

Structuring Learning and Development in Global Organizations

White Paper

by Roland Deiser

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Introduction

The objective of this white paper is a general assessment of the current way global corporations organize their learning and development functions, with special emphasis on structural integration and differentiation.

For this purpose, interviews were conducted with the heads of Learning and Development from 23 global corporations¹. While this sample is by no way scientifically representative, it allows drawing conclusions about the current status and some major trends and dynamics in this field.

The major findings can be summarized as follows:

Identity of the Field

- Learning and Development (L&D) is gaining increased top management attention as a strategically critical activity, especially when it comes to Leadership Development and Top Talent Management.
- Despite this fact, the L&D function has still a fuzzy identity, indicated by a vast array of labels for the same or similar functions.
- One reason for its identity challenge is the current evolution of the field of L&D, which includes a paradigm shift from a traditional view on learning as individual skill building to a more comprehensive view of L&D as a corporate-wide process of building strategic and organizational capabilities into the entire system (the “DNA”) of the firm.

Organizational Models

- The L&D function comes with many different labels and with organizational models that are differ substantially both in terms of scale and scope of L&D activities.
- Only 3 of the sampled companies clearly separate the Learning Function from Management and Leadership Development². In these companies, the Learning Function focuses on providing professional and functional expertise.
- The vast majority of the companies combine L&D under one structural umbrella, although each corporation has its distinctive features. Such features are a function of history and often reflect the specific business model and industry environment of the firm.
- Top executive talent management typically remains a domain of its own, typically reporting to the Corporate Head of HR the Office of the CEO. It is usually tightly linked to the L&D function through well designed processes and policies.

¹ Companies directly contacted were: ABB, Allianz Group, Bertelsmann, BMW, BP, British Telecom, Chevron, Citigroup, Credit Suisse, DaimlerChrysler, Deutsche Bank, Deutsche Telekom, Disney, EADS, ENI, ExxonMobil, IBM, J&J, Nestle, Novartis, Shell, Siemens, Total.

² Functions are considered *separate* in case “Management/Leadership Development” and “Learning” are 2 distinctive units who both report directly to the Corporate Head of HR. They are considered *integrated* if they are combined in one direct report to the Corporate Head of HR.

Key Trends

- There is a clear trend towards more integration of all activities related to L&D. Corporate Universities or Academies that originally focused on executive and professional learning only, are expanding their activity portfolio, or they get folded into a larger integrated L&D function. The result is a higher impact of learning interventions and a better orchestration of the overall strategic development process of the corporation.
- Corporations put an increasing attention to creating systems and processes that help to span organizational boundaries, to improve horizontal collaboration as well as the vertical dynamics between HQ and divisions/regions. Such systems are regarded even more important than the structural models.
- There is a trend towards outsourcing and/or using shared services for standard operations throughout the entire company. At the same time, strategic governance and the controlling function of Corporate L&D get stronger.

The following pages provide

1. An overview about how companies label their L&D functions, and what portfolio of activities find their home within that function
2. A very brief analysis of the most common elements of the Learning and Development Function Professional/Functional Learning, Executive Development, Talent Management)
3. A brief analysis on the relationship between Learning and Development and the pros and cons of structural integration or separation.

1. Learning and Development – a Fuzzy and Emerging Practice

Only very recently, with the emergence of the “new ball game” of knowledge and talent based competition, Learning and Development (“L&D”) is beginning to gain deserved attention at the very top level of the Corporation. Factors such as Leadership bench strength, management of the leadership pipeline, management of innovation, and creating learning agility are increasingly quoted as very important if not the most important elements of future competitiveness.

Despite that fact we still deal with an emerging field of practice. L&D has much less tradition and a much more fuzzy identity as established business functions, such as Finance, Accounting, Marketing, or Sales.

