

Six Ways To Make Your Learning Programs More Inclusive

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It's no secret that the world of business is competitive. One way to stay ahead of the curve is by ensuring every employee has access to the best learning programs available - and that means your learning programs need to be inclusive.

Let's look at six ways to ensure your learning programs are accessible and inclusive for all employees:

Understand the Definition of Inclusion

To create an inclusive employee learning program, you must first understand what inclusion means.

Inclusion is the act of ensuring that all individuals have equal access to opportunities and resources. This includes people of all races, genders, abilities, religions, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Beyond that, making sure your employees feel welcome, respected, and valued is the foundation of any inclusive learning program.

Let's dive into six important inclusion strategies.

1. MAKE SURE YOUR WORKPLACE IS ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYONE

An accessible workplace is the first step in creating an inclusive learning environment. This means your workplace is free from physical, attitudinal, and technological barriers.



Workplace accessibility provides opportunities for all employees to participate in learning programs and reach their full potential.

Steps to make your workplace more accessible include:

- » Providing employees with any necessary accommodations (e.g., assistive technology, interpreters, captioning).
- » Ensuring your workplace is physically accessible (e.g., wheelchair accessible, Braille signage).
- » Posting learning material online in an accessible format
- » Creating alternate versions of learning materials (e.g., audio, video).

2. CREATE FLEXIBLE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Employees should have opportunities to learn in ways that work best for them. Some might prefer hands-on learning, while others learn best through lectures or reading.

Using a variety of instructional methods ensures that all employees can absorb the material or develop the skills they need in the most effective way.

Ways to make your learning more flexible for employees include:

- » Offering courses in different formats (e.g., text, audio, video)
- » Creating courses that can be taken at the employee's own pace
- » Allowing employees to choose when and where they learn

3. ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Employees should feel comfortable communicating with their colleagues and managers, which means having multiple communication methods available.

Fostering open communication creates an environment in which all employees feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas, which can ultimately lead to a more productive and innovative workplace.

You can encourage communication by:

- » Maintaining an open-door policy
- » Encouraging employees to ask questions
- » Exhibiting and promoting transparency in the workplace
- » Encouraging the formation of employee resource groups
- » Creating an anonymous feedback channel/process

4. CREATE A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Employees should feel like they're part of a supportive community. This can mean policies such as zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination, and actively cultivating a collaborative, respectful culture to lay the foundation for a supportive environment.

You can also foster a sense of belonging by providing opportunities for employees to get involved with their colleagues both internally and externally in the community.

Consider ideas such as:

- » Offering mentorship programs
- » Facilitating employee resource groups
- » Encouraging employees to participate in charity work

5. PROVIDE EMPLOYEES WITH THE RESOURCES THEY NEED TO SUCCEED

All employees should have easy access to the tools, equipment, or materials required to do their jobs well. This could include new software training, upskilling, or mentorship opportunities.

Giving your employees the resources they need to successfully carry out their role and learn new skills can help maintain inclusion over time, and boost employee confidence and performance.

6. CELEBRATE DIVERSITY AND UNIQUENESS AMONG EMPLOYEES

A diverse workplace is a key factor in business success. Employees should feel their individual differences are valued, and be celebrated for their unique perspectives and contributions.

This is a core component of creating an inclusive environment and learning program, and can spark innovation by surfacing unique perspectives.

Benefits of an Inclusive Learning Program

Improved employee morale: When employees feel included, they're more likely to stay engaged and have a positive attitude.

Increased productivity: Inclusive workplaces are generally more productive. When people feel valued and appreciated, they tend to put forth more effort and achieve better results.

Attracting and retaining top talent: The best and brightest employees want to work for companies that value diversity and inclusion. By making your learning programs more inclusive, you can attract and retain top tier talent.


Greater innovation: Inclusive workplaces are more likely to foster creativity and innovation because employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas and are more likely to take risks.

How Software Can Help Your Inclusion Efforts

Certain tools can help you put these tips into practice and make your learning programs more inclusive.

E-Learning platforms can be used to develop and deliver online courses. They often include features such as quizzes and assessments to help employees track their progress, and ensure courses are available to employees anytime and anywhere.

Learning management systems are designed to manage employee training programs with features such as progress tracking and certification. An LMS can help you ensure that all employees have access to the resources they need to succeed.

Collaboration tools can facilitate teamwork through features such as chat and file sharing. These tools can be key to creating an environment where all employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas. 



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About the Article

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