

Life-Long Learning: What's the Big Deal?

If you work in the business world, you have likely heard the term “life-long learning” a few times. You may call it training, adult learning, course taking or any number of different terms. But do you know the importance of it? Life-long learning is critical to one’s sustenance and success! The reality today is every individual in the work place is responsible for building one’s own knowledge base.

Many individuals look to their supervisors and/or managers to help them learn. This is the wrong approach!

During my career, I have seen numerous examples of employees who did not take charge of their own learning and development. One example that comes to mind is the case of Georgina, who complained to her department head that she wasn’t getting the courses she needed to move to the next level in her job. Her manager asked her if she had sat down with Sam, her supervisor, to discuss her career path. You already know the answer – she said, “No, it’s his job!” Sam may know the job and what is expected of Georgina in that role, however, he may not know what Georgina needs in order to do her job even better. Georgina’s kind of thinking is out of step.

Employee development and learning is much more effective when supervisors and managers work together with their direct reports. Talking collaboratively with the employee about where they are in their career and where they want to go can help both parties. Once the supervisor or manager knows the employee’s career goals, it is easier to create an appropriate developmental plan to help the employee achieve his or her career goals. It is every employee’s job to recognize what he or she needs. As employers, we expect people to think for themselves! That can be quite a shock for some people today!

To engage employees to take control of their career, many companies use learning programs to

teach their employees career management. Create Your Career GPS™ is a learning program offered by Career Partners International to help every employee understand their career path is their responsibility. The supervisor/manager’s job is to assist employees in getting to their career goal. More importantly, this program helps people connect their career objectives and their needs, wants, education, experience, expertise and goals with the training and developmental needs as seen by the supervisor or manager. In the end, they leave the program with a plan and the manager or supervisor can assist. These two individuals can now sit down and create a plan so the employee can garner the experience and learning they need to be able to advance their career.

Life-long learning is critical to employee’s success and business success! Careers evolve, industries evolve, and life evolves. Keeping up-to-date on the latest information available while continually gaining new skills can be valuable to your career.

You are responsible for your career! What are you doing about it?

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