CHAPTER – 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

“You must be the ‘change’ you wish to see in the world”

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“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever”

Mahatma Gandhi

In a relatively short time, the literature on the learning organization has achieved massive proportions and continues to outpour. In such circumstances, a literature review is a project in itself.

Review of Research Articles/Papers

Farago J. and Skyrme D. have recognised the importance of Learning Organisation concept and recalled its origin in Companies like Shell, where Arie de Geus described ‘Learning” as the only sustainable competitive advantage. They have seen it as a response to an increasingly unpredictable and dynamic business environment.


They have tried to develop a definition to guide managers wanting to develop Learning Organization capabilities:

“Learning Organisations are those that have in place systems, mechanisms and processes, that are used to continually enhance their capabilities and those who work with it or for it, to achieve sustainable
objectives – for themselves and the communities in which they participate.

Important points to note about this definition as described by the authors that Learning Organization:

- Are adaptive to their external environment
- Continually enhance their capability to change/adapt
- Develop collective as well as individual Learning.
- Use the results of Learning to achieve better results.

They have explained further in their article regarding the interest of the organisations in Learning Organization. Because companies are seeking to improve existing products and services, and innovation. This has resulted in a plethora of initiatives such as TQM and Reengineering. But companies are finding that such programmes succeed or fail depending on human factors, such as skills, attitudes and organisational culture. The current interest in the Learning Organization. stems from the recognition that these initiatives, often do not work, something more is needed to, given as under:

- Cope with rapid and unexpected changes where existing ‘programmed’ responses are inadequate.
- Provide flexibility to cope with dynamically changing situations.
- Allow front-line staff to respond with initiative based on customer needs

It is observed that with the pace of change ever quickening, the need to develop mechanisms for continuous Learning and innovation is greater than ever.
‘Training’ is distinguished from Learning Organization. in the article as that while training does help develop certain types of skill, a Learning Organization. involves the development of higher levels of knowledge and skill, which is described as a 4-level model Learning

Level-1: Learning facts, knowledge, processes and procedures.
Level-2: Learning new job skills that are transferable to other situations.
Level-3: Learning to adapt
Level-4: Learning to learn.

This model can be applied at 3 levels to the Learning of individuals, of teams, and of organisations.

Based on several researches and observations they could identify 4 important characteristics of a Learning Organization.:

- Learning culture – an organizational climate that nurtures Learning.
- Processes that encourages interaction across boundaries.
- Tools and Techniques: methods that aid individual and group Learning.
- Skills and Motivation: to learn and adapt.

At the end they have recommended, the places to start within the organisation:

- Start at the top – helpful to give an impetus
- Start with a chronic problem – always a good place to get the thinking caps on
- Initiative a Task Force – a common response, but they will need drive and vision
Start with an Organisational Diagnosis – the HR consultants have to work on it.

Link to an existing process or initiative – go where there is existing energy.

Review existing systems and processes – an audit to identify a capability gap

New product development.

It is the belief of the authors that many Learning Organization initiatives are high jacked by HR department or outside consultants. This should not be the case developing a Learning Organization is about doing it from within and taking a holistic systems perspective.

In view of the above observation and study authors find management challenges before managers are to make the efforts needed to learn some of the new skill and techniques, and to put in the process that engage their workforce in programmes of continuous capability development. Learning should be integrated into the doing, as part and parcel of everyday work. It should also be energising, stimulating and fun. Getting the best out of everybody, including one to meet the challenges ahead.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING & LEARNING ORGANIZATION.

An overview

Malhotra, Yogesh (1996)

Malhotra, Yogesh (1996) tried to explain the difference between Organizational Learning and Learning Organization, with the help of works of some of the renowned authoress.

He has explained the Organizational Learning through definition of Organizational Learning given by Argyris (1977) as
the process of “detection and correction of errors” In Argyris’s view organisation learn through individuals acting as agents for them. The individual’s learning initiated by an ecological system of factors that is known as organisational Learning system. (P-117).

It is also observed that Organizational Learning occurs when groups of people give the same response to different stimuli.

Learning Organization. is explained through the definition given by Senge (1990) as “a group of people continually enhancing their capacity to create what they want to create”

Malhotra defines Learning Organization. as “an organisation with an ingrained philosophy for anticipating, reacting and responding to change, complexity and uncertainty”. It supports the Senge’s remarks “The rate at which organisations learn may become the only sustainable source of competitive advantages

The difference between Organizational Learning & Learning Organization. can be expressed in terms of process versus structure.

The key ingredient of the Learning Organization. given by Malhotra is how organisation process their managerial experiences. Learning Organization/Managers learn from their experiences rather than being bound by their past experiences. In Learning Organizations the ability of an organisation/manager is not measured by ‘what’ it knows (that is the product of the Learning), but rather by ‘how’ it learns – the process of Learning.

He has also suggested that there is a role of Information Systems in the Learning Organization. He states that IS can serve the 3 processes – knowledge Acquisition, Information Distribution, and Information Interpretation) as well Internets, e-mail and
Bulletin Boards can facilitate the process of information Distribution and Information Interpretation.

“The Learning Organization. and Knowledge Economy”

(Need of Transformational changes in Saskatchewan)

Mario de Santis, Sept. 1998

Mario de Santis (1998) had introduced the motion that the Learning Organization. and knowledge Economy were excellent metaphors for describing what our societal web of life should be in order to support a healthy and global economic system.

It is felt by the author that in Saskatchewan, most of their leaders (Political or business) were still operating under the obsolete world view that life was a struggle for the survival of the fittest rather than a cooperative effort to increase the collective intelligence and wealth of our communities;

Author has therefore made an effort to study the need of transformational changes of their organisation by describing the management philosophy of the Learning Organization. and the new emerging knowledge Economy.

Knowledge Learning is also termed as Network Economy or Internet Economy.

It’s importance or the financial impact on the Learning Organization. was tried to be travelled from the study carried out of old companies by Shell group of Companies, where it was described that these establishments were financially conservative with a staff which identifies with the company and a management which is tolerant and sensitive to the world in which they live (A.P. de Geus 25 Jan. 1995, Lecture at the Royal Society of Arts). This
simple definition does not make reference to any special financial or technological wizardly for surviving so many years.

This definition is very different from today’s “economic” company, a business which is run for profit and which at the time of crisis either restructure its work force or shuts down.

Author has referred Peter Senge for providing concept of five disciplines of Learning Organization. which distinguishes Learning Organization. from traditional organisations.

Based on the above definition, author has summarized the difference between two organisations

The traditional organisation (T.O.) - producer of goods and services
The Learning Organization. (L.O) - sees the company as living being.

The T.O. - growth based on influence on the market.
The L.O. - Growth as dependent on its capacity to create new wealth for the members

The T.O. - collaborating management to maintain a cohesive team.
The L. O. members use dialogue as a means to learn to reason to think together and a build a collective intelligence.

The T.O. - is a hierarchical organisation where control is from the top.
The L. O. has a multilevel stratified structure which encourages participative process at all level of organisations.
The T.O. - assesses its performance with numbers: How much money can we save by laying off so many employees and how
that money can be used etc. targets of sales, company’s market value etc.

The Learning Organization. - uses well documented Learning histories to assess its overall performance.

Author has quoted provincial auditor of the company as:

“Our employees are our strength and major resource in achieving our mission and values. We value fairness and equity, personal development, creativity, challenge, and innovation, teamwork, and leadership”.

Justifying the Learning Organization. Characterisation existing in the company.

Further he described the ‘economy’ in the Learning Organization. where wealth is the product of knowledge. The economic value of knowledge is nonsubtractive, abundant, and unpredictable in its creative aspect. Knowledge breaks down the conventional law of economics and there would be challenge to manage and market their resources. Thomas A. Stewart, (1997).

He is concerned about customers who are becoming more demanding and they are asking for complete solutions to satisfy their needs. There is the need for suppliers to perceive customer needs as a unique package. The marketing approach to satisfy customers through a unique package has been called “Management Revenue”

It is observed by the author that with the globalization of the economy, the sharing of information and partnering have become key managerial issues for increasing the collective intelligence of cooperation’s. The concept of reusing information already available in the market place is the fulcrum of the knowledge
economy. There will be change affecting every aspect of our lives at work and at home.

Therefore it is suggested by the author that the strategic planning of corporations must make room for including the impact of the ongoing dynamic applications of new technologies even if such technologies are not known yet.

“Organizational Development - HRD Interventions for creating A Learning Organisation: My Experience and Reflections as a change Agent”

Narendra M. Agrawal

Watkins and Marsick (1993), quoted in Watkins and Golambiewski (1950), define the Learning Organization as “one that learns continuously and transform itself. Learning takes place in individuals, teams, the organisations and even the communities with which the organisation interacts. Learning results in changes in knowledge, beliefs, and behaviours. Learning also enhances organisational capacity for innovation and growth”.

Based on this definition, Watkins and Golembiewski argue that OD for creating a Learning organisation requires a shift from focus on change to Learning and change.

It is in this context, Narendra M. Agrawal described and examined some of the OD and Learning interventions that they had been using as an internal and external change agent for the last twenty years.

They have described following four interventions:

- Transfer of Learning from classrooms to work situations
- Development – cum – assessment center as a part of nurturing leadership Learning process.
• Image sharing process to enhance awareness about the context and behaviour of virtual team members.

• Building a model for organisation wide training effectiveness.

During a training programme, Author of this paper, got exposed to the concept of “Learning Diary”, “Learning Review” and ‘Action Planning’. Later on these were implemented in the programme along with modified “Diagnostics" exercise on the first day of training programme.

As narrated by author above concepts are described as under:

(a) Diagnostics: It facilitates the participants to think through their roles, responsibilities and organisation’s expectations from them at the beginning of the training programme. The participants get in touch their Learning needs and become active seekers of the knowledge.

(b) Learning Diary: - Participants are asked to visit their work place during the programme. They are asked to discuss problems in the class and capture their Learning on a regular basis in their “Learning diary”. It includes topic covered, significant Learning points, and how one proposes to use the Learning in one’s work setting.

(c) Learning Review: At the end of each week of the programme, each members of the small group shares one’s Learning and how one proposes to implement them in the work situations.

The participants are encouraged to examine whether some of the issues identified by them as part of the diagnostics have been answered or not.
(d) Action Plan: The ‘Diagnostics’, ‘Learning Diary’ and ‘Learning Review’ become the basis for the participants to prepare an action plan to be implemented back home.

Process of Planned Change

Author extended the classic model of planned change suggested by Kurt Levein (1947) from three stages to five stages as given below:

1. Awareness about the need for and direction of change
2. Empowering for change through Learning relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes.
3. Planning for change
4. Implementation of change
5. Refreezing of change

Development-cum-Assessment Centre:

It is the strong opinion of the author that HR systems and processes should be used to help employees experience fairness, growth and credibility for the top management, and in turn it helps in attracting and retaining talent (Bartlet & Ghoshal, 1998).

