



# HOW TO MAKE eLEARNING WORK

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Embedding eLearning at the Heart  
of the L&D Mix



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Notion White Paper 8

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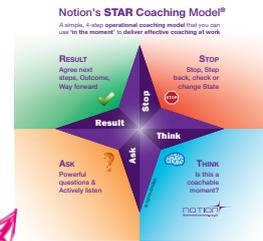
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# FOREWORD FROM NOTION

Over the past two decades, Notion has been delivering high quality, behavioural change programmes to organisations across the globe. We found that when people incorporated our unique **STAR® Model** (underpinned by the principles of 'Operational Coaching') into their everyday management approach, they were able to achieve fantastic results for themselves and their organisations. In fact, our clients were frequently reporting an impressive **ROI of up to 100 times their original investment as a direct result of our programmes.**



organisation, but also to deliver strong commercial results generated from increased levels of engagement, productivity and overall performance.

Crucially, we knew that STAR® Manager had to 'pack a punch' and, in many ways, be able to outperform our 'live' programmes, as well as continue to deliver the changes in management behaviour driving those commercial successes.

We soon realised that in order to help organisations to replicate these results on a much wider scale, we needed to find a way to make our programmes more accessible, more flexible, and deliver them at a cost that would be attractive to both our current and prospective clients.

eLearning has been around for a while in some guise or other, however, perhaps not entirely as a credible alternative to live training programmes. Earlier eLearning solutions simply didn't meet the 'real' needs of the organisation or the learner, so whilst some organisations dipped their toes in the water, few found lasting benefits other than from being able to demonstrate compliance for regulatory or H&S purposes.

As a result, we have been on a journey to bring an innovative solution to the marketplace that can meet the needs of the FUTURE organisation. In 2018, Notion launched **STAR® Manager** ([STARmanager.global](http://STARmanager.global)) our latest advancement, which is a 100% virtual, fully blended, behavioural change programme that helps Managers to transform their leadership and management style in a way that has the potential not only to change the culture of the

## UNTIL NOW.

**Times are changing quickly, and today's technological landscape has created a massive opportunity for eLearning to grow at an exponential rate, and to make a real difference to the way that people learn in organisations.**

## PART 1: THE RISE OF eLEARNING

### The Rise of eLearning

The global eLearning market size is expected to reach **\$65.41bn** by 2023<sup>1</sup> but eLearning isn't a new phenomenon; for many years organisations have dabbled with the integration of learning and technology, so it's not unusual to find pretty comprehensive suites of eLearning solutions in some of our larger organisations. In fact, **40%** of Fortune 500 companies have already implemented eLearning.<sup>2</sup> Historically however, eLearning has had somewhat of a weak reputation and is commonly regarded as the poor relation of more traditional face-to-face training because of the lacklustre performance that it generates post-implementation. Yet, according to a survey last year, it's predicted that by 2019, **50%** of all classes will be delivered online<sup>3</sup>, and **98%** of businesses plan to use e-learning by 2020.<sup>4</sup>

What we discovered on our own journey, however, was that our clients were also wrestling with these issues and were seeking guidance about how to introduce eLearning into their organisations; how to ready their organisations for change, how to get the technology right, how to ensure that the eLearning content itself was useful and impactful, how to engage people in something different, and ultimately how to integrate eLearning into their L&D mix in a way that works.

Over the past couple of years, we've had to ask the hard questions that needed answering if we were really serious about making eLearning work. In doing so we have generated many new insights, a lot of which we have built into STAR<sup>®</sup> Manager and into our processes working with our clients. We hope that sharing our insights will prove useful in guiding others through their own learning journey, and in some way, contribute to the overall quality and effectiveness of eLearning in organisations as a whole.

In this white paper 'How to Make eLearning Work' we do just that. Part 1 looks at the rise of eLearning in the workplace and the limitations organisations need to overcome. Part 2 explores the conditions that need to exist for eLearning to work well. In Part 3, we ask the big questions and give guidance about **how to balance accountability for eLearning** as well as **offering a 'blueprint tool'** that can be used to help design effective eLearning policies. Part 4 explores some future considerations for learning in an online world, and, finally, in Part 5, we reflect upon how important it is for organisations to re-evaluate their learning and development strategies in order to remain relevant and competitive in the new world.



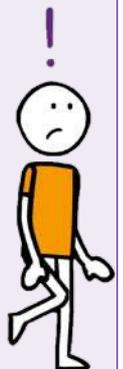
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So what's powering the rise of eLearning in the workplace?

### The Changing Face of Organisations

#### **Multi-generational workforce**

Since Generation Z entered the workplace in 2017, there has been a lot of speculation about how organisations can create environments that are capable of uniting five generations with very different needs and expectations. Thankfully, whilst the essence of human nature has ensured that there are more factors that connect each generation, perhaps **one big differentiator that might separate them is their experience of technology. The newer generations have grown up with intuitive technology at their fingertips and have a high expectation for, and reliance on, connectivity and immediacy.** With Generation Z kicking at the heels of the dominant Millennial population, organisations are under increasing pressure to provide technological responses that work for them. The consequences of not integrating learning and technology may have a significant impact on an organisation's ability to retain talent.



What are the expectations of the different generations working in your organisation?

**What's powering the rise of eLearning...(cont.)**

**Geographic dispersion**

Today's organisations also look very different. Internet connectivity and mobile technology has affected the way people are organised within organisations allowing for greater flexibility and more diverse teaming across different regions and time zones, and naturally this has changed the way we work, collaborate - and learn. **Technology has enabled a new social environment and it is also through technology that organisations will be able to provide a more relevant learning environment.**



What are the challenges your organisation faces in bringing people together for training?

