

# Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	viii
<i>List of Tables</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
Introduction	1
1 Overview	5
2 Memory and Learning Theory	16
3 Learning Quotient	48
4 Learning in Groups	64
5 One-to-One Learning	89
6 Learning with Technology	119
7 Assessing Learners	138
8 Assessing the Providers	171
9 Learning in a Diverse Workforce	191
10 Conclusion	206
<i>Bibliography</i>	211
<i>Index</i>	219

# Introduction

“There is nothing so practical as a good theory.” (*Kurt Lewin 1890–1947*)

Learning, like teaching, is a core life skill. It is commonplace; everyone does it. When there is an urgent critical need to learn we can do it. Babies and children grasp life’s essentials quickly enough. But as we grow older, individuals move in different directions and at a different pace. Learning, while still essential for our happiness if not survival, is not as instinctive as it was. We need help, some would say direction, to keep up with others. Nowhere is that more apparent than in the workplace.

Employers demand skills, many of which are not taught by parents, school or university. Furthermore, in today’s competitive world, employers are not just looking for people with knowledge and skills but those who have appropriate work and life values. They want staff who have commitment, who are going to win new business against the odds, who will go the extra mile.

But trainers and the professional institutions that promote and look after their concerns (ASTD in the US and CIPD in the UK) frequently lament the fact that they are not taken seriously. They believe they warrant a place on the board of directors. But do they deserve it? Are they truly professional? Do they know their job? Do they really earn their keep and deliver a high-quality product?

Training, coaching and the associated learning technologies have become big business and yet the professions are unregulated; anyone can claim to be a trainer or coach and cash in on the business needs of an ever more skill-hungry workforce.

Perhaps because learning is so commonplace, people think it is instinctive, a gift which most people share. We all know how to do it because we have experienced it ourselves and have taught others. Senior executives and many staff therefore believe that trainers have an easy life and do not deserve much more than a decent salary. They think this despite the fact that many cannot put together a decent presentation let alone plan, deliver or evaluate a training course.

*If money is your hope for independence, you will never have it. The only real security that a man will have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience, and ability.*

Henry Ford 1863–1947  
American industrialist

Trainers do not always help their cause. Practitioners can go about their business and not know why they are doing something and easily become subject to fads and fashions. The world of training has plenty of those. Many new learning ideas, done in the right place and at the right moment, can help, but, in the hands of the unknowledgeable, they can, at best, be useless and at worst dangerous.

The issues are similar with technology-based training, but more complicated. The learner is distant, there is little if any human contact, there is a bigger premium on using good visual aids and the new technologies are so complex that specialists need to build the programs. The future should be bright for e-learning and other technology-based learning. But can it deliver the promises made by many on its behalf?

In the modern world of competitive global business, of ever better qualified employees and increasing labor turnover, retraining older staff and the plethora of new technologies put the learning profession under greater pressure to deliver. At present trainers and coaches rely on learners wanting to move on. The trainer often needs to do little more than put new knowledge in front of students and let them absorb it. Knowledge of the process of memory and learning will become fundamental to the professions of training and coaching.

Practice has also developed over the years through trial and error. It works, but why? What is the scientific basis for the systems that have grown in the learning environment? Too much training and coaching happens without the deliverers understanding why it works or indeed if it works.

CEOs and directors considering the training options in their organization have a wealth of choice, from the traditional prospectus offered by training departments around the world, to specialized coaching options often offered to high flyers. Exotic technologies suggest there is a quick fix.

*It is always in season  
for old men to learn.*

Aeschylus, Agamemnon

Training is experiencing some tectonic shifts as its world has to absorb the impact of new words and concepts (learning rather than training, blended learning, learning organizations as well as the remarkable increase in coaching and e-learning). Are these shifts really changing the shape of learning or will the learning crust settle back into something familiar?

Statistics provided by the leading professional bodies of learning in the US-based American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and the UK-based Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) show that at the beginning of the 21st century, coaching and e-learning are increasingly popular on both sides of the Atlantic.