Development and assessment centre are powerful mechanisms to help people experience these processes in an organisation.

A development center combines at least three elements of a Learning Organization. namely, personal mastery, mental models and team Learning from the five disciplines of Learning Organization. as suggested by Senge (1990).
**Image Sharing**

It is a powerful OD technique. By helping organisational groups to learn about the images that exist about them within the organisation and its environment, they can be motivated to change their behaviour and to redefine those images. Image sharing as a technique has the power to help members of interdependent teams to confront the reality and then helps them to plan to change the reality.

Author while concluding suggests that evaluation studies of OD interventions when integrated with the concept of creating Learning Organization. enhances the understanding of linkages between OD interventions and their role in enhancing individual, group and organisational Learning and change management.

“**Promoting Change via the Concept of the Learning Organization.”**

**Doreen Fisher (2001)**

Importance and implementation of Learning Organization. Concept is discussed in light of industrial development but Fisher (2001) saw its importance in education field also. The purpose of the paper is to discuss and to analyze the problem faced by the Berks-Lehigh College in relation to the concept of a Learning Organisation.

The paper is based on the discussion of five disciplines of a Learning Organization. according to Senge (1990), the seven Learning disabilities that inhibit organisations, and power influences that are transcended by openness.

It is emphasized in the paper that the influence of a systemic approach and thinking is that the heart of an organisation’s ability to make their vision a reality and to change their future.

Author has quoted Ananda and Renesch (1995) (P.404) for paying attention to the deteriorating values of education and suggesting that
Education must take leadership in co-evolving with the restructuring efforts in the other parts of society; business, health and communities. Institutions of higher education need to be the leaders in society, changing how education is delivered and structured to foster a systemically coherent work place.

The case study taken in the paper is of Berks-Lehigh Valley College of the PennState. It has identified in its strategic plan innovative approaches to Learning as a major goal for the institution. This key goal is essential to the new vision of the college to become distinctive within the Penn State system in regard to excellence in teaching and innovatives learning. To become distinctive within the Penn State system, the college has identified excellence and distinction in the use of innovative approaches to Learning as a key goal. On the formation of college it was determined that the predisposition of administration, faculty and staff for creating and supporting an enriching Learning environment would contribute to the success of the college goal.

Introducing an innovative approach into an organisation and changing the organisational culture are interesting in terms of how organisational problems of quality of teaching and instructional methods are addressed.

It was obvious that in order to achieve the goals of the college, a shift in the organisational culture and adoption of the disciplines of a Learning Organization would be beneficial to its future.

A strong culture really constitutes an organisational paradigm which prescribes how to look at things. To become a Learning Organization, a shift in the organisational, culture of an institution is required. Thus organisations must go beyond survival and adaption to engage in ‘generative Learning’. Senge (1990). The disciplines of a Learning Organization support localized control, responding directly to
issues and necessary changes, as well as absolving the political nature of an authoritarian hierarchy.

The goals of the new College were set which were based on Penn State’s mission; to provide teaching, research and public service to the people of the Nation and the World, utilising five disciplines of the Senge.

“The Learning Organization

Smith M.K. (2001)

What constitutes a ‘Learning Organization’ is a matter of debate. Author has explored some of the themes that had emerged in the literature and the contribution of key thinkers. It is questioned by the author that is it anything more than rhetoric? Or can it be realized?

Many consultants and organisations have recognised the commercial significance of Organizational Learning and the notion of the Learning Organization. has been a central orienting point in this.

Smith, M.K. (O2001) has made an effort to study the applicability of Learning Organization. concept and to identify real-life examples.

There has been a lot of talk about Learning Organization but it is very difficult to identify real life examples. This might be because the vision is “too ideal” or because it is not relevant to the requirements and dynamics of organisations.

A distinct contrast is given by Easterby et al (Easterby Smith and Arango 1999:2) as under:

“Although theorists of Learning Organization. have often drawn an ideas from Organizational Learning there has been little traffic in the reverse direction. Moreover since the central concerns have been somewhat different, the two literatures have developed along divergent tracks. The literature on Organizational Learning has concentrated on
the detached collection and analysis of the process involved in individual
and collective Learning inside organisations, whereas the Learning
Organization. Literature has an action orientation, and is geared toward
using specific diagnostic and evaluating methodological tools which can
help to identify promote and evaluate the quality of learning processes
inside organisations”.

Finger and Brand (1999:136) put this in the way “Organizational
Learning is the ‘activity’ and the process by which organisations
eventually reach the ideal of a Learning Organization. “.

In this context, author has examined the path breaking work of
Donald Schon on firms as Learning systems and then went on to
explore Peter Senge’s treatment of the Learning Organization. (and its
focus on systemic thinking and dialogue). Then concluded with brief
exploration of the contribution of social capital to the functioning of
organisations.

The Learning Society and the knowledge economy:

The emergence of the idea of the Learning Organization. was
wrapped up with notions such as the Learning society. The defining
contribution was made by Donald Schon, who provided a theoretical
framework linking the increasing change with the need for Learning:

“We must in other words, become adapt at Learning. We must
become able not only to transform our institutions, in response to
changing situations and requirements, we must invent and develop
institutions which are ‘Learning systems’, that is to say, systems capable
of bringing about their own continuing transformation. (Schon1973:28).

One of the Schon’s great innovations was to explore the extent to
which companies, social movements and governments were learning
systems and how those systems could be enhanced. Donald Schon then
went with Chris Argyris to develop a number of important concepts with
regard to Organizational Learning and particularly in feedback and single and double loop Learning.

Author observed that a failure to attend to the Learning of groups and individuals can spell disaster in this content, against that Lead beater (2000:70) argued that company needed to invest not just in new machinery to make production more efficient, but in the flow of know how that would sustain their business. Organisation need to be good at knowledge generation, appropriation and exploitation.

Peter Senge began to explore “The art and practice of Learning Organization”. Publication of this book (1990) was the most significant factor in popularising the motion of the ‘Learning Organization’. But Sandra Kerpa in 1995 denied to have consensus on the definition of Learning Organization. Even Garvin (2000:9) observed that a clear definition of the Learning Organization. has proved to be elusive.

Following characteristics appear in Learning Organization.

- Provide continuous Learning opportunities
- Use Learning to reach their goals
- Link individual performance with organisational performance
- Foster inquiry and dialogue, making it safe for people to share openly and take risks.
- Embrace creative tension as a source of energy and renewal.

Author has briefly commented on the use of ‘System thinking” and ‘dialogue’ by Peter Senge.


Systematic thinking is the conceptual cornerstone (the Fifth Discipline) of Peter Senge’s approach. Systems theory’s ability to comprehend and address the whole, and to examine the inter
relationship between the parts provides both the incentive and the means to integrate the disciplines.

As per Senge “The systems view point is generally oriented toward the long term view. That’s why delays and feedback loops are so important. In the short term, one can often ignore them, they are inconsequential. They only come back to haunt in the long term” (Senge 1990:92).

**Dialogue and the Learning Organisation**

Peter Senge also places an emphasis on dialogue in organisations especially with regard to the discipline of team Learning.

Habermas (1984: 28;287) explained it nicely “The concern is not to ‘when the argument’, but to advance understanding and human well being”. As a social relationship it entails certain virtues and emotions.

Author has pointed out some particular problems associated with his conceptualisation. These include a failure to fully appreciate and incorporate the imperatives that animate modern organisations, the relative sophistication of the thinking he requires of managers, and questions around his treatment of organisational politics. There has also been a lack of critical analysis of the theoretical frame work.

Smith has quoted the useful listing of more important short comings of the Learning Organization. concept from the study carried out by Matthias Finger and Silvia Burgin Brand (1999). “It is not possible to transform a bureaucratic organisation by learning initiatives alone”.

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They further commented that Learning Organization mainly focuses on the cultural dimension, and does not adequately take into account the other dimensions of an organisation.

- Favours individual and collective Learning processes at all levels of the organisation, but does not connect them properly to the organisation’s strategic objectives.

Lastly it is argued that the exact functions of Organizational Learning need to be more clearly defined.

Finally, Finger and Brand concluded that there was a need to develop ‘a true management system of an organisation evolving Learning capacity.’. They suggested that this could be achieved through defining indicators of Learning and by connecting them to other indicators.

Smith concludes in the article, that the notion of the Learning Organization provides managers personally developmental, and that could increase organisational effectiveness, but as there are number of shortcomings to the model – it is theoretically underpowered and there is some question as to whether the vision can be realised within the sorts of dynamics that exist within and between organisations in a globalized capitalist economy. It might well be that ‘the concept is being oversold as a near universal remedy for a wide variety of organisational problems’.

Author sees some debate for where to go from this point.

He further comments that it could be that the notion of the Learning Organization has had its ‘fifteen minutes of fame’. However he sees life in the notion yet. It offers an alternative to a more technical framework, and holds within it a number of
important possibilities for organisations seeking to sustain themselves and to grow.

**Organizational Learning: What is New?**

**Ecdgar H. Schein, (2002) MIT Sloan School of Management**

Author has contention that there is neither understanding of the word organisational nor of the word Learning. He further states that we talk glibly about organisational Learning without, taking into account the useful distinction by Craig Lundberg between “Organisational Learning” (OL) by which we mean Learning by individual and groups in the organisation vs. the “Learning Organization” (LO) by which we mean Learning by the organisation as a total system. He emphasized that there is also a need to distinguish both these concepts (OL) & (LO) from the concept of organisation development (OD) or as Golembienski prefers “Organisation Development and Change (ODC).

Authors feels that review of these concepts would be useless because the literature on Organizational Learning, Learning Organization, ODC and culture is confusing, one reason for this confusion is that there are so many methodologies and paradigms for looking at these phenomenon.

Author would like to go back to real data, for the way out of this confusion, which he calls a clinical approach and has made attempts to characterise its unique features.

The clinical perspective grows out of work with clients who need help. Author has expressed that real focus should be on Learning Organization and culture.

For this purpose, he has defined systematic health and Learning as organisation itself is complex system. In the process,
it can be seen that systemic health can only be understood as a combination of four factors each of which must be present to some degree:

1) A Sense of identity, purpose or mission

2) A capacity on the part of the system to adopt and maintain itself in the face of internal and external changes.

3) A capacity to perceive and test reality.

4) Some degree of internal integration or alignment of the subsystems that make up the total system.

These are the four conditions which are a prerequisite for Learning. Cultural assumptions provide stability and meaning to our daily life. They structure our perceptions and thought and they tell us how to evaluate and feel about things.