**Tumbling cost of technology**

What has made a real difference in the eLearning market, compared to some early efforts to introduce eLearning into organisations, is the rapidly declining costs of technology and telecommunications. **Many organisations that were once priced out of the market can now introduce competitively-priced technological infrastructures that are fast enough and smart enough to deliver real solutions.** And, with these infrastructures in place, eLearning can be delivered on a more cost effective basis than traditional face-to-face learning, by removing downtime, transport, accommodation and subsistence costs.



To what extent is technology already deployed within your organisation to support or facilitate the work of individuals?

**The learning revolution**

The past decade has seen an explosion in the use of the Internet for supporting distance learning programmes. Renowned American Universities (e.g. Stanford, Harvard, Berkeley and others) also joined this learning revolution, powering the availability of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), allowing learners in the furthest reaches of the world to enjoy learning resources previously denied to them. The creation of online digital learning platforms such as Udacity, Udemy, Coursera and Khan Academy has enabled a new generation of teachers to share their knowledge, preparing courses for everything from Nuclear physics through to playing an instrument or learning how to cook. However, this revolution isn't without its drawbacks; attrition (course dropouts) is a significant factor. Research has shown that for MOOCs in particular, the completion rate for these programmes may be as low as 3-5%<sup>5</sup>, and a range of factors are being shown to affect the motivation of learners (we reference several of these later).

This revolution in learning has of course found its application in the corporate sector with many training suppliers converting their stock of courses into a myriad of online offerings, which have been taken up by organisations keen to leverage the economies of scale offered by this route to learning. Similar research in the corporate sector has shown that completion rates (for non-mandatory learning) fare better at around 22-30%<sup>6</sup> (compared with 85% for classroom based training), with the very best eLearning programmes reported to be over 50%, and this will be due to a variety of circumstances and support.



Where is the drive for eLearning coming from? Is it coming from employees themselves? How do your employees actually want to learn?



What enabling and limiting beliefs do you or your organisation have about learning?

**Limitations of eLearning**

It's probably fair to say that despite the external environment pushing the human race to integrate increasing levels of technology into their lives, **organisations are still finding it difficult to create the right internal environments. This is especially true in the area of learning, which is still grounded in fixed mind-sets about how people learn online.**

So what are the limitations that can reduce the effectiveness of eLearning in the workplace?

#### Fixed mind-sets about how people learn

Many practitioners subscribe to the premise that people learn according to the 70:20:10 rule, i.e. most people learn on the job, **20%** from the people they work with and only **10%** from formal learning. This may be at the heart of why eLearning hasn't taken off in some organisations. **Standalone, bite-sized eLearning that informs but otherwise fails to engage learners interactively, or with each other, or doesn't relate learning clearly to new activity back in the workplace, will fail the 70:20:10 test.**



In what ways does your current learner experience engage the learner? How are they encouraged to apply their learning back in the workplace?

"THE STAR<sup>®</sup> MANAGER PROGRAMME IS A CURATED LEARNING JOURNEY THAT HAS BEEN BUILT AROUND A SERIES OF WORKPLACE 'MISSIONS' DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE SMALL CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOUR. EACH 'MISSION' IS SUPPORTED BY A SHORT MODULE OF ONLINE LEARNING AND FOLLOWED BY A GUIDED REFLECTION EXERCISE TO TEASE OUT INSIGHTS AND EMBED NEW LEARNING."

#### Lack of urgency

In some organisations, there is less 'urgency' for such solutions. Smaller organisations, or organisations with a single geography, or who are operating in slow moving markets, may not have the momentum that is required to help eLearning flourish. **A low impetus for change would prove to be a significant obstacle when trying to adopt new approaches - the 'why' hasn't been explored, let alone the 'how'.**



What are the drivers in your organisation for wanting to integrate eLearning? Is there a compelling enough business case?

#### Everyday exposure to technology and computer literacy

If employees don't already interact with technology in their day-to-day work activities then taking 'time out' to learn online might feel alien to them. Booking training rooms, accessing shared computers, restricting time for training, will also have an impact on how 'natural' and 'intuitive' learning online becomes.

Many eLearning solutions simply aren't as intuitive as the mobile technology that most people incorporate into their daily lives and can require a level of computer literacy that some employees just don't have. **While eLearning solutions are still cumbersome and complex, employees are unlikely to perceive them as a genuine alternative to the traditional training methods they have become accustomed to.**



Which audience are you trying to reach and what are their technological capabilities?

What technology do they have common access to and how else could it be leveraged, extended, upgraded or replaced?

ONLY 5% OF ORGANISATIONS SAY THAT eLEARNING COMMONLY HAPPENS OUTSIDE OF WORKING HOURS.

#### Clear accountability for completing eLearning

Despite many organisations' assumptions about making eLearning accessible at any time<sup>8</sup>, there's disagreement about whether people believe that they should make themselves available to 'learn' outside of working hours. Notion's poll on eLearning discovered that only **5%** of organisations say that eLearning commonly happens outside of working hours with one respondent claiming that "learning is part of the day job, not unpaid extra time."<sup>9</sup> **Organisations that make assumptions about the accessibility, usability and completion of eLearning 'outside of the workplace' may fail to connect with a proportion of their workforce.**



What considerations has your organisation given to a policy that clearly defines accountability for eLearning inside and outside of work?