One indication of L&D’s search of identity within the Corporate power grid is the vast array of co-existing organizational models and designs. Depending on the underlying intentions and the level of maturity of the corporation, the design of L&D Functions includes models as diverse as³

- Comprehensive Learning and Development units that include Professional/Functional Training, Leadership Development, Change Management, and Strategy Process Support – across all businesses and often throughout all levels of the organization (BMW, British Telecom, Chevron, Citigroup, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank, EADS, GE, IBM, Shell, Siemens, Unicredit)

³ The models typically do not appear in a pure form but rather as hybrids. Some of them are structured as Corporate Academies, others are typical organizational L&D units.

- Primarily virtual learning architectures that are focused on senior executive education and leadership development (Allianz Group, Bertelsmann, BP, DaimlerChrysler, Exxonmobil, Pearson), sometimes including a focus on external stakeholder orchestration (PricewaterhouseCoopers)
- World class Training and Learning Centers that focus on professional and/or functional expertise in areas that are relevant for the industry (Credit Suisse, E.ON, Johnson & Johnson, Motorola, Nestle, Novartis, Toyota, Union Fenosa), some accredited for providing academic degrees (ENI Corporate University, Autouni (Volkswagen), GM in the 80ies)
- Platforms for top management and top industry stakeholders to drive key issues of the industry (Total, Swiss Re, GE, Shell)
- Platforms for improving supply chain efficiency and dynamics (Toyota, GE, Cisco, Heidelberger)
- Platforms for managing transformational change projects (Citigroup, Credit Suisse, EnBW, ERGO, GE, IBM, Shell)
- Tools for standardizing core practices that are critical for the company's business model and/or brand management (Disney, Accenture)

Exhibit 1 is revealing: In our random sample of 22 corporations, only 4 use the wording "Head of Learning AND Development" more or less explicit in the title, but almost all those units include Development activities, and almost all of them report directly to the global Head of Corporate HR.

Company	Title	Reports to
ABB	Group SVP, Global Head of HR Operations	Head of Group HR
Allianz	Head of Group Management Development	Head of Group HR
Bertelsmann	VP and Managing Director, Bertelsmann University	Head of Global HR
BMW	Head of HRD and Leadership Qualification	Head of Group HR and Social Affairs
BP	VP Executive Development	Group VP Diversity, Inclusion, ExDev
BT Group plc	Group Organizational Development Director	Group HR Director
Chevron	Head of Learning and Development	Corporate VP HR
Citigroup	Director, Office of Learning and Development	Head of Global HR and Public Affairs
Credit Suisse	Chief Learning Officer, Head of CS Business School	Chief Operation Officer
DaimlerChrysler	Head of Corporate University	Head of Executive Management Dev
Deutsche Bank	Chief Learning Officer, HR Policy and Development	Head of Group HR
Deutsche Telekom	SVP HRD	Head of Group HR
EADS	SVP Leadership Development and Learning	Head of Corp HR
ENI	Head of ENI Corporate University	Board of Directors
E.ON	Head of Corporate University	Head of Global HR and CEO
ExxonMobile	Head of Leadership Development Advisory Group	Global HR Services Group
IBM	Chief Learning Officer (Head of Learning and Development)	Head of Corp HR
J&J	VP Organizational Capability	Head of Corp HR
Nestle	Head of Corporate Training and Learning	Head of Corp HR
Novartis	Head of Learning	Head of Corp HR
Shell	Head of Global Learning	Head of Corp HR
Siemens	Head of Leadership Excellence and Learning Campus	Head of Corp HR
Total	Corporate University	Head of Corp HR

Exhibit 1: Labels for Corporate Learning and Development Executives (random sample)

A closer look at each individual company reveals that the variety of labels is matched by an equal variety of activity portfolios, which reach from strategic discourse platforms (Total) to very comprehensive and integrated units (IBM, Shell, EADS etc.)