Schein has raised the question that why do subsystems transformation rarely diffuse to the main system? After deep study of the ‘Operator culture, the engineering culture, and the CEO story, he concluded that one major reason why innovations do not diffuse is because the engineering and CEO culture are fundamentally oriented toward other kinds of concerns—technological elegance and financial viability.

The next question raised by Schein is “Why don’t great ideas for organisational improvement such as ‘empowerment’, ‘team work’ and ‘self managed groups’ catch on faster in managerial practice’?”

Based on his study he replied that if Learning ultimately only occurs in a community of practice, and if transformational Learning involves changing of some culture assumptions, it must be mediated by a consortium of practitioners who provide to each
other the support and insight that only a fellow practitioners could provide and, at the same an outsider perspective that permits local cultural assumptions to be surfaced and examined.

His third puzzle was that why does total organisational Learning take so long?

He has quoted example of Procter and Gamble, after 20 years of change efforts, they could get the results.

After the detailed study Schein came to conclusion that the Learning Organization is a complex beast consisting of many systems whose separate Learning and change efforts must be coordinated and integrated. He further states that it is time to accept the reality of this complexity, and stop oversimplifying systematic Learning processes by counting particular remedies like leadership, vision, re-engineering, total quality, customer focus, systems thinking, and the like.

Ultimately what is new in this field is the recognition that transformational Learning, however, necessary it may be, will require patient and careful research before we can advocate any particular Learning mechanisms of how to do it.

“A Measure of the Learning Organization: Kuittho’s Experience

Associate Prof. Dr. Ahmad Bin Othman, Abdul Mutalib bin Leman (2004)

Dr. Ahmad Bin Othman and Abdul Mutalib bin Leman presented a paper (2004) on “A Measure of the Learning Organisations: Kuittho’s Experience, on the results of a study carried out at Kolej Universiti Technologi Tun Hussein ann (KuiTTHO), Johor, Malaysia into what is a Learning Organization., how organisations learn, and how to develop a Learning Organization. The objective
of study was to identify the components that underpin the development and operation of a Learning organisation, particularly at KUiTTHO, i.e. the foundations, or organisational Learning mechanisms, that support the development and maintenance of a Learning Organization. As authors prescribed, there are four categories of organisation Learning mechanisms identified for this study:

(a) The Learning environment,
(b) Identifying Learning and development needs,
(c) Meeting Learning and development needs and
(d) Applying Learning in the workplace.

The study carried out by Dr. Ahmad and Abdul, Mutalib provides an instrument for systematically measuring and monitoring progress towards achieving a Learning Organization.

Authors believe that, an institution of higher Learning is an organisation that has no different from other organisations except it gives more emphasis on knowledge in terms of managing and discriminating it. Knowledge is the basis for, and the deiver of, our economy, knowledge is the result of Learning which provides the sustainable competitive advantage especially in the fast changing and competitive environments. KUiTTHo is one of the institutions of high Learning that gives high regard to organisation excellence and aims to be a world class University. This paper presents the results of research that had being carried out at KUiTTHO.

The instrument used in this study was based on the work of Anna Armstrong and Patrick Foley of Victoria University, Australia, (2003).

From the study, it was found that the results obtained were comparable with the study conducted by Armstrong and Foley.
Author concluded that Learning Organization. Surely may provide a valuable framework with which to design and analyse the values and structures supporting Learning organisational and monitor their progress.

**Transforming a University into a Learning Organization in the Era of Globalization:**

**Challenges for the School System Leaders**

Lun Naguyen Quoc Hung (2007)

Hung (2007) believes that Learning Organization. is not a new concept and has been considered as the key for many organisations, both entrepreneurial and academic, to adopt to the world of changes in this era of globalization. In the article he has focussed to examine crucial roles of leaders in the process of transforming a university into a Learning Organization. In the beginning of the paper interpretation of the concept of Learning Organization. is done and identified the forces and challenges, influencing higher education, organisations to become global Learning organisations, particularly in the Vietnamese context, Important steps in the process of transformation are also presented in the paper.

Hung emphasised that globalization, which is inevitable and irreversible, was a multifaceted process with economic, social, political and cultural implications for higher education.

It is observed by the author that in Vietnam the phenomenon of globalization had posed the country numerous challenges. One of which was the demand to develop and sustain a school as a Learning Organization. To survive and succeed in this competitive world, academic organisation like any other organisations had to function as Learning Organization. He has
stressed that transforming an existing school system into a Learning one, University leaders were required to take new roles to create a context for the institution that enhances the capacity to learn and to adapt to a rapidly changing environment.

According to Hung, Camtho University has entered in the new era facing following global challenges – information explosion, knowledge in many fields such as computer science, biology, medicine, law and business administration needs to be continually updated, knowledge learned in schools might be obsolete in just a few short years. It is also observed that university still has organised instructions and measured student success in terms of student mastery of a defined and fairly static set of subject matter. These practices are no longer appropriate when the subject matter is changing rapidly.

It is also observed that with technological innovation such as Internet, www site etc., it has provided learners with new opportunities to receive ‘transnational education’ such as ‘one line courses, internet based distance education. But it has not been utilised efficiently in CanTHo University, on the contrary old traditional teacher – centered approach still exists. Therefore it is the need of hour that CanTho University should have new paradigm of Learning.

In the process, it was felt essential that first teachers should adopt continuous learning which is the key to change. This idea was supported by Fullan (1993) when he discussed the role of teachers as key agents, because he noted that ‘teachers must succeed if students are to succeed, and students must succeed if society is to succeed’.
As a result, for the past few years, University leaders have responded in various ways to the challenges indicated above. The University has undertaken many actions to encourage the shift from teacher – centered, traditional methods of teaching to a learner centered teaching. The University has continually upgraded its internet system so that all the staff and students can have free access to Internet.

All these efforts have brought positive changes. Transforming a University into a Learning Organization differs from traditional approaches to school reform. A Learning Organization should lead and manage changes in order to increase the habit of curiosity which Bogue (1994) referred to as inspiring and sustaining capacity in a Learning Organization. The change should be from top management. School leaders organise an annual meeting to discuss and contribute their ideas to the school decisions. It could be established that the lifelong Learning must be the goal of fostering lifelong Learning in students.

The school transforming has led to the transformation in the style of leadership.

According to Burns (1978 cited in Johnson 2002), “transforming leadership is the type of leadership that raises both leader and follower to higher levels of motivation and morality.
“A Turkish Translation, Validity, and reliability study of the Dimension of the Learning Organization Questionnaire”

Dr. H. Nejat Basim

Basim Negat H.et. al (2007) emphasized on the ‘change’ which is inevitable in the past and today. In order to adopt themselves to changing environmental conditions and to increase their competitive abilities, he has observed that today’s world organisations are in constant process of change in first priority for organisations and organisational transformation needs must analysed carefully, the most appropriate strategies must be developed so that organisation can adapt to environmental changes. Dr. Basim observed that organisations which had capacity of faster Learning would adapt to new conditions quickly and have significant strategic advantages in globalized and competitive world. This new kind of organisations will have more knowledge, be more flexible, fast and strong and capable of adapting to changing environmental conditions in order to please both workers and shareholders. He found that when the literature of Learning Organization concept was searched, it could be seen that some of the researchers such as Argyris and Schion, Senge and Huber have worked the subject only mentally and had not offered a road map or an experimental research result. But in order to take Learning Organization concept from mind to practice, someone could measure it. Therefore, there must some measures to expose the Learning capabilities of the organisations. He has taken seven dimensions from the nine dimension developed by Watkins and Marsick (DLOQ) to assess Learning activities within the organisations namely: (Translated to Turkish and used).
(i) Create continuous Learning opportunities (continuous Learning)

(ii) Promote enquiry and dialogue (dialogue and inquiry)

(iii) Encourage collaboration and team Learning (team Learning)

(iv) Establish systems to capture and share Learning (embedded systems)

(v) Empower people toward a collective vision (empowerment)

(vi) Connect the organisation to its environment (system connections)

(vii) Leaders model and support Learning (provide leadership)

The DLOQ was composed of forty nine items. ‘Continuous Learning’ dimensions included seven items and each of the other dimensions included six items. In his study DLOQ was tested in a different Turkish cultural sample. In Turkey many organisations think about ‘change and development’ but they cannot decide the way of change or development. He assumed that DLOQ would be a useful instrument in Human Resources Management or Organisational Development in Turkey to decide the way of change within the organisation. Therefore the purpose of study as described by Dr. Basim, is to translate the seven dimensions of DLOQ into Turkish, to adapt it to another cultural environment and to test the validity and the reliability of Turkish version of the questionnaire. This version may inspire some new researches in different cultures, similar to Turkish one. Thus cross – cultural validation of DLOQ could be done.

Building a Learning Organization

Oliovier Serrat (2009)

Serrat O. (2009) believes that for organisations wishing to remain relevant and thrive, Learning better and faster is critically
important. He further states that many organisations apply quick and easy fixes often driven by technology and most are futile attempts to create organizational Change. However, Organizational Learning is neither possible nor sustainable without understanding what drives it.

He has derived 4 subsystems as shown in the figure below. These are 4 subsystems of Learning Organization: Organisation, People, Knowledge and Technology. Each subsystem supports the others in magnifying the Learning as it permeates across the system.

Author has explained importance and explanation of all the subsystems of Learning Organization which are as under in brief:
Organisation

A Learning Organization values the role that Learning can play in developing organizational effectiveness. It demonstrates this by having an inspiring vision for Learning and Learning strategy that will support the organisation in achieving its vision.

The structure of a Learning Organization takes into account the common obstacles to Learning so it is carefully aligned with strategy, avoiding the development of “silos” and minimising unnecessary levels of hierarchy.

People:

A Learning Organization needs people who are intellectually curious about this work, who actively reflect on their experience, who develop experience based theories of change and continuously test these in practice with colleagues and who use their understanding and initiative to contribute to knowledge development.

Closely linked to development and retention of staff members are the importance of recognition and incentives for Learning.

High quality coaching and mentoring can help reflective practice flourish.

Learning Organization require and encourage the development of leadership competences at all levels in the organisational hierarchy, not just at top, which is in turn based on the possession of expertise and knowledge, not simply positional status.
Knowledge:

It is a critical asset in every Learning Organization. A Learning organization provides creative opportunities for the knowledge to be developed and shared with others through interpersonal contact and access to documentation.

Key (and often underutilised) sources of knowledge in organisations are the data and information that emerge from monitoring systems and the analyses, conclusions and recommendations that arise from self-and independent evaluation.

Learning organisations are networked with the wider world. They know how to create and run partnerships, collaborative mutual Learning arrangements with other organisations are common and fruitful.

