



# Building capabilities.

**How to gain competitive advantage  
through learning.**

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## Is learning linked to your business strategy?



### Is it connected?

Training is deliberately architected to serve the business strategy from day one.



### Is it relevant?

Skills are developed to build a critical mass of key capabilities.



### Is it measurable?

New skills are tracked and evaluated in terms of the impact to the business.



### Is it flexible?

Carried out in diverse formats and venues, based on how people learn best.



### Is it human?

It is fun. It shifts hearts and minds.



### Is it starting new conversations?

Customers and colleagues listen and interact more effectively.



### Is it fostering new work practices?

People move from fire-fighting to creating outcomes and solving the right problems.



## Are you getting the bang for your buck?

Last year, in the US alone, businesses spent \$90.6 billion on corporate training.<sup>1</sup> Employees received an average of 47.6 hours of training, mostly focused on improving job-specific skills.<sup>2</sup> We're spending half that money on someone called Barb.

### Barb is overwhelmed and under-engaged.

If statistics are correct, your average employee is overwhelmed and under-engaged.

Meet Barb. Two years ago, Barb was on the high potential list. A veteran recruited for expertise in leadership and logistics. Last quarter, she attended a two-day off-site training on business acumen. Barb came back very excited. But back on the job, Barb didn't get to practice the new strategies. There wasn't even anyone to talk with about what might be relevant.

Here's Barb on a typical day: Triple booked in three back-to-back meetings. She is not paying too much attention in two of them. Partly because they are death-by-powerpoint. Partly because a big review is looming next week. Add to that another 94 emails that came in during the meetings, and now her inbox has over 300 unread messages in it. One of those is a second invitation to Slack, another an invitation to Yammer. Barb isn't quite sure what either means and has a sneaking suspicion that she won't be happy to find out. Well, at least there's a fire to put out: The last text of the day asks Barb to jump on a call at 9pm — the AsiaPac staff meeting. There's an outbreak of flu, and they need some input from Barb.

We call Barb, "overwhelmed Barb."

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<sup>1</sup> "Training industry report 2017." *Training Magazine*. November/December 2017, Vol 54:6, 21.

<sup>2</sup> "Training industry report 2017." *Training Magazine*. November/December 2017, Vol 54:6, 22.



**2 in 3** Americans are disengaged, or actively disengaged at work.<sup>3</sup>

Americans check their phones on average every **12 minutes**.<sup>5</sup>

**44%** of Americans are stressed at work.<sup>7</sup>

Actively disengaged workers cost the US **\$450 to \$550 Billion** per year.<sup>9</sup>



Employees who are engaged are **27%** more likely to report “excellent” performance.<sup>4</sup>

Productivity improves by **20-25%** in organizations with connected employees.<sup>6</sup>

Employees who exercise their strengths on a daily basis are **8%** more productive and **6x** more likely to be engaged.<sup>8</sup>

### Overwhelmed Barb

Barb can represent almost half your workforce.<sup>10</sup> She isn't just stressed. She's disengaged. This is a problem. Actively disengaged employees cost the U.S. \$450 to \$550 billion per year in lost productivity.<sup>11</sup> Companies with engaged employees outperform those without by 202%.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Lydia Saad, Gallup, Inc. “[Eight in 10 Americans Afflicted by Stress.](#)” Gallup.com, 20 Dec. 2017

<sup>4</sup> Dan Witters and Sangeeta Agrawal. “[Well-Being Enhances Benefits of Employee Engagement.](#)” Gallup.com, Oct. 27, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> 2017 Asurion Smart Phone study conducted by OnePoll

<sup>6</sup> Michael Chui, et. al. “[The social economy: Unlocking value and productivity through social technologies.](#)” July 25, 2012

<sup>7</sup> Lydia Saad, Gallup, Inc. “[Eight in 10 Americans Afflicted by Stress.](#)” Gallup.com, 20 Dec. 2017

<sup>8</sup> Peter Flade, Jim Asplund and Gwen Elliot. “[Employees Who Use Their Strengths Outperform Those Who Don't.](#)” Oct. 8, 2015,

<sup>9</sup> “[State of the American Workplace.](#)” Gallup.com. February 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Lydia Saad, Gallup, Inc. “[Eight in 10 Americans Afflicted by Stress.](#)” Dec. 20, 2017

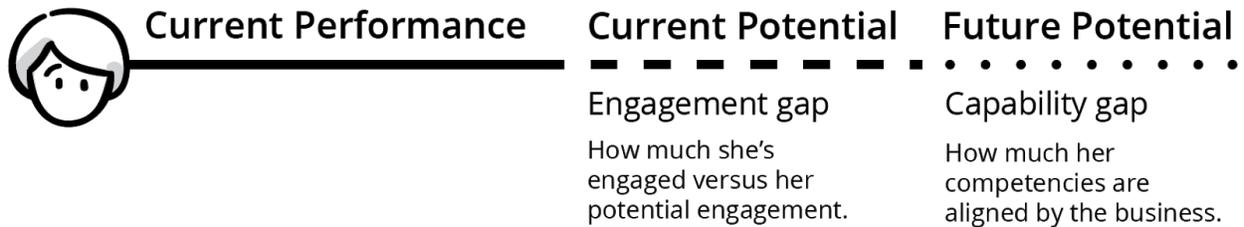
<sup>11</sup> “[State of the American Workplace.](#)” Gallup.com. February 2017.

