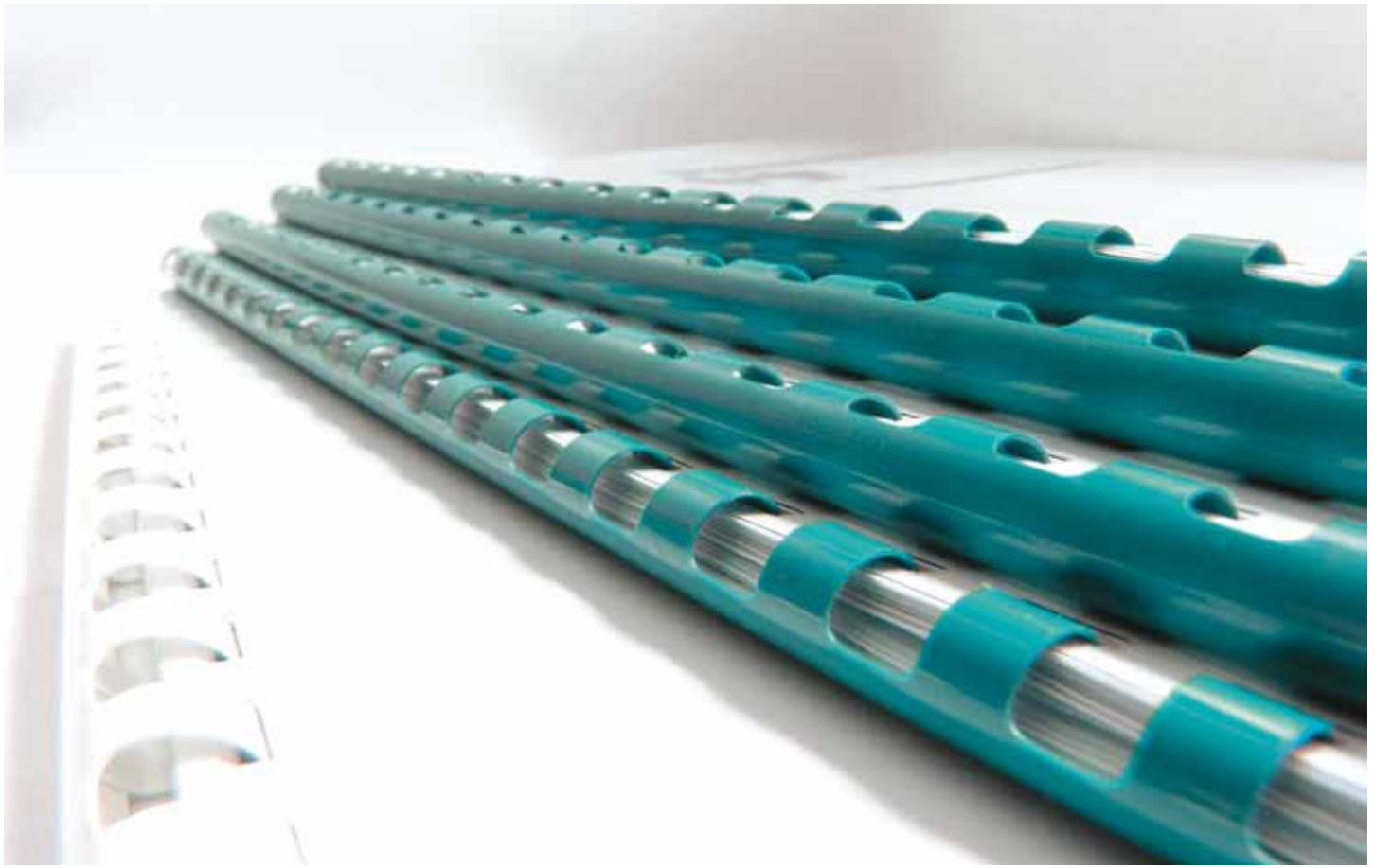# *L&D Summary Report and Written Executive Report*

by: Dave Vance
       President
       Manage Learning LLC

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Talent Development
Reporting *principles*

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Purpose

This document provides an example of a 2-page L&D Summary Report and a 3-page executive report to accompany it. Both are consistent with the principles and recommendations in the Talent Development Reporting Principles (TDRp) document. These reports are intended for senior leaders in the organization including the CEO, Executive and Senior Vice Presidents, members of the governing body for learning, and other leaders interested in the management of learning. A written report should always accompany the L&D Summary Report when the summary report cannot be presented in person.