Company	Title	Activity Portfolio	Reports to	Trend
ABB	Group SVP, Group Function Head of HR Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talent Attraction Talent Retention Talent Development Executive Learning 	Group EVP HR	Integration
Allianz	Head of Group Management Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Academy Management Development (Systems) Succession Planning Global Top Executives 	Head of Group HR	Integration
Bertelsmann	VP and Managing Director, Bertelsmann University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Programs Leadership Development 	Head of Global HR	Integration
BMW	Head of HRD and Leadership Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting Educational Policy Executive Education HRD (Systems, Policies, Strategy) Leadership Development and Qualification 	Head of Group HR and Social Affairs	Integration
BP	VP Executive Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Development (all systems and interventions except Compensation and succession) Top Executive programs 	Group VP Diversity, Inclusion, ExDev	Integration
BT Group plc	Group Organizational Development Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Strategy and Development Leadership Dynamics Leadership Development BT Academy Employee Engagement HR OD 	Group HR Director	Integration
Chevron	Head of Learning and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Development Global Workforce Development Talent Management Change Management and OD 	Global VP of HR	Integration
Citigroup	Director, Office of Learning and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top Executive Development Global Franchise Training Global Leadership Training HR Professional Development 	Head of Global HR and Public Affairs	Integration
Credit Suisse	Chief Learning Officer, Head of CS Business School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Development Programs Functional Academies Learning Services (E-Learning etc.) Change Facilitation 	COO and Member of the Management Board	Integration
DaimlerChrysler	Head of Corporate University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Programs for top 2000 Hi Pot Programs Cross function Education (Finance, HR, GP&S) 	Head of Executive Management Development	Integration
Deutsche Bank	Chief Learning Officer, HR Policy and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Development Executive Education Learning and Development strategy and overall policy on a global scale Governance of shared services 	Head of Group HR	Integration

Exhibit 2 (part 1): Labels and Activity Portfolio of Corporate Learning and Development Functions

Company	Title	Activity Portfolio	Reports to	Trend
Deutsche Telekom	SVP HRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Culture Diversity Leadership Development Executive programs Training Professional Development Hi-Pot Development 	Head of Group HR	Integration
EADS	SVP Leadership Development and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managerial Culture & Leadership Development L&D Competence Management, Corporate Business Academy, Change & Organizational Development 	Head of Corp HR	Integration
ENI	Head of ENI Corporate University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University with Vertical Departments along functional specialization Certified Master program in Energy Business University Relations 	Board of Directors	stable, separated
E.ON	Head of Corporate University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education programs for Executives, Senior Managers and Emerging Leaders Customized Programs for Target Groups, Corporate E-Learning Platform 	Global Head of HR and CEO	separated
ExxonMobil	Head of Leadership Development Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top executive programs Global customized Programs 	Global HR Services Group	Integration
IBM	Chief Learning Officer (Head of Learning and Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exec Development Management Development Sales Learning Technical Learning Core professional employee learning 	Head of Corp HR	Integration
Johnson & Johnson	VP Organizational Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Education and Training (strategy and governance), Organizational Development and Consulting 	Head of Corp HR	Separated → Integration
Nestle	Head of Corporate Training and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Executive, Management, and Functional Programs recently added Leadership Development Program (roll-out) 	Head of Corp HR	stable, separated
Novartis	Head of Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hi level global learning Programs (Innovation, People, Performance) governance and policy for regional learning activities 	Head of Corp HR	Integration
Shell	Head of Global Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Development Executive Education OD Consultancy, 2 functional "Academies", Governance of shared services Diversity/Inclusiveness 	Head of Corp HR	Integration
Siemens	Head of Leadership Excellence and Learning Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top Executive Programs, Learning Campus (Broad Training Portfolio), Overall Learning Strategy and Policy 	Head of Corp HR	Integration
Total	Corporate University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top events with Global Experts and Top executives on strategic industry issues 	Head of Corp HR	separated

Exhibit 2 (part 2): Labels and Activity Portfolio of Corporate Learning and Development Functions

Exhibit 2 reveals a number of commonalities and differences between the companies which can be pretty confusing for anybody not too familiar with the field. The following table⁴ is an effort to provide a bit of structure by creating 10 distinctive clusters that contain all mentioned L&D activities.