<sup>12</sup> Eyal Katz. “[Remote Workforce NPS: The Most Important Metric You're Missing.](#)” March 2, 2017.



How does all this fit? What if you could wave a magic wand that reduces Barb's stress and gets her engaged? What if she could bring her full capacity to work?

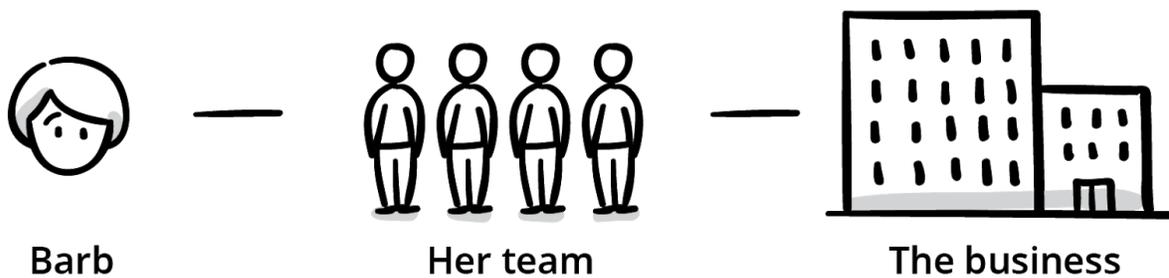
**If you don't know your capability gaps, you're leaving talent and business transformation on the table.**



Measuring Barb's capacity

Some of this is Barb's responsibility — but a lot of it isn't. The difference between Barb's performance today and her total potential is made up of two things. What we call the 'engagement gap' and the 'capability gap'. Ultimately Barb will make a choice about how much energy and passion she puts into her work. That choice is influenced by the culture Barb works in — which is shaped by leaders.

Remember, it's not just Barb. This engagement and capability gap scales across the business.

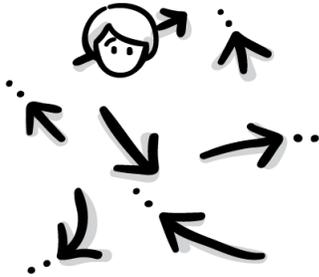


Barb is part of a larger ecosystem

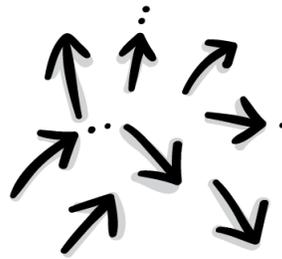
What if all the Barb's in your business suddenly lined up and executed against the strategy?



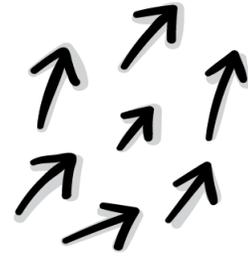
If your capabilities aren't aligned to your strategy, you're wasting energy and potential.



**A. No strategy, poor engagement, weak capabilities.**



**B. Strategy, better engagement, some capabilities.**



**C. Executing on the strategy — Engaged, aligned employees delivering capability.**

Three cases of strategy

Our challenge: lining up a company's execution with its strategy.



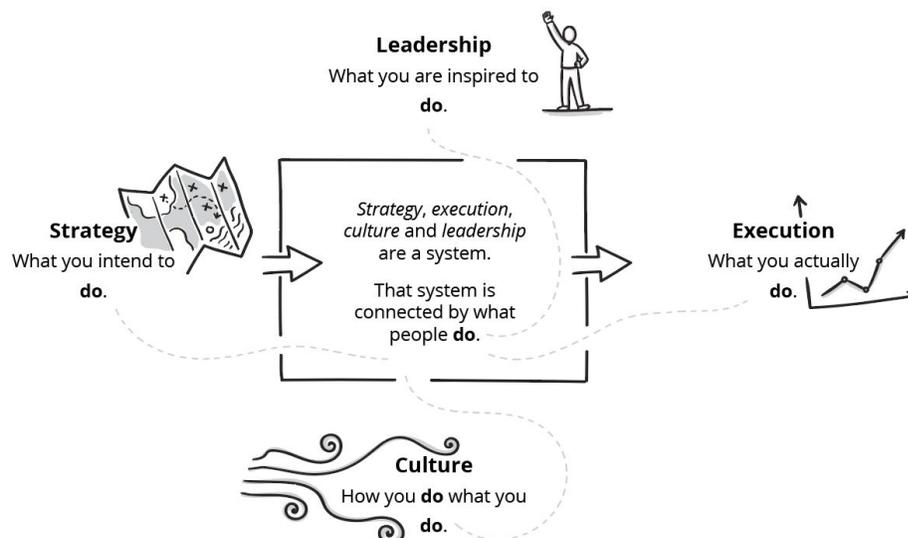
## What levers do you have to build and drive your business?

*Strategy, execution, culture and leadership* exist as a system in business. Businesses that keep them separated, struggle. Businesses that get it right, perform.

