IDC
Analyze the Future

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WHITE PAPER

At the Speed of Business: 5 A's of the Corporate Learning Chain

Sponsored by: SkillSoft

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IDC OPINION

Business professionals are constantly learning, yet corporate resources often fail to help those professionals winnow the vast array of resources and styles of information. IDC estimates that fruitless information searches cost the Fortune 500 as much as $85 billion per year in lost productivity. In fact, a typical corporate infrastructure may hinder the learning process because it presents far more options than can be systematically evaluated. To solve this problem, companies must better align their learning infrastructure with *how* learners select the appropriate solution for their learning needs. To provide the maximum benefit to the enterprise, a corporate information resource system must be integrated into the Corporate Learning Chain. Information must be:

- **Available** to the learner in a ubiquitous manner
- **Appropriate** to the business context and employee role
- **Accessed** by the learner whenever a relevant need is present
- **Absorbed** by the learner through proper presentation and actionable format
- **Applied** to the problem to achieve business change

Companies can use these 5 A's of the Corporate Learning Chain to evaluate their own information resources and determine the viability and appropriateness of various commercial offerings.

IN THIS WHITE PAPER

The corporate learning infrastructure must simultaneously meet the corporate objective of providing appropriate materials that will be useful to the organizational goals and also satisfy the learner's criteria for selection, or it won't be used or accessed. This concept is reflected in the 5 A's of an effective Corporate Learning Chain. In this White Paper, IDC examines how a corporate information resource system must incorporate each link in the chain to provide maximum benefit to the enterprise.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Business professionals are constantly learning, in both formal and informal settings. Executives and managers learn from colleagues, the trade and business press, and journals of various types. The constant search for information and knowledge is driven by the dynamic and changing nature of today's business environment. Many enterprises encourage this adaptation to new business circumstances because it

facilitates the company's ability to adapt to new situations and take advantage of new opportunities, and it also allows workers to increase their productivity and efficiency.

Most people do not consider themselves to be in a constant state of "learning" when they scan *The Wall Street Journal* or refer to the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* for market data. However, professionals are ultimately driven to learn because they hope that what they read will teach them something they can use. Even if they are simply perusing a particular article or headline, this activity represents the consumption of information without a specific purpose or objective and can be considered *passive learning*. Other times, the consumption or search for knowledge has a more specific, often urgent, purpose and is considered *active learning*. The urgency is typically defined by the current task of the learner, and the context is often characterized by a need for specific information.

When a specific problem or information need arises, *how* a knowledge worker addresses that need may appear somewhat obvious. A U.S. Department of Labor study suggests that only about one-third of learning occurs in a formal setting. About two-thirds of all learning is "informal" in nature and occurs either spontaneously, as a result of incidental experiences or as part of an intentional search for a specific piece of information. What is often overlooked is that informal sources are often the most valuable to learners (see Figure 1).

To better understand the learning needs of information workers, IDC conducted an online survey with 263 IT and business professionals to identify their approach to learning as it relates to their current work environment. Respondents include a mixture of IT directors, CIOs, and business managers. The purpose of the research is to understand the different styles in which people learn, the sources they rely upon most, and their learning preferences.

In spite of the obvious predilection of learners for informal sources, enterprise efforts to provide relevant information have focused more on formal delivery. Classes, competencies, and even performance reviews reflect the organizational preference to place more focus on formal learning experiences. Although there is little call for a reduction in the amount of formal training provided, IDC believes that the informal learning channel can become more efficient and companies can reap significantly greater benefits.

For example, a library may be a good source for some forms of information, especially for deep research. However, when a learner needs an answer to a business management problem or IT technical challenge, a library is a far less attractive option; informal networks, trade publications, or formal classes are usually more appropriate. Although many corporate resources may be available, they may not all be best-suited for the task at hand.

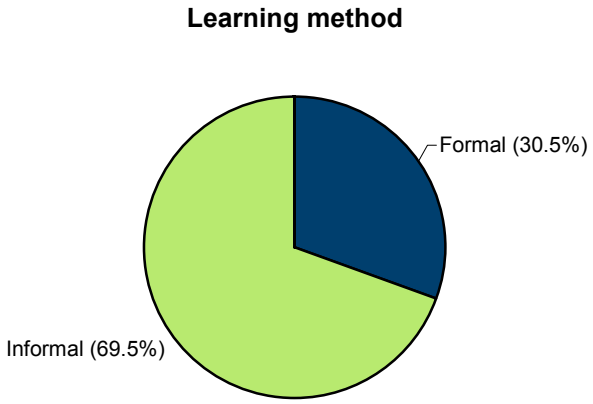
The infrastructure most companies have established for satisfying the constant demand for learning includes corporate libraries, professional subscription reimbursements, access to online databases and forums, and, of course, a budget for internal and external formal classes. Companies have accumulated these resources over time, and they represent the best thinking of the business (given budget constraints) on the broadest and most appropriate mix of alternatives that would be beneficial for the broadest mix and frequency of problems.

