Corporate Training, Corporate Culture, Corporate Behavior: Development Based on Remote Education Technologies

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Abstract

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Companies with an extensive network of regional and territorial offices in the framework of corporate training actively develop e-learning technologies. System of corporate training in such companies consists of successive multi-level program for employees of the appropriate level. Most programs focused on a remote on-line training for general employees and managers. Personal courses are designed for heads of regional departments and senior managers. Topics and content of the training modules of internal training courses are divided into the following levels according to groups of students: «Employee» - line staff; «Leader» - the heads of desks and departments; «Leader of the group» - the head of branches or the whole company. Remote technologies in corporate training are used mainly at the «employee» and «leader» levels. Thus, the instructional materials contribute to the formation of not only knowledge about the company, but also case studies, contributing to the development of leadership qualities, the ability to take decisions and so on. The purpose of corporate training at the «employee» level is the adaptation of the enlisted in the company. It includes the company history, its mission, global and regional structure, specifics of the business.

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1. Introduction

Companies with an extensive network of regional and territorial offices (i.e. banks, hotels and restaurants etc) in the framework of corporate training actively develop e-learning technologies. System of corporate training in such companies consists of successive multi-level program for employees of the appropriate level. Most programs focused on a remote on-line training for general

employees and managers. Personal courses are designed for heads of regional departments and senior managers.

It should be noted that distance learning technologies were first used as an effective educational technologies in the framework of corporate universities (and other corporate educational institutions), showing more flexibility in comparison with classical schools. By 2000, 92% of US corporations on the Fortune 500 list had launched Web-learning projects. According to data provided by Corporate University Xchange, specializing in the analysis of data in the field of corporate education: first of all, according to existing trends, there will be more corporate universities in the next few years than regular ones. Secondly, the share of classroom teaching in corporate training will steadily decline (in particular, according to the company, from 2003 to 2013 full-time education decreased from 80% to 25% of the total time allotted for corporate education programs).

What are the advantages of virtual education? First of all, it significantly reduces costs (no need to rent classrooms and pay for the students' travel / accommodation). Employees can participate in workshops, attend lectures and perform practical tasks directly in their workplace or after work, in the evening at home.

Online classes give the participants the privileges that are typical for small groups - a close and direct contact with the teachers, the high level of motivation. Each of the "virtual" students gets more attention from the instructor and spends more time working on the task than an average particiapant of a traditional workshop or lecture.

Using the Internet, students can find all the necessary information directly from the workplace by selecting any on-line courses, libraries, forums they need. They can adjust their work so as to maintain the pace of learning they can afford in the workplace. Today, the ability to distribute new materials within the company during one night is considered normal. Thus, thanks to online learning, employees can get the needed information "just in time", so that the system of education will really give the knowledge and skills demanded by the corporate and market situation.

2. The target audience of corporate training

Topics and content of the training modules of internal training courses are divided into the following levels according to groups of students:

- «Employee» - line staff;
- «Leader» - the heads of desks and departments;
- «Leader of the group » - the head of branches or the whole company.

Remote technologies in corporate training are used mainly at the «employee» and «leader» levels. Thus, the instructional materials contribute to the formation of not only knowledge about the company (history of creation, development on regional scale, indicators of economic activity etc), but also case studies, contributing to the development of leadership qualities, the ability to take decisions and so on.

The purpose of corporate training at the «employee» level is the adaptation of the enlisted in the company. It includes the company history, its mission, global and regional structure, specifics of the business. At this stage, a new employee must learn not only internal corporate rules, formal and

informal guidelines, but also to deal with their own functional responsibilities in this particular company. At this stage much attention is given to the study of norms of corporate culture and the rules of corporate behavior.

The main objective of distance learning at the Leader level is to teach heads of departments the main corporate governance standards, records and internal communications, correspondence rules, requests to other departments, terms and rules for forming statements and other corporate standards.In addition, at this level remote education includes theoretical knowledge on the motivation of human resources, human resource management, rules of giving tasks to subordinates and monitoring the progress of their implementation, time management techniques, as well as other techniques of effective leadership and personal career.

Thus, the training materials contribute both to the formation of knowledge about the company (history of creation and development, regional scale and indicators of economic activity etc.), and to the development of leadership skills, ability to make independent decisions, etc.

