early in his career, he had an intuitive sense that if he could deliver a training program that made life easier on the Director of Customer Service, he would have done his job well. At a fast-growing online financial services organization, they were hiring scores of people every month.

"I need these people to be prepared to talk to our customers as quickly as possible," the Director of Customer Service said. She did not tell Bill she needed good training. She told him what her business needed. If handing out donuts prepared people to talk to our customers, he could have passed out donuts. It was not about training, it was about the end result. Then it hit Bill as he read Ram Charan's *What the CEO Wants You to Know*[1]—everything that anyone in the organization needs to do is contribute to the end goals of the business. Customer service has a role, sales has a role, operations has a role, even the learning department has a role. So, if a learning organization has a role to contribute to the end goals as a business, just like any other department, why is it that learning professionals resist this notion?

As Bill grew as a training manager and worked with others in his profession, he observed this resistance in many ways. First, too many times he had heard learning professionals complain that they do not have enough resources. He had also participated in discussions in which his learning colleagues complain that executives don't understand the importance of proper andragogy (adult learning theory) and hear them complain that "if we only had nine months to develop the needed training, it could be so much better." All Bill kept thinking during these conversations were, "No one else has enough resources either" or "But the customer is on the phone now" or "But the product launch is in three weeks." Too often for learning professionals the learning is the ultimate goal, not the business results. And that is a problem.

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1. Ram Charan, *What the CEO Wants You to Know: How Your Company Really Works* (New York: Crown Business, 2001).

Learning is a means to an end. The end is whatever the business cares about most. Learning professionals often only see learning as the end, when our focus should not be on what people learn but what people do to improve business results. The end is performance. Performance could be defined by revenue, cash flow, profit margin, speed to market, productivity, quality, or any other measure that is important to your business. Certainly all organizations have a customer or a constituency it serves. One vital end is helping to make sure that the customer is served well.

So you have to ask yourself if the learning experiences that you deliver make an impact on those measures that the business cares about most. For example, did the training improve sales results? Did this new social learning platform reduce training costs and increase productivity of the people who use it? Did these job aids reduce error rates? That is what business leaders care about.

1

"If you don't like change, you're going to like irrelevance even less."
– General Eric Shinseki, former U.S. Army Chief of Staff

2

Business acumen is understanding your stakeholder's business model, what they care about most, and their most important challenges.

5

How you provide value: know the top three things your CEO cares about most. Help him/her achieve those things.

6

The best way to align your goals to the business goals is to make your goals the business goals.

7

Think of yourself as a business professional that drives results through people, not a training person. Design solutions to that end.

Section IV
Enterprise 2.0 Collaboration

Learning professionals have a new purpose in our professional lives. We no longer are responsible only for training people in our organizations. That may be one of the things we do, but it is no longer our sole purpose. In the new world of work, our job is to enable people to work together so they can learn from each other in the moment of need. It is time to stretch—even impose—ourselves into areas of the business not traditionally occupied by the training department. Learning professionals should help work groups learn how to use Enterprise 2.0 collaboration tools. Enterprise 2.0 collaboration is a broad category, and does overlap with social and informal learning. With social learning, there is an element of facilitating learning with the purpose of learning something new. Enterprise 2.0 collaboration is about helping people work smarter by connecting people and enabling them to tap into each other's knowledge and experience so they can get their work done more efficiently. For example, learning professionals can help people learn to use collaboration tools to create documents together and eliminate the need for sending multiple emails with updated attachments that no one can keep straight.

What if you helped people create personal learning networks (PLN) using tools like Yammer, Chatter, or Elgg? Enterprise 2.0 collaboration does not even need to be about technology. What if you sat in the office with the group you support rather than in the training department office space? Another non-technology collaboration solution could be to get a white board on wheels, dry erase pens, an eraser, a couple of stools, and wheel them into a corner somewhere. Write on the white board, "Got an idea? Write it here." The point is to bring people together so they can work together to solve problems.

90

Learning needs to become a part of your daily workflow.

91

Attend staff meetings in operations, sales, customer service, and other organizations you support.

92

Embed yourself in the organizations you support. Attend manager meetings and participate like any other manager.

93

Request to have your desk or office moved so you sit with the organizations you support.

94

Think of bringing learning to work rather than removing people from their work to learn.

95

Instead of classroom, e-learning, and brown-bag lunches, think communities of practice, brainstorming sessions, and huddle rooms.

96

A personal learning network (PLN) is a collection of resources that one can tap into to find answers to questions or offer ideas to others.

109

Stop sending attachments by email. Post it on SharePoint, Box.net, Huddle, etc., and tell people to go there to review it.

110

Enterprise 2.0 collaboration is about enabling people in organizations to create much of the content they need to do their jobs effectively.

111

Tap into the tacit knowledge in your organization by providing tools that allow people to ask for help and share what they know.

112

Enterprise 2.0 collaboration is to knowledge management as Wikipedia is to the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Section V
Performance Support

Performance support is about providing people with the resources they need to do their jobs. Let's face it, there is no practical way we can satisfy all of the learning needs of the people we serve. Nor should we and nor do they want us to. For example, people do not need to spend too much time learning how to do a complex task that they perform infrequently. For those tasks, provide people with an easy-to-find resource that clearly explains how to perform the task. Most people think of this as a job aid. And it is, except the job aid could be in the form of a short audio or video clip, a simple checklist, a laminated card, or pictures showing steps in a process. For certain tasks, performance support is a much better solution than training. In the end, the point is to improve performance, not provide training.

