

## What is a Learning and Development Strategy and Why Does Your Organisation Need One?

**A Learning and Development strategy is not a menu of programmes. A great Learning and Development Strategy can enable an organisation to achieve its goals and its people to achieve their full potential.**

Organisational performance, generational demands, competitor differentiation are some of the few criteria that are contributing to the elevation for the need for the Learning and Development (L&D) offer to expedite the delivery of robust and impactful learning experiences and results.

Tom Garavan's recent research demonstrates this escalation; with evidence of more senior roles being created in the area of L&D at a strategic and project management level. A future feature of L&D representation at the Executive table is predicted, the challenge is to achieve a value add position at the C Suite whilst ensuring that there is strong engagement throughout the organisation from front line managers to employees.

*It is no longer acceptable to provide a menu of learning experiences to suffice as a strategy. The IITD Survey on L&D Activity, Budgeting and Current trends 2017 cited that 70% of respondents confirmed that their organisation have an L&D strategy in place, while a further 13% indicated that a strategy was currently being considered.*

The research found that more than half of those surveyed said that their L&D plan is tied into and fully integrated with the strategic plan while a further 44% indicated that the plan was partially linked to the strategic plan. For the remaining 4% of respondents, L&D is separate to and independent to the strategic organisational objectives.

However experience and research demonstrates that L&D strategy is not just about being connected to the organisation goals and a demonstration of holistic joined-up thinking. It needs to incorporate a number of elements to ensure it can truly deliver on the organisational goals and the engagement and development of its people.

The table below illustrates the elements that form part of a robust L&D strategy.

<b>Strategy</b> Vision, strategy and goals of the learning organisation, and their alignment with the business strategy	<b>Operations</b> The 'back office' processes that support delivery of learning programmes and services
<b>Structure</b> How learning is organised to provide programmes and services to the business	<b>Partners</b> Quality of learning vendors and partners, and how they are managed to optimise cost, quality and cycle time
<b>People</b> People, culture and competencies of the learning organisation	<b>Programmes</b> Programmes and services provided by the learning organisation and how they are delivered
<b>Technology</b> Tools and technologies that support learning and learning operations	<b>Investment</b> Investment the organisation is making in and value achieved from learning services, staff and technology

Adapted from PwC US article *Creating a high-performing learning organization*, 2009

In the last two years Harvest have partnered with a number of organisations to develop their L&D strategy and use these elements to inform and guide the design process. We facilitate the development of the strategy whilst ensuring that the L&D and or HR team engage in the detailed development of the plan.

These ensures robust context and relevance and provides a learning experience that the team can replicate themselves for future strategy design.

If you would like more information about Learning and Development Strategy, email [hello@harvest.ie](mailto:hello@harvest.ie) or call 014974622.