The L&D Summary Report

According to the TDR principles and recommendations, the L&D Summary Report should contain the most significant measures from the Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Efficiency statements. Typically these will be grouped into three of four categories which may be business outcomes, effectiveness, and efficiency, but they do not have to be. In the TDRp framework, reports should be highly customized to best meet the needs of each particular organization. Therefore, there is considerable flexibility in deciding which measures to choose and how to group them. TDR principles, however, do require including data on last year's results, plan, year-to-date results, comparison to plan, and a forecast for how the year will end. Additional columns may be added, but these are the minimum.

For this example, measures have been grouped into four categories: impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and L&D investment. Impact includes business outcomes (from the Outcomes statement), application rates (from the Effectiveness Statement), and participant numbers (from the Efficiency Statement). Effectiveness includes summary measures from the Effectiveness Statement (levels 1-2). Efficiency includes key measures from the Efficiency Statement although L&D investment is shown separately. Others will structure their L&D Summary Report differently choosing other measures and groupings. There is no single approach that will work for everyone because our organizations, goals, and areas of focus are different. That said, every L&D Summary Report should contain business outcome measures for your important organizational goals. The measure of L&D impact on those goals will vary widely and will reflect what measures are available. If you have level 4 or 5 impact measures, great! Use them. However most will not. So, use what you have: application rates, intent to apply (from learner surveys), or sponsor estimates of impact. Initially, you might even use some input measures as proxies for impact.

Every report should also contain some effectiveness and efficiency measures. Virtually all organizations can report feedback and learning measures (levels 1 and 2) for effectiveness, even if only for a sample of courses or participants. If application rates (level 3) were not used in the impact section, then these should be reported under effectiveness if available. Efficiency measures typically would include a measure of timeliness (at least for selected courses) and some type of utilization measures (course, classroom, instructor, etc.). Another common measure of interest to senior leaders would be the reach of the L&D organization. This would show how many employees are touched by some learning activity and may include how many are participating in some key activities (like having a development plan).

Leaders also would be interested in measures of budget or opportunity cost reduction and how they are being achieved. Many organizations are implementing strategies to increase the percentage of online learning and virtual instruction to reduce travel time and cost. Many also would like to see some measure of the use and impact of informal learning such as communities of practice. Other measures might include reduction in cycle times and reduction of vendor costs.

Many more measures for efficiency are included in the TDRp white paper. Like business outcomes and effectiveness measures, decide which are most important and relevant to share with your senior leaders. They do not want to know everything you know. They just want what is most important and they want it aggregated to a high enough level so they get the big picture. Learning jargon (e.g., "level 1") should be avoided.

The Written Report

The written report should highlight and summarize the key elements of the L&D Summary Report, just as if you were making a presentation using the summary report. This requires providing context, history, and updates where appropriate. Focus should be on the most important elements and especially on important changes since the last report, although you should not assume the audience remembers the last report. The goal is not to discuss every number in the table but to tell a story. The story should answer the following questions:

- How are we doing year to date? (Versus plan and last year)

- How is the year likely to end? (Versus plan)

- Is there anything else important the audience needs to know?

- Is any action required from them?

The written report should not be too long. Two to three pages is reasonable. Begin with an executive summary containing your most important message for them. If they read only the executive summary, they should have a feel for the answers to the questions above. Following the executive summary, the contents of the written report should follow the order of the L&D Summary Report so it easy to go back forth between the documents. It is assumed the reader will have the L&D Summary Report in front of them.

Remember that this is a business—not learning—discussion. If performance is below plan on some measures, tell them why and what you are planning to do about it. Always provide the necessary context, but don't provide too much detail. They are usually not interested in the detail (they hired you to worry about that), and they can always ask for detail when they want it.

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Written Report Example

L&D Quarterly Report—
June 2011

Executive Summary

Learning has contributed significantly to first-half results and is on track to deliver the planned benefits for the year as a whole. The application rate for all key programs is running ahead of last year but slightly below plan. Improvement is expected in the second half, and the sponsors are confident that learning will have the intended impact on achieving their goals. Focusing on the four most important company goals (growth, talent, innovation, and safety), both application and impact are slightly ahead of plan and are forecast to end the year above plan.