126

Helping people find people
who can help them with their
job is an under-used aspect
of performance support.

127

Be creative. Performance support is about helping people improve performance. Nothing more. Nothing less.

128

Do this exercise: spend the next 10 minutes writing down how many ways you could help people improve their performance.

129

Don't forget about mobile. Many people have smartphones and would gladly use them to look up performance support resources.

130

For mobile performance support, think podcasts, video, checklists, refresher quizzes, and instructions.

131

Still don't understand performance support? If nothing else, create checklists. Have you ever created a checklist as part of your training?

132

Ask yourself, "Could good checklists replace some of the training I offer? Would that be a better use of time for my audience?"

133

You know those audio programs that give tours of museums? Why not create one of those for new hires?

134

Performance support can reduce the need for some of the training you provide—lowering your training costs, while increasing effectiveness.

About the Authors

Bill Cushard is not a typical learning leader. Rather, he is a revenue accelerating, customer satisfaction specialist who just happens to be an innovative learning and performance improvement professional. He has always believed that employee performance and the customer experience are critical drivers of revenue and profit. During his career, Bill has delivered learning experiences that have improved employee performance and directly impacted productivity, quality, and customer satisfaction.

Bill has over 15 years of experience building innovative learning organizations at well-known companies like E*TRADE Financial, Accenture, Time Warner Cable, The Knowland Group, and Allonhill. He holds a Bachelor's degree in International Business from the University of Denver, a Master of Business Administration from Pepperdine University, and is currently working on his PhD in Education with a specialization in Training and Performance Improvement at Capella University.

Bill blogs about his beliefs, experiences, and approach to enterprise learning and collaboration on *The Daily Mindflash* blog and on his personal blog, *Luminary Learning*. He has spoken at several conferences and events including Devlearn 2010, the California Society of Association Executives (CalSAE) Elevate 2011 Conference, the 2011 Enterprise Learning Conference & Expo, and at an ASTD Sacramento Chapter meeting. He is a former president-elect for the Mt. Diablo ASTD chapter in the San Francisco Bay Area and donates to the Silicon Valley Education Foundation.

Bill enjoys skiing, running, fly fishing, and playing Monopoly at the dinner table with his family.

Mitchell Levy is the author of 12 business books and the CEO of the independent publishing house Happy About. After earning his MBA from the College of William and Mary, he spent 13 years working for corporations in IT, Finance, and Operations. He then spent 11 years as an entrepreneur creating 13 companies and strategic partnerships, including Happy About in 2005. During this timeframe, he created over 70 courses at various universities, online learning courses, and booked over 500 speakers at large-scale conferences.

Mr. Levy is also partner of the physical networking firm CXOnetworking and sits on the Board of Directors at Rainmaker Systems (NASDAQ: RMKR). Previously, he created four executive education programs at two different Silicon Valley Universities, was the conference chair for four Comdex conferences focusing on business executives at medium-to-large sized enterprises, has contributed to and written over 100 articles, and given over 250 speeches on e-commerce and business.

Getting "#SUCCESSFUL CORPORATE LEARNING tweet Book02" (http://bit.ly/SCLtweet02[1])

"#SUCCESSFUL CORPORATE LEARNING tweet Book02" can be purchased as an eBook for $11.95 or tradebook for $16.96 at **http://bit.ly/SCLtweet02**[2] or at other online and physical book stores.

Please contact us for quantity discounts **sales@happyabout.info** or to be informed about upcoming titles **bookupdate@happyabout.info** or phone (408-257-3000).

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1. www.happyabout.com/thinkaha/successfulcorporatelearningtweet02.php
2. www.happyabout.com/thinkaha/successfulcorporatelearningtweet02.php

#SUCCESSFUL CORPORATE LEARNING TWEET

Don't Fall Behind-Keep Your Skills Ahead of the Pack

"[This book] is a real tweet—sorry, make that treat—from two wonderful workplace learning and performance (staff training) leaders. The bite-sized bits of wisdom that flow through the book serve as great reminders for all of us, and also provide a wonderful set of daily exercises for those of us who want to become better trainers-as-leaders producing positive results for the organizations and clients we serve."
-Paul Signorelli, Co-author (with Lori Reed), *Workplace Learning & Leadership*

"Bill and Mitchell have a unique ability to integrate witty and insightful learnings into everyday business practices that are so often overlooked. Learning does not have to be an event; as they share it must be an ongoing, integral part of the workplace. Bill and Mitchell teach us straightforward practices to accomplish this."
-Suzi White, Director, Customer Service, Motif Investing

"Bill and Mitchell understand that if performance doesn't improve, neither do profits. Training departments that don't understand that principle will find themselves obsolete. Read this book, avoid obsolescence and make your organization successful."
-Rick Zanotti, Founder, RELATE Corporation

Bill Cushard (@billcush) is an innovative learning leader who has built and led learning organizations at E*TRADE Financial, Accenture, Time Warner Cable, The Knowland Group, and Allonhill. A thought leader, Bill has spoken at many conferences and blogs at *The Daily Mindflash* blog.

Corporate visionary, acclaimed speaker, prolific business writer, and CEO of publishing house Happy About, *Mitchell Levy* (@happyabout) finds himself frequently called upon for his strategic expertise, big picture thinking, and extensive business networks.

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