



How to Ignite Workplace Learning Anytime, Anywhere

By Cal Wick and Kathy Granger

Overview

What if you could provide your employees and managers with a simple way to ignite their professional development after formal learning programs? Imagine an innovative solution designed specifically to activate informal workplace and social learning that is deeply engaging, user-centered, and easy to use!

Fort Hill Company has created a unique web and mobile app called [70-20®](#), which is designed to activate and engage people in learning on the job. 70-20 makes experiential and social learning intentional and visible.

Bridging the Generation Gap

70-20 is a web-based learning support platform designed to be device agnostic – but more about how it works in a minute. First, let's explore the question: *Why this and why now?*

The simple answer makes instant sense to anyone who's challenged with navigating the tricky territory of creating and deploying learning content today. In a word: Millennials.

Learning leaders know too well the pressure to make learning curricula relevant to younger employees who aren't accustomed to, or interested in waiting for formal programs to apply new skills, evolve their understanding, and get immediate feedback and recognition.

The simple fact is, like much in society today, technology, mobile devices and the Web are fracturing traditional learning models and delivery modes. More employees – both young and those more seasoned – are capable of building new skills by driving their own learning in more informal and social ways. Millennials are especially adept at self-directed learning – and they use their smartphones for just about everything - including self-development.

And yet, the familiar challenges still exist. In a recent Fort Hill survey of learning leaders, everyone said it's very important that employees apply learning to work. What's more, every learning leader agreed that it is vital that employees gain new skills and capabilities from a learning experience.

As for performance, nearly all of the learning leaders polled by Fort Hill (80%) said it's also very important that employees improve their performance after a learning experience.

But here's the reality: Most organizations do very little – or not enough – to support that effort. Nearly 75% of the learning leaders in our survey said they only moderately invest in helping employees apply what they learn to their work. None said their learning transfer support was effective consistently across their curricula.

The implications are becoming huge: As more and more experiential learning happens across organizations, learning leaders need new ways to drive relevancy and add value outside formal classroom and eLearning settings. The burning question for learning leaders is: ***What about the other 50 weeks of the year?***

Activating the Learning Side of Work

The 70:20:10 learning reference model is well-known and becoming widely adopted by organizations wanting more agile and performance-focused approaches to learning. The framework holds that about 10% of workplace learning happens in structured, formal learning experiences. The other 90% is informal learning made up of on-the-job experience (70%) and via exposure to others – social learning (20%).

Formal Learning is when people leave their work to learn by attending a program or stop working to “take an eLearning module.” People then return to work with their new knowledge and skills. The challenge is then getting people to apply what they learn in a way that improves their performance. Fort Hill has more than 15 years of experience helping clients excel at learning transfer after formal training programs.

Experiential Learning – what we call the **Learning Side of Work** – takes place while people do their work. The challenge is finding a way to activate informal learning ***intentionally*** – anytime, anywhere – and in ways that are motivational, learner-centered, and that improve capabilities and performance.

Introducing 70-20: A Unique Learning Support Platform

70-20 is an innovative web and mobile app that supports continuous progress on any type of learning or performance challenge. Users can create personal learning challenges at any time, work on formal learning challenges assigned during a training program (a “10”) and accept development challenges from their manager or team leader.

The user then shares updates of progress in the form of text, photos, videos, web links, or documents to get feedback and ideas from others on how to achieve the learning challenge faster or more effectively. The goal is improved performance and new capabilities, both of which can be measured and tracked by a user’s manager or coach.

Here’s where 70-20 excels at igniting the learning side of work:

Greater Visibility of Workplace Learning

70-20 activates and captures **post-program learning transfer** and **intentional informal learning**. It enables participants to take action on learning challenges arising from formal programs as well as personal learning challenges aimed at improving their capabilities.

70-20 enables learning leaders – for the first time ever – to provide an engaging process and supportive web app that makes experiential learning intentional and visible. For a formal program, a course owner can easily create learning challenges that support course objectives – launching 70-20 challenges before, during and/or after the program. The process sparks application of new skills, behaviors and knowledge on the job. As participants provide evidence of progress made on their challenges, leaders can monitor capability and performance improvement on their 70-20 Sponsor Dashboard.

Scalable, Visual, Verifiable

Program leaders now have a way to make progress and results visible, valuable and verifiable after learning and development initiatives. 70-20 users have a process to move from starting their challenge to reaching an achievement with clear steps and easy ways to have their progress validated. The platform provides a means for consistent numerical scoring on learning application and results for any type of challenge. For the first time, normative data on learning outcomes will be tracked across the curriculum.

Anytime, Anywhere Mobile Interaction

70-20 is available anytime, anywhere in an easy, simple web app on smartphones and tablets, which enables participants to track and document their learning with technology they use every day. What's more, users can utilize the camera on their phones to document their progress in real time.

Collaborative Multimedia Storytelling

70-20 is a personalized learning and storytelling platform that blends multimedia storytelling with online peer coaching to promote social learning and collaboration on shared challenges.

For personal challenges, the user can invite their manager, a mentor or colleagues to coach and support them as needed.

Final Thoughts

If it's true that smartphones are making us all smarter, the most pressing question for learning professionals is this: What are we doing to use them and the many other devices widely available to drive learning on demand?

If the answer is "not much", your organization is missing a huge opportunity – and perhaps squandering a large investment. Today's most pressing priority should be to activate learning anytime, anywhere – especially with Millennials – and tap into the rich opportunities offered by advanced mobile platforms.

We believe that informal and social learning is the best source of creativity, innovation and performance improvement in the modern workplace. Our goal is to provide you with a tool that activates and encourages the types of learning that deliver stronger results to employees, managers and your organization.

Cal Wick is the Founder and Kathy Granger is President of Fort Hill Company, the innovator of the workplace learning activation tool, 70-20®.