



Spotlight on Paul Hudson

Experienced L&D Manager

How long have you worked in Learning & Development?

Over 20 years

In your career in L&D, what has been your best or most memorable experience and why?

Whilst working for Thames Water, I was Vice President of the water industry trailblazers creating new occupational standards for apprentices. During that time we designed, created and delivered the first in industry traineeship programme aimed at the NEET population (Not in Education, Employment or Training). The programme was a success – 42 out of 45 completed the traineeship scheme and gained employment.

What was your most challenging training situation and why?

Whilst working in the armed forces I served in Iraq working in the Naval Transition Team. This was a great challenge, training the Iraqi Military and working in a harsh environment. However, the objectives were achieved and great friendships were made along the way with the Iraqi people and other multi-national armed forces.

Best (or most unusual) training environment you've ever trained in and why?

I served as a firefighting instructor within the Royal Navy, delivering everything from basic training up to senior advanced maritime firefighting. It was both physically and mentally challenging and sometimes in very dangerous situations. It was a great challenging role where I learnt a great deal and benefitted as a trainer.

How do you stay up to date with what's going on in L&D?

Social media is great, as well as TED Talks, CIPD, ILM, Learning and Performance Institute, eLearning Industry, L&D Forums and LinkedIn networking.

What's the best advice or recommendation you could give to a new trainer?

Make training fun and enjoyable and deliver it in short bursts (micro-learning); this way you can at least ensure that the learning transfer will stick. I am a big believer in 'hands on' training, lots of practical and a mixture of theory along the way – mix it up and always ask for feedback the Kirkpatrick way!



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What do you think the future of L&D looks like?

With the likes of AR/VR being used, technology will play a great part in the transformation of training. The use of ipdf and social media is already changing the way we learn; e-learning (micro-learning) being used in the workplace to enable the workforce to have access anytime they require it; LMS systems will become more autonomous, being able to flag up training requirements to senior management teams and line managers. Companies are already addressing health and wellbeing along with mental health in the workplace which is good to see.

The use of Insights and DiSC profiles for senior management teams are also great tools being widely used. Technology will be the greatest asset in L&D.

In your opinion, how can L&D teams be more strategically aligned to business priorities?

This I believe comes from the very top; from Head of HR, CEO's and senior executive teams to ensure that the L&D function is aligned to the company's visions and values and getting senior stakeholder buy-in. Having the L&D team fully embedded into the company in every division will promote a better ROI (Return on Investment) for the business and people culture, thus promoting the L&D function and fully integrating it from the very bottom of the workforce to the very top.

... And lastly, what would you attempt to do, if you knew you could not fail?

Run my very own L&D Academy or Skills Development Academy where young people could gain skills - such as life skills, CV writing, interview techniques, soft skills to give young people a great start who may not be going to Uni or College



Trainer
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