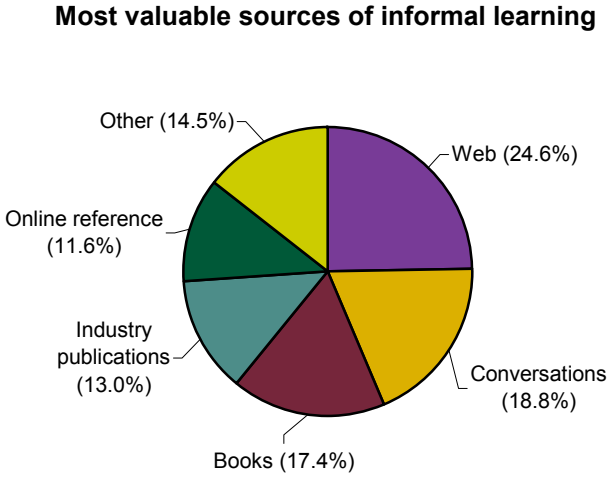
FIGURE 1

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INFORMAL LEARNING AND RESOURCES

Q. What percentage of learning is formal, and what percentage is informal?

Q. What sources of informal learning do you find most valuable?





Source: U.S. Department of Labor, 1999; IDC Information Worker Survey, April 2003

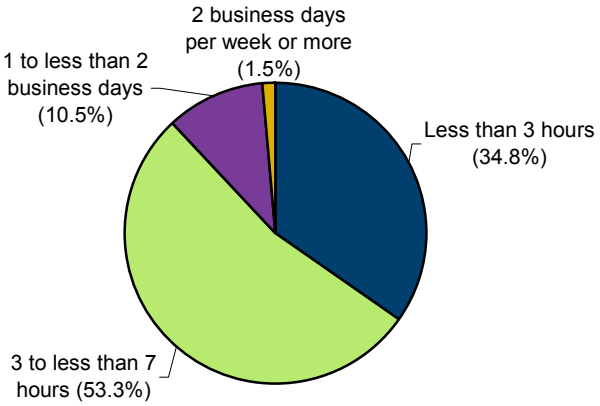
Quite often, the available corporate resources do not help the learner winnow the vast array of learning alternatives. Most active learners with short-term needs frequently start searching within their own network of solutions (e.g., peers and the Internet) to see what is available before exploiting corporate resources. In fact, the infrastructure (both corporate and individual) may hinder the learning process because it presents far more options than can be systematically evaluated. Because of the discontinuity between organizational infrastructure and learner selection criteria, most corporate learning resources are significantly underutilized compared to the range of needs of learners. But time-inefficient searches and search failures can prove quite costly.

IDC research suggests that knowledge workers spend 15–30% of their time actively seeking specific information (see Figure 2). However, these searches are successful less than 50% of the time and can cost millions in time and opportunity costs. For instance, IDC estimates that an organization of 1,000 knowledge workers could lose $6 million per year on fruitless searches and about $15 million in opportunity costs. For the Fortune 500, the total cost represents between $60 and $85 billion in direct costs of failed searches and twice that amount in the opportunity costs of searching for information.

FIGURE 2

TIME SPENT DEVELOPING SKILLS AND LEARNING NEW JOB SKILLS

Q5. On average, how much time per week do you spend developing skills or learning new things for your job, including the things you learn on the job, as you're getting your work done?



n = 263

Source: IDC Information Worker Survey, April 2003

Table 1 illustrates the calculations that companies can use to determine the cost of searches. It also provides "rules of thumb" for estimating costs.

Clearly, various companies have different types of information needs and challenges. Professional services firms (including law offices, accounting firms, and business consulting firms) have a higher percentage of knowledge workers and therefore would risk a higher cost per employee in failed and inefficient searches as well as more searches overall and more failed searches. IDC estimates that professional services firms could spend up to 11% of payroll on time spent searching for information.

Manufacturing firms, on average, have a smaller percentage of knowledge workers, and those workers spend closer to 8% of payroll on time spent searching for information relevant to their jobs. However, manufacturing firms also tend to operate on a lower gross margin, so these searches represent a significant and unnecessary expense.

TABLE 1

CALCULATING THE COST OF SEARCHES

Calculation	Result
Wage * S-hours * K-workers * F-rate	Cost of failed searches
P-rev * S-hours * K-workers	Opportunity cost of searches

Notes:

Wage = average salary of knowledge worker per hour (range: between $25 and $100)

S-hours = number of hours per year, per worker spent searching (range: up to 20% of time)

K-workers = number of knowledge workers in the organization (range: from 15% to 60% of an organization)

F-rate = 100% – success rate of searches (range: from 50% to 75%)

P-rev = average revenue potential of knowledge worker (either revenue per k-worker per hour or billing rate per hour of k-worker or other measure) (range: from $50 to $1,000)

Source: IDC, 2003

Many companies have recognized this conflict and are investing to unify their information resource systems and offer better access to those resources. IDC has identified several key imperatives that companies must satisfy to derive benefit from this unification.

IDC believes that the corporate learning infrastructure must become better aligned with *how* learners select the appropriate solution for their learning needs. The learning infrastructure must simultaneously meet the corporate objective of providing appropriate materials that will be useful to organizational goals and satisfy the learner's criteria for selection, or it won't be used or accessed.