Technology:

In a Learning Organization information and communication technologies are used, among other purposes, to strengthen organisational identity, build and sustain Learning communities. Keep staff members, clients and others informed and aware of Corporate developments, helpful connections between people and provide access to this knowledge and ideas, encourage innovation and creativity, share and learn from good practices and unintended outcomes, strengthen relationships, develop and access organisational memory, share tools, methods and approaches, celebrate success, identify internal sources of expertise, and connect with outside world.

The creative use of information and communication technologies indicates that an organisation takes learning seriously.
In a Learning Organization sufficient opportunities are provided to learn how to make use of available technologies for knowledge management and Learning.

**Building the Learning Organization**

**A system approach to quantum improvement and Global Success**

Michael J. Marquardt (2011)

Marquardt, J. Michael, based on his experience with 50 of the top Learning organisations from all around the world, as well his analysis of the hundred of outsides and books on Learning organisations, could led him to conclude that the full richness of the Learning organisation incorporates five distinct subsystems:-

- Learning
- Organisation
- People
- Knowledge and
- Technology

He has observed that attempting to understand or become a Learning organisation without all five of these dimensions will lead to only a partial appreciation of the process and principles necessary to move from a non-Learning to a Learning organisation.

He has presented each of the necessary five subsystems and how they interface and complement each other. He has emphasized that the core subsystem of the Learning Organization is Learning – At the levels of individual, group, and organisation, with the skills (or disciplines as Peter Senge refers to them) of systems thinking, mental models, personal mastery, team Learning, and shared vision. Each of the other subsystems – organisation, people, knowledge and technology, are required to
enhance and augment the quality and impact of Learning on a corporate wide basis.

It is observed by the Marequardt that some of the forces that created the changes in the environment and atmosphere can serve as the foundation stones for building the Learning Organization. Giving an example – Know how workers who have greater mobility and choices force an organisation to empower these workers so they can be more productive.

Experience and research have shown that when companies incorporate 5 district by subsystems into the Learning Organization. process, i.e. Learning, organisation, people, knowledge and technology, they are quicker and much more successful in becoming a Learning Organization. Attempting to become a Learning Organization without all five of these dimensions will be insufficient and frustrating. Full throttle on all gears is necessary to go from a non-Learning to a Learning Organization.

In his study, he has carefully explored each of the subsystems and shown that how they interface and complement each other, and how each of the subsystems support and energise one another.

Marquardt has beautifully analysed the Rover, the largest Car Company in U.K. case. In the late 1980s, it was in trouble. Losses were exceeding $100 million per year. Union-management relations were wretched and employee morale was sinking.

Now Rover is the best car maker in the world, with winning every award for quality that exists and employees have high morale as average revenue per car sold increasing by 50 per cent.
What caused these dramatic changes in productivity, and worker satisfaction? Top management and employees are unanimous and quick to attribute the new prosperity to Rover’s successful journey toward becoming a Learning organisation.

**Review of Books**


A speech made by Geoffrey Holland, (in early 1986), the then Director of the Manpower Services Commission, calling for a new management development initiative in the UK, proved a turning point for the authors of the book.: 

“If we are to survive – individually or as companies, or as a country – we must create a tradition of ‘Learning companies’. Every company must be a ‘Learning company’.

Authors were encouraged to do some work on ‘Learning company’ concept, which became an idea into which they started to put their individual and collective energies.

It is observed by the author that the idea of Learning Company had not diminished in the years since the first edition in 1991.

In the book, effort is made to explain the importance of the process of Learning in all the companies instead of searching for the Learning organisation, perfect and complete in all its parts. If process of Learning can be improved in all the companies then much can be done for those who live and work in them, but also for the survival and development of those organisations who contribute to country’s social well being.
Book contains ideas, methods and useful tools to improve the organisational Learning in the company. As the authors believe that company may be full of bright, creative, self-developing individuals, but that does not mean that it can learn and change as a whole living organism.

The consuming questions discussed in the book are – How can one transform himself as a whole, when he need to? By what means do one change in order to better achieve collective purposes? What is the distinctive contribution to all those who have an interest in the work.?

This book is in four parts, forming a Learning cycle (Fig. 3) of idea, Diagnosis, Action and Reflections. Part 1 deals with the question: What is Learning Company?
It is claimed in the book that it is written for the people who believe that there is massive underdeveloped potential in their organisation and who want to set out releasing it.

Based on the experience of first edition of the book, definition of Learning company was changed to ‘Learning of all its members and consciously transforms itself and its context i.e. from continuously to consciously on the ground of reality. Moreover the word consciously adds awareness and internationality, the learning company transforms itself as a result of self-awareness.

Further, full implication of ‘A Strategy for sustainable development’ is discussed. It is discussed as a powerful image where the vision of organisational Learning is of the efficient adaptive unit – always in the right place at the right time to take advantage of environmental change, which is discussed as a mid point of a three stage process in the book.

Authors (Pedler Mike et al) have suggested three stage evolution of the Learning company as under:

Stage-1: Surviving: Companies that develop basic habits and processes and deal with problems as they arise on a ‘fire fighting’ basis.

Stage-2: Adapting: Companies that continuously adapt their habits in the light of accurate readings and forecasts of environment changes.

Stage-3: Sustaining: Companies that create their contexts as much as they are created by them, who achieve a sustainable, through adaptive, position in a symbolic relationship with their environments.

Stage 3 is considered as most important and considered as the part of the emergent evolution of work organisations where the principal concern for all stakeholders – owners, customers, users, staff and son on becomes the production of meaning.
In fact all three stages have light and shadow sides for example, stage 1 functioning offers basic stability, preserving the Learning and wisdom of the past in valuable procedures that work, but it can also represent rigidity, automatic, habitual behaviour and an inability to innovate.

He has emphasized the usage of the word ‘Company’, because the original idea of eating bread together and of creating meaning through relationships, captures the convinciality of working together, better than the more mechanical and lifeless organisation. As one of the oldest words for a group of people engaged in a joint enterprise, it is continued to ‘accompany’ others and do things in company. So the author has used word ‘Learning Company rather than Learning Organization’.

Chapter 2 develop the argument that the Learning Organization is an idea for the present times, that its era has come.

Chapter 3 offers a working framework of the idea so that any given company can be viewed from this perspective as the beginnings of the process of becoming a Learning Organization. This framework includes two key models.

The “characteristics of the Learning Organization and the E-Flow or Energy Flow model.

The next four chapters from Part 2 and follow the trilogy of Idea, Phase and Era offering diagnostic activities for each to help to compare and contrast the company with these models of the Learning Organization. Chapter 4 and 5 focus on the idea with methods for looking at the company using the 11 characteristics of the Learning Organization and the E-Flow models. In Chapter 6, Biography approach of the company is taken to interpret its current stage of development.
Finally Chapter 7 considers the ‘era, the company is in – what is the wider context in which the company operates and how might a Learning Organization strategy fit with this. Chapter 8 to 10 focus in turn on each of the 11 characteristics of the Learning Organization culminating in the BICC story (Chapter 19) – a Case study of a major organisation development effort.

In the introduction to part 3, various starting points for developing a Learning Organization strategy in the company are suggested. Part 4 reflects on the many new directions which mark this still emerging field of study and practice. Survey of the important writers who have contributed to the ideas of Learning Organization and Learning Organization is given in the Part 4. Whole system development and the contribution of IT Computer networks to Organizational Learning feature in this part. No neat conclusion is given at the end but a rich array of possibilities for experiment and further Learning is there instead of conclusion.

Pedeler et. Al suggested a blue print of a company which should look like a Learning company.

From earlier researches including Revans Argyris and Schon, Senge and the others and on the research carried out by the Authors and the speculations about what the Learning company ought to be, they have derived a list of common 11 characteristics which create a Learning company.

All the characteristics are put to order and cluster.

Fig: 4 - Shows a blue print in which characteristics are clustered around a central pivot of structures. Above this ‘Looking in’ and mirrored below is ‘Looking out’ Strategy tops at the clusters while Learning opportunities from the base on which all else is built.
Fig - 4 - The Blue Print of a Learning Company.

Peter Senge (1990)

Peter Senge’s vision of a Learning organisation as a group of people who are continually enhancing their capabilities to create what they want to create has been deeply implemented. He has studied how firms and organisations develop adaptive capabilities for many years at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) it was his book (1990) ‘The Fifth Discipline” that brought him firmly into the limelight and popularized the concept of the Learning organisation.

(About Peter Senge – Born in 1947, graduated in engineering from Stanford and then went on to undertake a masters on Social systems modelling at MIT before completing his Ph. D on Management.

His current areas of special interest focus on decentralization the role of leadership in organisations so as to enhance the capability of all people to work productively towards common goals.

The reason for this is Senge’s involvement in the Society for Organisational Learning (SOL), a non-profit organisation. SOL is part of a ‘global community of Corporations, researchers and Consultants' dedicated to discovering, integrating, and implementing ‘theories and practices for the interdependent development of people and their institutions”.

An Engineer by qualification, Peter was a protégé of John H. Hopkins and has followed closely the works of Michael Peters and Robert Fritz and based his books on pioneering works with the five disciplined in various companies.

Senge emerged in the 1990s as a major figure in organisational development with his book The Fifth Discipline, where he developed the
notion of a Learning Organisation. This views organisations as dynamic systems in a state of continuous adaptation and improvement.

Senge proposes that people put aside their old ways of thinking (mental models), learn to be open with others (personal mastery), understand how their company really works (Systems thinking), from a plan everyone can agree on (shared vision), and then work together to achieve that vision (team Learning).

None of these concepts are new, but Senge created something new and powerful by putting them together. Unfortunately very few read the book and have carried out its ideas (Dumaine, 1994). To make the Learning organisation more accessible to a seasoned managers, Senge and Several Co-consultants published. The Fifth Discipline Field book, a more hands on work.

The Field book explains that anyone who wants to be part of a Learning organisation must first go through a personal change (Senge, Kleiner et al, 1994).

Once ‘personal paradigm’ is shifted Senge says’ one must master something called systems thinking, a scientific discipline that helps one understand how organisation work’ The outsider, faced with such a formidable field to master, might ask, why bother? Senge argues that the very future of the planet hangs in the balance. This comment reflects Senge’s interest in tackling issues like overpopulation, hunger, and environment, and his commitment to a personal life that reflects these professional ideals.

In 1997, Harvard Business Review identified The Fifth Discipline as one of the survival management books of the previous 75 years.

It is emphasized that a Learning Organization values, and derives competitive advantage from, continuing Learning, both individual and collective.

According to Peter Senge (1990:3), Learning organisations are:

- Organisations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expensive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually Learning to see the whole together.

- The basic rationale for such organisations is that in situations of rapid change only those that are flexible, adaptive and productive will excel. For this to happen it is argued, organisations need to ‘discover how to tap people’s commitment and capacity to learn at all levels (ibid;4).