*Strategy* is what you want to **do**, or intend to **do**. It's bad strategy if it only exists on a binder or on a PowerPoint slide. It should guide the actions of every employee across the business. It should inform what they *execute* on. *Execution*, therefore, is what you actually **do**. It's what you **do** that you report results on. If you're not executing on the strategy, you are transactional, not tactical.

*Culture and leadership* both affect your ability to *execute* the *strategy*. *Culture* is how you **do** things around here. It's how you **do** what you **do**. This is where Drucker's phrase, "culture eats strategy for breakfast" comes in. If how you **do** things doesn't line up with what you intend to **do**, culture can be an obstacle. Like an organ donation, the company *culture* rejects the *strategy*.

This is where *leadership* comes in. At all levels the *leaders'* job is to inspire you to **do**. They define *strategy* at all levels. They translate messages throughout the organization. They improve process and practice. They find and groom talent. They shape *culture*. Most important, they drive *execution* and deliver results.

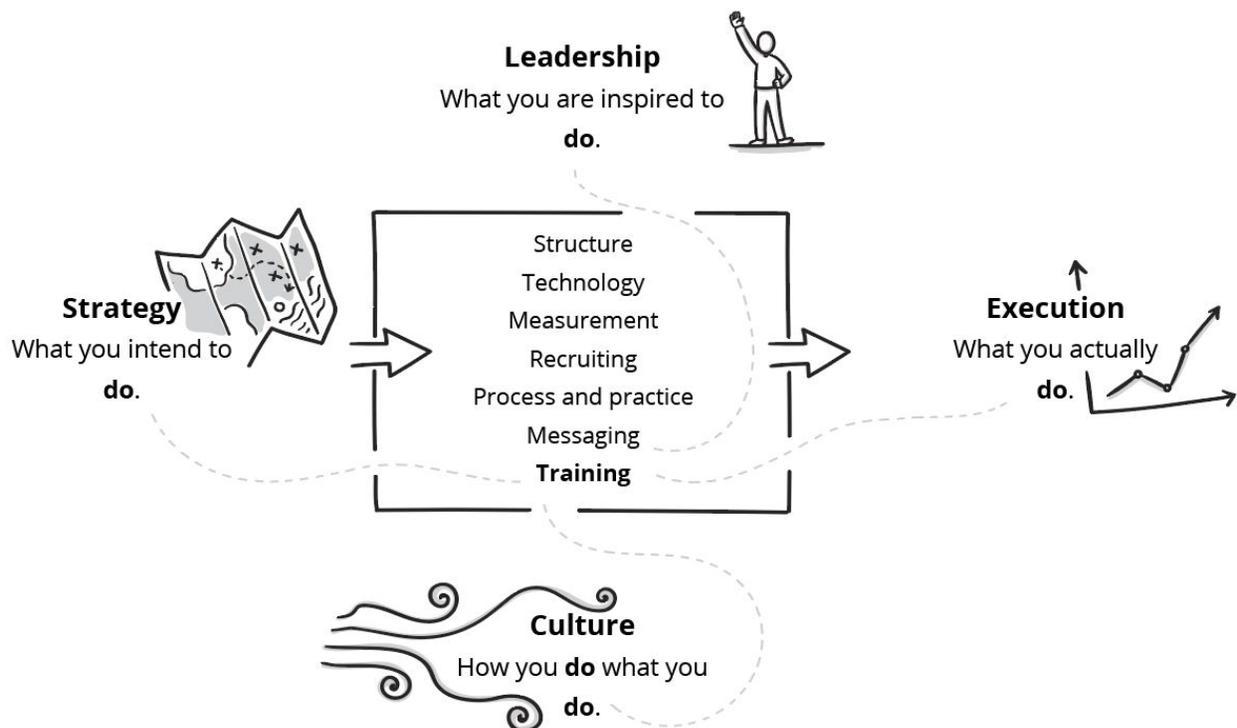


The *strategy-execution-culture-leadership* system



Strategy, execution, culture and leadership are a system. That system is connected by what people do.

Business leaders have many levers for controlling this system of strategy-execution-culture-leadership. These levers improve our ability, capability, and capacity to do the work of the business. Some will be more robust and mature than others. Not all are controlled in the same way. All of them need attention: are you getting as much out of each lever as you can?