Top 10 Programs and Initiatives		2010 Actual	For 2011			
			Plan	Jun YTD	% Plan	Forcast
Total Participants						
Total Participants	Number	40,000	83,300	41,589	52%	87,000
Sponsor Estimate of Impact of Learning	1-5	NA	3.5	3.6		3.7
Application Rate	%	62%	75%	73%		74%
Top Four Programs and Initiatives						
Total Participants	Number	21,000	59,500	31,992	54$	62,650
Sponsor Estimate of Impact of Learning	1-5	NA	4.0	4.1		4.2
Application Rate	%	67%	81%	83%		82%

The first half was executed according to the 2011 Business Plan for Learning approved by the CEO and Board of Governors in December. There were no emerging requests for training which required reprioritization and, at this time, no major adjustments from Plan are foreseen for the second half. As always, the Board of Governors will be consulted should such requests for reprioritization arise. L&D is on budget and is projected to end the year slightly below budget due to greater than expected internal cost reduction and slower than anticipated addition of staff.

Impact

Overall, learning has had the intended impact on results for the first half and is expected to deliver planned results for the year. (Refer to the attached report for the data discussed below.)

Total partcipants are 48% of annual plan through June which is consistent with the seasonal pattern reflecting slightly greater deployment in the second half. Learning is now forecast to reach 24,000 employees this year with each employee expected to take an average of about five offerings.

Year-to-date (YTD) participation in the top ten programs is running slightly ahead of plan (at 52%) and is now expected to significantly exceed plan of

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83,300 for the year. The application rate for the top ten programs (measured as a sample for each of the ten programs) is running at 73%, which is 2% below plan. L&D senior leaders have met with the sponsors for those programs falling short of plan and have helped them devise strategies for the second half to increase the application rate. This should allow the company to achieve a 74% application rate for the year, just slightly below plan of 75%. With these efforts underway, the sponsors believe learning will have the intended impact on achieving their goals (3.0 represents a medium impact meaning that learning has an important, but not exclusive, role in achieving the objective).

The highest company priorities for 2011 are growth, talent, innovation, and safety. Consequently, L&D has given priority in scheduling and resource assignment to learning initiatives in support of these goals. Training for our sales force is 79% complete (total participants), and 95% of the intended audience has taken at least the first course. An additional 50 candidates have been identified for the program this year. The 30-day application rate of 85% is exceeding plan and sales are running 8% ahead of last year. The sponsor is very pleased with the initiative and the contribution of learning towards the goal of increasing sales by 10%.

Higher employee engagement is the second highest priority goal for 2011, and here again, learning is expected to play a major role. Based on last year's employee opinion survey and a detailed follow up, the sponsor and L&D leaders believe that having employees take two performance management courses focused on setting good goals and having good performance discussions will significantly increase engagement. The application rate will be used as the proxy for the impact of learning with a goal of 80%. So far, the application rate is running at 75% and the forecast for the year is 77%. Engagement has already risen dramatically and is now forecast to end the year up 4 points versus 5 in the plan.

Learning is also expected to be a key driver of our effort to increase innovation. 90% of our engineers have already completed the innovation course, and patentable ideas have almost equaled last year's total. The application rate of key concepts is higher than plan and should contribute to another 13 patentable ideas by year end according to the sponsor. While the total number of patentable ideas is forecast to fall short of plan, it will nonetheless be significantly higher than 2010.

Our fourth priority in 2011 is safety, where the goal is a 20% reduction in injuries. The sponsor believes learning (and the associated reinforcement by supervisors) will be the single most important factor in achieving the goal. During the first six months, 80% of the target audience has taken the training, and even with an application rate slightly below plan, injuries have been reduced by 17%. With this strong start and with the application rate expected to increase in the second half, the sponsor now believes injuries will decrease 23% this year.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness measures how well the results discussed above are being delivered and helps to identify opportunities for improvement. Feedback from both participants and sponsors is important. If they do not like the learning, cannot apply it, and would not recommend it, the program is highly unlikely to deliver the planned impact on company goals. Participant feedback is better than last year and just slightly above plan. Sponsor feedback is also better than last year, but slightly below plan. L&D leaders are meeting more often with sponsors and the feedback is expected to improve in the second half coming close to plan for the year as a whole.

In some courses, it is possible to measure how much learning has occurred through a knowledge or skill check. In these cases, the sponsor will set a passing score and subject matter experts will provide the questions and answers. Year-to-date scores have averaged 83%, close to the plan of 85%, and 75% have passed on their first try.

Efficiency

Significant improvements have been realized this year in delivering courses on time, reaching 93% for the first half which is a new high. We expect to come very close to plan (95%) by year end. Utilization rates also have improved dramatically from last year. Classroom utilization is up to 91% and is expected to remain at this level through the second half. 92% of our available offerings have been used in the first six months versus 77% at this same time last year. This improvement reflects both an aggressive culling of low use courses and more strategic new course selection.

