

ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM 'LAZY LEARNING'?

'Here is John. See John run. Here is Betty. See Betty run. Here is Spot. See Spot run.' The John and Betty books I grew up with at school supposedly taught me to read and expand my language. But, given the topics, they didn't teach me much about life. Kids run, and so do dogs it seems.

How life-expanding is the learning in your organisation? Or are you suffering from the effects of 'lazy-learning'? And is your L&D falling into lazy habits too?

The Five Levels of Conscious Learning

There are five levels of conscious learning, all useful if all are practised holistically.

Level 1 Education: information gathering of facts and figures, language and systems, online learning. The left side of the brain loves this learning but it doesn't know what use it is until you tell it through the next level of conscious learning. It is very linear.

Level 2 Practice: being informed and given ways to try it out. Giving it a go. Practising something new fires up the brain synapses and beds down new pathways. Learning is bringing the body into the equation. Taking action and applying the mind to it. You engage more of your being in the conscious learning process and it starts to become part of you.

Level 3 Knowledge: using what you have practised with competence and confidence and seeing the nuances - knowing (with a small 'k') enough about the mechanics of it to see how to improve on it. What could you do better? What could they do better? The 'expert' starts to wake up.

Level 4 Wisdom: having insight and vision into what could be. The right side of the brain loves this because it is built for spatial, what-if kind of thinking. It can see a bigger social picture and think in tetrahedrons or globally. You need to take time to reflect and dream to allow this part of the brain to be at its best. The inner eye needs to come on board. This is where strategic thinking begins. People matter. Now you can align what you see with new ways to improve. Detachment and objectivity strengthens. This is the realm of emotional intelligence.

Level 5 Immersion: going deep within your own being to access a conscious, collective source of Knowledge (with a capital K). Putting yourself in the path of more enlightened thinking for a higher purpose. This is where inventive insights and aha moments come from. Self-awareness can only happen when you detach enough to be the observer of your own thoughts, behaviours, reactions and values. This is the magical place of deep, unequivocal Knowledge. You have found your Truth. And that brings inner strength. This is the realm of spiritual intelligence.

Lazy learners get stuck somewhere up in the first three levels. Conscious leaders embrace more of levels 4 and 5 and find ways to include this type of conscious learning in their own development and ways of leading others. They help others to learn in this way too. In fact, if you look at corporate hierarchies, Level 4 conscious learning 'Wisdom' is definitely recognisable in some of the best top-end leaders. It sits in their job description.

But immersive knowledge is what really counts when change and innovation is desired. It is needed when *you* want to change. You will find your own abilities and efficacy, intuition and empathy levels sky-rocket. This is when you get to know who you are and what you can truly bring to the table. It is a very 'adult' place to be. It is courageous and full of the virtues needed for the leadership journey.

Don't be lazy

Level Five conscious learning is highly neglected in the workplace. Little time is given for reflection and sharing wisdom - pace is everything. Retreats and the like are saved for senior executives as if this Level 5 learning were reserved for only those who have made it through the lower levels of the business. Everyone needs access to all 5 Levels.

Here are some Level 5 ways of conscious learning:

- Contemplation at the start of a meeting
- Conversations of inquiry
- Mastermind circles
- Reflective think-tanks
- Coaching sessions
- Retreats
- Meditation and mindfulness
- Personal self-inquiry
- Doodling and mindfulness colouring in books
- Journalling
- Creative visualisation
- Realising Potential workshops
- Breathing techniques before starting a task

On my website www.consciousleader.com.au you will also find the 8 Elements of a highly conscious leader. These 8 Elements will provide you with further tools to take you to Level 5 Immersion learning.

Make a place At UK Sport we had a dedicated area for quiet games and mindful colouring, intuitive cards and reflective conversations on comfortable couches. The first aid room was also set up to be used as a prayer room and place for deep relaxation, or sleep if needed.

Make a place in your team meetings for some of these practices. Encourage deeper self-awareness and allow people to express their wisdom. Honour the 'adult' in them.

I have also set up an entire team learning framework that allows for this kind of learning. You can [contact me](#) for more details on this.

It only takes a minute The misunderstanding many people have is that Immersion takes time. Yes it does, but no it doesn't. With practice you will find you are staying connected for longer as you move through your day. It only takes a moment to breathe and focus inwardly to get there again. The impact Immersion learning has is to morph time. You will find yourself worrying less about completing tasks at burn-out speed and finding you have more time for what is positively impactful. You will gain time and energy.

Lazy L&D? Look at your Learning and Development offerings. Which Learning Levels are represented in the structure and programs, coaching methodologies and mentoring? Ensure you have a healthy mix of all 5 levels, and absolutely ensure you and your people get to become great at conscious self-leadership by including Level 4 and 5 conscious learning experiences.

The deepest learning can only come through *experience*. You can only learn fully and wisely when you throw your whole Self in.

Indira Kennedy 24.7.19

Indira Kennedy is director of her own London-based leadership consultancy, helping organisations to create conscious leaders and high-performance workplaces through the use of specialised emotional and spiritual intelligence tools for learning.

Contact Indira here or at indira@consciousleader.com.au, or phone 07946 319 516 or go to www.consciousleader.com.au for more information.