Seven levers in the *strategy-execution-culture-leadership* system

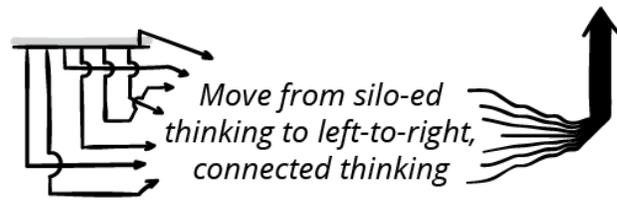


	<i>Watch out for...</i>	<i>Ideally...</i>
<p><b>Structure</b> <i>How people are organized to do work</i></p>	Yearly reorganizations that don't improve the ability of the organization to do work.	An organization structured to deliver a capability to market or as part of a value chain.
<p><b>Technology</b> <i>The systems that support and enable the work</i></p>	Systems with high technical debt that debilitate the ability of the organization to deliver work.	Integrated systems and technology that improve capability, and deliver it with scale, capacity and speed.
<p><b>Measurement</b> <i>Tracking and evaluating the work</i></p>	Measures that do not align to the goals or strategy or the organization, or incent poor behavior.	A simple yet comprehensive system of measurement that gives performance feedback to the business.
<p><b>Recruiting</b> <i>Hiring the right people with the skills to do the work</i></p>	Hiring for the 'old' culture rather than the new, or hiring without a track record of delivery.	Hiring people for cultural fit, skill, and ability to deliver results to the business.
<p><b>Process &amp; Practice</b> <i>How work flows through the business, and is done effectively and efficiently</i></p>	Process and practice becomes methods and procedure, and a bureaucracy that stifles work.	Flexible process to support teams in the execution of their work. Practice allows the organization and individuals to learn and improve.
<p><b>Messaging</b> <i>How people understand the work and how purpose, vision and goals are clarified</i></p>	A wall of noise. Cascading messages throughout the organization that overwhelm employees.	Message discipline within the organization that prioritizes, simplifies and clarifies the work.
<p><b>Training</b> <i>Improving the skill of individuals to develop an organizational capability</i></p>	Training that is disconnected from business capabilities and strategy.	Training that builds individual skill and develops organizational capability.

'Hard'.  
Easier to see and inspect.



'Soft'.  
More difficult to see and inspect.



## What is training's untapped superpower?

A well structured learning architecture aligns to the strategy-execution-culture-leadership system. Done well, it can be a significant lever in transforming the business. Done poorly, it's at best a series of events that build short-term engagement and individual skill. At its best, training should:

- Give individuals a skill.
- Build organizational capability.
- Spark business transformation.

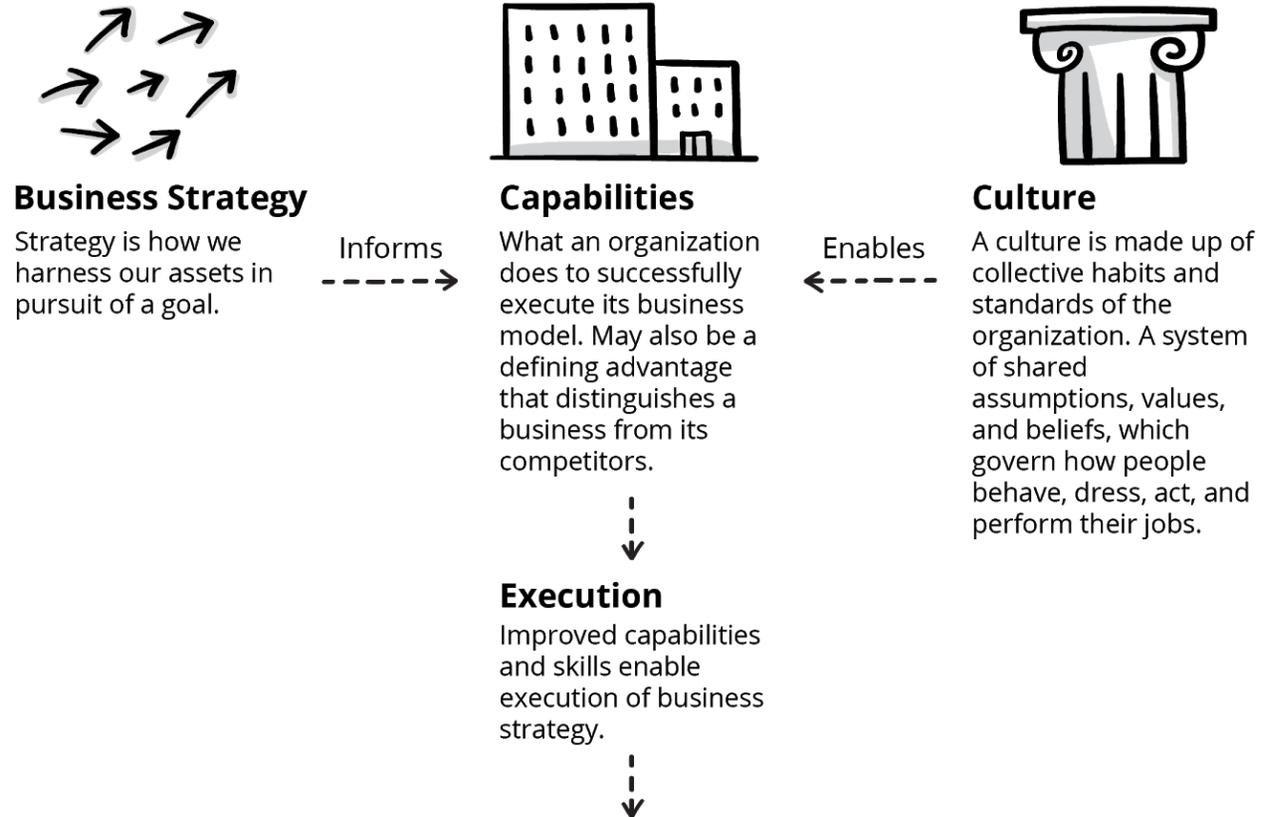
## The key to unlocking training's superpower is capabilities.