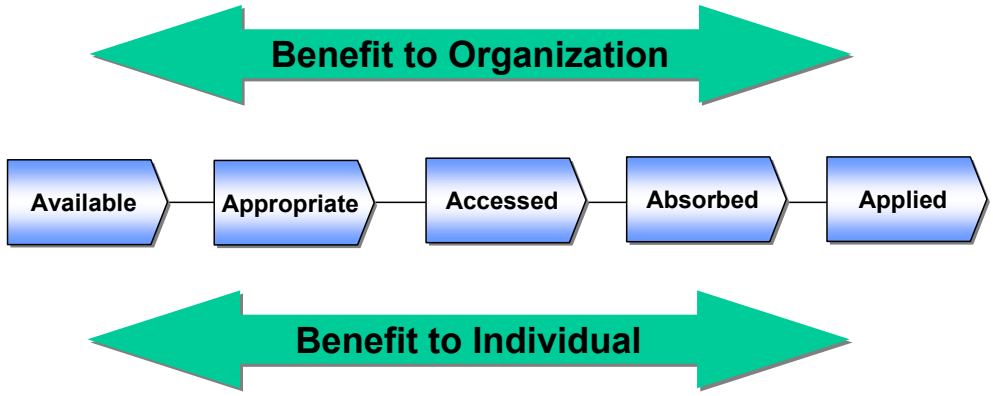
This concept is reflected in the 5 A's of an effective Corporate Learning Chain (see Figure 3):

- Information must be simultaneously *available* and *appropriate* to a set of potential problems. If the solution is believed to be available and appropriate, it is more likely to be accessed.
- If it is *accessed*, it is more likely to be absorbed.
- If it is *absorbed*, it is more likely to be applied.
- If it is *applied*, it is more likely to drive accomplishment.

This IDC White Paper seeks to validate the current drivers of learning within enterprises and explore the findings.

FIGURE 3

THE CORPORATE LEARNING CHAIN



Source: IDC, 2003

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES

The 5 A's of an effective Corporate Learning Chain are not revolutionary. Knowledge management professionals and chief information officers have been using similar rubrics to guide their efforts to disseminate the right information to corporate employees at the right time and in the right format.

What is often misunderstood is that both the organization and the individual have interests in the proper application of this model. Sometimes their interests diverge, but, ultimately, the learning imperatives of both parties must be satisfied for a company to effectively adapt.

Organizations that are deciding which information resources to make available should calculate the cost versus the benefit to determine if the value of the available resource justifies its cost. That calculation is often anecdotal, yet complex, and the target varies depending on who is performing the analysis. On the benefit side of the equation, the business is seeking to make the appropriate information available to its employees so that they can meet organizational goals. Because *cost* is controlled by the organization and the individuals must use the corporate resource system for the company to receive the benefits, for the purposes of this discussion, the organizational criteria will be focused on cost and whether there is value in the investment.

The *benefit* half of the calculation can be derived from the individual. Simply put, if the individual derives sufficient benefit to provide value to the company, then the information resources have value to the company. At the same time, individuals have their own needs and desires to see a positive cost versus benefit relationship, but of a different type. For the individual, cost is measured in terms of time and benefit is measured by a combination of work performance and personal effectiveness. Learners are likely to have additional motivators, but, for the most part, they are driven by work-related requirements. For a learning system to meet an individual's requirements, it must match the relevant information with the particular needs of the learner — how much information, relevance or credibility of the sources; acceptable delay in getting the information; and time available for the learning itself — to ensure the learner derives sufficient benefit to return for the next answer.

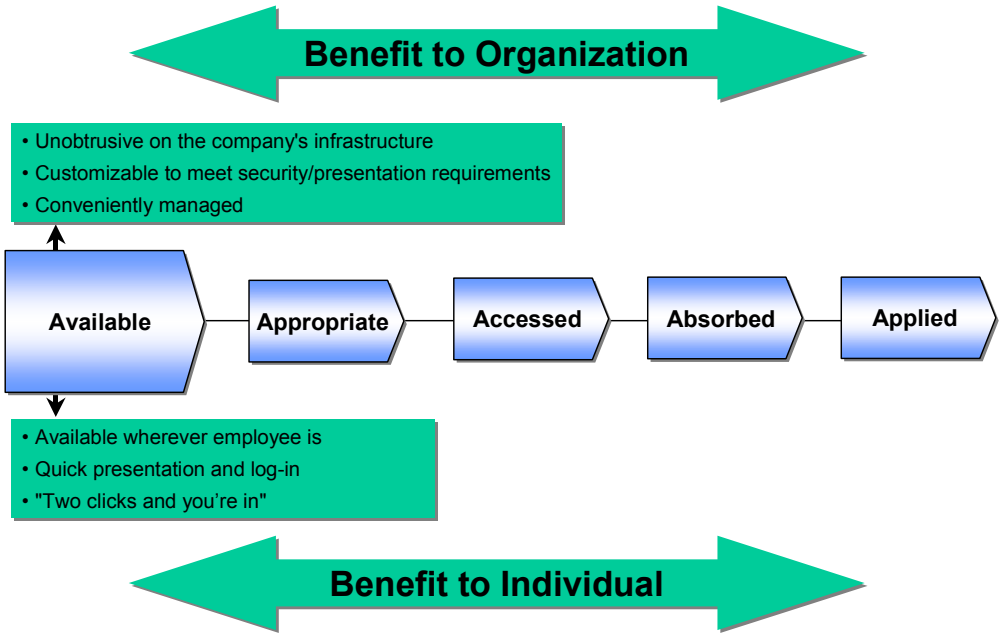
Therefore, for each of the 5 A's within the Corporate Learning Chain, the needs of the organization and the learner must be satisfied simultaneously, or the ultimate objective — business adaptation for the organization and personal effectiveness for the individual — cannot be achieved. IDC examines the 5 A's of an effective Corporate Learning Chain, including their relevance in the chain, as well as the types of imperatives that the organization (cost focused) and the individual (benefit focused) must derive for the learning system to provide value.