This has caused some excitement and both disciplines receive much coverage in their research and publications. Books on both subjects are regularly reviewed in their house magazines. But they tend to play down the fact that instructor-led classroom training still accounts for the biggest proportion of training.

According to the ASTD's *2004 State of the Industry*, over 60% of training is still done in the classroom (Sugrue and Kyung-Hyun 2004, p. 14). In the UK the CIPD found that "the emerging new orthodoxy still finds an important place for the training course. In fact on balance respondents report an increase in the level of formal classroom training offered over the past few years." (Sloman 2004, p. 31). The popularity of coaching and e-learning is, however, rising more rapidly.

Other statistics produce slightly different figures but the picture is similar: classroom learning still dominates but coaching and e-learning are increasing their share. Other concepts such as blended learning are also increasing in popularity.

Rather than trying to convince the reader that any one method, mode, mantra or mindset is best, *Learning at Work* puts the business of learning into the context of learning theory and analyses how practice matches what is known about how the mind works. There are many theories, some of which are based on scientific research and have been exposed to critical academic analysis as well as trialed in the workplace. Other "theories" have caught people's imagination; perhaps because they claim a quick fix or offer the ultimate training solution.

This book starts with the assumption that like all professions, there should be a strong knowledge base to their work. In the case of learning this means knowing about how the memory works and how people, particularly adults, learn best. The early chapters describe the theoretical underpinning of best practices in the learning business.

*Learning at Work* goes on to examine the options available to companies and organizations who are looking for the most effective ways of developing, teaching and training their staff. It puts the options of coaching and e-learning along with more traditional forms of learning into the context of learning in the workplace.

Managers, trainers and coaches often come across people who are reluctant to learn. This phenomenon does not apply only to those who feel they are too old, but to young people with excellent educational backgrounds and the highest IQ. Others who come with unexceptional backgrounds absorb new knowledge and learn new skills easily and with alacrity. Suggestions of slacking or lack of commitment begin to appear.

The more enlightened trainers or coaches will give such individuals more time and even call in specialists to help. However, do we really understand what is happening? Why should one individual, capable in every necessary respect, be unable to take on some new learning? Is it specific personality traits, some competence that is lacking or is it to do with self-esteem? Sports coaches know only too well that the state of mind of a sportsperson can profoundly affect the game of an individual or team. The same is true at work, although few people realize it.

People do lose confidence or fail to engage in a particular subject. They have the necessary intellectual horsepower and the determination, but somehow they fail to develop, to understand and learn. Chapter 3 analyses

*If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.*

Derek Bok, president  
Harvard University

the factors which contribute to someone's ability to learn a particular subject. New theory is developed to help to judge someone's learning quotient (their "learnability", that is, ability to learn). Conscious of why someone may be finding learning difficult, the trainer, coach or manager will be better equipped to help that person address the issues and develop properly.

There is no alternative to developing staff. It is not easy to train or coach well, although many people can do an average job. For most CEOs and budget managers, however, OK is not enough. Excellence in the learning business will come from sound knowledge of the theory and being able to put it into practice. *Learning at Work* aims to help those responsible for any aspect of learning to achieve excellence.

# Index

16PF (16 Personality Factors),  
146–7  
360° assessment, 162–9  
  appraisal, use in, 165–7  
  giving feedback on, 168–9  
  history of, 163  
  impact of, 167–8  
  validity, 164–5

## A

ability to learn  
  *see* learning quotient  
Abstracts, 131  
adult learning, 34–5, 53, 75  
age, 5, 8, 33–4, 58  
andragogy  
  *see* adult learning  
apprenticeships, 92  
attention, 26  
attitude, 20  
  learning *see* beliefs and values  
  tests, 144–5  
autism and learning, 192

## B

Baddeley, Alan, 21–22, 32, 75  
Barnum effect, 169  
Bartlett, Frederic, 29  
BBC, 121  
behavior, 21  
Belbin, Meredith, 153  
beliefs and values, learning, 17,  
  19–21, 25, 38, 111, 112, 129  
blended learning, 83, 84–5, 86,  
  124–5,  
British army, 37

