

125d The Future Vision of Learning

Keith A. Johnston

IBM's Future of Learning vision suggests how people will learn and work in the future. Established studies have shown that more than 70% of learning occurs informally and on the job. The preoccupation of learning solutions to support formal learning has largely left the informal learning opportunities unaddressed and without affordable solutions.

This presentation will outline IBM's Future of Learning vision and how it is being used to transform the IBM organization. It will also demonstrate how several key concepts of this future vision – embedded learning, learner empowerment, organizational learning, and collaboration – can begin to be realized today. Specific approaches and examples will be presented that illustrate how IBM is enabling these key concepts to help transform its organization and discuss how they can be used by others. A solution that embeds learning into the workflow where end users can learn “while doing” vs. “before doing” will be demonstrated.

In addition, an example that illustrates the concept of organizational learning facilitated through the use of community tools will be presented. We will show how innovation in informal learning is based on the use of collaboration technologies that link communities of practice to a mechanism that provides informal, just-in-time learning for enterprise applications. Through the concept of Community Tools, end-users can broadcast a specific question to their online professional community for instant performance support from an available expert. Used throughout IBM, the Community Toolset enables informal learning for performance support, encourages a collaborative culture, and reduces the amount of required formal training without the increased investment in search technologies and sophisticated content management systems typically associated with just-in-time learning.

Combined together, these examples provide a higher level of learner empowerment – where learners both consume and produce knowledge – and exercise greater influence in the learning process.