AVAILABLE INFORMATION: GETTING TO THE INFORMATION IS THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE

Making information available is as important as having the appropriate information. If the information is not available, its existence is irrelevant. *Available* information can have several characteristics that are applicable to either the organization or the individual (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4

KEY IMPERATIVES FOR "AVAILABLE" INFORMATION



Source: IDC, 2003

Before an information system can meet criteria to satisfy relevance requirements for the organization, the IT department must be able to address logistical considerations. The information sources that the company selects (e.g., paper, electronic) must be available to the potential users. For example, with the prevalence of the Internet, a Web-based information resource makes sense because it leverages existing components and is relatively simple to manage. IDC research has identified several key characteristics of a system with the staying power and the capability to be truly unobtrusive. The information resource solution must be:

- Based on open standards
- A modular architecture to permit specialized products when needed
- Easy and quick to implement
- A recognizable name to the business user
- Able to solve identified business problems
- Robust and scalable
- Intuitive and easy to navigate (no training required)

At the same time, the information resource should be flexible enough to mitigate a company's security or access concerns — either to prevent unauthorized use of information or the substitution of bogus information for legitimate information. The enterprise will often require the ability to customize the presentation to support a consistent and easily maintainable interface that is integrated with existing, ubiquitous tools and applications the company deploys. This integration reduces the "incremental effort" associated with the maintenance and deployment of the information resource and simultaneously makes it convenient for the employee as well.

For knowledge workers, availability means ubiquity. Wherever the employees are — work, home, on the road — the information resource has to be available. In some cases, employees may require wireless access from handheld devices, but most often, if their computers are on, the information resources they need to do their jobs are available. Ubiquity also means unobtrusiveness. An employee who needs to access the system must find the process convenient and seamless, which typically includes the incorporation of some form of single sign on feature.

Enterprises must remember that the information resource is competing with dozens of alternatives and hundreds of additional distractions. While it might be an arbitrary goal, IDC believes that the corporate learning infrastructure should be based on the mantra of "two clicks and you're in." The goal of ubiquity is clarity, not obscurity, and reducing the steps to find relevant information aids in clarity.

Need is the obvious criterion. When learners are seeking information, they most often are not interested in waiting for search results or even waiting to understand the results. The need is urgent, and the system must reflect this bias. When individuals are "looking for something," they expect to find it quickly — usually in minutes, not hours. Only rarely do learners think they should spend more than a day searching for information. But in a formal class, individuals are often willing to spend far more time — typically up to three days — to find out what they need (see Figure 5).

FIGURE 5

TIME SPENT SEEKING INFORMATION FOR AN "AVERAGE" NEED

Q7. Thinking about an "average" information need (not a training/education need), how long are you willing to spend to learn what you need (including searching and learning)?

Q12. What do you consider a "reasonable" amount of time for a training/education program?

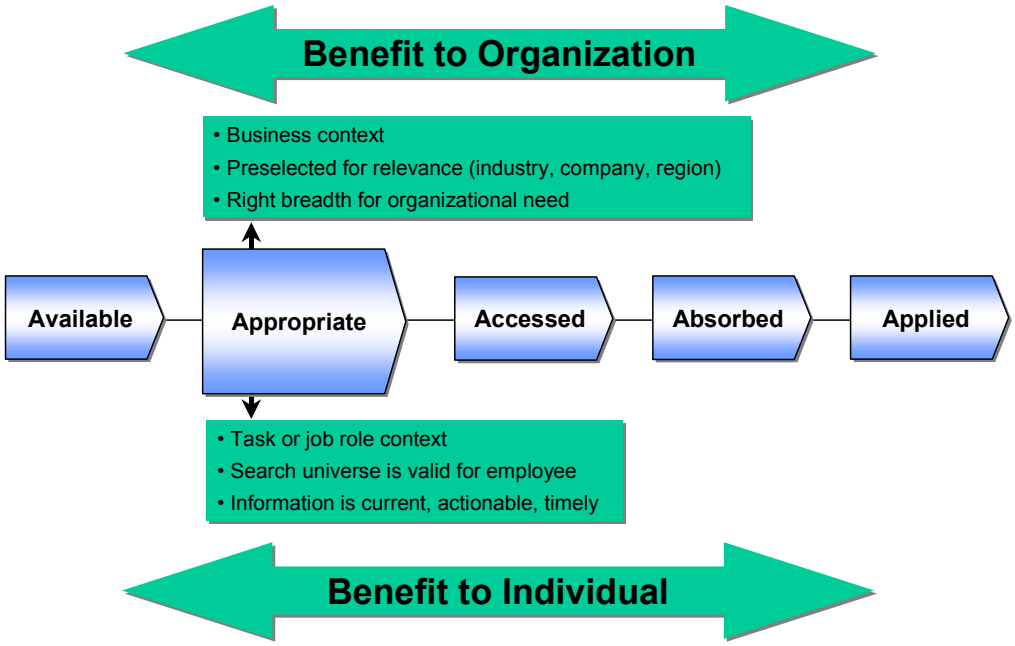
Source: IDC Information Worker Survey, April 2003