Learning and development has touched 93% of our employees through June and should reach 95% by year end, easily surpassing plan of 92%. We are right on plan to ensure that 95% of employees have a development plan in place.

In response to associate and manager feedback, a major effort this year is underway to reduce the opportunity costs associated with learning. Where appropriate, more learning is being offered online, which eliminates travel time and is more

efficient. Online learning for the first half represented 33% of total hours, which is up considerably from last year's 27%. Following the successful pilot last year, virtual instructor-led learning is also on plan to significantly reduce hours. Lastly, the number of communities of practice is on track to more than double this year (exceeding plan), making it much easier for our associates to share information and solutions and saving them precious time.

Our strategy to reduce the number of vendors and negotiate more favorable terms has allowed us to reduce costs by $164,000 in the first half and positions us to exceed planned savings of $290,000 for the year. Progress has been slower in reducing cycle times. Although we are making progress, the forecast is now for a 10% reduction versus plan of 15%.

L&D Investment

We are on budget for the first half and expect to finish the year slightly under budget—even as we deliver results above plan.

L&D Sample Summary Report

Results through June

Impact		2010 Actual	For 2011 Plan	Jun YTD	% Plan	Forcast
Total Participants	Number	80,000	120,000	58,146	48%	125,000
Unique Participants	Number	20,000	23,000	21,150	92%	24,000
Top Ten Programs and Initiatives (1)						
Total Participants	Number	40,000	83,300	41,589	52%	87,000
Sponsor Estimate of Impact of Learning	1-5	NA	3.5	3.6		3.7
Application Rate	%	62%	75%	73%		74%
Total Four Programs and Initiatives						
Total Participants	Number	21,000	59,500	31,992	54%	62,650
Sponsor Estimate of Impact of Learning	1-5	NA	4.0	4.1		4.2
Application Rate	%	67%	81%	83%		82%
Growth (3 courses/particpant)	Unique Participants	213	1,000	950	95%	1,050
Increase in Sales	Total Participants	213	3,000	2,375	79%	3,150
Corporate Goal or Actual	%	2%	10%	8%		10%
Application of 3 Key Principles within 30 days	%	NA	80%	85%		80%
Talent (2 courses/participant)	Unique Participants	20,146	23,000	21,150	92%	24,000
Increase in Engagement Score	Total Participants	26,547	46,000	21,150	46%	48,000
Corporate Goal or Actual	points	NA	5 pts	3 pts		4 pts
Application to Goals, Performance Discussions	%	NA	80%	75%		77%
Innovation (1 course/participant)	Unique Participants	0	500	450	90%	500
Patentable Ideas	Total Participants	0	500	450	90%	500
Corporate Goal or Actual	Number	15	30	12	40%	25
Application at 90 days	%	NA	70%	80%		79%
Safety (1 course participant)	Unique Participants	5,023	10,000	8,017	80%	11,000
Reduction in Injuries	Total Participants	5,023	10,000	8,017	80%	11,000
Corporate Goal or Actual	%	10%	20%	17%		23%
Application (observation by supervisor)	%	65%	95%	90%		92%

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L&D Sample Summary Report
(Using Proxies for Impact of Learning)
Results through June (continued)

Effectiveness		2010 Actual	For 2011			
			Plan	Jun YTD	% Plan	Forcast
Participant Feedback	On 6 Point Scale	4.8	5.1	5.2	102%	5.1
Sponsor Feedback	On 6 Point Scale	4.5	5.0	4.8	965	4.9
Learning	Test Grade	78%	85%	83%		84%
Efficiency						
Timeliness (% of courses delivered on time)	%	82%	95%	93%		94%
Utilization Rates						
Courses	%	81%	95%	93%		94%
Classrooms	%	85%	89%	91%		92%
Reach						
% of Employees Reach by L&D	%	85%	92%	93%		95%
% of Employees with Development Plan	%	82%	95%	95%		95%
Reduction in Opportunity Costs	Million $	$3.4	$4.9	$2.2	45%	$4.8
Percentage of Hours Delivered Online	%	27%	35%	33%		34%
Hours of Virtual Instructor-led Learning	Number	15	150	68	45%	$4.8
Number of Communities of Practice	Number	26	50	40	80%	60
Reduction in Internal L&D Costs	Thousand $	$63.0	$290.0	$164.0	57%	$310.0
Reduction in Development Cycle Times	%	NA	15%	5%		10%
L&D Investment	Million $	$25.4	$29.5	$14.5	49%	$29.0