



The Business of Learning

By David L. Vance

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Are Your Corporate Learning Dollars Maximizing Bottom-Line Results?

Over half a billion dollars are spent annually on corporate learning, but are those dollars being spent wisely to improve not only individual performance but also delivering on the highest priority goals of the organization?

Many companies see learning as strictly an expense. Unless the learning is well aligned to an organization's key goals, it can become an easy target for cutbacks. Managed well, the learning function can become an indispensable, strategic partner with a significant impact on an organization's goals. Managed poorly, learning will be viewed as a cost with questionable value and little connection to the organization's goals or success.

The Business of Learning will provide your VP of Learning and management team with the tools necessary to make learning a strategic and powerful contributor to your corporate success.

You will learn:

1. The importance of strategic alignment and how to achieve it
2. How to develop a business case and to create a business plan for learning
3. Fifteen specific steps for running an effective learning business
4. How to manage the metrics, evaluations, and disciplined execution to support your plan
5. How to maximize impact to the bottom line for the investment made

The Business of Learning is like an MBA in a box for management team members interested in building an incredible resource in their organization. Included are tools and examples for every key concept and much more:

1. Step-by-step instructions
2. Coaching advice for managers

3. To-do lists and reading guides
4. Common objections and how to mitigate them
5. A complete sample business plan to guide your own development

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The Business of Learning By David L. Vance Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #316739 in Books
- Published on: 2010-10-01
- Binding: Hardcover
- 544 pages

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Editorial Review

About the Author

David Vance is the former President of Caterpillar University, which he founded in 2001. Until his retirement in January 2007, he was responsible for ensuring that the right education, training, and leadership were provided to achieve corporate goals and efficiently meet the learning needs of Caterpillar and dealer employees. Prior to this position, Dave was Chief Economist and Head of the Business Intelligence Group at Caterpillar Inc. with responsibility for economic outlooks, sales forecasts, market research, competitive analysis, and business information systems.

Dave now consults with organizations on learning and performance issues with a particular focus on launching and transforming corporate universities and designing effective strategies for managing the learning function, including alignment, governance, organization, and measurement. His firm is Manage Learning LLC. Dave is a frequent speaker at learning conferences and association meetings. He also conducts workshops and simulations on managing the learning function.

Dave received his bachelor of science degree in political science from M.I.T. in 1974, a master of science degree in business administration from Indiana University (South Bend) in 1983, and a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Notre Dame in 1988. After pursuing various personal growth experiences, such as being a house builder, a traveler, and a YMCA camp director, he joined a medium-sized consulting firm in 1980, where he was an economist and financial manager until 1984. He was also an economics and statistics instructor at Indiana University from 1983 - 1987. Dave joined Caterpillar in 1987 as an economist.

He is a member and former director and treasurer of ASTD (American Society for Training and Development). He is president of the local ASTD chapter (Northern Rockies Chapter in Fort Collins) and president of the Windsor-Severance Library Board of Trustees. He is also a trustee and lead independent director for State Farm Mutual Funds and an advisory board member for Capital Analytics, Inc. and Knowledge Advisors. Dave was named 2006 CLO of the Year by *Chief Learning Officer* magazine. He was also named 2004 Corporate University Leader of the Year by the International Quality and Productivity Center in its annual CUBIC (Corporate University Best in Class) Awards.

Dave, his wife Barbara, and their two dogs live in Windsor, Colorado, where they moved after retiring from Caterpillar. (Windsor is near Fort Collins and about an hour north of Denver.)

Caterpillar was ranked number one in the 2005 ASTD Best Awards and was named Best Overall Corporate University in 2004 by both Corporate University Xchange and the International Quality and Productivity Center. During Dave's tenure, Cat U was also honored with numerous other awards, including many in the measurement and alignment arenas.

Dave's current research focuses on bringing economic and business rigor to the learning field as well as the development of computer-based simulations to help learning professionals increase their effectiveness and efficiency. He is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Southern Mississippi, where he teaches the graduate course on Managing Workplace Learning, and at Bellevue University, where he co-teaches the graduate course on Human Capital Development and Productivity.

Emerald Group Publishing recognized Dave's 2008 article Manage Learning without Apology: An Economist's Perspective as one of three Highly Commended Award winners for the journal *Industrial and Commercial Training*. *The Business of Learning* is Dave's first book.

Dave may be contacted at jansunsnow@aol.com or through his website, PoudreRiverGroup.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Bernard Woodley:

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