**Lack of resources**

Whilst more organisations have the financial capability to introduce new learning platforms or services, **what is sometimes underestimated is the amount of support required to introduce and integrate new learning technology into the workplace successfully, especially as learning is still very much a ‘human’ business.**

Capital investment is one thing, but are L&D teams themselves being prepared effectively for the introduction of eLearning? Do employees understand the implications of eLearning in terms of how, what, where and when they access it? Are reporting and measurement processes in place? Is there sufficient IT support available to deal with increasing levels of queries? **When organisations adopt eLearning because it is a prettier, perkier, more modern answer to training, they may fail to prepare their organisations appropriately, and as a result, not achieve the traction they hoped for.**

 **How has your organisation prepared the target audience for this new way of learning?**

 Ideas

# PART 2: WHEN eLEARNING WORKS

## Lessons in Success

According to a 2017 survey, **90%** of people think that eLearning is the same or better than traditional learning,<sup>10</sup> suggesting that whilst there are plenty of examples where eLearning doesn't work, it's perhaps the strategy, rather than the technology that's at fault. With many organisations now beginning to implement eLearning as part of their learning and development mix, are there lessons that can be learned about how to make eLearning work?

### Ownership

Research completed by Ambient Insights indicates that **81%** of eLearning is self-managed,<sup>11</sup> which is probably reflective of the strong preference of our largely Millennial workforce for flexibility. **Ownership certainly appears to play a role in successful enrolment in eLearning; enabling employees to make their own decisions about how, when, and where they learn would appear, on the face of it, to be a favourable approach.** Indeed the research reports that when learners have ownership and control they may have up to a **60%** faster learning curve with overall self efficacy **20%** higher.

 **What conditions exist in your online learning environment that might prevent or diminish people taking ownership and control over their learning?**

### On demand - Not necessarily “if you build it, they will come”...

For a number of organisations, satisfying this apparent demand for self-directed and self-determined learning has been met by offering unrestricted access to whole catalogues of online training resources, which has had mixed responses in terms of uptake. It may be that unnecessary bureaucracy in training administration or a cultural indifference to personal development may prevent learning from happening as frequently as desired. In some larger organisations though, **handing over access to training resources to the end user seems to have been advantageous**, with the likes of PWC reporting a **17%** increase in total training hours after they expanded their on demand eLearning services into **157** territories.<sup>12</sup>

 **To what extent is there a culture of ‘continuous learning’ within your organisation? How could this be enhanced?**

**On the move**

Traditional training is notorious for taking big chunks out of 'working' time. This has an operational cost that can be frustrating for the learner and their colleagues, leading many to opt out of scheduled training (to which they are entitled) in favour of more 'pressing' business concerns. For eLearning to be effective it needs to move out of the training room, away from fixed schedules and into the everyday lives of employees. **When eLearning can be accessed 'on the go', the learner can make decisions about when they are most ready to learn.** This ensures that the learning experience is completely bespoke to that individual's needs. Indeed, when people access eLearning using a mobile device, it is reported that productivity increases by 43%.<sup>13</sup>



**What would happen if your employees could access learning on the go?**

**Designing the Learning Experience**

When organisations do decide that eLearning is an important and integral part of their L&D mix they will want to consider how they can create a personal experience that is low effort, flexible and intuitive.

**To engage learners though, careful thought is required to ensure that both the design and the content of eLearning suits the intended audience by, paying regard to the following 5 principles.**

**TO STIMULATE GENUINE LEARNING, TRAINING CONTENT MUST BE TRANSLATED IN A WAY THAT WORKS FOR THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH IT'S HOSTED.**

**1. Deliver high quality, customised content**

Content is still king. It isn't sufficient to simply transfer course content from live workshops onto an eLearning platform in a bland or generic way - presenting text or videos that simply relay information, makes assumptions about the learning style of the learner and may not generate longer-term learning at all. To stimulate genuine learning, the content must be designed to engage the learner in a variety of ways and be translated in a way that works for the online environment in which it's hosted. The human element must be kept alive through high levels of customised interactivity e.g. game playing, rewards and recognition. **eLearning must outperform the traditional workshop in many ways by really focusing on the immediate experience of the learner and on providing solutions to real problems that they'll experience back in the workplace.**



**How can you reinvent your learning content in a way that stimulates the learning experience?**

**"EVERY ELEMENT OF STAR® MANAGER HAS BEEN DESIGNED FROM SCRATCH TO INCORPORATE THE COGNITIVE ASPECTS THAT MAKE IT WORK AS A TOTALLY VIRTUAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE"**

**THE OFFER OF MORE 'BITE-SIZED' LEARNING SHOULDN'T BE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OVERALL LEARNING EXPERIENCE.**

**2. Put bite-sized learning centre stage**

Unlike traditional training that is consumed in large doses, the best eLearning offerings tap into the trend for bite-sized learning. It makes sense. **Online learning programmes that are designed to be consumed in small chunks give users the freedom to learn in a mobile and flexible way, at times that most suit the learning style of the employee.**

The offer of more bite-sized learning opportunities however, shouldn't be at the expense of the overall learning experience. Finding new and innovative ways to help learners interact with the learning, to make connections (use of innovative and repetitive learning techniques, building strong 'wireframes' for the learning, or a strong narrative flow for example), or finding ways to get learners to apply quickly what they are learning, can all help to 'glue together' the content being learned and embed this in the minds of the learner.