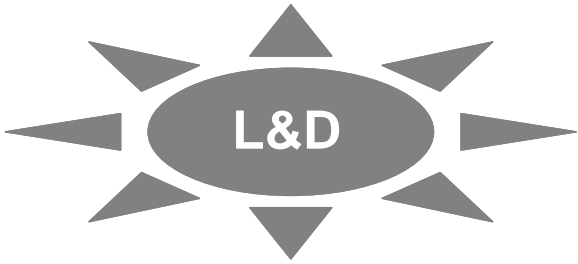
Talent Management	Leadership Development	Professional Education (high end)	Generic Training
Recruiting Talent Attraction Talent Retention Talent Development	Leadership Development Leadership Qualification Leadership Dynamics Hi Pot Programs Management Development	Executive Education High-end Professional and Functional Education Certified Master Program (University Degree)	Generic Functional and Professional Training Global Workforce Development Global Franchise Training Learning Campus
Change Consulting			Cultural Development
Organizational Strategy and Development OD and Change Management Change Facilitation and Consulting	Support and Interface Management	Corporate Policies	Managerial Culture Corporate Culture Employee Engagement Diversity/Inclusion
Professionalization of own Domain	Support and Interface Management	Corporate Policies	Dialogue Platforms
HR Organization Development HR Professional Development L&D Competence Management	Learning Services (E-Learning etc.) Governance of shared services University Relations	Learning and Development strategy and policy HRD (Systems, Policies, Strategy) Educational Policy	Top events with Experts and Top Executives on strategic industry issues Strategy Dialogues

Exhibit 3: Activity Portfolio within the Learning and Development Function (Aggregate of 23 sample companies)

In light of the high variety of activities it may be helpful to have a closer look at the most common and defining functions of L&D:

- Learning
- Leadership Development, and
- Talent Management.

⁴ Exhibit 3 contains only the exact same activities that can be found in the previous exhibit1. A broader sample of companies may reveal an even broader portfolio

2. A Closer Look On Some Key Functions

2.1 Corporate Learning – a Paradigm in Transition

As a field in major transition, the domain of Corporate Learning is difficult to define.

Traditional view

The traditional definition and perception derives from a Cartesian classroom model of learning and education. In this rather mechanistic model, subject matter experts transfer their knowledge to (uneducated, unskilled) students. The concept of learning is more or less limited to individual capability development, usually with a focus on cognitive-technical skills and behavioural skills.

→ *Implications and organizational consequences*

This perspective is still the predominant model in use. Organizationally, it leads to the creation of training and education centers that mirror traditional schools or universities, where trainers and experts come and “teach”. Learning transfer is left to the “student”, the Learning Function has no influence on the organizational and business context of its target group. This unfortunate separation of learning and doing leads to very low levels of effectiveness and to an image of Learning as “Ivory Tower”, something which is remote from real life.

Efforts of solving the “transfer problem” between classroom and real life are numerous but largely in vain. This is why corporations increasingly realize that they need to look at different paradigms for Learning and Development that create true organizational and strategic impact.

Newer and more advanced perspectives

A more advanced and comprehensive view of learning moves beyond the individual and emphasizes context and systems dynamics. It focuses much more on (learning) communities that are tied into practice, on enabling systems, and enabling environments. Here, learning effectiveness is not so much a function of good teachers and/or programs, but primarily a function of well designed “learning and development architectures” that address more complex systems, such as teams, organizations, trans-organizational networks (value chain partners), or even entire industry clusters.

→ *Implications and organizational consequences*

This latter perspective has the power to build individual AND organizational capabilities. Learning becomes practically synonymous with continuous change and development processes of people AND their organizational and strategic context. This approach requires to think hard about highly integrated organizational designs that systematically foster the connection between individual and collective learning processes.

Such designs consist of structures and mechanisms that institutionalize tight links between Learning, Development, Business, and the overall Strategy Process. This comes not easy, as the domain of Learning suddenly becomes a highly political animal, touching established domains of peers. But done well, such comprehensive Learning Architectures result over time in a sustainable *organizational* capability for innovation, change, and eventually industry leadership.

