

# Informal Learning

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## How to Measure a Moving Target

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February 21, 2018

1:00 – 2:00 CT

# Agenda

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Research about  
Digital Learners

Informal Learning  
Definitions

Measuring  
Informal Learning

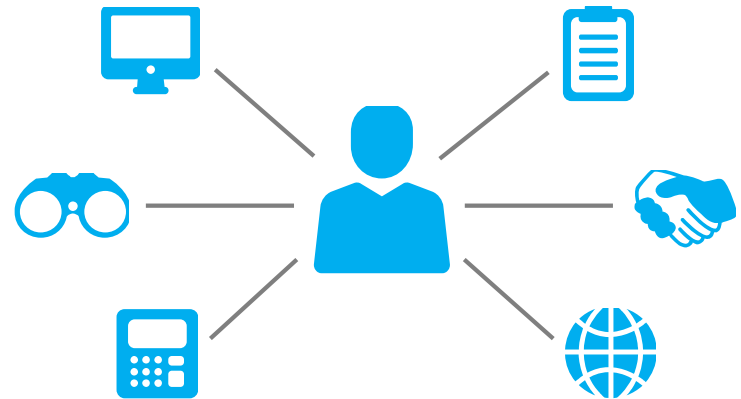
# A Funny Story

eLearning Leader's Idea of Effective Learning



**One-on-One Learning**

The Intern's Idea of Effective Learning



**Several Ways of Learning**

# A New Learning Landscape

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## Audience Perspective

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What are common ways that people prefer to learn today that are different from learning methods 10 years ago?

# L&D Focuses on Engaging Digital Learners

L&D Experimenting with a Range of Options with the Goal of Engaging Digital Learners



**Diversifying Learning Channels**  
67% of L&D functions have **increased the number of learning channels** in the last three years.

**Making Learning Fun**  
79% of L&D functions have **redesigned learning content to make it more enjoyable** in the last three years.

**Ensuring Immediate Relevance**  
59% of L&D functions focus on the **immediate relevance of products**.

n = 9,071.  
Source: CEB 2016 L&D New Learner Survey.

# Rise of the Digital Learner

Due to changes in technology and access to information, the way employees learn and consume information has changed.



## Empowered

76% of employees report that they will do what they need to do to learn effectively.



## Networked

69% of employees regularly seek out new ways of doing their work from their co-workers.



## Impatient

66% of employees expect to learn new information “just-in-time.”

*n* = 23,764.

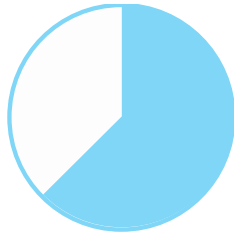
Source: CEB 2014 Learning Culture Survey.

## Critical Elements of L&D's Role

- Shape digital offerings to ensure learner behavior achieves goals for learner and business.
- Embed measurement of learning experiences to more precisely assess application of learning programs beyond learning activity and learner satisfaction.
- Turn insights into action to improve application, results and value of learning programs.
- Share results in a credible way with the business.

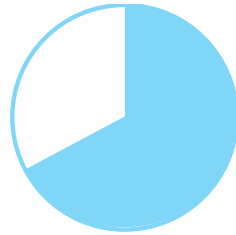
# Alternative Learning Becomes More Robust

## Learning Channels



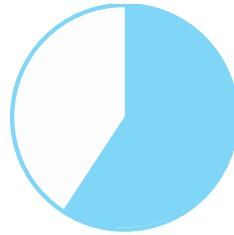
**65%** of employees access more channels for information and learning than just two years ago.

## Peer Learning



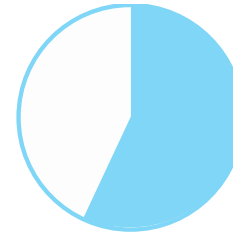
**68%** of employees actively learning new ways of doing things from their coworkers compared to 51% two years ago.

## Social Learning Technology



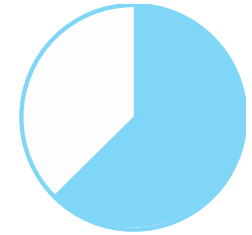
**59%** of employees access more channels for information and learning than just two years ago.