APPROPRIATE INFORMATION: KEY TO RELEVANCE

Appropriate information can have several characteristics that are applicable to either the organization or the individual (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6

KEY IMPERATIVES FOR "APPROPRIATE" INFORMATION



Source: IDC, 2003

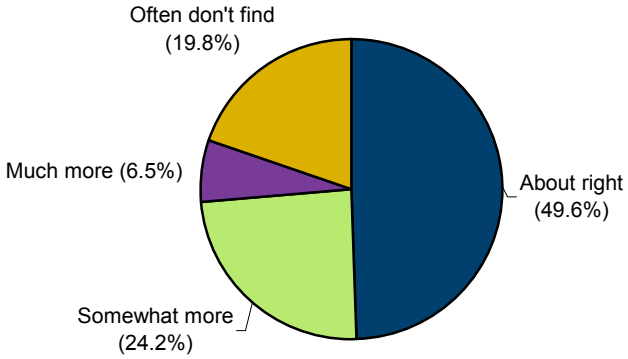
For the organization, cost and value can be demonstrated most easily by focusing the resources on information that is relevant to the business. If a corporate learning center has several million available resources, yet only a handful satisfy the search needs of its employees, the value of those resources must be questioned. In our research, nearly half of respondents indicated that they spend "about the right amount of time" looking for information. However, 31% spend more time than they should and approximately 20% "often" fail in their search attempts. These are pitiful results for organizations that need to be able to respond to change quickly (see Figure 7).

The business context means the content has been intelligently selected. The content must be relevant to the industry, region, or core functions of the business. There are many dimensions across which available content can be categorized to demonstrate its relevance to a particular business audience, but it is critical for the organization to maximize the appropriateness of the information it is supplying to its employees.

The consequences of failed searches hurt organizations in several ways. First, failed searches waste employees' time. Second, they waste money, because after several failed searches, employees will look somewhere else for the information. Therefore, the corporate investment is irrelevant. Individual employees are frustrated by the amount of "useless information" that is retrieved from a search, especially when they need an answer immediately. Employees are constantly looking for ways to improve the "hit rate," or percentage of useful results an inquiry returns, and they will seek systems that regularly provide the "right" answers to problems. If the information source is intelligent enough to present information based on an employee's job role, the individual would see immediate and dramatic improvement in the hit rate and would be more inclined to seek information there again (see Table 2).

FIGURE 7

RELATIVE TIME SPENT SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION COMPARED TO EXPECTATIONS



Source: IDC Information Worker Survey, April 2003

TABLE 2

TOP 5 CHARACTERISTICS OF "APPROPRIATE" CONTENT

Q11. Which factors are critical to your company's selection of an information resource/learning program?

Rank	Characteristic
1	Relevance of the content/topic
1	Quality of the content/teaching staff
2	Length of content
3	Quality of the presentation
4	Customization of presentation to specific needs
5	Program resources as on-the-job aids

n = 263

Source: IDC Information Worker Survey, April 2003

Appropriate information ensures that an information resource is relevant to the company and valuable to the employee. If the information resource is both appropriate and available to employees when needed, it is much more likely to be accessed. The Corporate Learning Chain then continues to the next stage: access.

ACCESS: USAGE STARTS HERE

The following passage alludes to a much-used proverb that is appropriate to our discussion of the accessibility of information resources:

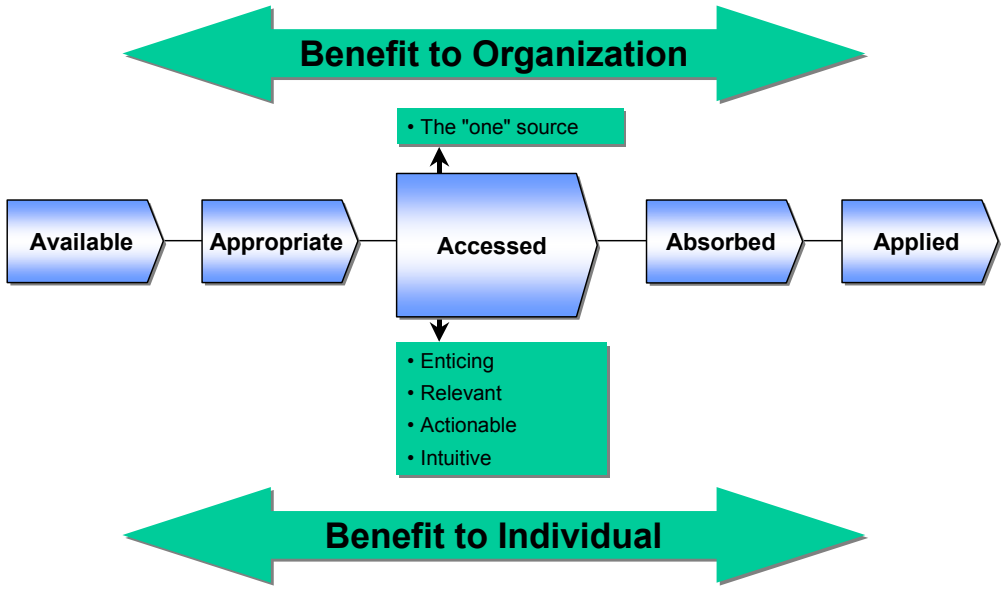
> "The water resources board spent months designing and installing a water purification system, years laying pipe, and millions of dollars to gain rights-of-way, long before the horse was led to water..." — Author unknown

If employees do not use the information resources the company provides, the appropriateness or availability of the resources does not matter.

Accessed information can have several characteristics that are applicable to either the organization or the individual (see Figure 8).

FIGURE 8

KEY IMPERATIVES FOR "ACCESSED" INFORMATION



Source: IDC, 2003

To support the goals of the organization, the information resource has to be considered "the one" resource that employees use to begin their quest for information. While it is unlikely that any single information resource will be used for every need, the organization derives value from its investment only when the information resources used are relevant. If employees use other sources for answers that otherwise could be found in this information resource, the money invested in the resource is wasted. In this way, the imperatives of the organization and the individual intersect. The information resource must be enticing.

Creating an enticing information resource may seem to be a daunting challenge, but the task can be accomplished more easily than may initially appear possible. Enticing for a learner is closely associated with relevance, which also means it is available in a manner that the employee is prepared to absorb. The content must be in a format (e.g., length, presentation, medium, tone, and depth) that supports both the context of the question or the particular needs of the employee. The information resource must present what the employee asks for, and the presentation must support the objective by being actionable.

The presentation must also help learners winnow the available resources by several criteria, including:

- How much information learners need
- What sources or opportunities are appropriate for the learners' needs
- What lag may occur before learners get the answer after a source is identified
- How much time learners are willing to spend acquiring or assimilating the knowledge they seek

When the system can perform or segregate the alternatives using these criteria, the employees/learners will be able to more quickly identify the best source of information and feel confident that the source is the most appropriate available.

Once the system is accessed by employees for all the issues that it was designed to support, the information it contains is more likely to be absorbed into the work behavior of the employees. The absorbing of information is the next link in the Corporate Learning Chain.

ABSORBED INFORMATION: FROM PAGE TO BRAIN

An organization wants proof that its investment is being "taken to heart" so to speak. In this context, the organization is hoping that its employees are retaining the information.

Absorbed information can have several characteristics that are applicable to either the organization or the individual (see Figure 9).

Firms are increasingly seeking proof that employees receive significant value from the learning events in which they participate. These proof points are used to judge the quality and impact of the investment and as a point of comparison when evaluating alternative investments.

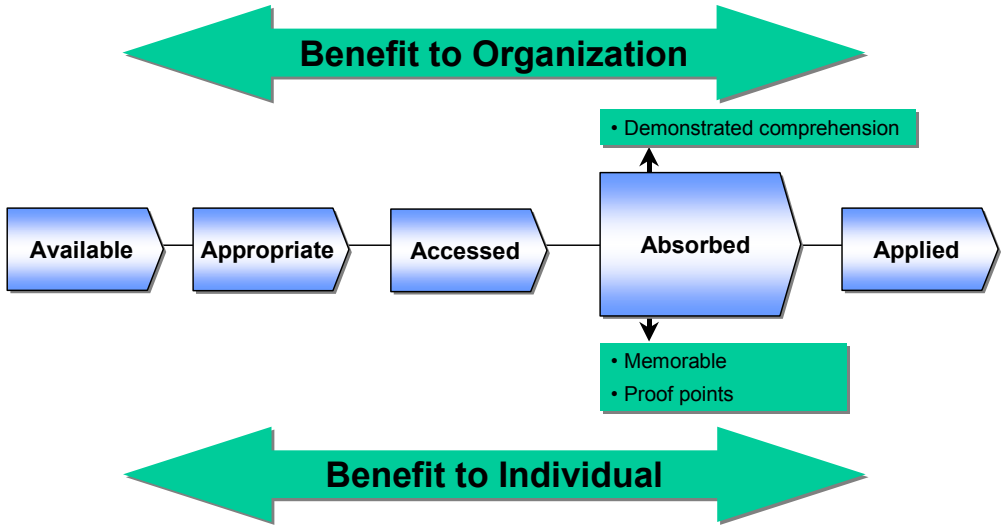
These proof points align with the employee's imperative for the information to be memorable. The hour or more that an individual spends seeking a technique or approach to a problem should be presented in a way that increases the likelihood that the employee will retain the information for future use. The information must be rememberable.