Leadership Learning has a special position within this universe, as the leadership culture and behaviour determines not only the performance of the corporation but is also at the end a critical variable for creating effective learning architectures, and for promoting a sustainable learning culture.

2.2 Remarks on Functional/Professional Training and Learning

High end professional and functional Training

is in many cases designed and delivered by Corporate Academies, often combining top notch internal and external expertise. Like in regular Universities, we frequently find topical differentiation/specialization (e.g., “Schools” for certain knowledge domains), to achieve focus and the best possible quality of content. Nestle’s Corporate Training and Learning function, Credit Suisse Business School, E.ON Academy, ENI Corporate University, or and Motorola University of 1980ies are good examples.

Executive Education is also part of this domain (e.g. programs in Finance, Marketing, General Management, etc.). Usually such programs are tightly connected with overall Leadership development activities.

Lower level functional and professional training

is typically delivered on the regional and/or business level. Historically, in most companies this type of learning and training rested entirely within the responsibility of the region or division. This leads in most cases to severe inefficiencies, duplications, and high variances of quality; it also becomes impossible to allocate strategic learning interventions and control their effectiveness control.

Strategic Alignment is Key

For this reason, we see a powerful trend towards a strategic alignment of company-wide learning architectures through the creation of integrating corporate steering and policy mechanisms. Such “strategic guidance” decreases centrifugal forces, creates economies of scale, makes costs accountable / manageable (also in terms of quality and impact), and allows for strategic resource allocation. Deutsche Bank is probably one of the best documented examples for this process that took place within this company over the last 4 years.

While *strategic* guidance of company-wide learning activities becomes a core function of Corporate Learning, *operations* (i.e. training delivery) are increasingly outsourced and/or performed by shared services (Deutsche Bank, British Telecom, Shell).

Exhibit 4 provides an overview how this segment of L&D is typically managed.

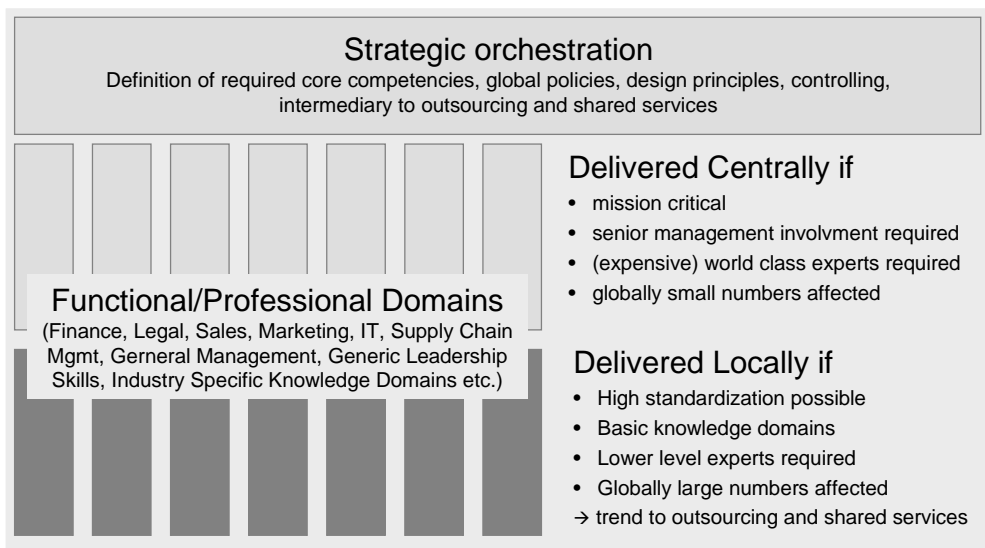


Exhibit 4: Corporate Architectures for Functional and Professional Learning Activities

2.3 Remarks on Development (specifically Leadership Development - LD)

Leadership development activities follow a different logic than traditional “academic” learning. The traditional model of learning quickly reveals its limitations when it comes to the complex challenge of building a powerful pool of leaders who are going to shape the future of the corporation.