## Manager-Lead Learning



**57%** of employees get advice and coaching from their manager, compared to 48% four years ago.

## Formal Learning

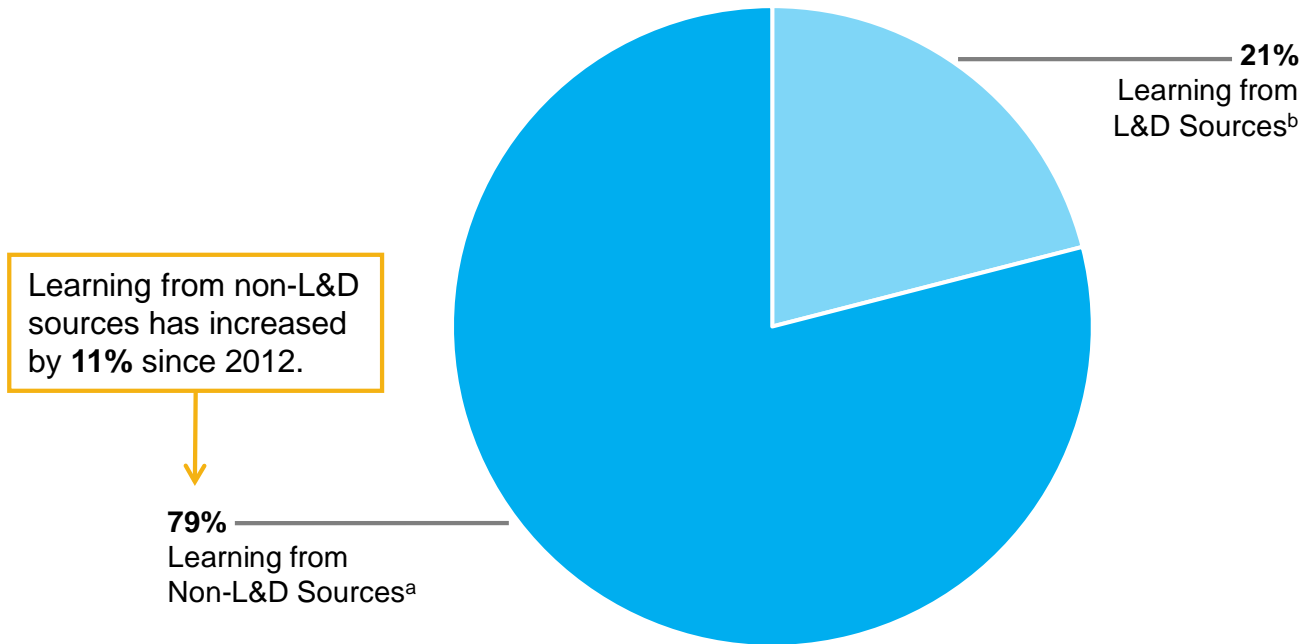


**64%** of employees participate in more formal learning than just two years ago.

*n* = 23,764 (2014); 23,339 (2012).  
Source: CEB 2016 L&D New Learner Survey.



# L&D Is Losing Market Share



*n* = 23,764.

Source: CEB 2014 Learning Culture Survey.

<sup>a</sup> Learning from non-L&D sources is defined as all employee learning during work time that is not provided by the L&D function.

<sup>b</sup> Learning from L&D is defined as all employee learning during work time that is provided by the L&D function.

# Audience Perspective

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Which group(s) within your organization is responsible for Informal Learning?  
(Check all that apply)

Learning & Development

IT

Knowledge Management

Individual Business Units

HR

Other

# Informal Learning

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# What Are the Key Aspects of Informal Learning?

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What is your working definition of informal learning?

# A Definition: Jay Cross

Informal learning is the **unofficial, unscheduled, impromptu** way most of us learn to do our jobs.

## Informal Learning Is Like Riding a Bicycle

The rider chooses the destination and the route. The cyclist can take a detour at a moment's notice to admire the scenery or help a fellow rider.

## Formal Learning Is Like Riding a Bus

The driver decides where the bus is going; the passengers are along for the ride. People new to the territory often ride the bus before hopping on the bike.

# Interesting and Incisive Quote

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“ Education happens in jail cells. It happens in dark alleys. It happens on the bus and in the shower and in front of the television. Sure, we learn from teachers and mentors and leaders. But we also learn just as much, if not more, from hoodlums and jerks and con artists. We learn from books and lectures, but we also learn by eavesdropping and people watching, In school, we learn all the fundamentals: reading, writing, math—but we’re also learning how to dress and talk and get along, and how to wake up early and often. We learn that not all teachers are equally inspiring and that not all guidance counselors know where they’re going...

But we don’t call all of that learning. We call it life. ”

Jessica Hagy  
Forbes Columnist

# Measuring Informal Learning

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## Audience Perspective

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How well do you measure formal and informal learning within your organization?

