

Needs Analysis Essentials:

Designing Training Programs
that Drive Results

EBOOK
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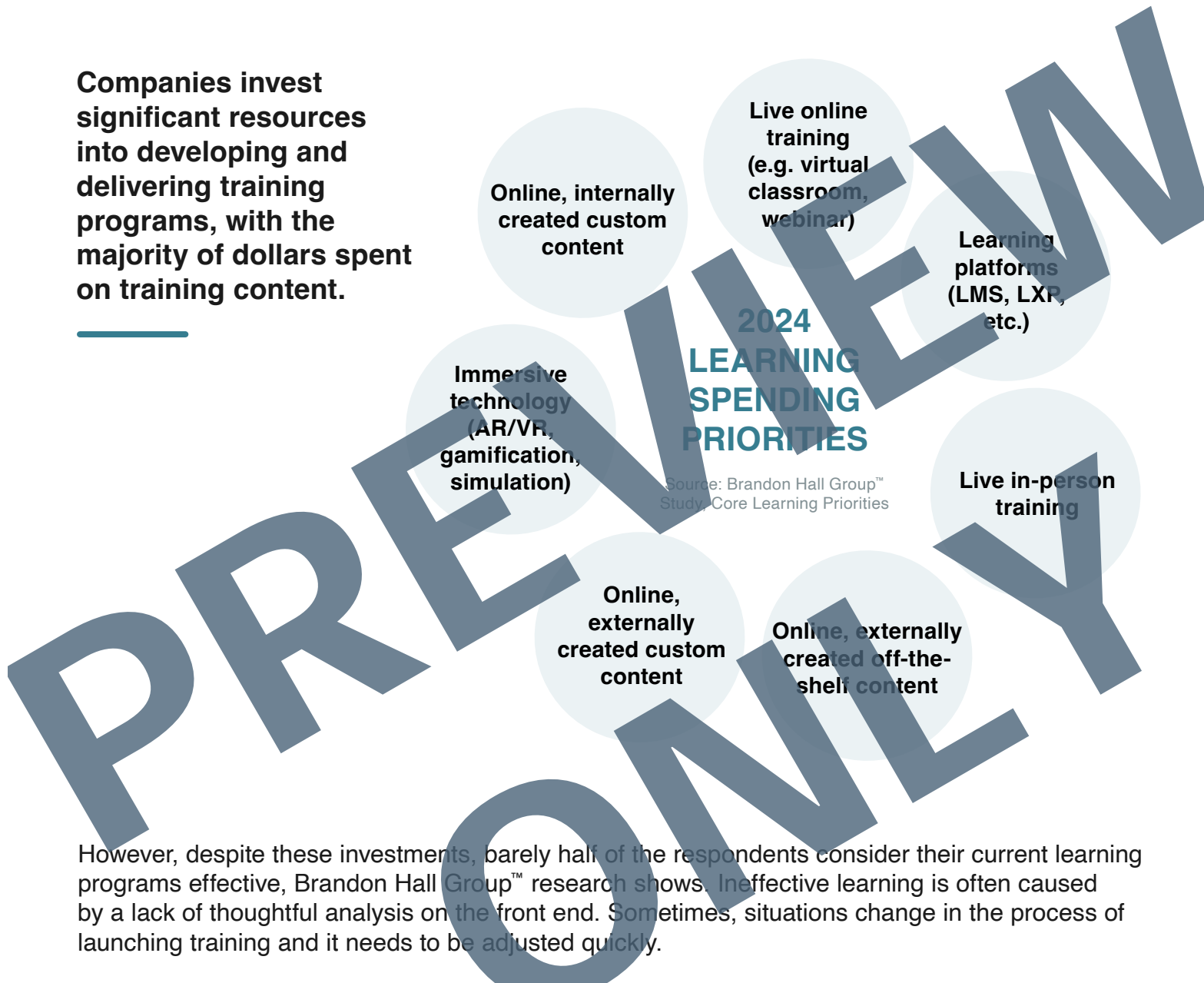


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Introduction

Companies invest significant resources into developing and delivering training programs, with the majority of dollars spent on training content.



However, despite these investments, barely half of the respondents consider their current learning programs effective, Brandon Hall Group™ research shows. Ineffective learning is often caused by a lack of thoughtful analysis on the front end. Sometimes, situations change in the process of launching training and it needs to be adjusted quickly.

If your training isn't working, it's important to discover the reasons. ELB Learning, a Brandon Hall Group™ Smartchoice® Preferred Provider, partners with countless organizations to do just that. If you're struggling to understand why your training isn't working, this eBook will help you come up with a plan.

What Should Be Happening

To create training programs that drive meaningful results, organizations must start by clearly defining their goals and objectives. These objectives should be directly tied to the skills or workforce capabilities required to achieve them. By aligning training with specific business outcomes, personal performance goals and training performance metrics, your organization can create a roadmap for success.

Whether you are building training from scratch or evaluating a current program that you feel is not effective, a clear understanding of what should be happening is the place to start.

What business outcomes should the training impact?

Business outcomes refer to the overall impact that training is expected to have on the organization's bottom line. This could include increased sales, improved customer satisfaction or reduced employee turnover. Step one, then, is to understand what those metrics are versus where they are meant to be.

What are the personal performance goals the training should help?

Personal performance goals focus on the specific behaviors and skills that individual employees need to develop to contribute to the broader business objectives. Do you have clarity on how the training is meant to help individual employees improve their performance?

What metrics are we tracking to ensure the training is performing as intended?

Training performance metrics provide a way to measure the effectiveness of the training. Typically these focus on items such as completion rates or utilization, assessment scores, and overall learner feedback. But the most effective learning metrics tie back to business outcomes.

Once there is a clear picture of what should be happening by looking at various data-driven metrics and targets, it's time to compare those expectations with actual performance.

Minding the Gap

When a gap is identified between the desired outcomes of training and the actual results, it is important to take a systematic approach to closing that gap. You should clearly define the problem, identify potential solutions and develop an implementation plan.

The first step is to conduct a thorough needs analysis to determine the root cause of the performance gap. This may involve gathering data from a variety of sources, such as employee surveys, focus groups and performance metrics. Once the underlying issues are identified, potential solutions can be brainstormed and evaluated based on their feasibility, cost and potential impact.

Finally, a detailed plan should be developed for implementing the chosen solution. This plan should include specific goals and objectives, a timeline for implementation and clear roles and responsibilities for everyone involved. By taking a structured approach to addressing performance gaps, organizations can ensure that their training programs are consistently delivering the desired results.



Where to Start

Training needs analysis is a business process that is easily minimized or conducted ineffectively. Because of these tendencies, it is often overlooked. When done well, the process will lay the foundation for even more successful training outcomes in the future. That happens because goals, targets and issues are clear, as are the ways the company can measure the impact and effectiveness of the program on the relevant business metrics.

Often, the experience or bandwidth to invest in a thorough needs analysis can be difficult to come by. That is why partnering with an organization like ELB Learning is helpful. ELB Learning works with companies to solve learning strategy challenges and helps create a learning blueprint for you, or work with you to create a design plan that structures a framework for your solutions. ELB Learning is also well-equipped to see those design plans through to sample solutions to help you visualize and evaluate possible programs.

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