Employees also want validation that they have learned something. Proof points may serve a different purpose for employees and organizations, but the basic technique is the same. A pre-test and a post-test can immediately show what was actually learned while helping learners focus on the information least familiar to them.

If appropriate material is available, accessed, and absorbed, then it must be applied to the business context for which it was sought in the first place.

FIGURE 9

KEY IMPERATIVES FOR "ABSORBED" INFORMATION



Source: IDC, 2003

APPLIED INFORMATION: FROM EMPLOYEE TO BUSINESS

The final link in the Corporate Learning Chain is the application of newly acquired information to the business context.

Applied information can have several characteristics that are applicable to either the organization or the individual (see Figure 10).

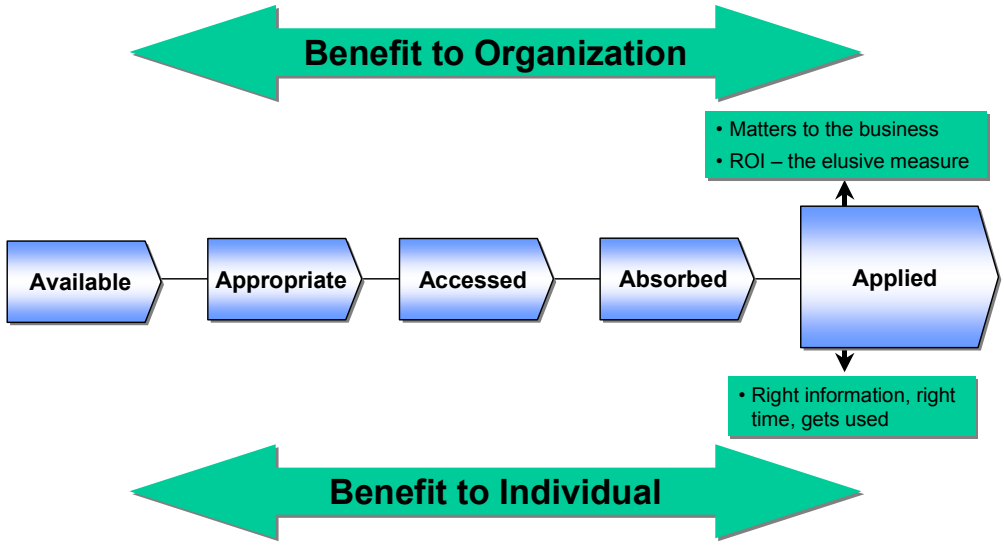
From a business perspective, the information that is learned must have an impact on the organization. Most often, this impact will result in a change of direction — either great or small — for the organization. It is often difficult to measure this impact among other business drivers.

Return on investment (ROI) is a method of ascribing specific value to a particular investment. It is often a complex calculation and involves looking at very specific behaviors and activities to understand the real cost and real benefits associated with a new project. It can be difficult, if not impossible, to attribute changing business results to a new system or any new process — but it is important to try.

It is easier to identify the specific change in behavior of individuals. When examining the application of new knowledge by employees, companies must be sure that employees had the right information, presented in the right way, at the right time — only then can it have measurable impact on the business.

FIGURE 10

KEY IMPERATIVES FOR "APPLIED" INFORMATION



Source: IDC, 2003

MULTI-MODAL LEARNING FROM SKILLSOFT: AN EXAMPLE OF AN ALIGNED SYSTEM

Because of the diverse and interrelated imperatives of an enterprise's learning needs, no single feature or technology can completely support the entire Corporate Learning Chain. In fact, a complementary suite of capabilities and technologies is an absolute requirement for companies that are considering an appropriate information resource solution. The challenge organizations face when seeking an aligned system is how to integrate disparate components while simultaneously ensuring maximum relevance and applicability.

The 5 A's of the effective Corporate Learning Chain can be used to help organizations establish how effectively a proposed suite of capabilities addresses the known requirements and imperatives of organizational learning.

Consider SkillSoft Corporation's Multi-Modal Learning, which represents a Web-based solution designed to enhance the productivity of business and IT professionals. Multi-Modal Learning leverages and integrates SkillSoft's range of elearning and performance support content, technology, and services. It also provides an unparalleled example of the ability to align components to support effective learning in an organization.

DESCRIPTION OF MULTI-MODAL LEARNING

The impact of SkillSoft's Multi-Modal Learning solution hinges on supporting and enhancing searching and informal learning, which can account for as much as 70% of an employee's learning process. It provides access to thousands of books on relevant business subjects — searchable by topic, keyword, or phrase — and presents those results side by side with formal learning experiences that satisfy the search criteria. It therefore builds on the capabilities common to formal learning programs and enhances them with content and tools relevant to the other 30% of an organization's learning needs.

