Social Learning @ Work - Quick Start Guide

What is Social Learning @ Work?

It's learning through and with others by talking about, sharing and observing work processes, decisions, techniques and tools. In other words, having good conversations about work. The conversations can be amplified by social technologies, but just having social tech does not mean you are supporting social learning. Social technology can scale good conversations, but the tech doesn't do it by itself.

Practice Transparency and Openness

At work, social activity forms around the work itself. When we work transparently, we invite others to join and we build trust. With trust, people will constructively question, contribute and collaborate to improve their (and your) work.

Do Today: Lead by example. Show Your Work/ Work Out Loud. Begin by ensuring that all important but not sensitive work is accessible and encourage observation and input by all levels of the organization.

Impact: Increased creativity, innovation, cost savings and efficiency

Reward & Recognize

Acknowledge cooperative and collaborative activities over individual achievement. This sends the message that the group is more important than the individual.

To Do: Be visible in thanking, acknowledging and rewarding sharing and cooperative behaviors. Be diligent in encouraging open sharing of ideas, resources and collaboration. Recognize and praise group inputs and outcomes. Model exactly what you want to see. Encourage leaders to model exactly what you want to see.

Impact: teamwork and larger community and network-building

Encourage Curation over Creation

Ideas, tips, instruction, research, etc are plentiful on the Web in the form of images, video, and text-based documents.

To Do: Share resources with the added "why" of its personal value to you - add context. Ensure access to outside information and to internal channels to share. Identify models of proper vetting and context adding to aid in the movement of best of kind resources and information quickly through the organization.

Impact: Workflow Learning

Formalize Social Technology

Tools and platforms for organization-wide conversation and sharing expand and extend cooperative and collaborative activities.

To Do: Use traditional communication channels (email, meetings) to move people to increased participation on social platforms. Create a simple structure for groups (<5) and keep them open vs. closed or private. Have employees complete profiles with an emphasis on skills and interests over titles. Nudge large group emails to be posted on social platforms. Ask sincere questions, to which the answers will help and inform your work.

Impact: Rapid Expert Identification, Openness