While knowledge about leadership theory helps, and while developing individual leadership skills is crucial, LD is (and needs to be) frequently linked with agenda such as

- creating a common understanding about what kind of leader is needed for the future (which requires a thorough understanding of the strategic position and thrust of the corporation);
- creating an integrated and aligned mental framework about “what it means to be a leader within our organization”;
- creating a unified perspective on key strategic issues of the organization, and a unified perspective how to best handle challenging discontinuities
- creating loyalty to the CEO
- creating an effective and high performing top team
- creating a strategic dialogue across divisional and regional boundaries
- utilizing leadership development efforts for important strategic and organizational transformation processes, making it an important tool for overall cultural change and development (often tied into programs about “leading strategic change”).

This means that the rationale of LD activities requires from the outset a much closer connection to strategic and organizational issues. For this reason, it is easier to find political agreement that LD has to “reach out” into domains of strategy and organization, that boundary-spanning is just part of the game (exhibit 5)

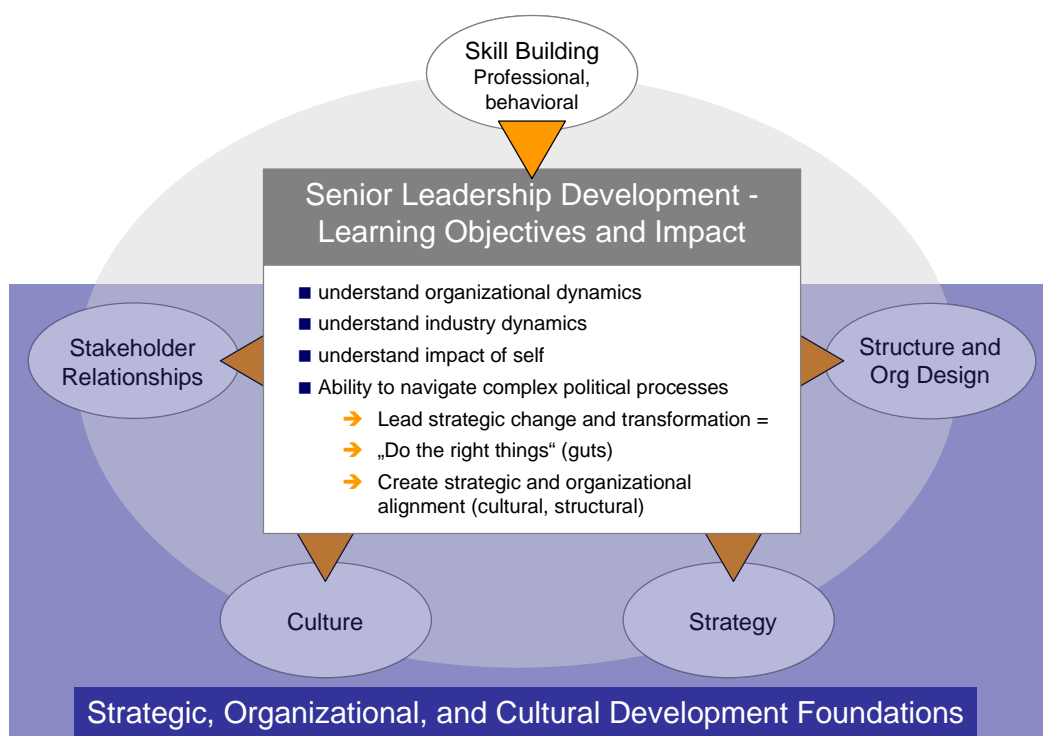


Exhibit 5: The comprehensive impact of Senior Leadership Development Activities

2.4 On Talent Management

Over the last decade, attracting and retaining key executive and professional talent has become an increasingly important source of competitive advantage. As a consequence, “Talent Management” ranks high on the agenda of many corporate leaders today.

Companies that excel in talent management have created *explicit leadership competency frameworks* that define desirable attributes, values, and performance metrics for future leaders. They also have developed sophisticated processes and tool-kits for identifying hi potentials and developing such Hi-Pots with a variety of learning and development interventions (360 degree feedback, performance reviews, Executive Development Programs, Coaching and Mentoring programs, etc.).