**In what ways is training consumed in your organisation? What context does the training exist within? Is this helpful?**

A SERIES OF "TRAINING" VIDEOS THAT FAIL TO STIMULATE COGNITIVE ACTIVITY MAY ONLY PROVIDE TEMPORARY 'ENTERTAINMENT'...

3. Supercharge the blend

eLearning must challenge people's preconceptions about what is possible in terms of the variety it offers, its ability to engage with different learning styles, and its potential to accelerate learning. This means that **the eLearning solution needs to have a comprehensive and engaging blend of learning activities**. Many eLearning courses currently on offer to organisations, tend to rely on one or two elements to convey their content, with video alone become an increasingly popular method. Whilst video can give learners an opportunity to see scenarios in action (satisfying the 65% of people claiming to be visual learners) it would be a mistake to use video just because it's 'trendy'. Of course, any eLearning solution must incorporate highly effective visual elements,<sup>14</sup> however, a series of "training" videos alone may fail to generate the insight, experience and attachments needed to embed learning. Without the "adaptive scaffolding" offered through a variety of interactions, research has shown that offering videos alone may, in fact, offer only limited value over and above temporary entertainment.<sup>15</sup>



What blend of learning activities are you using that really stimulate the brain in order for learning to occur and be retained?

4. Build communities

**To work effectively, eLearning must take advantage of the social capability of technology.** Incorporating forums, discussion groups, live coaching, content sharing and other community building mechanisms will enhance the learning experience and provide opportunities for shared learning. This is an important element to eLearning that helps to match, and perhaps exceed, the human element of live training.



"THE STAR® MANAGER PROGRAMME COMBINES 18 DIFFERENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES WITHIN ITS BLEND, DESIGNED TO STIMULATE EVERY FACET OF A LEARNER'S EXPERIENCE"



What opportunities exist in your organisation to create more effective online learner communities?

5. Create learning environments

**Where eLearning can really make its mark is in its ability to contribute to a continuous environment of learning** that's essential to the success of today's organisations, forced to operate in incredibly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous times (VUCA). Unlike traditional workshops, eLearning can happen in the moment, just in time, and have a real impact on operational events.



How do environmental factors impact the way people learn in your organisation?

The Human Factor - Enabling People

As organisations increasingly integrate technology into the normal practices of the workplace, and as automation and artificial intelligence start forming the 'way things are done around here', it would be a mistake to ignore the human factors at play.

THE MANAGER'S ROLE WILL BE FUNDAMENTAL IN HOW WELL EMPLOYEES RESPOND TO NEW APPROACHES TO LEARNING.

Leadership

The leadership of any organisation must get on board and understand the wider implications of any technology-led initiative. With regards to eLearning, **the leadership team might need to rewire how they think about learning in the workplace and truly embrace learning as an investment, not an expense.** The Manager's role will be fundamental in how well employees respond to new approaches to learning and how empowered they feel to undertake learning, and apply learning, beyond the constraints of the manager-employee relationship.



What leadership behaviours and attitudes are working for and against effective learning in your workplace?

What has to happen to get the leadership team on board?

#### Human resources

The role of HR and L&D is also important in this process of change and **to stay relevant, professionals need to be at the forefront of change agency, stakeholder management, communication, and critically, the commercial impact of change on Managers and employees alike.**



What impact will technology-led learning have on your HR and L&D teams? In what ways can they be better enabled?

#### Internal training teams

Internal training teams need to be seen to be supporting the eLearning strategy as a part of the overall L&D mix. There may be some reluctance among trainers and instructional designers to advocate new approaches. They may be worried about having to work in ways in which they have no experience, or worse still, they may fear becoming obsolete.

However, a complete disregard for instructor-led learning would be unwarranted in most situations. Both instructor-led learning and eLearning have a place in today's organisations. They serve different situations but they can also serve each other. Achieving the right 'blend' will be a critical component in making the eLearning strategy work.

So, instructors are still an important asset in any learning strategy and need to be reassured of their place, however, they may need to reposition themselves to ensure that they remain helpful in an advanced learning environment. **Rather than undertaking the traditional role of teacher or assessor, instructors may need to take on the role of 'Guide' and incorporate coaching and facilitation into their skill set.**



What does your organisation expect from its internal training team and does this marry with the expectations of the team members?

How can expectations be better aligned?

What opportunities exist to reposition these valuable resources as coaches that can support or champion learning within the business?

#### The learners

What is just as important, is that employees who undertake learning at work, are not simply passive recipients of training. Employees need to be helped to realise that it's not enough to just be present at training, or to simply rack up the training hours - it's about making that learning work for themselves and the organisation. When employees truly understand the value of learning they will see 'time spent' learning as an investment in their own personal development and future careers.

In traditional training, this concept might be diluted by regimented training sessions, sheep dip approaches, long-winded training approval processes, or even by training being used as a corrective performance measure. So, **for effective eLearning to happen in a self-determined, self-paced environment, employees need to be re-educated about their own responsibility for undertaking learning, engaging with the learning process, and about taking accountability for their learning outcomes.**



How would you describe your employees' level of accountability for their own learning?

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS WILL NOT HAPPEN OVERNIGHT - IT WILL BE A PROCESS OF CHANGE THAT NEEDS TO BE MANAGED ACCORDINGLY, AND ORGANISATIONS CAN START PREPARING THEIR ENVIRONMENTS STRAIGHT AWAY.

### Creating Enabling Environments

Often when organisations introduce eLearning, it is simply 'added-on', rather than carefully integrated into the business.