Training is under-utilized. Its untapped superpower is to connect disconnected parts of the strategy-execution-culture-leadership system. This is how it works:

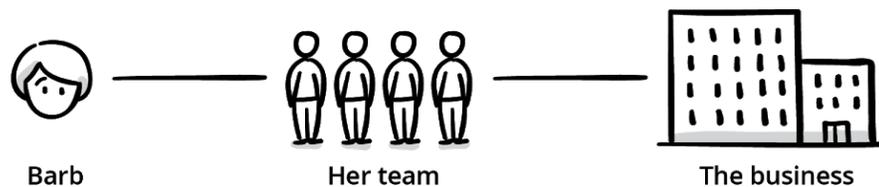
Think of your business strategy, which determines the capabilities your company needs. Those capabilities help execute your business model. A capability is the company's defining advantage over its competitors. Apple's capabilities (under Steve Jobs) were product development, brand building and market-making. Amazon has multiple business capabilities, in logistics, data science and storytelling. All are carried out with unprecedented scale and agility.



## Learning Architecture.



## Program Architecture across multiple levels and bands.



	Individual Skills	Organizational Capabilities
Leadership	Improved individual skills improve the collective capacity and capabilities of teams.	Focus on core leadership behaviors and practices that shape the culture and values of the organization.
Professional		Focus on core professional capabilities that build business acumen, thought leadership and industry relevance in a company.
Functional	Unique capabilities and skills by function and business unit.	

A capability is more than an accumulation of individuals with a



particular skill. It's competence at critical mass, supported by the culture. That culture has to value those skills and reward people for using them. Processes, tools and systems are in place so that individuals can use and grow their skills.

We can sum it up this way: **A capability is a critical mass of competency plus the capacity in the organization to deploy, recognize and build that competency.** Three types of skills are relevant here:

**Leadership skills** are core leadership behaviors and practices that shape the culture and values of the organization. Leadership training is for people who lead a team directly or lead an initiative with people on it.

**Professional skills** are core professional capabilities that build business acumen, thought leadership and industry relevance in a company. Professional training is for people across the company, no matter what job they have.

**Functional skills** are the know-how to complete job-specific tasks. Functional training gets employees up to speed on changing aspects of their job. It improves the performance of current employees. It's also for new employees.

Your business will turn skills into a capability if:

It has a critical mass of individuals with that competency

It has a culture that supports those skills

It enables those individuals to practice their competencies routinely

Once a business can do this over and over and at scale, it has a capability.

The goal therefore of your training architecture is simple: to help the business build the capabilities that will support its strategy.



## **Build learning events as programs that become practice.**

To build capabilities, learning events cannot be episodic. They must be aligned to business capabilities and delivered as part of a program that intends to both teach skills and give opportunities to reinforce and practice those skills.

Think of the learning event as where the formal learning happens. It could be a simulation or case-based learning. It could be socratic in style or experiential. It may be traditional or gamified. It may be delivered live in person, or live-online. Regardless of the format and venue, it should be engaging and relevant.

Reinforcement happens after the learning event. It's how you are reminded about the skill as you work. That could be in the form of coaching, either from a specialized coach or your manager. If the learning event is the 'Burst', the 'Boost' takes care of the forgetting.<sup>13</sup> Short, snackable and usually digital pieces of content remind the learner of what they've learned.

Most important is practice. This is how learning is applied to work, and the Thursday-Monday gap is closed. It happens because the culture supports practice and improvement. Leadership supports practice. What you're measured on supports what you practice.