Significant time is spent on the very top level of the Corporation to systematically assess and discuss ways how to maximize the performance of the most senior leaders and the most promising candidates in the succession pools.

Implications and organizational consequences

- In the majority of companies, talent management for the most senior group of executives⁵ is designed as a distinctive function, usually reporting to the global Head of HR, sometimes also directly to the office of the CEO or to Corporate Development. In consideration of the strategic importance of creating a leadership pipeline and placing the right people on the right jobs, there are frequently institutionalized processes and mechanisms for discussing talent issues at the most senior level of the corporation (best known example: GE’s session C).
- Although Talent Management is usually separated from Learning and Development, they both belong to a coherent activity cluster that need to be united by a common leadership framework, which in itself needs to be firmly rooted in the strategic process of the firm. High performing companies pay high attention to foster integration and functional interface management.

Exhibit 6 illustrates some key elements of the cluster and their typical organizational “home”



Exhibit 6: The Strategic Leadership Framework as Anchor for Talent Management and L&D Activities

⁵ For global companies with 200,000+ employees these are typically the top 100-300 executives plus the respective hi-pot pool

3. Separation or Integration?

3.1 General Interdependencies

A brief look at a high-level definition of concepts of Learning and Development reveals high degrees of overlap:

- Traditional Learning and Training will always be an important part of a Corporate Learning function. In fast changing environments there is an obvious need for continuous professional education. But traditional Training is also an important ingredient in large-scale transformation processes, which creates a tight connection to the domain of Transformational Learning.
- As Transformational Learning intends to build strategic capabilities into the DNA of the organization, Executive Development must be in the core of its attention. After all it is Executive Performance and Leadership that is one of the most important factors for creating the structures, mechanisms, and the culture for continuous learning and innovation.
- Talent Management is not possible without Leadership Development systems.

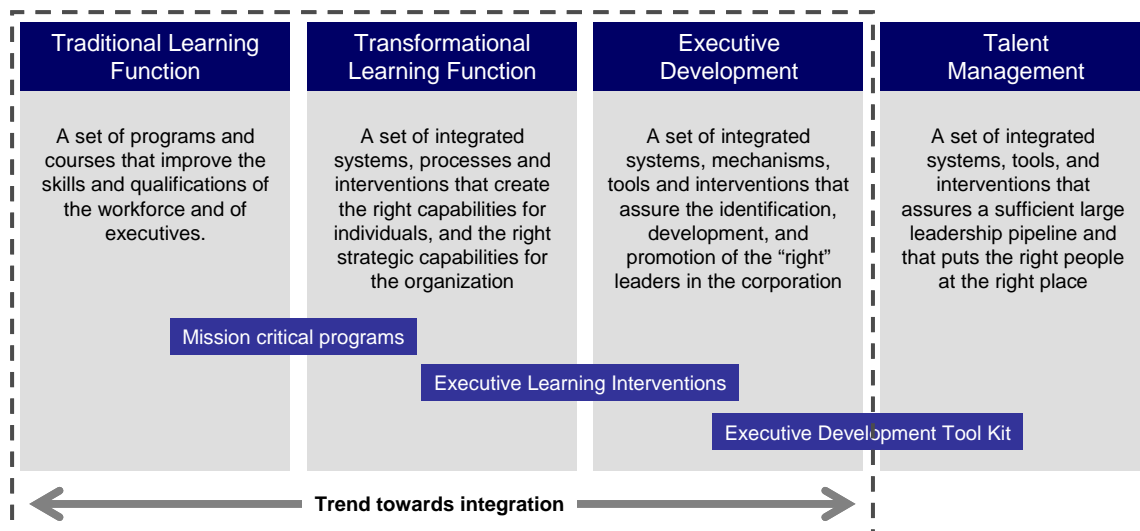


Exhibit 6: The Interplay of Learning and Development Functions

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that most of our sampled companies have a pretty integrated structure⁶, and an overwhelming majority of 21 is moving towards even more integration. Much effort is spent on improving collaboration processes and policies, both horizontally and vertically.

