

From Learning to Workplace Performance

Course completion is an input. Capability has to be applied, reviewed and evidenced in work.



Learning matters because it can change what people are able to do. But attendance, content completion and even increased confidence are not the same as changed workplace capability.

The trainer facilitates capability development; the workplace provides the evidence.

Developed by Michael J Bolam with AI-assisted research, analysis and editorial support. Final judgement and approval remain human.

Organisations invest in learning because they want something to improve: performance, quality, judgement, management practice, leadership, adaptability or another outcome that matters in work. Yet development activity is often measured most easily at the point where the learning ends - who attended, what was completed and how participants rated the experience.

Those measures can be useful operationally, but they do not demonstrate that capability has transferred into the job. Skillogy PERFORM™ therefore treats learning completion as an input rather than the intended outcome. The intended outcome is changed capability demonstrated through workplace application and connected, where appropriate, to organisational objectives.

THE TRANSFER PROBLEM

Knowing is not the same as doing.

A learner can understand a model, remember a technique and pass a knowledge check without yet being able to use that capability effectively in a real situation. Work introduces context, time pressure, other people, competing priorities, uncertainty and consequences. That is where capability has to operate.

Skillogy separates learning activity from workplace application and from performance evidence. This prevents course completion from being treated as though it were proof of changed performance.

LEARNING ACTIVITY - Build understanding The learner engages with the approved content and develops knowledge of the relevant skill or ability.

WORKPLACE APPLICATION - Use it in real work The learner applies the capability in job-based activity where context and judgement matter.

PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE - Examine what changed Evidence comes from workplace application and resulting outcomes, not from completion alone.

ORGANISATIONAL VALUE - Connect change to what matters Where evidence and measures support it, changed performance can be related to organisational objectives and value.

THE LEARNING-TO-PERFORMANCE CYCLE

Development continues after the tutorial ends.

ASSESS > LEARN > APPLY > REVIEW > REFLECT

Assess identifies the relevant capability need and creates a clearer starting point. Learn develops understanding through the approved content. Apply transfers that understanding into real workplace activity. Review examines what happened, including barriers and outcomes. Reflect turns experience into learning that informs the next cycle.

The cycle is intentionally continuous. Reflection may expose a new need, a different context or a capability that requires further practice. Development therefore becomes connected to the work rather than confined to a learning event.

Action planning creates the bridge

Implementation guidance and action planning make the transfer explicit. Instead of assuming that learners will remember to apply what they have learned, the process asks what will be done, where it will be tried, what support may be needed and how the learner will review the result.

Review prevents activity being mistaken for progress

An action can be attempted without being effective. Review and reflection allow the learner to examine what happened, adapt the approach and decide what should be repeated, changed or developed further. This is particularly important for Human-Centric capability because behaviour and judgement often depend on context rather than a single correct answer.

EVIDENCE SHOULD FOLLOW THE WORK

Performance evidence is different from participation evidence.

Useful evidence may be qualitative or quantitative, depending on the capability and the work. It might include a changed behaviour, a better decision process, improved communication, stronger delegation, reduced rework, faster resolution, safer practice or another observable outcome relevant to the objective.

The important discipline is causation and proportion. Learning should not be credited automatically with every positive result that follows it. Where organisational value or ROI is considered, the evidence chain and measurable outcomes need to be strong enough to support the claim.

Completion tells us that learning activity took place. Workplace evidence tells us whether capability was applied and whether anything meaningful changed.

Facilitation supports transfer without creating dependency

A facilitator can help maintain momentum, encourage peer discussion, prompt action planning and support review. But the facilitator does not replace the learner's responsibility for workplace action. The learner has to make the judgement, try the behaviour, observe the result and reflect on what follows.

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR BETTER LEARNING TRANSFER

The design of development should begin with the outcome, not the course.

- 1. What capability needs to change?** Define the performance or responsibility issue before selecting development activity.
- 2. Where will the learning be applied?** Identify the real workplace situations in which the capability needs to operate.
- 3. What action will the learner take?** Translate understanding into specific work-based activity rather than leaving application implicit.
- 4. How will the action be reviewed and adapted?** Build in review, reflection, feedback and peer or manager support where relevant.
- 5. What evidence would show that capability has changed?** Agree credible indicators connected to the work and, where possible, to the organisation's intended outcomes.

Learning becomes valuable when it survives contact with the workplace.

This is the practical purpose of Learning-to-Performance: to keep the development process moving until knowledge has been tested in real work, reviewed against evidence and used to strengthen future performance. It shifts attention from whether people completed learning to whether they can do something more effectively because of it.

Development and content integrity note. These Insights are developed by Michael J Bolam with AI-assisted research, analysis and editorial support. AI may help question, compare, synthesise and draft, but the author determines the subject, challenges assumptions, reviews evidence, makes substantive judgements and approves the final content. AI does not generate, rewrite or replace approved Skillogy PERFORM™ course content.