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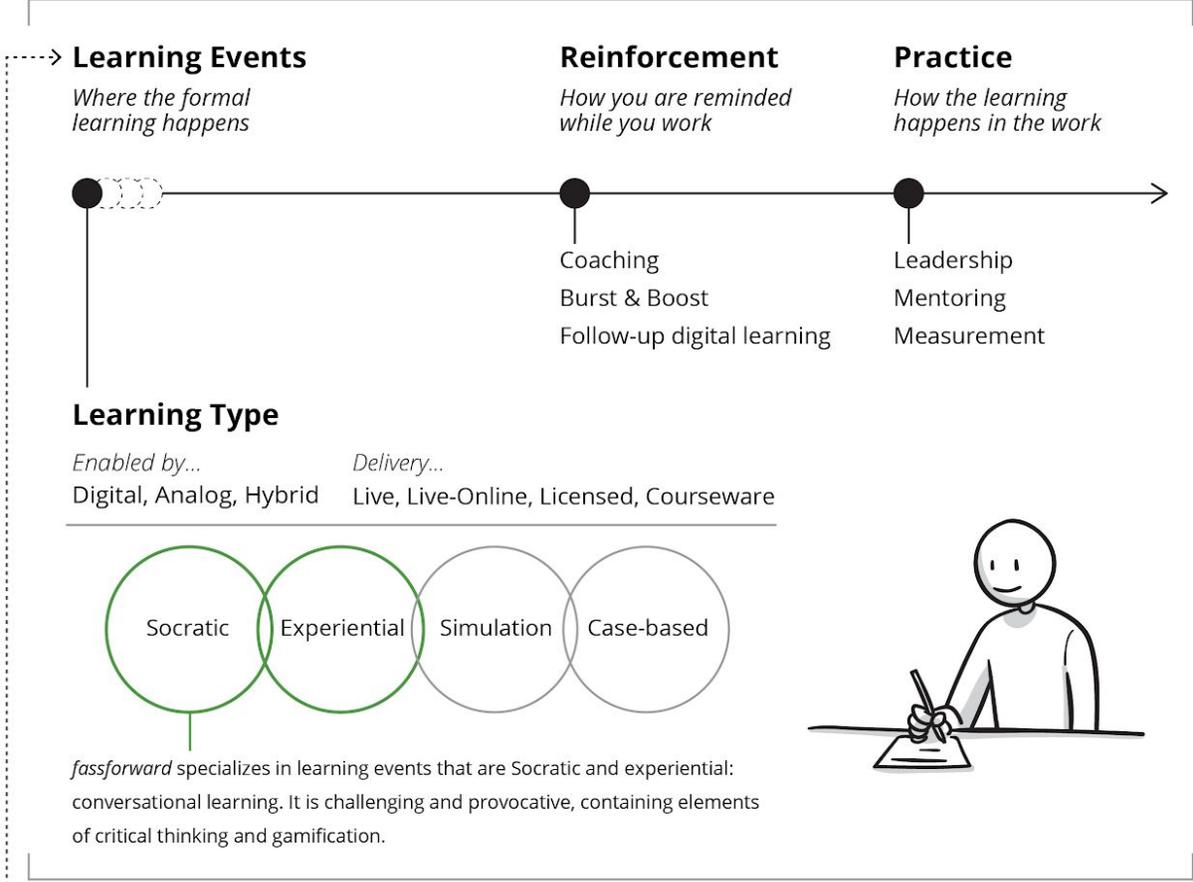
<sup>13</sup> ["Don't Forget the Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve."](#) Association for Talent Development, 8 Dec. 2017.



# Program Architecture.

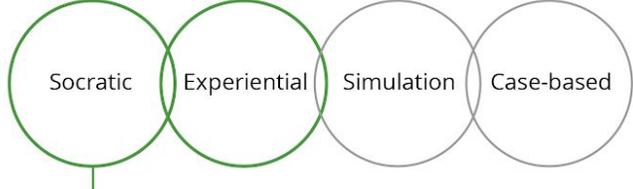
## Program x n

Gives individuals skill  
Builds organizational capabilities  
Drives business transformation



### Learning Type

Enabled by... Digital, Analog, Hybrid      Delivery... Live, Live-Online, Licensed, Courseware



fassforward specializes in learning events that are Socratic and experiential: conversational learning. It is challenging and provocative, containing elements of critical thinking and gamification.



## Capability - Program Mapping

Program External Change	Position and Reposition the Business		Setting the Right Goals		Setting and Prioritizing Learning Objectives		Managing the Social System		Enabling a New Model of Delivery		Building a New Model of Delivery		Measuring External Outcomes	
	Impact	Time	Impact	Time	Impact	Time	Impact	Time	Impact	Time	Impact	Time	Impact	Time
Stability	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Adaptability	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Resilience	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Agility	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Efficiency	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Effectiveness	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Customer Centricity	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Employee Engagement	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Operational Excellence	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Financial Performance	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Market Leadership	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Brand Equity	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Customer Satisfaction	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Employee Retention	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Operational Efficiency	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Financial Stability	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Market Share	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Brand Recognition	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Customer Loyalty	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Employee Productivity	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Operational Reliability	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Financial Growth	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Market Penetration	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Brand Strength	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Customer Retention	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Employee Satisfaction	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Operational Innovation	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Financial Resilience	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Market Expansion	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Brand Differentiation	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Customer Acquisition	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Employee Development	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Operational Scalability	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Financial Sustainability	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Market Dominance	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
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Employee Empowerment	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
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Financial Growth	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Market Penetration	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Brand Differentiation	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Customer Acquisition	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Employee Development	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Operational Scalability	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Financial Sustainability	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Market Dominance	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Brand Authority	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Customer Advocacy	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Employee Empowerment	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Operational Flexibility	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Financial Soundness	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Market Growth	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1					

## Training's traditional challenges.

Leadership training goes back to World War II when companies began to teach supervisors how to manage factory employees.<sup>14</sup> It has traditional challenges:

### Focus on the functional.

Companies invest more in training for job-related technical skills than for business acumen, leadership capabilities, team development, and soft skills.<sup>15</sup>

### Training is obligatory.

Leaders mainly offer training as a way to retain their talent. It's a box to check off.<sup>16</sup>

### Training is limited.

Only top leaders and high potentials get attention — mid-level and front line managers don't learn the skills that they need to lead teams.<sup>17</sup>

### Costs a lot.

US companies spend \$50 billion a year on leadership development.<sup>18</sup> The largest share of the training budget, 35 cents of every dollar, goes to leadership development.<sup>19</sup>

### Not linked to company strategy.

Only 22% of employees strongly agree that the leadership of their organization has a clear direction for the organization. And only 13% of employees strongly agree that their leadership communicates effectively with them.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Deborah A. Sleight. "[A Developmental History of Training in the United States and Europe.](#)" December, 1993.

