

TURN YOUR DATA INTO A KILLER LEARNING IMPACT STORY

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RECENTLY, WE TALKED TO OVER 40 L&D LEADERS ABOUT THEIR STRATEGIES FOR MEASURING AND ANALYZING EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT.

A STORY EMERGED, HIGHLIGHTING LEADING PRACTICES FOR ALIGNING, EXECUTING, GATHERING, CONSOLIDATING, AND ILLUSTRATING WHAT THEY DO. AS IT TURNS OUT, TODAY'S L&D ORGANIZATIONS CAN DO MORE THAN JUST SHOW IMPACT — THEY CAN ACTUALLY HAVE IMPACT.

GET CLEAR ON THE BUSINESS GOAL

FIRST THINGS FIRST: Tie what you do to business goals. Begin by understanding what the organizational goals are.

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

What is the business goal we are trying to move?

How is the organization measuring the business goal?

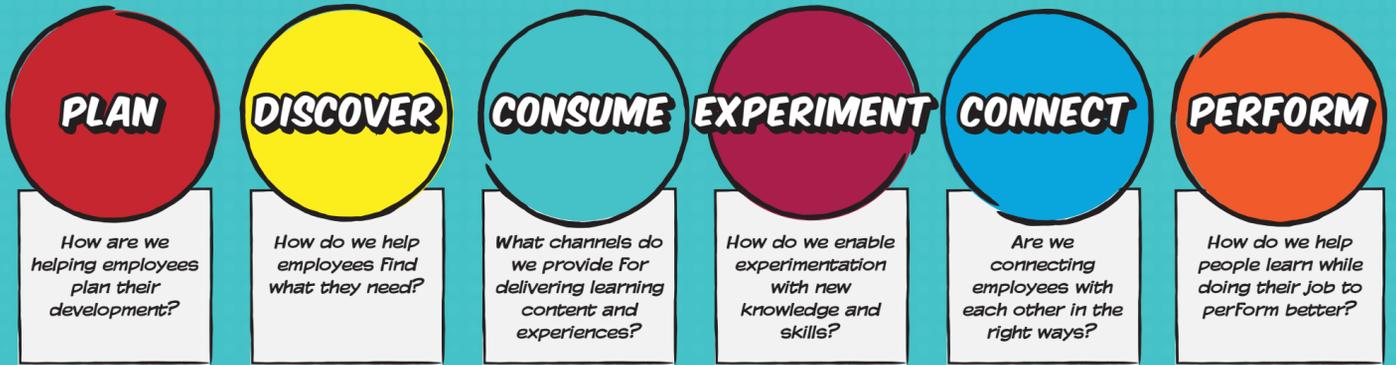
How will what L&D does affect the business goal?

Who do we need to collaborate with in order to ensure that this is successful?

What employee development needs to happen in order to affect the business goal?

CONSIDER ALL THE LEVERS

Don't shortchange your impact; Pay attention to ALL of the things you can do — and measure — to affect the Business KPIs. Most L&D orgs Focus heavily on helping employees consume content. But when they focus instead on influencing the **CONDITIONS** for learning, their opportunity for impact increases.



MAKE YOUR METRICS

Most useful metrics don't come preassembled; you have to make them! Find the purest form of the data and then add context, like rate, percentage of total, variation from average, or correlation to other metrics.

RATE!

e.g. # of employees accessing learning paths related to business goal by month

PERCENTAGE!

e.g. % of employees with items related to business goals in their IDPs

VARIATION!

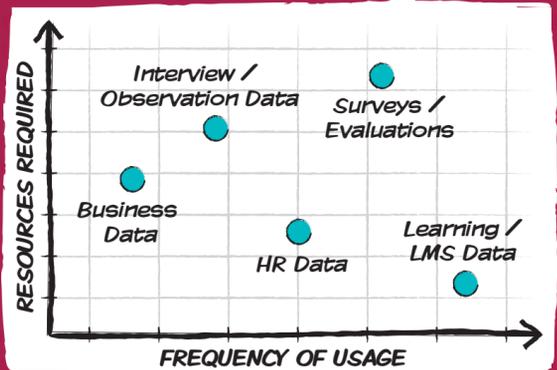
e.g. Increase or decrease in # of cross-functional connections

CORRELATION!

e.g. Correlation between business KPI and awareness campaign

CHOOSE DATA SOURCES

DON'T JUST ROUND UP THE USUAL SUSPECTS! Look for data that will tell your story — don't build your story around the data you have. But do beware of the support you're asking for from your organization — gathering data can suck major resources.



CONSIDER LEADING AND LAGGING INDICATORS

Use both leading AND lagging indicators. Lagging indicators tell you how you've done; leading indicators tell you where you're going.

LEADING

Predictive in nature; Frequent and Formative; offer valuable information that can help organizations adjust and change.

EXAMPLES

- Intention to change
- Improved awareness
- Popularity of a topic on an LXP

LAGGING

Used to confirm long-term trends; significant changes in orgs generally occur before changes in the market.

EXAMPLES

- ROI
- Spend per employee
- Operating income growth

REMEMBER: CONSISTENCY IS KEY

TWO HINTS:



BE PATIENT!

Metrics aren't always immediately useful. Collect them consistently over time.



STANDARDIZE!

Collect and format data in the same way as the rest of the org.

Most L&D Functions lack consistent data. Without it, longitudinal results, interactions, correlations, and variances are hard to come by.

ANALYZE AND ADJUST CONTINUOUSLY

More evolved orgs analyze and adjust what they do continuously. Dashboards, continuous data feeds, and constant monitoring are your friends.



ILLUSTRATE YOUR STORY

All the metrics in the world won't matter if the story you tell is boring, un motivating, or confusing. Storytelling is a skill — learn it! Avoid some of the most common pitfalls L&D falls into.

PROBLEM: Fail to paint a picture



PROBLEM: Tell them stuff they don't care about



PROBLEM: Bury the lead



ANTIDOTES:

BE GRAPHIC!

Use pictures, not just numbers. Get good at data visualization.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE!

Know what's important to your audience; do they really care about completion rates?

FOCUS!

Use only data that tells your story.