- While all people have the capacity to learn, the structures in which they have to function are often not conducive to reflection and engagement. Furthermore, people may lack the tools and guiding ideas to make sense of the situations they face. Organisations that are continually expanding their capacity to create their future require a fundamental shift of mind among their members.

- For Peter Senge, real Learning gets to the heart of what it is to be human. We become able to re-create ourselves. This applies to both individuals and organisations. Thus for a Learning Organization, it is not enough to survive. Survival Learning or what is more often termed adaptive Learning is important. But for a Learning Organization ‘adaptive Learning’ must by joined by ‘generative Learning’, Learning that enhances our capability to create (Senge: 1990:14).
- The dimension that distinguishes Learning from more traditional organisations is the mastery of certain basic disciplines or component technologies.

- This book shifted the boundaries of management from concentrating on silos (marketing, HR, finance, production) to looking at organisations as open systems which interact with outside systems and put into motion forces that may not be easily understood using traditional systems to assessment.

- The ability of systems thinking, Senge called the ‘Fifth Discipline’, the other four being:

  (1) Personal Mastery
  (2) Mental models
  (3) Building shared vision
  (4) Team Learning

The field of systems thinking was developed in MIT under Prof. Jay W. Forrester, but Senge gave it the managerial flavour.

The belief being, once an organisation has mastery of all the five disciplines, the organisation can become a Learning Organization. This book therefore triggered the craze and feel on part of organisations to become Learning Organization.

Senge’s five disciplines are common concepts in many Corporate offices. He is considered by many to be founder of the concept of the Learning Organization. He defines the core of Learning Organization. work based on five ‘Learning disciplines’. To expand on them, in Senge’s words they are:
Personal Mastery:

Learning to expand our personal capacity to create the results we must desire, and creating an organisational environment which encourages all its members to develop themselves towards the goals and purposes they choose.

Mental Models:

Reflecting upon, continually clarifying and improving our internal pictures of the world, and seeing how they shape our actions and decisions.

Shared Vision

Building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future one seeks to create, and the principles and guiding practices by which one hopes to get these.

Team Learning

Transforming conversational and collective thinking skills, so that group of people can reliably develop intelligence and ability greater than the sum of individual members.

Systems Thinking:

A way of thinking about, and a language for describing and understanding, the forces and the interrelationship that shape the behaviour of systems. This discipline helps as to see how to change systems more effectively, and to act more in tune with the larger processes of the natural and economic world.

Senge believes that the impact of practices, principles and essences are highly influential. Practices are ‘what you do’. Principles are ‘guiding ideas and insights’, and essence is ‘the state of binding those with high levels of mastery in the discipline’ (Senge 1990 p 373).
He looks at leaders as teachers, stewards and designers – quite a different metaphor than the traditional business practices of the time. It is the leaders who must pave the way to the creation of the Learning Organization and they must also model the process.

The Creation of this type of Learning Organization comes from establishing a group that learns new ways to work together, discussing priorities, working through divergent thinking, clarification, then convergent thinking to come to conclusions and implementation of the solution. The Learning Organization discovers how to best work with individual styles, allowing for reflection and other individual needs. It becomes a safe place to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from the results.

To summarize, Senge’s model is based on the interaction and the Learning that goes on between individuals in an organisation. It is an intangible process, but one that can be enhanced by taking certain measures to foster development.

John Van Maurik (2001:201) has suggested that Senge has been ahead of his time and that his agreements are insightful and revolutionary. It could be said that while there were some issues and problems with his conceptualization, at least it does carry within it some questions around what might make for human flourishing.

The drawing together of the elements via the Fifth Discipline of system thinking, while not being to everyone’s taste, also allows us to approach a more holistic understanding of organisational life.

There are still substantial achievements and when linked to his popularizing of the motion of the Learning Organization – it is
understandable why Peter Senge has been recognised as a key thinker.

**Organizational Culture and Climate**

**Pareek Udai**

Pareek Udai, in his book, Organisational culture and climate" discussed organisation Learning prior to Learning organisation. He proposed Learning Organization as a development process, from individual to group and to organisations. In other words it is proposed that ‘a concept of individuals Learning should be embedded in a concept of O.L.”, suggesting three processes at the levels of the individual (interpreting), group (integrating) and organisation (institutionalising), with the respective outputs (Cognitive map, shared belief structures, and organisational structure and systems) respectively.

Author suggested a normative concept of Organizational Learning As a continuum from no Learning (insensitive or closed to experiences and realities) to full Learning (effective use of experiences for action).

He defined Organizational Learning as the process by which an organisation acquires, retains, and uses inputs for development, and the process results in an enhanced capacity for continued self Learning and self renewal.

He gave organisational Learning Systems as under:

![Organizational Learning System](image)

**Fig: 5 - Organizational Learning System**
It is suggested that Learning results is increasing the capability of an organisation to learn more on its own. Self Learning may not necessarily involve an outside stimulus or input. As organisation may develop mechanism of examining its experiences, retaining more functional ways, and discontinuing dysfunctional ways of dealing with issues. This is said to be self Learning leading to self renewal.

Author also gave Mechanisms of Organizational Learning to be used at the three phases of OL, describing it as a specific action an organisation takes to achieve a purpose. General areas of such mechanisms are given as under:

(A) **Experimentation and Flexibility:** An organisation needs to develop flexibility and a positive attitude towards experimentation.

(B) **Mutuality and Teamwork:** Organizational Learning requires mutual support, mutual respect, and learning from one another, collaborative work and effective teams to solve problems.

(C) **Contingency and Incremental Planning:** Organizational Learning is enhanced by an attitude of Learning, rather than by an attitude of certitude.

(D) **Use of Temporary Systems:** Temporary systems are effective mechanisms to generate ideas and take quick action. Some examples are task groups, task forces, special committees, project groups, problem identification groups etc.

(E) **Competency Building:** To make OL effective, it is necessary to build resources which the organisation can use when needed. Building needed resources may ensure continuity of organisational Learning. Competencies are the primary resources.
Organizational Learning: A theory of action perspective”

Chris Argyris and Schon (1978)

The work of Chris Argyris has influenced thinking about the relationship of people and organisations, organisational Learning and action research.

Key aspects are discussed here:

Chris Argyris born in Newlark, US on July 16, 1923. During world war II joined U.S. Army. Graduated in Psychology, completed M.A. in Psychology and Economics and Ph.D. from Cornell University in organisational Behaviour. He has been a faculty member at Yale University where he served as the Professor and Chairperson of the Department. At present Director in one of the company at Cambridge. Earlier his research was on “personality’ and then to organisational change. In late 70’s he shifted his focus on ‘organisational Learning’. (Organizational Learning 1978, Organizational Learning (1996).

He was an influential teacher also, as on Peter Senge (1990) talks about his own experience.

Argyris and Schon argued that people have mental maps with regard to how to act in situations. This involves the way they plan, implement and review their actions. Furthermore, they assert that it is these maps that guide people’s actions rather than the theories they explicitly speak i.e. to say that there is split between theory and action. However, they suggest that two theories of actions are involved namely – Theory of action and Theory in use.

To understand theory in use they gave a model of the processes which included three elements:

**Governing variables:** Those dimensions that people are trying to keep within acceptable limits.
**Action Strategies:** The moves and plans used by people to keep their governing values within the acceptable range.

**Consequences:** Result of an action.

Where the consequences of the strategy used are what the person wanted, then the theory-in-use is confirmed. If there is mismatch between two then, Argyris and Schon suggest two responses, which can be seen in the notion of single and double loop Learning.

**Single-loop and double loop Learning:**

When the error detected and corrected permits the organisation to carry on its present policies or achieve its present objectives, then this process is ‘single-loop-Learning’.

Double loop Learning occurs when error is detected and corrected in ways that involve the modification of an organisation's underlying norms, policies and objectives.

The focus of much of Chris Argyris intervention research has been to explore how organisations may increase their capacity for double loop Learning, so as to make informed decisions in rapidly changing and often uncertain context.

After describing Single loop and double loop Learning, the next step Authors take to set up two models. The belief is that all people utilize a common theory in use in problematic situations. This is described as Model I and it can be said to inhibit double loop Learning. Model II is where the governing values, associated with theories-in-use enhance double loop Learning.

Chris Agyris looks to move people from a Model I to a Model II orientation and practice-one that fosters double loop Learning.
Organisational Learning

Authors suggest that each member of an organisation constructs his image of the theory-in-use of the whole. The picture is always incomplete – and people, thus, are continually working to add pieces to get a view of the whole.

Organisational theory-in-use, continually constructed through individual enquiry, is encoded in private images and in public maps. These are the media of Organizational Learning (1978).

Agyris and Schon suggests six phases of work as organisation effort i.e. the formulation and implementation of an intervention strategy for organisation development.

Phase 1 - Mapping the problem as clients see it
Phase 2 - The internalization of the map by clients
Phase 3 - Test the model
Phase 4 - Invent solutions
Phase 5 - Produce the intervention
Phase 6 - Study the impact

It is argued that the process entails looking for the maximum participation of clients, minimizing the risks of candid participation, starting where people want to begin, and designing methods so that they value rationality and honestly.

As suggested by Authors, the theorizing of theory-in-action, the educative power of the models, and the conceptualization of Organizational Learning have been, and continue to be, significant contributions to the appreciation of process in organisations.

Agyris and Schon have made a significant contributions to pragmatic Learning theory.
Handbook of “Total Quality Learning –


The book places individuals in a personal development mode – to learn about and grow their own management persons. Stress on the word Learning and its linkage with ‘total quality’ emphasizes the importance of individual initiative and this excellence is the objective. Book has given vision of development which is needed for all who purport to practice the profession of management.

Book contributes to encourage a personal sense of direction and focus for managers, but it also assists materially with road map.

It has stressed for 2 dominant factors in organisations in the 21st Century as ‘quality’ and ‘Learning’ and has also developed the first integrated approach to individual and Organizational Learning

Author has demonstrated in the book that by developing a parallel approach to Learning and innovation, the very substance of an organisation can be transformed. The fundamental discipline of production and marketing, finance and Human resources management can be recast so that whole individual business can be Learning and innovating simultaneously. Out of such total Learning arises total quality.

Following subject matter is covered in 5 parts in the book:

Part I - Total Learning (Towards the Learning Organization.)
Part II - Transforming your managerial self.
Part III - Transforming your business knowledge
Part IV - Transforming your management skills (From Apprenticeship to Mastery)
Part V - Total Quality

- Knowing yourself as a whole
Building a Holographic organisation

It is the organisation which underpins the whole work.

“Building A Learning Organization”

Rastogi P.N. (1998)

Author has given introduction of the Learning Organization in length, before the original text of the book. He has emphasized mainly on knowledge management and Role of managers/leaders. As described in introduction, knowledge and Learning, creativity and innovation, constitute the organisation’s key resources for facing an uncertain future. The organisation is refocused around knowledge and Learning as its central organising principle.