<sup>15</sup> David Wentworth. "[Training Budget Benchmarks and Optimizations for 2017.](#)" 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Mike Prokopeak. "[Follow the leadership spending.](#)" Chief Learning Officer. March 21, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> David Wentworth. "[Training Budget Benchmarks and Optimizations for 2017.](#)" 2016.

<sup>18</sup> Mike Prokopeak. "[Follow the leadership spending.](#)" Chief Learning Officer. March 21, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> "[The Corporate Learning Factbook 2014: Benchmarks, Trends, and Analysis of the U.S. Training Market. January, 2014.](#)" January, 2014.

<sup>20</sup> "[State of the American Workplace.](#)" Gallup.com. February 2017.



## ... to that, add these new challenges.

### **Information overload.**

We won't clutter your attention with another statistic about the number of emails sent every day.

### **Time poor.**

You know what we're talking about here too.

### **The rise of remote.**

Leaders are managing remote teams, often across the globe and in different time zones. In those settings, it's harder for people to share the experience of learning with each other.

### **Cultural competence.**

Companies based in the US often don't translate globally. Differences in communication, leadership style and expectations can cause misunderstandings, lack of engagement and delay.

### **Noise.**

Most of the information about training is aimed at making decisions about cost — but not much else. How is the content structured? What's the best way to reinforce learning?

### **Piling on.**

If the learning program doesn't clearly make the learning relevant, then employees have to do it themselves — and integrating what they learned in training adds another project to a very long list.



# What to do.

## Strategy

*The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do.*

**Q. Do you know your business strategy?**



Your training can help you build capabilities for the business.

- **NO** → Training builds individual skill and short-term engagement lift.

## Capability

*If we did what we are capable of, we would astound ourselves.*

**Q. Have you identified the capabilities you need for your business strategy?**



Your training can transform a concentration of individuals with skills into a business capability.

- **NO** → You risk groups of skilled individuals working in multiple directions at once — no focus to their energies, and you don't drive long-term engagement. Employees may be reluctant to develop soft skills because they don't seem relevant.

## Capability Gap

*When you see a business faltering, attribute that to a gap in talent.*

**Q. Do you know your biggest capability gaps — where focus gives you greatest reward?**



You have a solid platform to develop a learning architecture that connects strategy, execution, culture, and leadership.

- **NO** → Audit your capability gaps across the needs of the business and look for pools of talent that have the potential to grow.

## Learning Partners

*It's all very well in theory, but will it work in practice?*

**Q. Can you identify partners who can provide relevant learning in the formats and venues that will help effectively fill those gaps?**



You know that training is relevant for people's jobs and how they learn.

- **NO** → You risk training becoming 'check the box' rather than learning events. You are getting less value from your training budget than you could.

## Learning Programs

*Leadership and learning are indispensable to one another.*

**Q. Can you design and deliver relevant, multi-format, flexible learning based on the human need for social connection, emotional motivation, and opportunities to practice? Does it connect immediately to employees' work?**



Your training program will become a significant lever for business transformation.

- **NO** → Training is at best entertainment for your employees. At worst, it's a time-sink.

## Practice

*Knowledge is of no value until you put it into practice.*

**Q. Are you building skills into a practice, and practices into a capability? Does your culture support learning and practice? Is measurement reinforcing the learning? Are you making the learning sustainable?**

- **NO** → Training programs have a short-term effect that is diluted over time as the operating environment in the business does not support it.



## **Start with your business strategy.**

Leadership and professional development should begin with the business strategy and the capabilities it needs. How far training brings people should be tracked and measured, and their competencies should be supported by the culture itself.

## **Shaping a culture.**

What is the culture where those capabilities can thrive? One that sets out to build those capabilities. One that rewards people for their competence.

## **What are the needed capabilities?**

Critical thinking? Product development? Making markets? Growing inside talent? Each company will need different capabilities based on its business strategy and its transformation needs.

## **Assessing the gaps.**

Next what's needed is to assess the skill and capability gaps that exist in the organization and design the training to fill those gaps.

## **Delivering those skills.**

Different skills, different methods. You tailor the learning mode to the skills themselves. Professional skills are best delivered via in-person learning events with subsequent prompts to refresh. Leadership skills are best delivered via coaching and mentoring.

## **Embedding the skills.**

How do new skills and competencies become part of the everyday fabric of the job? The culture plays a big role in welcoming people back from learning events, valuing their new skills and giving them opportunities to practice and be recognized.

## **Training is the thru-line for all the doing.**

Your business strategy is what you intend to do. Your execution is what you get done. Your culture is how you do things around here. Training is the thread that lines them all up with each other.



## What to look for in a learning partner.

Can your learning partners and outside vendors play in your learning architecture?

### **Remember that training builds capabilities.**

Look for learning partners whose training content fills your capability gaps.