#### Integration

**Developing an eLearning strategy is so much more than conducting an IT project.**

Often when organisations introduce eLearning, it is simply 'added-on', rather than carefully integrated into the business. eLearning may feel intuitive, and develop organically in some organisations, but many organisations will have specific constraints that hamper the effectiveness of their eLearning strategy, if not addressed.

#### A process of change

The culture of an organisation can either make or break the successful integration of eLearning, so readying the organisation for eLearning is essential. Akin to preparing for any organisational change, the chances of success are increased if a change management process is adopted. Whilst the political, technological and financial landscape of the organisation will set the scene, **the size of the change journey will be largely determined by the existing culture of the organisation.**

If the organisation is predominantly made up of employees with low levels of autonomy operating within a 'command and control' culture, the road to self-determined, self-paced environments will be much longer.

#### Trust

eLearning won't have the impact it is capable of, if Managers cling to stifling organisational models of control. Learners need to be encouraged to partake in their own learning and then given some measure of control about when and where they can access learning. However, **letting go of control is also a matter of developing high levels of trust which requires a whole new psychological and emotional contract between Managers and employees.** Managers that are used to 'telling' others what to do, will reduce the level of 'learned helplessness' that exists within their teams when they adopt more of a 'coaching style of leadership'. When Managers make this shift in behaviour, they will soon see that their employees are much more independent, resourceful and capable, which over time will result in higher levels of trust being established.



What efforts have been made to change the behaviour of your managers to use more of a coaching style? How effective has that been?

#### Dealing with resistance to change

As with any process of change there will be resistance. Some people won't want to go on this journey, others will need a little encouragement. Rather than bulldozing a new idea into the organisation, developing an authentic understanding of the learner population will be important - eLearning might not be right for some people, others may need to build more confidence in their IT skills. **eLearning will be perceived as a fad unless the organisation can offer relevant solutions to learners.**

ORGANISATIONS THAT ENLIST 'NODAL' MANAGERS THAT CAN ADVOCATE THE ADVANTAGES OF eLEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE, WILL MAKE PROGRESS QUICKER.

Organisations that identify their key stakeholders and enlist 'nodal' Managers that can advocate the advantages of eLearning in the workplace, will progress quicker. Pilot programmes can also be useful to motivate people to access eLearning by demonstrating what the learner experience is like and the results that individuals can achieve for themselves and their organisations. When both personal and commercial results are openly recognised and rewarded too, a momentum will build that others will follow.



#### Knowledge transfer versus behaviour change

Understanding what each eLearning solution is capable of, is a critical success factor for successful implementation. Organisations that want to change behaviours will require a different solution to those that simply want to impart information. Rudimentary and largely transactional eLearning platforms will be sufficient for the purpose of transferring standard induction material or for the provision of some mandatory or regulatory training, but organisations will need to adopt a smarter eLearning solution in order to affect lasting behaviour change.

"NOTION'S STAR® MANAGER PROGRAMME IS A 100% VIRTUAL, BLENDED, BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAMME THAT HELPS LEADERS AND MANAGERS TO ADOPT AN 'OPERATIONAL COACHING' APPROACH, WHICH HAS, IN TURN, BEEN PROVEN TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR IN THE WORKPLACE"

Described as a "game changer" and "the first of its kind", STAR® Manager is the latest advancement in online learning that can revolutionise how organisations can affect a change in management behaviour. The organisation's challenge is to know when to favour a new approach that is capable of achieving a sustainable change in behaviour instead of relying on existing (and possibly outmoded), 'catalogue' eLearning solutions that are either counterproductive or unfit for purpose (with organisations recording poor uptake or experiencing "no noticeable impact").

#### Recognition and reward

It's crucial that eLearning isn't perceived as a second class version of other training available in the organisation, nor should it be considered as a novelty. When mandatory or recommended training is completed via online learning this presents an opportunity to celebrate, communicate and report to the wider organisation. eLearning that also incorporates awards, points, certificates, feedback mechanisms or unlocks access to new modules, will help to reinforce the individual effort of the learner and spur them on to achieve even more.

eLearning that is part of a developmental plan and is undertaken at the discretion of the learner should also be recognised in talent management strategies and be part of the dialogue about a learner's potential and future progression in the organisation. Success stories should be regularly highlighted through internal communications.



To what extent do you communicate learning successes within your organisation?

INTRODUCING eLEARNING INTO ANY ORGANISATION IS NOTHING SHORT OF A CHANGE PROJECT IN ITSELF AND NEEDS TO BE MANAGED AS SUCH.

eLearning solutions that **make explicit the links between online learning activity and improvements in employee engagement, productivity and performance**, will reinforce learning and prove the return on investment of their eLearning strategy.

#### In-house marketing

Whilst eLearning shouldn't be perceived as a gimmick, when introducing something very new to people, a little in-house marketing is useful. A big bang approach will help stir up some interest and excitement, but it won't necessarily engage the cynics or drive long term interest.

Using consistent and positive messaging about eLearning that integrates into everyday communications, interactions and activities - in a more organic way - will help to drive longer term, sustainable engagement. Introducing eLearning into any organisation is nothing short of a change project in itself and needs to be managed as such.



What mechanisms exist to raise the 'background noise levels' about the importance attached to learning?



Ideas

# PART 3: STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

## The Big Questions

The technology is in place; the leadership team is on board; the culture has been/is being readied for change - the macro picture is starting to take shape, but what about the detail? How do organisations actually implement an eLearning strategy at a micro level?