3. Approaches to the formation of corporate culture in e-learning technology

At present, companies operating in the territory of the Russian Federation (both domestic and branches/representative offices of foreign companies) are actively developing corporate education programs, including remote education technologies.

The author conducted a large-scale study of the use of remote technologies within the corporate training domain. 64 companies participated in the survey. 5,300 people filled in questionnaires (including employees of the central office, branches and regional offices).

First of all, we should note that all companies have approved plans, programs and schedules of educational activities within the framework of corporate training. In addition, in all companies' educational programs, there is a certain share of remote training modules targeted at different categories of students, including:

- new employees - 61 companies (95.3%);
- regular employees - 64 companies (100%);
- middle managers - 53 companies (82.8%);
- heads of territorial offices - 44 companies (68.75%);
- top managers - 12 companies (18.8%);
- other categories of students - 59 companies (92.2%).

As noted by respondents, the thematic area of training is divided into two main parts - programs for the implementation of the norms of corporate culture and corporate behavior, and professional modules. In all surveyed companies (100%) corporate culture is emphasized, including in the framework of remote learning programs.

Approaches to the use of remote technologies allow to group the studied companies by type.

Category 1 - 14 companies surveyed (21.8%) - use teaching materials distributed to employees on CD/USB drives to organize remote education programs

Special sets of teaching materials divided by topics/units/lessons) include the materials to be learned. In order to form the corporate culture, the media usually contain:

- Basic documents that regulate corporate rules - codes of corporate culture and ethics, corporate standards, corporate dress code etc.

- Photo sets, reflecting the corporate culture in action - pictures from holidays and other corporate events, pictures about what is "right and wrong" (for example, the way a corporate tie should be tied, or what side the corporate badge should be located on), pictures of standard actions (e.g, display of goods) etc.

- Schedule and programs of corporate team building, leadership, personal growth and other trainings.

- Corporate rules governing the formal requirements for the transition from one job to another, assessment procedure, etc.

Thus, from the first day of work for such companies, the employees receive a set of documents to study. The procedure for the study of these documents is not regulated, the employee will define when and how long to study them during the day/week. Control measures (tests, quizzes etc.) are carried out either through the online system within the corporate internal portal or off-line with the assistance of an expert.

Category 2 - 29 companies (45.3%), who upload similar materials to the domestic corporate portal and strictly regulate the procedure of the study.As a rule, the materials are to be studied consistently, and at the end of each module, offline tests are carried out.This form of training restricts the access to the training materials (which often have elements of corporate secrets) to the company employees.

Category 3 - 9 companies (14.1%), whose process of fixing the rules of corporate culture and corporate behavior is entirely on-line.In this case, assessment events are also held in the form of on-line testing.

Category 4 - 12 companies (18.8%) - use a variety of combinations of the abovementioned approaches.

According to the responses of HR managers who are responsible for organizing staff training (64 people, one from each of the companies surveyed) showed that remote technology are efficient in shaping the norms of corporate culture. In particular, they agree with the following statements:

- "Remote technologies are effective for training new employees" - 64 people (100%);

- "Full-time staff training can be replaced by remote one without losing the quality of education" - 61 people (95.3%).

Speaking about the prospects for the use of remote technologies in corporate training aimed at creating and strengthening the standards of corporate culture, HR specialists noted that the main obstacle for the development of e-learning are technological constraints (capacity of corporate web systems, need to create computer programs for online control and monitoring, etc.).

In addition, the experts noted that e-learning is seen as one of the most popular forms of training for the lower level personnel. The higher the official rank, the lower the popularity and effectiveness of remote learning technologies.

4. Conclusions

To summarize, we should note that, in the opinion of HR specialists, development of distance learning technologies can solve not only the practical problems of formation and consolidation of the rules of corporate culture, but also global strategic objectives of companies, in particular:

- adapt new employees to the team;

- assimilate new managers;

- reduce staff turnover;

- carry out the assessment and evaluation of staff;

- organize staff training and development (including updating of knowledge, business skills development, cultivation of certain emotions and attitudes);

- ensure the preservation of "cultural heritage" of the company, strengthen and develop the existing corporate culture.

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