### **They offer programs.**

Your learning partner is effective because they offer more than scheduled training sessions. Their content fits into a larger architecture. The learning is connected, and oriented toward executing the business strategy.

### **They facilitate learning.**

One fundamental we know improves learning is human interaction. Your learning partners provide multi-format, flexible learning lined up with the human need for social connection, emotional motivation and opportunities to practice.

### **Their content is relevant.**

The training they provide is relevant to people's jobs — they can bring it with them from day one.

### **They close the Thursday-to-Monday gap.**

The gap between the learning event and the return to work isn't just about memory. Will the learning program keep people excited once they're back at their jobs? And will they get to practice what they learned?

### **Learning together.**

Ideally, people attend learning events with people they work with (regardless of location). This gives them small communities of practice when they return to work so that last Thursday's training becomes this Monday's shared reality.



**Digitally enhanced.**

Courseware, live online workshops, and digital burst-and-boosts keep learners connected to what they learned. Memory decays — that's a fact. But timing the nudges in cognitively optimal ways gets people to build habits out of their new skills.

**Measuring learning.**

It's not easy to measure learning, but an effective learning partner will help you get as close as possible to knowing the strength of your capabilities so that you know what you can call on for your business.

**A reward system.**

Another fundamental that improves learning: a culture that rewards competence-building. This happens if a person's new skill lines up with the capability you're trying to build.



## Old vs. new.

	<i>Old...</i>	<i>New...</i>
<p><b>Is training connected?</b> <i>Training is deliberately architected to serve the business strategy from day one.</i></p> 	<p>Training is either a perk or focused primarily on functional skills.</p> <p>Training is episodic and disconnected from the work.</p> <p>Training comes from one vendor, one method.</p>	<p>Training is essential and is lined up with strategy. It transforms capabilities via a learning architecture.</p> <p>Training is continuous and aligned to the work.</p> <p>Content and formats can come from multiple vendors, coordinated by the learning architecture.</p>
<p><b>Is training relevant?</b> <i>Skills are developed to build a critical mass of key capabilities.</i></p> 	<p>Learning may be relevant to someone's job, but it doesn't build a platform for the future of the business.</p> <p>Training is limited to a select few.</p> <p>Learning and working are two separate activities, each with its own time and place.</p>	<p>Learning is relevant to build individual competence <i>and</i> capabilities that serve the business.</p> <p>Training is at scale to build critical mass.</p> <p>As much as possible, the learning is related to the work and accessible from the workplace.</p>
<p><b>Is it measurable?</b> <i>New skills are tracked and evaluated in terms of the impact to the business.</i></p> 	<p>Metrics mainly set up to measure ROI of training: did training happen, and how many people took it?</p>	<p>Metrics measure the impact to the business and the reach of training.</p>



Most new skills are related to a specific job function.

New skills can be used in multiple roles and across a career.

Training is the only place where you learn.

Learning sparks curiosity — people leave ready to seek out further engagement and information on their own.

**Is it fostering new work practices?**

*People move from fire-fighting to creating outcomes and solving the right problems.*



Training is disconnected. It reinforces narrow and siloed thinking.

Training helps people create outcomes and solve the right problems.

Training may be relevant to the day-to-day, but isn't relevant for the year-to-year.

People get to practice new skills on the job and grow their jobs into meaningful work.

Too few opportunities to practice.

New skills are practiced in context to make them part of daily work.



## Final thoughts.

### The goal of a learning architecture.

The goal of your learning architecture is simple: to help the business build capabilities that will support the execution of its strategy.

### Training as essential.

In business, strategy, execution, culture and leadership exist as a system. A leader has seven levers for guiding this system, one of which is training. Training possesses an untapped superpower: it puts parts of that system in conversation with each other. In a way, a learning architecture is a thing that makes everything else do more.

### Training puts a handle on “what you do”.

What do you get when you tap into training’s hidden power? We see it happen in our work all the time: when a learning program lines up with business strategy and culture, it can transform the business.

### Pitfalls to avoid.

If you do embark on building a learning architecture for your business, there are some pitfalls of thinking and practice that you should know about.

Don’t confuse a concentration of skilled players for a business capability.

Not all vendors play well together or fit into the architecture.

There may be too many owners of leadership development — too many cooks in the kitchen.

We’re not the only one saying this, but the right metrics matter. Doing the hard work to measure learning over the long term will always pay off.



## **Your next steps.**

Most global companies see training as something that needs to happen. Time and investment is a key consideration. When budgets are tight, more often than not training is the first thing to get cut. Bringing in the right training at the right time in the right way is not so easy. It starts with the right blueprint; a learning architecture that is aligned with the strategy; a program architecture that takes people from the event, through to their daily work practice. Training too often is episodic with the concentration on the event vs the system the event sits in. Providing a holistic view where all events work together to achieve a larger goal changes the mindset of key stakeholders. Training then becomes as essential to the success of their businesses and functions as other key imperatives.

## **A better way to do more.**

Imagine learning experiences that showcase the cutting edge talent of your leaders. Where skills are honed and the future is built every day. We believe that you can react to the future or create it. That's why our all time favorite question is, what's next?

We would like to build that for you.