Author further states that the Learning Organization approach views an organisation as a human community whose collective knowledge and wisdom represent a distinctive capacity to cope with change, and create its own future. The critical managerial activities must therefore, resolve around, and focus on building and using knowledge resources of the organisation.

The overall objective of this book is to understand the nature, dimensions, rationale and significance of the Learning Organization in order to be able to design and build it.

In the book, this macro-level overall objectives is disaggregated into a set of thematic objectives. The latter define the contents of this book.

The contents are outlined in terms of addressing the following set of questions:

- What is paradigm of the Learning organisation? Why is it important in the context of present day global business
environment? What are its distinctive premises and approach to enterprise strategy and management?

- What is a Learning organisation? What is its nature and rationale? In what way(s) is it different and unique?
- What are different perspectives on the requisites and requirement of a Learning organisation? What are the common and complementary distinctive and unique elements in the plural perspectives?
- What are the core issues involved in building a Learning organisation?
- How may I.T. facilitate the creation of a Learning Organization? What is its role and rationale in an infrastructure knowledge management?
- How loading companies foster organisational Learning and management of knowledge?
- How would a Learning company cope with its turbulent business environment? What would be the distinctive bases of its effectiveness and sources of success?
- How have some leading companies transmitted themselves into Learning Organization? What insights and guidance do they provide in search for excellence and success?

Author has attempted to answer the foregoing questions in seven chapters and three appendices.

Chapter one and two delineate the nature, meaning, purpose and significance of a Learning Organization. These Chapters highlight the focus of a Learning enterprise on knowledge as its quintessential resource, and continuous Learning as primary source of its sustainable competitive advantage.
Chapter three outlines briefly the perspectives of different management thinkers on the nature and dimensions of a Learning Organization, and the requirements for building it.

Chapter four builds on the preceding three Chapters towards identifying and elucidating the core issues and themes in building a Learning enterprise. It examines the basic considerations that need to be taken into account towards building Learning Organization.

Chapter five expands the design theme further. It examines the nature and role of information technology in facilitating the creation of an infrastructure for the management of the company's knowledge resources.

Chapter six describes briefly, the knowledge management practices of some leading companies across the world.

Chapter Seven, the last one, envisages the thrust and direction of a Learning organisation towards coping with the challenges of today's turbulent business environment. It highlights the power and prowess of a Learning enterprise towards converting challenges into opportunities.

Three appendices towards the end of the book, supplement the Chapters. Appendix I describes briefly some of the methods, techniques and approaches developed and employed towards creating and building a Learning Organization. Appendix II outlines five case studies of the companies that have transformed themselves into effective Learning Organization.

Appendix III provides a brief outline of an action plan. The plan is based on, and summarizes, the findings of the previous Chapters.
Peter Lassey strongly believed that ‘If organisations are to gain a competitive advantage in a changing world they need to have the ability to adapt constantly to new circumstances and challenges. Yet organisations are simply collection of people, who share common goals, only some of whom embrace change. Therefore if we want an organisation to adapt to take advantage of the new circumstances, then we also want whole collection of people to continually change their behaviour”. He therefore emphasized on collectively continuous Learning.

The aim of this book is to show how organisation can develop a culture where Learning is encouraged.

Chapter I examines the rationale behind the ‘Learning Organization’ concept and outlines how the Learning Organization differs from traditional organisation. The reminder of the book is broken down into 3 parts.

Part I looks at the structures within the organisation that can help to develop and nurture a Learning Organization. It examines how occupational standards of competence can be used to facilitate a coherent set of systems and procedures, job description, which will provide the foundation of the Learning Organization.

Part 2 looks at developing people within the organisation. It examines how people can develop solutions to business problems and how flexible training and development activities can be implemented to meet Learning needs.
Part 3 looks at how different initiatives in Part I & 2 can help to provide external recognition and its people through ISO ratification.

The book aims to pull together a number of different initiatives and show how they can be integrated to provide the basis of developing a Learning Organization.

**The Learning Organisation**

**Bob Garratt (1987)**

Bob Garratt (1987) gave the first Learning organisation model. He found it useful in helping directors understand the dimensions of their role. It was considered to be powerfully memorable and capable of explaining to people at all levels of an organisation, what their duties and rights are within a business which is striving to increase its rate of Learning so that it can survive and develop.

**Fig:6 - The Learning Organisation and the thru level hierarchy**
He further emphasized that the Learning Organization model highlights these issues – How do we manage the external/internal environmental boundaries? How does the operational side cope with policy and strategy? How does the total system integrate and synthesize? How will directors delegate operations to their managers so that they (directors) may spend more time on policy and integration issues.

**Building the Learning Organisation**

**Michael J. Marquardt (2002)**

Marquardt’s work is based on the belief that in today’s highly competitive business environment, Learning organisations hold a significant competitive advantage, and therefore puts it as organisations must learn faster and adapt faster to changes in the environment or they simply will not survive.

He states that following are the some of the crucial issues which are faced by the today’s organisations/corporations.

- Reorganisation, restructuring and re-engineering for success, not just survival.
- Increased skill shortages caused by schools that have not adequately prepared people for work in the 21st century.
- Doubling of knowledge every 2 to 3 years.
- Global Competition from the world’s most powerful companies.
- Overwhelming break through in new and advanced technologies.
- Spiralling need for organisations to adapt to change.
It is also believed that to overcome above issues, and to obtain and sustain competitive advantage in this new environment, companies will have to learn better and faster from both success and failures.

The work of Marquardt has dealt mainly with mastering the 5 elements for corporate Learning:-

(i) Building Learning Dynamics
(ii) Transforming the Organisation for Learning excellence
(iii) Empowering and enabling people
(iv) Knowledge Management in Learning Organization.
(v) Technology for Building the Learning Organization.

Chapter I – assesses rising social, political and economic forces as well as the new expectations of workers, customers and even communities that have necessitated the emergence of Learning organisation. The eight key forces causing this shift from institution based on manufacturing (manual labour) to those based on manufacturing (mental labour) are discussed.

Chapter 2 introduces the total system Learning Organization model with an overview and brief synopsis of the five subsystems; Learning, organisation, people knowledge and the technology. The international and complementary nature of the subsystems is also discussed.

The dimensions, principles, practices, and ideas of five subsystems are explored in Chapters 3-7. Each Chapter contains examples of best practices from learning organisations around the world.
At the end of each Chapter, 10 top implementation strategies for building the sub-systems are discussed. Chapter 8 provides 16 steps, for becoming a Learning Organization.

“Creating A Learning Organisation”


The Learning Organization perceives itself as a living system. Every part is connected to every other part. As in a living organism, there is enormous pressure to maintain homeostasis. Once change has in fact occurred, however, it will affect the entire system. Systems thinking allows the organisation to focus on systems change, rather than searching for one quality party when there is a problem.

The author has thus stressed on the importance of change. Things are changing so fast today that it is difficult to keep up with the pace. People who can't keep up with those changes may find themselves “downsized”.

Author has emphasized that nobody can’t slow down change, there is nowhere to hide, no industry is immune. The only answer is learning.

Apart from Learning in the organisation, Author is concerned about barriers to Learning that inhibit Learning or slow it down. He has described some of the most common ones:

- Mixed Messages
- Lack of Resources
- Organisation Structure
- Political Environment
- Unclear, conflicting, or missing vision.
Steps should be taken to remove the obstacles for learning to flow through the organisation.

Further Author has stressed that the greatest challenge in creating a Learning Organization is to see that the Learning flows into every work and cranny of the business.

It is the common thing to offer courses or send people to seminars, and even to be certain that the training is well delivered and customized to organisations needs. But author questions the actual implementation of the Learning?

Once knowledge is gained, then, how do we support and facilitate the application of knowledge so that true Learning does occur. At the same time it is to be assured that this is happening across an organisation of diverse people, perhaps diverse locations, among jobs with differing demands and constraints.

Author has suggested solution to the above question.

He has suggested that the lifelong learner keeps an open mind to Learning. How does one stay open? He has given some beautiful tips in the book very important for a learner to keep in the mind.

- Surrender
- Be curious
- Have intent or purpose
- Suspend Expectations
- Look the Fool
- Ask questions
- Be Humble
- Seek the truth
- Be Ready and Patient
Author has examined some motivations to learn. As it’s a well known motivation principle that people do things for their own reasons, not for someone else’s reasons, this principle applies just as clearly to Learning. The more we understand what is behind someone’s desire to learn, the more we can support them in their Learning. In the process, we’ll leverage the Learning that occurring overall in our organisation.

**Motivations to learn:**

- Curiosity
- Self protection
- To fulfil a purpose
- Reward or profit
- Through painful or negative experience
- Fun
- When expectations aren’t met.
- For future focus
- It’s mandatory
- Enjoyment

It is important for each learner to know why and when one is most likely to learn. Author further described in the book that learner should learn the preference and his intelligence to learn.
Case Studies

The BICC story

Content: Pedler, etc. applied their “Characteristics of the ‘Learning Company’ concept to the BICC. It brought life in the case of a Company-wide organisation development effort at BICC.

This case study is a story of BICC seeking to survive and develop in difficult and changing times.

BICC is a large U.K. based Engineering Company. It has cable manufacturing business in power transmission, fibre optics, and copper based telephone cables. This is the case study of BICC Telephone Cables, Manchester, UK, with a workforce of 400 people is on a 100 years old site in Blackley.

It was having good relationship with British Telecom (BT), till BT was privatised and lost its monopoly. BT reallocated the market share between existing supplier, stating its intention to deal with only best one.

This presented a considerable challenge for BICC. Its market share was at to 17% - turning to loss. BICC Tel cables decided to respond positively to this threat. This took the form of a development project led by Tom Boydell and Malcom Larry. The project was in four main phases:-

(1) Setting the scene (March-August 1992)
(2) Removing the barriers and creating the right environment (Sept. 1992 – June 1993).
(3) Introducing team working in manufacturing (April 1993 – April 1994)

Discussing specially No. 4 i.e. “creating a Learning environment”.

First of all team training was carried out, at the same time number of further initiatives were taken aimed at individual Learning and development including –

- Establishing a personal development programme
- Creating an open-Learning facility on site
- Further development of team leader and team member training, based on a process of self assessment
- Integration of production and maintenance skills training with nationally recognised occupational qualifications, e.g. National Vocational Qualification (NVCCs)
- Establishment of a training and development programme in service/support functions
- Launch of a process improvement initiative
- Commitment to gain a National Award (Investors in people).