### The build or buy decision

Whether to build or buy an eLearning solution will depend on whether the organisation has the technological infrastructure, the internal expertise (of online instructional design and building eLearning platforms) and the time and resources to build it themselves.

It will also be determined by what the organisation wants to use eLearning for. For example, if the organisation has the capability to do so, they may choose to build their own corporate induction modules, as they already own all of the data and the inside knowledge required.

On the other hand, if the organisation wants to introduce something quite new, such as a management behavioural change programme (rarely done online) they may opt to buy that in so that they can leverage the knowhow of leaders in the field and relieve the intensity of the workload of building something revolutionary, from scratch. That doesn't necessarily mean the eLearning solution has to be a faceless, off the shelf alternative - **the best hosts, will be able to customise aspects of their eLearning solutions to resonate with the needs of the audience or of the organisation as a whole.**

### Does it meet REAL needs?

A good question for organisations to ask when introducing elearning into the organisation is 'what needs are being met'? Is the workforce widely dispersed? Does the organisation need to accommodate flexible working practices? Do work life balance issues impact access to learning? Would increased access to learning improve innovation?

What is the precise need that eLearning is meeting? When this is very clear, then it will be much easier to establish appropriate policies that support effective eLearning.

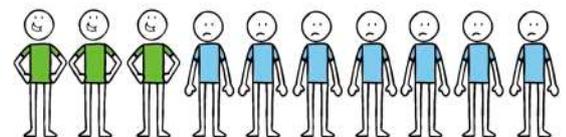
Is the eLearning experience managed effectively?

### eLearning policies

One of the most important, yet frequently neglected factors in the participation and uptake of eLearning is whether or not organisations have a clearly defined eLearning policy that sets out the expectations of employees and the Managers that support them.

ONLY A THIRD (33%) OF ORGANISATIONS HAVE A DEFINED eLEARNING POLICY.

Notion's poll on eLearning revealed that only a third (33%) of organisations have a defined eLearning policy.<sup>9</sup> This strongly indicates that issues such as where and when eLearning happens remains unclear in the majority of organisations.



Yet, having clear eLearning policies will help to create a more facilitative and supportive backdrop for employees to adapt to learning online and will help Managers to understand exactly how they should respond to situations that might require their discretion.

## Who's taking accountability?

It's one thing to respond to a trend for on demand, on the move, bite-sized learning experiences with a great eLearning solution. However, just because training is more readily available doesn't mean it will actually get used. If organisations hand over ownership to the learner they will also need to re-establish accountability for learning itself, particularly when learning is about self-improvement or job progression. This might mean educating employees about when they need to use their own discretionary effort (inside or outside of work) to undertake learning in order to achieve personal and career development goals. Equity in this learning contract must be shared by the employee.

### A good eLearning policy will establish guidelines about:

- What the Company position is
- What the legal position is
- Who has access to eLearning
- How learners discover what eLearning is available
- How learners apply for eLearning
- What the authorisation procedure is
- What the appeals process is
- What IT is available for eLearning
- What IT support is available
- What risk assessments need to take place
- What training and support is available for eLearners
- What the difference is between mandatory, recommended and discretionary eLearning (Expected, Expand, Elevate & Lifelong)
- How does eLearning integrate with other learning and development activities
- When does eLearning happen
- Where does eLearning happen
- In what conditions does eLearning take place
- What budget does eLearning come out of
- When is eLearning funded by the organisation
- What responsibilities Managers have
- What responsibilities Learners have
- What happens when eLearning is not completed
- What happens when eLearning is completed
- How data is collected and used

### Ideas

Notion's 3EL Model of eLearning Accountability

"In discussion with a number of our clients and based on how eLearning is made available to employees, we have formulated The 3EL Model which could offer some guidance for encouraging the wider use of eLearning and the policy for its use."

The simple 3EL model of learning accountability (which can be integrated with performance and talent management programmes), provides a formula for Managers and employees to use when discussing eLearning. It can help to clarify expectations concerning where and when eLearning activities should be completed and also into which category a particular course or programme might fall.



The 3EL model suggests that only half of eLearning activities will relate to required learning (i.e. that which employees are 'Expected' to complete in order to perform their role). For all other learning, (i.e. for Expanding their roles, or that may be undertaken for Elevating them towards promotion), the model indicates an element of employee discretion, which grows as employees choose to progress their careers, alongside an increasing expectation that they will take personal accountability for their own (Lifelong) learning.



'3EL' Model of eLearning Accountability

Learning Type	% of eLearning	Where? When?	Accountability
<b>E</b> xpected Regulatory, mandatory or required learning in order for the employee to perform the job to a satisfactory level.	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At work</li> <li>In scheduled times</li> <li>As part of the job</li> </ul>	Employer
<b>E</b> xpanding Recommended learning for the employee to add value over and above the basic requirements of the role.	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At work</li> <li>Determined by employer/at the discretion of the employee</li> <li>As part of annual Objectives</li> </ul>	
<b>E</b> levated Discretionary learning which contributes towards the employee's advancement to the next level position.	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At work, and outside of working hours</li> <li>At the discretion of the employee</li> <li>As agreed in development plan</li> </ul>	
<b>L</b> ifelong Wholly discretionary learning which contributes to the continuous development of the employee for the long term.	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outside of working hours</li> <li>At the complete discretion of the employee</li> <li>Subject to employee's motivation for self-development</li> </ul>	

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## The eLearning Change Management Blueprint

There are no shortcuts. To effectively introduce eLearning into an organisation these questions must be answered. The answers to ALL of the big questions will be determined largely by the nature of the organisation NOW and what kind of FUTURE vision it has. There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. However, answering the questions below can help to form a 'blueprint', which can help you to determine the right strategy and policies that fit the needs of the organisation, and ensure that a best practice approach to eLearning is taken.