(Check all that apply)

Do not measure formal learning or informal learning

Attempt to measure formal learning

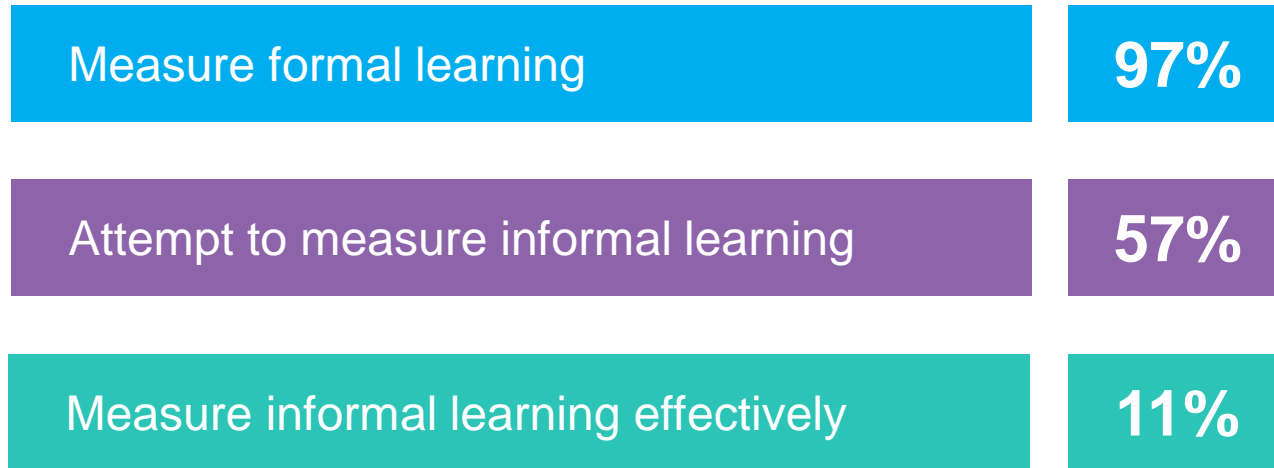
Measure formal learning effectively

Attempt to measure informal learning

Measure informal learning effectively



# Are You Measuring Informal Learning?



*n* = 79 (formal learning); 131 (attempt to measure informal learning); 131 (measure informal learning effectively).  
Source: CEB 2014 September Quick Poll; CEB 2015 February Quick Poll.

## Why aren't these numbers higher?

# Informal Learning Is Complex

Learning Methodology	Formal	Planned Informal	Unplanned Informal
Moment of Need	Infrequent (Mentoring)	Frequent (Coaching)	Constant (OJT)
Massive Content	Multiple Sources	Trackable/ Not Trackable	Selectively Consumed
How to Measure?	What	When	How

# Simplifying What You Should Measure

## Efficiency (Activity and Cost)

- Amount of people trained
- In what way  
Cost/learner
- Cost/hour

## Effectiveness (Quality)

- Learning
- Application (scrap)
- Performance improvement
- ROI estimates

## Outcomes (Business Impact)

- Decreased safety issues
- Improved project  
management
- Increased revenue

# Three Factors Enable Informal Learning Measurement

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**Content**

**Timing**

**Tools**

# Categorizing the Learning Events: Content

How do we classify these types of learning into a MECE list?



- Formal Learning (LMS) ILT, eLearning, VILT, Conf.
- Web Portal/Company Knowledge Portal
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Content curators
- Learning Record Store
- Web Portal/Knowledge Management Tool
- MOOCs
- Social Learning (SharePoint and Networking)
- Catch all—videos, podcasts, gamification
- Other Developmental Experiences (rotational)

*n* = 9,071.  
Source: CEB 2016 L&D New Learner Survey.

# Timing

## When do we measure?

### In the moment

- when learners are on a web page
- immersed in an eLearning module

### Immediately after the event

- After the class is over
- After a mentoring session is complete
- After reading a book

### Periodically because you don't know when events (e.g., coaching) occurs

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Semi-annually

# Tools

## How do we measure?

### In system tools

- Web analytics
- Data layers that gather learner behaviors
- Adaptive testing
- Observation during the event

### Post-event tools

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Interviews

### Business outcome data (Systems of Record)

- Activity / on the job performance
- Financial systems data
- Performance data

# Example: Web Portal

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## Content

### Web portal / Knowledge site

New dosage information  
about a new  
pharmaceutical to combat  
cancer

## Timing

### Continuously and selectively

## Tools

### Continuously

Use web analytics to track  
the number of hits, repeat  
hits, time on page, before  
and after pages

### Selectively

For 10% of readers  
launch a pop up survey to  
gather feedback about the  
quality of the content



# Example: Mentoring Program

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## Content

### Formal Mentoring Program

Mentor and mentee meet at least once per quarter to discuss career issues

## Timing

Periodically

## Tools

### Periodically

Send a survey to a random sample of 10% of the mentees once per quarter; once annually send a brief survey to 10% of the mentors

# Summary and Actions

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# Summary and Actions Regarding Informal Learning

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L&D and learners  
are changing  
substantially.

The complex nature  
of Informal Learning  
makes it very difficult  
to evaluate beyond  
summarizing activity  
(Efficiency).

Find the right mix.  
Evaluate activity, cost,  
effectiveness, and  
outcomes.

Questions?