## C

Cambridge Programme for  
  Industry, 44  
case histories, 81  
choice of learning, 9  
chunking, 27–8, 74–7  
coaching, 10, 89, 91–2  
  consultants and, 107  
  directive style, 11, 95–7, 118  
  GROW, 100, 103, 110  
  instructional techniques, 97–8  
  non-directive style, 11, 95–7,  
  98–101, 118  
  origins of, 92–3  
*see also* executive coaching; one-to-  
  one learning,  
cognitive ability, 58  
  tests, 143–4, 153  
consultants  
  *see* coaching  
counseling, 104–7  
cultural differences, 192–9  
  fate and, 198–9  
  inter-personal relationships,  
  193–7  
  management development,  
  203–5  
  social, 203  
  time and, 197–8

## D

definition of learning, 6, 17  
design of programs, 74–7, 181–3  
diversity, 191–205  
  *see also* cultural differences

**E**

- Ebbinghaus, Hermann, 21, 31  
 education  
   definition, 6  
 e-learning, 119–21, 123–4  
   definition, 11, 120  
 emotional intelligence, 155–8  
   ability EI, 157  
   trait EI, 157  
 EPQ(R) (Eysenck personality questionnaire (revised)), 147–8  
 evaluation, 171  
   coaching, of, 175–8  
   four levels of, 172–5  
   happy sheets, 172–4  
   value for money, 208  
   *see also* providers of learning  
 executive coaching, 10, 89, 101–4  
   definitions, 101  
   differentiating features, 104  
   processes compared, 102–4  
   *see also* coaching; one-to-one learning  
 exercises in training, 83

**F**

- feedback, 77–9, 84, 168–9  
 FIRO-B (Fundamental interpersonal relations orientation – behavior), 149–50  
 flexibility of the trainer, 207  
 foreign language, learning in, 84  
 forgetting, 21, 31–3  
 future challenges, 209–10

**G/H**

- Gallwey, W. Timothy, 95–6, 98, 99–100  
 Goleman, Daniel, 156  
 Hogan's personality inventory, 149  
 Honey and Mumford, 35  
   learning style questionnaire, 6, 35, 155

**I/J/K**

- inkblot test  
   *see* Rorschach test

- intelligence, 143–4  
   tests, 153  
   types of, 144  
   *see also* learning quotient *and* cognitive ability  
 interpreters, use of in training, 195, 199–202  
   advantages of, 201  
 Johari window, 77  
 Kirkpatrick, Donald, 171, 175, 190  
 knowledge  
   coach's level of, 113  
   learning, 17–18, 35, 37–8,  
 Kolb, David, 6, 35, 155

**L**

- language training, 133  
 learnability  
   *see under* learning quotient  
 learners, assessment of, 138–70  
 16PF (16 Personality Factors), 146–7  
 360° assessment, 162–9  
 Belbin team roles, 153–4  
 emotional intelligence, 155–8  
 EPQ(R) (Eysenck personality questionnaire (revised)), 147–8  
 ethical considerations, 158  
 faking tests, 160  
 FIRO-B (Fundamental interpersonal relations orientation – behavior), 149–50  
 Hogan's personality inventory, 149  
 learning styles questionnaire, 155  
 legal considerations, 158  
 MBTI (Myers-Brigg Types Inventory), 145–6  
 NEO-PI, 148  
 norms, 161  
 OPQ (occupational personality questionnaire), 150–1

PAPI (PA preference inventory), 151  
 Raven's Progressive Matrices, 153  
 reliability, 158–9  
 summary of personality tests, 152  
 use of, 162  
 validity, 160  
 Watson-Glaser, 153  
*see also* feedback  
 learning cycle, 37–8  
   four stages, 79  
 learning methods compared, 13–15  
 learning quotient, 7–8, 38, 48–63  
   intelligence, 7, 50, 58  
   learning history, 7, 49–50, 57–8  
   measuring, 57–63  
   motivation, 37–8, 54–6, 60–2  
   personality, 7, 50, 58  
   self-esteem, 8, 39, 50–2, 58–60, 111  
 lectures, 81  
   great lecturers, 87–8  
 life coaching, 109–10  
   I CAN DO, 110