Consider each of the sentences in turn, from an eLearning change management perspective, and the urgency with which the statement/issue needs to be addressed:

- A** - A priority that we MUST address urgently
- B** - A pressing need that needs to be addressed, but not before priority items
- C** - There is a need to include this, but as a lesser priority, i.e. it's less urgent
- D** - This doesn't need to be addressed as a priority

When you have completed the blueprint, formulate actions that you have defined into a priority Action Plan for addressing the items you have graded as **A**, and as a second phase, the items graded as **B**.

Organisational Readiness	Determine the priority/urgency status for each of the items in the table below from A-D	Considering your vision for the FUTURE, what actions do you need to take to gain or maintain momentum?
There is an urgent need for eLearning in my organisation		
Employees in my organisation need/demand a new, more relevant way of learning		
My organisation already uses eLearning		
eLearning initiatives have been successfully implemented in my organisation		
My organisation knows what problems/opportunities eLearning addresses		
eLearning and live workshops are rated as effective as each other		
eLearning and live workshops exist in harmony with each other in my organisation		
Building Technological Capabilities	Priority (A-D)	Considering your vision for the FUTURE, what actions do you need to take to gain or maintain momentum?
The technological infrastructure for eLearning is in place in my organisation		
Technology is weaved into the fabric of everyday operations in my organisation		
Employees in my organisation are computer literate		
Employees in my organisation are comfortable with eLearning		
Easy to use, intuitive technology is available to employees in my organisation during working hours		
Easy to use, intuitive technology can be accessed by employees in my organisation via their own devices		
IT support is available in my organisation for eLearners		
My organisation has the internal resources (including time) needed to build eLearning programmes in-house		

## HOW TO MAKE eLEARNING WORK

### Embedding eLearning at the Heart of the L&D Mix

Engaging Internal Stakeholders	Determine the priority/urgency status for each of the items in the table below from A-D	Considering your vision for the FUTURE, what actions do you need to take to gain or maintain momentum?
The leadership team in my organisation understand and advocate the benefits of eLearning		
My organisation has engaged 'nodal managers' to help advocate eLearning		
HR and L&D teams in my organisation have the skills required to successfully implement eLearning		
My organisation knows what problems/opportunities eLearning addresses		
eLearning and live workshops are rated as effective as each other		
Trainers/Instructors/L&D teams in my organisation understand their role in eLearning		
Enabling Organisational Culture	Priority (A-D)	What actions do you need to take to move up (or down) the scale?
My organisation is a learning organisation		
Employees in my organisation are used to self-paced, self-determined learning		
There are high levels of trust between Managers and Employees in my organisation		
My organisation understands the end user learning requirements		
Employees understand how learning can contribute to personal and organisational performance		
Employees in my organisation are empowered to make decision		
eLearning Strategies and Policies	Priority (A-D)	What actions do you need to take to move up (or down) the scale?
My organisation has a robust eLearning strategy		
The eLearning strategy in my organisation is comprehensively integrated into other business activities		
My organisation has a clear eLearning policy		
The eLearning policy clearly outlines my organisation's position on eLearning		
The eLearning policy in my organisation outlines and adheres to legislation about fair and equitable access to training		
The eLearning policy in my organisation has a clear risk assessment process to ensure eLearners are safe		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines who has access to eLearning		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines how employees find out what eLearning is available		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines how employees apply for eLearning		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines the authorisation process		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines the appeals process for rejected eLearning training requests		

eLearning Strategies and Policies (continued)	Determine the priority/urgency status for each of the items in the table below from A-D	Considering your vision for the FUTURE, what actions do you need to take to gain or maintain momentum?
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines what IT is available for eLearning		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines what IT support/training is available to employees		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines what eLearning is mandatory, recommended and discretionary, and why it is different		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines how eLearning integrates with other L&D strategies		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines when <b>mandatory</b> training takes place, i.e. during working hours/in scheduled times/in own time/at employees discretion		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines when <b>recommended</b> training takes place, i.e. during working hours/in scheduled times/in own time/at employees discretion		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines when <b>discretionary</b> training takes place, i.e. during working hours/in scheduled times/in own time/at employees discretion		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines where eLearning takes place, i.e. in normal place of work/at another site/at home/on the move		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines what cost centres eLearning is charged to		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines under what circumstances overtime is paid for eLearning		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines when eLearning is not funded by the organisation		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines the Manager's responsibilities		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines the Employee's responsibilities		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines the consequences for inappropriate use of eLearning		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines what happens if eLearning is not finished or completed on time		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines what happens when eLearning is completed		
The eLearning policy in my organisation clearly outlines how data is collected and used		
Results	Priority (A-D)	What actions do you need to take to move up (or down) the scale?
My organisation uses eLearning systems that include recognition and reward mechanisms		
Processes are in place in my organisation to ensure that eLearning successes are communicated, recognised and rewarded		
Measurement and reporting mechanisms are in place in my organisation that are used to evaluate the personal and commercial benefits of eLearning		

## PART 4: THE FUTURE

### Future Considerations

The world is changing at an incredible pace, and the speed at which people learn must keep up to enable sustainable progress. Professor Reg Revans believed that, “in order for organisations to survive, **the rate of learning must be equal to or more than the rate and pace of change.**”<sup>16</sup> If ‘Revans’ Law’ applies then all indicators suggest that organisations will struggle to survive unless they do something radically different to ensure that people can keep up with the demands that will be made of them. eLearning will undoubtedly play a major part in ‘how’ people accelerate their learning but organisations also need to be prepared for, and work to overcome, the unintended consequences.