This trend is an indication that the practice of Corporate Learning matures into a more advanced paradigm, and that companies increasingly recognize the importance of a comprehensive Learning and Development architecture.

⁶ However, most companies still keep their top talent management separate

3.2 Pros and cons of Integration

Some important reasons that make companies head towards integration are:

- *Ease of Management*
An integrated structure requires less formalized political processes and allows for a more flexible adaptation and allocation of resources in times of change
- *Higher visibility, stronger voice*
An integrated L&D function is bigger and easier to recognize. This is especially important in light of the emerging identity of the field, which requires relentless communication about what Learning and Development is about.
- *More power*
An integrated L&D function has usually a closer relationship to the top team of the corporation. This makes it easier to play a successful role in the highly political environment of change and transformation processes.
- *Better strategic alignment*
Transformational Learning and Development becomes an integral part of the strategy process. An integrated structure allows for better orchestration of the important elements of mental alignment, leadership competence, and overall individual and organizational capability development.
- *Mirrors the true learning experience*
True learning experiences do not separate Learning from Development and real-life enactment. The traditional institutional separation of Learning and Practice is artificial and comes with unintended consequences

What may speak against integration is

- *Weakening of Functional expertise*
Integration weakens the focus on each function, which may result over time in a loss of expertise
- *Harder to explain*
Integrated L&D is a complex animal, especially when viewed under the perspective of a more advanced, transformational paradigm. The separate functions are easier to explain.
- *Political Issues*
Integrating previously separate functions comes with political power struggles that are not rooted in the rationale of the function but in the desire to remain powerful and/or independent. This does not necessarily speak against integration, but it may lead to a temporary loss of effectiveness of both functions.

3.3 Pros and cons of separation

There are also arguments for keeping the functions separate, at least to a degree:

- Separation always allows for more focus and depth for the specific function, which usually leads to a higher degree of specialization and quality.
- Separation may result in higher flexibility and speed when it comes to developing and deploying certain programs.
- Separated functions are easier to explain, as they link to the traditional understanding of Learning.

However, structural differentiation comes with a potentially high price:

- Separation tends to create mental and organizational boundaries that make it harder to create the necessary collaborative culture.
- Separation requires additional management structures that assure interface management and the enforcement of overarching mechanisms and processes. This leads to higher transaction costs.
- It is much harder to get a fit, to get alignment with the rest of the organization.
- Separation re-enforces a traditional view of Learning with all the weaknesses inherent to this paradigm (separation from Learning and Life)
- ... and it means missing all the above stated advantages of integration.

When weighing the pros and cons of structural models, it is important to keep 2 things in mind:

Structures are only *one* element of the game. A *collaborative culture* (which is a function of leadership), and *enabling mechanisms and processes* are at least as important, if not even THE decisive factor for effectiveness and high performance of Learning and Development in complex organizations.

And: No model is “good” or “bad” per se. The effectiveness of organizational design is a function of the strategic fit with industry dynamics and the underlying forces of the specific business model of the firm. However, it is safe to say that great models are (1) aware of this fact, and (2) are making sure that there is a high degree of consistency with the overall strategic thrust of the organization.

4. Summary

Corporate Learning and development is an evolving field, in search of identity. In light of more advanced concepts of Learning, the practice is gaining strategic importance, reaching far into the domain of Corporate Change and Strategic Transformation.

Almost all sampled corporations realize the importance of continuous integration of their L&D activities, and the need to create alignment with the overall strategy process of the firm.

Integrated organizational structure can send strong signals; even more important is the intelligent design of collaborative processes and mechanisms that ensure effective interface management beyond the quality of individual relationships.

About the author



Roland Deiser is the founding Chairman of the European Corporate Learning Forum (ECLF) and the author of “[Designing the Smart Organization](#)”. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Center for the Digital Future at the University of Southern California. Please find more information about his work as well as a complete list of publications at www.rolanddeiser.com.