

5 ways workplace training can keep your organisation agile

By [Phemelo Segoe](#)

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Like all buzzwords, "agility" gets thrown about so much it almost seems to have lost its meaning. Overuse has dulled its impact and relevance, and led to eye-rolling fatigue at best, and total apathy at worst. This is dangerous territory. While the concept of agility may have become increasingly threadbare, in practice it's more important than ever before.



Education specialist and marketing manager at Optimi Workplace, Phemelo Segoe

In celebration of Workers' Day yesterday, 1 May, we are exploring why agility is important for both your workforce and business alike.

Agility refers to the ability of an organisation to adapt to changes in the environment around it. Being agile can help your business adjust to market shifts, such as periods of growth or recession, as well as internal changes, like repositioning and restructuring efforts.

While there are many factors that contribute to a culture of agility, we believe that one of the most critical ingredients is workplace training. By creating an environment that promotes lifelong learning, businesses improve their chances of being able to bend to the inevitable changes that come their way.

Five ways in which workplace training enhances organisational agility

Continuous workplace training is an essential contributing factor to agility, but the courses you choose to offer don't always have to be long and intensive. Instead, short courses that equip employees with the skills and knowledge they need to do their jobs, and especially that are aligned with their interests and passions, are enough to make a meaningful difference.



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Here are five ways in which workplace training can help businesses be more agile and future-fit:

1. Fosters employee loyalty

Employees who feel as though their professional development is a priority are more likely to feel a sense of loyalty. It can also help them to feel more invested in their careers and in the companies they work at, which means they're more likely to help steer the company through periods of flux or hardship.

2. Boosts creativity and innovation

Education helps people see things from a fresh perspective. It sparks fresh ideas and can prompt them to be more creative, to innovate, and to find new ways of doing things. Innovation is a critical component of agility — the two exist side by side. The more innovative your teams are, the better they'll be able to respond to gaps and opportunities.

3. Reduces inefficiencies

If your people don't have the information they need to perform their jobs adequately, your working environment is likely to be slow and sluggish. This means that you probably won't see an opportunity or risk approaching and respond to it quickly and effectively. An efficient business is an agile business.

4. Promotes teamwork

Teams bond when they learn together. They share ideas, solve problems, and develop new solutions. This ability to work together will stand them in good stead when the market takes a turn, or when the business embarks on a new direction. They'll be able to draw on their individual and collective expertise to ensure the company not only survives, but thrives.

5. Teaches conflict resolution

Businesses that teach not only technical skills, but also so-called soft skills to their employees help them learn how to trust each other, hold each other accountable, and manage conflict. Contrary to common perceptions about conflict, it can be a productive force in the workplace if managed correctly — a chance to challenge the status quo and be creative.



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Looking for metrics to monitor as you seek to make your business more agile? Make sure that you're keeping track of the following:

1. Employee engagement:

Your workforce needs to be engaged, plugged in, passionate and inspired in order to respond to periods of change.

2. Innovation process:

Are there processes in place that make innovation cumbersome and laborious? Reducing the red tape around innovation can help to enhance agility.

3. Support, mentorship and leadership:

Having the right leadership structures in place can ensure people feel properly supported and inspired when they want to try something new.

Of course, workplace training can help with all of these things. It encourages people to dismantle the box, let alone think out of it, and create a business that successfully responds to shifts and succeeds. Agility starts with education — everything flows from there.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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