Multi-Modal Learning combines in-depth courseware, learning management platform technology, and support services to support certification, continuing professional education, management and professional effectiveness training, functional area business acumen, and many formal learning priorities with a search engine designed to present the right material, in the right format, at the right time.

Multi-Modal Learning integrates several technologies for training and day-to-day performance support, including:

- **Books24x7 Referenceware,** to access and search unabridged book content from more than 3,000 books from more than 100 of the world's leading publishers on business and technical subjects
- **Simulations,** to access thousands of simulations and RolePlay exercises to immerse learners in task-based, multi-path simulation
- **Courseware,** to access a library that includes several thousand hours of instruction on a span of critical business, technical, and end-user skills
- **Online Mentoring,** for access to mentors through online chats and email; learners can ask questions, receive clarification, and request additional information to get the answers and understanding they need
- **Prescriptive Assessment,** learning needs assessment tools that match appropriate courses directly to competencies associated with 20 major job roles common to business organizations and key technical certification areas (Assessment results help direct individuals to appropriate learning, at the appropriate time, and for a specific job function.)
- **Job Aids,** more than 2,000 online job aids relevant to specific job roles, tasks, industries, and issues
- **Brief Articles,** more than 5,000 brief articles provide concise summaries of key knowledge points and skills
- **Learning Management (Hosted or Intranet),** to provide a range of capabilities for learning delivery and management

The potential impact of a comprehensive resource such as Multi-Modal Learning can be illustrated in a matrix that indicates which technologies and performance support capabilities are designed to support each element of the effective Corporate Learning Chain (see Table 3). To complete this matrix, IDC conducted interviews with customers and SkillSoft engineers and reviewed customer data. Table 3 indicates how comprehensively Multi-Modal Learning addresses the Corporate Learning Chain.

In the matrix, an "X" indicates that a specific component was designed to address one or more of the organizational and individual imperatives of the corresponding element of the Corporate Learning Chain.

TABLE 3

MULTI-MODAL LEARNING APPLICABILITY MATRIX

	Appropriate	Available	Accessed	Absorbed	Applied
Books24x7 Referenceware	X	X	X		X
Simulations	X	X	X	X	
Courseware	X	X	X	X	
Online Mentoring	X	X		X	X
Prescriptive Assessment	X		X	X	X
Job Aids	X	X	X	X	X
Brief Articles	X	X	X	X	X
Hosted Learning Management	X	X	X	X	X
Organizational and individual imperatives	Addressed completely	Addressed completely	Addressed completely	Addressed completely	Addressed completely

Source: IDC, 2003

When compared to the effective Corporate Learning Chain, each of the elements contributes significantly to organizational learning and complements the entire chain to ensure an effective process.

Through careful design and engineering, Multi-Modal Learning has the characteristics to address the organizational and individual imperatives necessary to satisfy the causal chain of organizational learning. It represents a unique combination of capabilities that enhance productivity of professionals and provide an opportunity for companies to maximize access to relevant resources and turn that access into better-informed decisions and faster business execution.

CONCLUSION

Business professionals are learning all the time, and their need for information is often driven by the dynamic nature of the business environment. However, the costs associated with fruitless searches are enormous: IDC estimates that up to 11% of a company's payroll, representing $85 billion per year in the Fortune 500, is lost searching for appropriate information.

But that "lost time" is not the only cost. Consider the business impact of failing to make a timely decision, or worse, making the wrong choice while your competitors choose correctly. Those mistakes and missed opportunities are not easily quantified with a simple calculation, but the impact can be devastating.

The economic impact of reducing that burden can be tremendous, but the approach to achieving that goal is clear. Several factors determine the ultimate value of knowledge sought and found. At the most basic level, a causal chain of events must be satisfied before information can make its way from simply being available to being applied in a business setting. This chain represents the 5 A's of an effective Corporate Learning Chain and includes:

- Available information: Getting to the information is the biggest obstacle.
- Appropriate information: Relevance is critical.
- Accessed information: Information usage starts here.
- Absorbed information: Transforming information on a page to knowledge.
- Applied information: Applying knowledge to the business.

IDC believes that if information is simultaneously available and appropriate to solve a business problem, it is more likely to be accessed. If it is accessed, it is more likely to be absorbed. If it is absorbed, it is more likely to be applied. If it is applied, it is more likely to drive accomplishment — the ultimate goal of the business.

For companies that are serious about reducing the cost and establishing an insurmountable competitive advantage of making the right decisions at the right time, making relevant information available to key employees is not an option, it's an imperative.

SkillSoft's Multi-Modal Learning is a system that is built to address the imperatives of organizations and individuals in their search for information. It is built to engage the natural learning process and present information that is appropriate to the learning needs and patterns of the individual worker.

Finding a system and a process that takes the guesswork out of accessing the right information in a format that is relevant is the first step to turning this goal into a real advantage. Don't waste more money on time-inefficient and fruitless information searches.