IN A WORLD WHERE INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE IS ACQUIRED ONLINE, THE PROCESS OF SHARING HUMAN EXPERIENCE MAY BECOME MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.

### Human interaction

Will eLearning ever replace face-to-face learning? In some ways, yes. In the future, learners are more likely to access information and theory online. Doing this self-directed learning will mean that there is no need for development leaders, trainers and tutors to deliver knowledge in person. But, that doesn’t necessarily mean that face-to-face learning will become obsolete. Instead, learners will engage with their ‘trainers’ and fellow learners in more of a reflective and experiential way that helps to reinforce their newly acquired knowledge.

In a world where information and knowledge is acquired online, the process of sharing human experience may become more important than ever. Organisations that neglect this important aspect of learning will risk limiting the potential of eLearning and may even slow down the learning process. Whether this human interaction can be replicated virtually in the future remains to be seen, but in the meantime, any eLearning solution will benefit from a strong blend of learning activities, including human interaction.

“WITHIN THE STAR® MANAGER PROGRAMME, HUMAN INTERACTION HAS BEEN BUILT IN WITH LEARNERS ABLE TO JOIN FORTNIGHTLY ‘LIVE’ Q&A SESSIONS WITH AN EXPERIENCED TUTOR AND ALSO ATTEND OPTIONAL SMALL GROUP ‘PRACTITIONER’ SESSIONS WITH COLLEAGUES AT POINTS THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAMME”

FINDING AND HIGHLIGHTING SUCCESS STORIES COULD PROVIDE SOCIAL PROOF FOR HOW SELF-DRIVEN LEARNING CAN BENEFIT CAREER ADVANCEMENT.

### Autonomous learning

When the parameters of classroom based training are removed, learners will have to become more autonomous in their personal development. However, self-directed learning requires more personal motivation and self-discipline that not everyone will possess. Simply providing a catalogue of eLearning options may result in training not started, not completed, or not returning any value into the organisation. To truly empower learners, organisations need to provide some guidance about when, how, and why learning is important. The challenge for organisations will be to ignite and inspire that motivation in their employees by demonstrating the benefits to them personally, evidencing this with social proof, by drawing attention to and making strong linkages to learning and successful career advancement or rewards.

### Lifelong learning

Organisations can expect that skills and knowledge will become less relevant more quickly in tomorrow’s world. Regrettably, the organisations that enable their employees to rest on their laurels, once they have reached a certain level of expertise or attained a new qualification, will soon block their talent pipelines. eLearning may indeed provide a flexible way for employees to access learning opportunities - when and where they need it - but employees will also need an ethos and commitment to lifelong learning in order to readily do so. Perhaps it’s **only when learners accept the temporary value of their current skill sets that they will truly invest their own time and energy into continuous learning.** eLearning will therefore only ever have a sustainable role in lifelong learning when organisations embed it deeply into their talent management and learning and development strategies.

## PART 5: FINAL THOUGHTS

### Conclusion

#### ***Introducing eLearning is a change project***

Looking back, this will be a story about change. Those organisations that recognise that a move towards eLearning also represents a shift in thinking about how people learn, and a shift in the way Managers and employees interact, are more likely to ready their organisational environments, and their people, for change. Organisations that adapt to reflect the needs of the modern workforce will be one step ahead in terms of creating learning organisations that deliver higher levels of performance, productivity and engagement.

#### ***Get the human factor right***

Getting the human factor right is just as important as ensuring that the technology and tools are the best they can be given the requirements of the organisation. Acceptance of eLearning will be accelerated when organisations can source first class eLearning programmes that also help to develop new behaviours and ways of thinking. When this happens, the organisation will reap all the benefits of eLearning in terms of speed, scope, cost effectiveness and commercial results.

#### ***Make the time to develop a strategy - use the blueprint***

Organisations will benefit from taking a strategic perspective to the implementation of eLearning; firstly, by taking stock and developing a clear vision of what type of organisation they want to be, and establishing how effectively their current organisational infrastructure and L&D strategy supports that vision.

#### ***Demonstrate it works and support with social proof***

Positioning eLearning so that it delivers recognisable and believable solutions to real issues or opportunities, will make it meaningful to people in the organisation. These connections are very important; when people see how eLearning really adds value and changes the way in which people work together for the better, they will be more eager to be part of the journey.

#### ***Cascade and promote widely***

And finally, to really make eLearning work in organisations, the strategy needs to be cascaded into the organisation in a way that makes sense. This might be through a combination of training, communication, support and also clear, fair and equitable eLearning policies.

Organisations will need to take a bespoke approach because there isn't a 'one size fits all' solution. There are different dynamics at play in every organisation that will impact how eLearning is implemented. The blueprint

we have offered is a tool which can be used to help organisations to define the actions it can take to ensure that eLearning really works.

Please also contact Notion directly for a demo of STAR® Manager and to learn how this revolutionary blended learning programme can contribute to making eLearning work in your organisation. Visit [STARmanager.global](http://STARmanager.global).

### Ideas

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