**The changes observed in BICC:-**

Some of the measurable outcomes of above cited initiatives were as follows:-

- Employee productivity up 113%
- Scrap down 50 per cent
- Absenteeism reduced by 58 per cent.
- UK market share up from 17 per cent to 40 per cent (BICC became supplier to BT)
- New export contracts
On time deliveries highest ever (98 per cent)

Move from loss over a £1 million to profit of over £1 million.

At least 300 jobs saved

These outputs were the results of the totality of changes made throughout the period of the project. By working on all the 11 characteristics simultaneously, a vessel was created within which people could apply their existing knowledge and acquire new knowledge, not only about how to make cable but also about how to work together.

**Chaparral Steel**

It is a minimill in Midlothian, Texas founded in 1975.

It functions as a Learning laboratory. Every employee participates in experimentation, the garnering of new ideas, and the improvement of the factory processes, tools, parts, and products. Research is done throughout the entire organisation instead of in a separate R&D laboratory.

The company enjoys the reputation of being the world’s most efficient producer of steel. The company has also been recognized for quality in terms of prestigious awards from Japanese and American certifying institutions.

The company set out to produce large structural I-beams for about half the cost of big steel mills. Other steel mills could cast steel into large I-beam only through a very expensive process.

The company experimented constantly to increase the efficiency. The workers learned from the experiments, solved problems, and generated large number of useful ideas. Every employee is viewed as being in R&D operators see everything that goes wrong, and try to prevent it.
The company emphasizes multi skilling and multi-functioning of employees. Employees are cross-trained to be able to perform each other’s functions. Work is so structured as to help the dissemination of knowledge.

The company invests heavily in training of all kinds. The company’s credo states:

“It is the intent of Chaparral Steel to provide the broadest possible growth experience for every person employed by the Company. We believe that the company grows in excellence in direct proportion to the growth of its people”. (Dixon, 1994).

90 percent of the employees participate in some form of training. Employees learn on the job, through cross training, and classroom instruction. Frontline supervisors are given sabbatical leave to work on special projects, visit other steel plants, spend time with customers, enrol in academic studies, or examine new equipment, or programmes under consideration.

Employees monitor the development of relevant technical expertise across the world. They benchmark against best-in-class companies from steel, and other different industries. The company has developed an extensive network to gain access to new ideas quickly. It maintains long term relationship with suppliers. The company invests heavily in employee travel for benchmarking, and to investigate a new technology. People who collect the information are the same people who will use it.

The Company’s pay structure rewards performance and growth of individuals, and their Learning of greater skills.

Unlike other steel companies in U.S. Chaparral pays salaries, not hourly wages. There are no time clocks. All workers are paid like professionals in a laboratory. Workers interact with senior managers and
discuss ideas. All employees can make their views known to top management. In order to maintain such an interchange, the company has deliberately held its size to less than thousand employees. The organisation structure is flat with only two hierarchic levels between the bottom and the top.

The plant layout also facilitates the constant interaction among employees, and between employees and management in pursuit of excellence, and constant innovation.

Success of the Chaparral Steel can be attributed to the fact that it has put almost all characteristics of Learning Organization in practice. All the dimensions which are responsible for a company to be competitive and on the top in the market, are present in Chaparral steel.

“Johnsonville Foods

This company was started in 1945 as a sausage making family business in Johnsonville, a small town in Wisconsin. In 1968, the Company employed 12 persons. By 1980 its turnover was $15 million, and the number of employees was 200. In 1978, Ralph Stayer, the owner’s son, took over as CEO, and decided that the organisation needed to change. He found people uninterested in their performance, prone to errors, and lacking in responsibilities. He was also concerned about both regional and national competition and wondered about the company’s ability to survive any serious competitive challenge. He initiated a comprehensive programme of organisational transformation.

It was accomplished by recasting four fundamental and interrelated systems of the organisation:

Performance, information/feedback, reward and people.

Members in a typical work group carry out following tasks: (Peters 1993).
✓ Recruit, hire, evaluate and fire (if necessary) on their own,
✓ Regularly acquire new skills as they see fit, then train one another as necessary
✓ Formulate and then track and amend, their own budget
✓ Make capital investment proposals as needed (after doing the supporting analysis, making appropriate visits to equipment vendors etc.)
✓ Handle quality control, inspection, subsequent trouble shooting and problem solving
✓ Take on the task of constantly improving every process and product
✓ Develop quantitative standards for productivity and quality, and then monitor them
✓ Suggest and then develop photo types of possible new products, packaging etc.
✓ In routine work on terms fully integrated with counterparts from sales marketing, and product development
✓ Participate in “corporate-level” projects.

The transformation effort was successful. The Company’s revenue rose to $130 million in 1991. CEO, on success commented “Watching people grow is my number one joy”.

“Continuous Learning” and ‘life time Learning’ are a reality at Johnsonville. Workers are encouraged, with company financial support, to study anything which interests them irrespective of its being related to their job, or not. Even members are provided $100 every year on any development activity he chooses.

The activity may range from buying books to attending industry training. Each person can generate projects, Team members show
strong social disapproval towards anyone involved in the ‘personal growth’.

The architect of transformation, CEO says:

“It’s more difficult to work at Johnsonville than at any other place. It takes a different class of person, a person who really wants to excel, because nothing else is accepted. We’re here to give you an opportunity to achieve whatever it is you want to achieve in life. We’ll also help you figure out what that is. We’ll give you resources to do it. We’re also going to give you a little push in that direction. But if you don’t have a goal, if you don’t see yourself as improving, you are not going to make it here. It’s that simple because you are going to be letting down not only yourself, but all of your fellow workers. This is a way of life. You set the values that you cherish, that you will not deviate from. And then all of the other things, flow from that. If you are really going to change how you do things, you have to change everything”. (Quoted by Peters 1993).

“National Bicycle Industrial Company” (NIBC)

National Bicycle Industrial Company (NBIC) was Japan’s second largest manufacturer of bicycles in 1992, with sales revenue of about $210 million. The company pursues two modes of production — mass production and mass-customization — simultaneously.

NBIC, according to Kotha (1996) has created a system that focuses on knowledge creation and organisational Learning, through the interaction of both modes of production.
Knowledge Creation at NBIC

To promote knowledge creation, the company emphasizes the interaction between its two systems. Many of the process related skills required in complex manufacturing setting at the mass custom factory. They convert unique customer specifications into finished products in terms of their experience and expertise on the other hand in the mass production factory, the efficiency of operation is determined by the division of labour, specialization and high volume production.

NBIC rotates highly skilled workers between the two focussed factors so that they can train one-another.

A centralised group of product and process engineers at NBIC facilitates the sharing of information and knowledge between the two factories, and across different market segments.

Interaction between two, also led to the embedding of explicit knowledge into new process technologies, i.e. equipment and machineries.

The centralized organisational structure of product and process engineers at NBIC, also facilitates the company’s Learning from its customers and market segments.

NBIC is currently viewed as the leader and innovators in the Japanese bicycle industry. Its competitive edge is engendered and sustained by the firm’s knowledge creating capability. This capability roots on the following bases:

(i) Harnessing the worker’s knowledge as a source of value directly at the point of production.

(ii) Converting tacit knowledge into explicit and building and using both knowledge for both product and process innovations.
(iii) Opening up the boundaries that inhibit the flow of information between its two systems of production, and

(iv) Utilizing knowledge created by one part of the enterprise to trigger changes in the firm’s wider knowledge system.

**Rover Car Company**

Rover Company is the largest and most successful car manufacturer in Great Britain employing 34,000 people. It was producing over half a million vehicles a year in 1998 in 150 markets worldwide. The company was however, in great trouble in the late 1980. Its losses exceeded $100 million per year, quality performance was poor, industrial relations were tense, future prospects appeared black and employee morale was sinking.

Transition towards Becoming a Learning Organization.

The company’s turnaround was made possible by its successful transition towards becoming a Learning organisation. A new entity, Rover Learning Business (RLB) was created within the company. It was a signal to the employees that organisation wide Learning would become the base for Rover’s survival and revival. The thrust and the direction of RLB were specified along the following lines:

- To stimulate, encourage, and enable all employees to “climb the Learning ladder” for developing themselves, and enhancing their contribution to team objectives.
- To provide innovative tools, techniques, and materials to support employees’ Learning efforts towards achieving major business changes
- To lead and facilitate the design, development, sharing and deployment of best practices based upon internal and external bench marking.
- To support the business objectives of company’s dealers and suppliers with Learning support and collaboration to facilitate world class activities.

- To achieve “world’s best-in-class Learning company” status.

With the launch of RLB, the company began to change towards becoming an agile, fast Learning, dynamic, and 'success through people’ company.

The Company’s concept and vision of Learning Organization. as quoted by Marquardt (1996).

“A company in which Learning and working are synonymous, it is peopled by colleagues and companions rather than bosses, subordinates and workers, and both the inside and outside of the company are being continuously searched and examined for newness. A company that monitors and reflects upon the assumptions by which it operates. It is in touch with itself and its environment and thereby adapts and changes as a matter of course, rather than transmatically as in a crisis”

Mentoring of, sharing of experience by, and self-development programmes for employees were integrated together.

Rover’s board and top management demonstrated their commitment to Corporation wide Learning through a number of initiatives and measurers.

Rover’s Learning Process Model

The Company’s RLB unit has developed a Learning process model consisting of 13 key elements as follows:

1. **Business opportunity:** Learning activities and efforts should contribute directly to bottom line business performance.
2. **Champion:** A Rover board director will normally be a champion for a major strategic project.

3. **Key Players and Expert Group:** all individuals whose role are deemed to be crucial

4. **Developing Specification:**

5. **Design of change process and plan:**

6. **Preparing coaches and Learners:** They are to serve as change agent.

7. **Creating the Learning Material:** High quality, learning material like videos, audios, books, articles, write ups etc.

8. **Preparing Change/Learning Environment**

9. **Implementing Change:**

10. **Measurement.**

11. **Recording Experience:** Recorded in computer system.

12. **Developing Learning/change material.**

13. **New Best Practice:** Gained from new Learning experience are shared through the organisation.

**Sustaining Learning Organization culture:**

Company initiated a number of important measures for sustaining the creation of a Learning Organization culture.

The Company has grown and developed successfully as an emerging Learning Organization over the last few years. It continues a sustained search for more and better ways of excelling as a knowledge-based global enterprise.
Tata Steel

Tata Steel demonstrates long term commitment to evolving knowledge capabilities and social responsibilities (contributions to community learning and development).

Tata Steel is a rapidly growing, agile business and has received industry recognition for knowledge excellence.

For the past few years it has been an Asian ‘Most Admired Knowledge Enterprise” (MAKE) award first place in the following; Creating an enterprise knowledge-driven culture, creating an environment for collaborative knowledge sharing, and creating a Learning organisation on delivering value based on customer knowledge. In 2008, it was named as the overall MAKE Award winner.