## M

Maslow, Abraham, 52  
 MBTI (Myers-Brigg Types Inventory), 145–6  
 memory, 21–34, 75  
   association, 26–7, 29  
   distribution of practice, 23–5  
   meaning, value of, 29–31  
   mnemonics, 26–7  
   working, 22  
 mentoring, 108–9  
   definitions, 108  
 mentors, 11  
 mind maps, 76–7  
 motivation to learn  
   use of fear, 95–6  
   *see also* learning quotient  
 multi-rater feedback (MRF)  
   *see* 360° assessment

## N/O

need theory, 53–4  
 NEO-PI, 148  
 objectives, learning and training, 19, 66–9  
   SMART, 27, 101  
 older workers, 33–4  
 one-to-one learning, 10–11, 14, 89–118  
   advantages and disadvantages, 11  
   *see also* coaching; executive coaching  
 Open University, the, 122, 125  
 OPQ (occupational personality questionnaire), 150–1

## P

PA consulting group, 151  
 PAPI (PA preference inventory), 151  
 personality, 58, 138  
   *see also* learning quotient; styles of learning  
 personality questionnaires, 142–3  
 presentation  
   *see* lectures  
 providers of learning, 171–90  
   administrative support, 183  
   amateurs, 187–9  
   assessing before the event, 179–90  
   coaches, 182  
   experience, 189–90  
   outsourcing, 180  
   personal qualities of, 87–8, 208  
   professionalism, 188  
   qualifications of, 184–5, 187–9, 196  
   TBL, 182–3  
 Psychological testing,  
   history of, 138–41  
   use of, 141

## R

Raven's Progressive Matrices, 58, 153

reinforcement, 31  
 reviews in training, 25, 80  
 Rorschach test, 143

## S

Saville and Holdsworth, 150  
 self-esteem  
   *see* learning quotient  
 self-learning, 13, 14  
   *see also* TBL  
 seniority, 5, 8  
 skills, learning, 17, 18–19  
 sports, coaching in, 39, 55–6, 96,  
   110–6  
 styles of learning, 6, 35–40  
   personality, 39–40

## T

TBL (technology-based learning),  
 11–13, 14, 119–37  
 advantages and disadvantages,  
   12, 125–6  
 autism and, 192  
 business dimension, 131–2  
 definition, 121  
 development of programs,  
   128–9  
 future trends, 136–7  
 history, 121–2  
 introduction to programs,  
   127–8  
 language, importance of,  
   129–31  
 quality, 135–6  
 software skills and, 126–7  
 subject knowledge and, 127  
 summary of programs, 129  
 theory of learning and, 127  
 TBL, types of, 133–5  
 audio, 133  
 CD-ROMS, 134  
 DVDs, 134  
 electronic book, 133  
 internet, 134

intranet, 134  
 radio, 121, 133  
 simulators, 134–5  
 television, 121, 133–4  
 theories of learning, 35–46, 206–7  
   behaviourist, 40–1, 44  
   cognitivist, 41–2, 45  
   constructivist, 42–3, 45  
   experiential, 35–9, 75  
   humanist, 43–4  
   social, 44, 45–6  
 timing of learning, 25–6  
 training, 9–10, 64–6  
   advantages and disadvantages,  
     10, 14  
   computers in, 83  
   consultants in, 189  
   cycle, 66  
   definition, 5  
   demonstration, 82  
   development of group, 71–3  
   DVD, use of, 81–2, 86  
   environment, 51  
   interpreters, use of in, 199–202  
   methods compared, 85–6  
   needs analysis, 67  
   observing others, 82  
   one-to-one discussions in, 81  
   quality, 63  
   reading in, 84  
   reasons for failure, 178–9  
   size of group, 73  
   syndicates, 84  
   video, use of, 81–2  
 transfer of learning, 208–9

## U/V

US Army, 135  
 values  
   learning, *see* beliefs and values  
   testing, 144  
 Watson-Glaser, 153  
 words, power of, 129