

Is It a Learning Organization?

Overview

Becoming a learning organization is important for success in the twenty-first century. Organizations that improve knowledge management will have an advantage over slower-learning competitors. However, many organizations are unaware of their learning capacities or how to increase their potential. If they are familiar with the learning organization concept, they often only focus on a few elements.

The Learning Organization Profile is a comprehensive instrument that assesses the five key components of a learning organization: learning dynamics, organizational transformation, people empowerment, knowledge management, and technology application. It has been utilized by numerous organizations worldwide to evaluate their status as learning organizations and to receive guidance on further development.

The completion of the Profile is recommended for a wide range of employees to gather a representative sample. It is beneficial for senior management to have a basic understanding of the principles of a learning organization, as it showcases their dedication to transforming the company. The Learning Organization Profile can be administered in a group setting or through individual completion of the instruments followed by their return.

Learning Organization Profile

Here is a list of statements about your organization. Please carefully read each statement and determine how much it applies to your organization. Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statement on a scale of 1 to 4:

- 4 = applies totally
- 3 = applies to a great extent
- 2 = applies to a moderate extent
- 1 = applies to little or no extent

I. Learning Dynamics: Individual, Group/Team, and Organization

In my organization ...

_____ 1. People prevent distortion of information and blocking of communication channels by utilizing skills such as active listening and providing effective feedback.

_____ 2. Teams and individuals utilize the action learning process, which involves thoughtful reflection on a problem or situation and applying it to future actions.

_____ 3. Individuals can think and act with a comprehensive systems approach.

_____ 4. Individuals receive training and coaching in the art of learning.

_____ 5. We are responsible for managing our own learning and development.

_____ Learning Dynamics Score

II. Organization Transformation: Vision, Culture, Strategy, and Structure

In my organization ...

_____ 1. The climate recognizes the importance of education.

_____ 2. The organization is structured with minimal management levels to enhance communication and learning across all levels.

_____ 3. Both failures and successes provide us with valuable learning experiences.

_____ 4. Learning opportunities are integrated into operations and programs.

_____ 5. Top-level management supports the vision of a learning organization.

_____ Organization Transformation Score

III. People Empowerment: Employee, Manager, Customer, Alliances, Partners, and Community

In my organization ...

_____ 1. Authority is distributed and delegated based on one's responsibility and capacity for learning.

_____ 2. We engage in sharing information with our customers to gather their ideas and input for the purpose of learning and improving our services and products.

_____ 3. We engage in collaborative learning events with suppliers, community groups, professional associations, and academic institutions.

_____ 4. Managers are responsible for coaching, mentoring, and facilitating learning.

_____ 5. Our goal is to create a skilled and capable workforce that can learn and excel in their performance.

_____ People Empowerment Score

IV. Knowledge Management: Acquisition, Creation, Storage/Retrieval, and Transfer/Utilization

In my organization ...

_____ 1. Individuals receive training in the skills of creative thinking and experimentation.

_____ 2. Systems and structures are in place to ensure that important knowledge is encoded, stored, and accessible to those who require and can utilize it.

_____ 3. We are constantly working on developing new strategies and mechanisms to share learning within the organization.

_____ 4. We frequently create demonstration projects to test new methods of product development and service delivery.

_____ 5. People gather information about trends outside our organization through various methods such as benchmarking best practices, attending conferences, and examining published research.

_____ Knowledge Management Score

V. Technology Application: Information Systems, Technology-Based Learning, and Electronic Performance Support Systems

In my organization ...

_____ 1. People have easy access to various forms of information technology, such as local area networks, the internet, and online platforms.

_____ 2. Just-in-time learning, which combines high-tech learning systems, coaching, and on-the-job work into a unified process, is endorsed.

_____ 3. Our electronic support performance systems enhance our learning and work efficiency.

_____ 4. Learning facilities, such as training and conference rooms, provide electronic multimedia support and a learning environment that integrates art, color, music, and visuals.

_____ 5. Effective and efficient computer-based information systems play a role in facilitating learning.

_____ Technology Application Score

GRAND TOTAL TO 5 SUBSYSTEMS _____

(Maximum score: 100)

SCORING AND INTERPRETING THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION PROFILE

To calculate the Learning Organization Profile scores, add individual scores and find the average scores for each subsystem and department. Asking and discussing the following questions can greatly improve the interpretation of compiled data:

- Which subsystems have the highest and lowest scores? What are the factors contributing to these high and low scores?
- Are there notable discrepancies in the scores within each subsystem? What measures can be taken to improve scores in each subsystem?
- What variations are observed among the different departments? What is the distinction between management and non-management? What are the possible factors that contribute to these varying perspectives?
- Which statements are considered to have the most significance and offer the greatest potential for organizational change?
- How can the results of the Profile be utilized to develop an action plan for initiating the construction of a learning organization?