It is also being selected as a best-practice partner in the American Productivity and Quality Centre (APQC) consortium benchmarking study on “Leveraging knowledge across the value chain”, and as a ‘best-practice partner in knowledge management.

Based in India and operating globally, Tata Group companies each operate in line with its traditional values of leadership with trust.

Two thirds of the equity of Tata sons, its promoter company, are held by philanthropic trusts, which have created national Learning, based institutions in science and technology, medical research, social studies and performing arts.

The knowledge Management programme at Tata Steel started quite small in 1999, primarily focused around office based personnel and supervisory staff, and success stories captured and shared. The knowledge programme included the people aspects of knowledge sharing and Learning, such as capturing experiences from both
successes and failures, and understanding the value in their tacit experiences.

Introduction of ‘Aspire Knowledge Manthan’ programme in 2004 and ‘Manthan Ab Shop Floor Se’ (MASS) (to promote horizontal deployment of available knowledge assets at the plant-floor operator level), Tata continued to spread the knowledge sharing and capability development throughout the entire organisation.

The organisational leadership was happy with the tangible and intangible benefits from the programme.

The listed benefits were:

- Huge scope for horizontal deployment of available knowledge within the company
- Some of the excellent ideas remain confined to their shell due to inadequate thrust on proper knowledge transfer, and
- Structured guidance for a desired goal and interaction with different departments and experts during the wave has helped a lot in changing the way MASS leaders think, and has actually turned them into a real ‘change agent’ at shop floor level.

As they realised that too much emphasis on captive and technological aspects was unproductive, they introduced multipronged strategy to balance the people, processes and technological aspects of the programme.

The three key strategic directions of Tata Steel’s programme have been:

1. **Codification** – the capture of tacit knowledge in explicit forms so it can be reused by others to create new tacit knowledge
2. **Personalisation** – transfer of tacit knowledge and experiences between people,
(3) **Knowledge diffusion** – the application of knowledge and intellectual assets in projects and improvement programmes (This also incorporates novel methods such as knowledge quizzes, facilitated knowledge debates and the MASS programme. ).

Active participation in these programmes has been a significant part of ‘Learning’ at Tata.

The exchange of knowledge between people at both fact to face and virtual events contributes to the development of individuals and groups. The holistic and informed approach to Learning is working well for Tata.

Tata made limited use of external consultants, because it believes its own people are in a better position to understand the culture and working of its business.

Tata entered its knowledge and Learning journey across the Tata group of companies, as a means to an end, in that it was striving to deliver supervisor performance.

It has taken the wealth of what it has learnt over the organisation’s history.

In 1990, Tata Steel was not ranked in the top 80 global steel makers. **Since the year 2000, it has been in the top five for performance and has been number one on several occasions. It is now acknowledged by many as the best and most efficient steel company in the world.**

Tata has a growing reputation for excellence in knowledge sharing, social responsibility and operating **as a true “Learning Organisation”**.
Motorola, Inc.

It was founded 60 years ago in Schaumburg, Illinois, U.S.

Motorola is an excellent example of a company that aggressively anticipates the future and positions itself accordingly.

It has successfully undergone a complete transformation from producing consumer products such as car radios & TVs, to being a world leader in high-technology industrial electronics, with annual sales of more than $10 billion.

Motorola continues to redefine itself. Its stated goal is to provide customers with “what they want, when they want it, with quality and best-in-cycle time.

As a part of helping its 1,00,000 employees upgrade their skills and learn new ways of working, the company spends more than $100 million a year on education and training.

Motorola, by growing smart managers, they are building a smart organisation.

The company's new model for senior executive's development is given below:

It involves solving real-life, critical problems benefit the company and teach its top executives how to learn on the job.

Director of the SEP, said her two pivotal points in the new programme were:

(1) Where as the old method of executive development produced incremental increase in Learning, the new model could produce quantum leaps, and
(2) The new model could be an advanced Learning lab where experimentation is valued and people learn from mistakes to get some quantum benefit from this model.

(c) Going into Eastern Europe: After the software team was off the ground, a second team formed, focussing on acceleration into new regions.

Meetings were arranged in new regions with appointed teams in that particular regions. Within 3 to 4 months they could dent into the market where consumers speak different language and have different systems.

(d) The sum of our parts is less than the whole: Different teams were visiting same places and were sharing the information, but it confused consumers. It was decided to share consumers and not the information which was considered appropriate approach by the director of SEP.

(a) Creating a New Paradigm:

In 1991, training programme went into the work place, one particular topic was selected and discussed in a yearly conference or symposium where world class expert would speak and raise the relevant issues for the group of senior executives. In such one of the conference ‘Leadership’ was discussed and successfully implemented among Senior Executives. The new Senior Executive Programme (SEP) helped them to manage change around.

(b) Real Problems, Real Solutions:

Top 15 executives were asked to identify the most critical issues Motorola faced. Two issues were chosen.

(i) To value and promote software initiatives and employees and
(ii) To accelerate Motorola’s entry into new markets, using Eastern Europe for the prototype.

Senior executives were asked to learn how to manage change, but from the programme it was desired from them to learn how to learn.

(e) Reflective Learning:

It was observed by many members that the same was tried earlier but didn’t work. Director observed that they were doing a lot of reflection on their processes, and ultimately suggested the need of a good facilitator who can lead them into that Learning process.

The other SEP included the following:

(f) No Team Training in Advance.

(g) How to tackle Non-participant on the team.

(h) Executive Education as a catalyst for Growth.

(i) Tips for Developing a Senior Executives Education Programme.

- The programmes are directly linked to critical business concerns.

- Those concerns are identified by the CEO and the policy committee, which creates ownership from the very top.

- Each senior executive programme (SEP) has a sponsor from the CEOs office.

- Programmes are given internal consultation, facilitation, and support.

(j) Not Just Another Task Force:

(k) Burning platforms – Trying to make major change in an organization means, its assurance to be on a burning platform.

(l) Measuring Success: The growth was observed at all levels, individual to organisational level.
Eastman Kodak Company

Eastman Kodak, has latched onto Learning as a navigating tool in this new era. The 110 year old company – for decades the uncontested leader in film – now faces tough competition on every side.

As stated by company executives, they are using intentional Learning to carry the company forward in a variety of ways. Their experience exemplifies how a large, dominant company moves from, self satisfaction to aggressively seeking self improvement.

With the entry of electronic cameras into the business, Kodak was compelled to decide, how to maintain and advance its core product – photographic film – yet not get left behind in digital technology.

Kodak’s executive stated: Through the early 1970s we were virtually uncontested. Then Fugi came at us in the early 80s. We have been doing a very good job of fighting Fuji off, but they haven’t let up on the accelerator pedal at all, and now we find companies like Sony and Cannon right around the corner."

Top management with the help of consultant proceeded as under:-

(a) Establishing a vision: Unless Kodak become the world leader in imaging – which is much broader than photography – we could be threatened with decline.

(b) Promoting Inventiveness: It is pointed that paradigm shifts are led by people who operate on the fringes.

(c) How to survive getting run over by a Japanese truck.

There is a small subset of companies that survive, and when one takes a look at that subset, there are some common characteristics. The ability to learn is clearly one:
(d) **Identifying the performance gap** Senior V.P. Kodak explained the Learning process at Kodak “The Learning process that we use is a very simple one. It is a gap analysis. Human nature is such, that if you find yourself behind that is very difficult to accept. If you can create a vision of gap, and well run organisation, you can create motivation.

(e) **When Company Isn’t Learning**: When one learns in the competitive world is whatever featured product he has, he has got to be able to produce that product at least as well as your competitors do or you are eventually going to die.

(f) **Keeping Everyone Informed**: With close to 40,000 people in his worldwide organisation, Senior Vice President said that he has had to find a way to consistently and coherently communicate the company’s expectation. Every quarter he holds interactive sessions with over 1000 senior staff members.

(g) **Extra ordinary work from Ordinary Managers**: Every company has the basic ingredients it needs to improve and become more of a Learning organisation. What’s often lacking, said Kodak CEO, is the motivation to change. Get fairly ordinary people and give them extraordinary motivation. One should end up selecting people who value Learning.

(h) **Tapping the world’s Learning Centres**: Organisations must stay abreast of worldwide Learning, not just what is happening in their own company. CEO said that it should be recognised that Learning occurs in lots of places, and one has to go where the Learning is.

(i) **Learning for the Future**: CEO emphasized the importance of intentional Learning. He said “You have got to go from your basic paradigm of Learning’s to a whole new paradigm of Learnings. That’s proved to be very challenging.

Case Study (Taken from the book The Learning Edge” (page 20)
Sevolift Eastern:

It is a Boston manufacturer of food handling equipment, which used. Learning to its advantage. Few years ago, walking through the factory was like negotiating a maze.

The production flow was choked by work-in-progress inventory that had been piled in discs to be picked up later. More importantly, the lead time from order to shipment date was often 8 weeks or longer, causing many customers to place their orders elsewhere.

Nath Srivastava, V.P. of manufacturing & engineering for Servolift dismantled the company’s functional based layout and reintegrated those functions into a group-technology, product based layout. That one change produced several advantages. It helped, reduce the product lead time and it made a dramatic improvement in quality. The brightly lit factory floor has an open feeling, workers communicate, and there is a sense of flow. Lead times are down to less than 2 weeks. Effective use of time has become a competitive advantage, a phenomena the Co. CEO credits to the Co’s new Learning agenda. “It was kind of unlearning” said Srivastava, who was the primary instigator of the charges. “The biggest Learning for them was unlearning what they had done for such a long time. When they saw the dramatic results, they became the preachers”.

Scotiabank

Scotiabank, an international full service financial institution with multiple business units, has established a federated training infrastructure. A shared service dept. has overall responsibility for global training, but individual training units have the freedom and authority to fashion programmes that best meet the needs of their business units to which they report.
The Scotiabank Learning technology is based on a single company-wide LMS (Learning Management System) and a supporting service staff.

The case study describes Scotiabank's approach and the way in which its federated training governance organization serves its needs.

In 1832, The Bank of Nova Scotia in Halifax opened for business with the goal of facilitating the trans-Atlantic trade among Great Britain, North America, and the West Indies. Today, Scotiabank is among Canada's largest full-service financial institutions, offering retail, commercial, corporate, and investment banking to customers worldwide and provides employment to approximately 48,000 people around the world.

Learning areas cover everything from the basics of face-to-face customer relations in a local retail bank branch to highly technical topics such as compliance with U.S. Sarbanes and other regulations.
Programmes in the Bank are individually evaluated to determine the measurement strategy.

Scotiabank struck a balance between Federated and Centralised structures. Using this model, each training group sets their own training priorities, which make them more accountable.

In Scotiabank the following essential Learnings from their experiences proved very useful learning

i. Ongoing Review

ii. Establishment of Standards.