



August 2008 Monthly Marketing Newsletter



Marketing Tip of the Month

Self-service Learning – Giving your learners the tools they need

Adapted from *"Informal Learning: Rediscovering the Natural Pathways That Inspire Innovation and Performance"* by Jay Cross (Available on Books24x7) and *"Learn More Now"* by Marcia Conner

Empowering the worker changes how we look at training and development. If you're going to be nimble, the six-month course development cycles of the past aren't going to be good enough—not that lengthy courses fit today's go-go business environment anyway. Take someone away from cell phone and e-mail cold turkey to attend a class is not a pretty picture! Pluck salespeople out of the field, no matter how green and in need of new skills they may be, and the sales vice president will say you're the reason she didn't make quota.

People who already know the lay of the land don't want a curriculum. That's someone else's opinion of what they need to know. It undoubtedly contains lots of things they either already know or have no interest in finding out. They prefer to cherry-pick what they need in the easiest way available to them.



According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 70% of learning experiences in the workplace are informal or accidental, not structured or sponsored by an employer or a school. This kind of learning is pervasive, continuous, and profoundly social. It happens wherever people do their work: on a shop floor, around a conference table, on site with customers, or in a laboratory.

Informal learning can support the day-in and day-out culture building and skills development needed in an economy fueled by distinctive information and sparkling innovations. What we learn informally can move ideas through the organization and help everyone in it create something new.

Despite such a noble responsibility, informal learning receives little attention. Perhaps that's because it appears to be the way it sounds: ad hoc, unplanned, and unmanageable. Although you cannot usually schedule informal learning, you can encourage it in the people around you. It might sound paradoxical, but you can create an organization-wide "discipline" of informal learning without destroying its spontaneity.

To elicit the potential of informal learning, find out what learning lurks on your walls and in your halls right now. In addition to helping people find innovative new ways of working, informal learning offers increased confidence and motivation, a feeling of security, personal growth, a sense of community, and rewarding relationships

Take a look at the attached documents to help get you started on ways to highlight and promote informal learning within your organization.

"You cannot mandate productivity; you must provide the tools to let people become their best."

STEVE JOBS

In January, Donald Clark, Nigel Paine, and Jay Cross led discussions on informal learning and web 2.0 at Learning Technologies 2008 in London. Check out a few snippets from this discussion on YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pi3r-GBD1tk&eurl=http://informl.com/>

Check out Jay's Informal Learning Blog - <http://informl.com/>

Article of Interest

Informal Learning: Overlooked or Overhyped?

By Andrew Paradise (July, 2008)

New research indicates that companies are recognizing formal pieces to the informal puzzle.

Informal learning represents a unique and somewhat mysterious method in workplace learning and performance. So how much informal learning is actually occurring in contemporary workplaces? Is it helping or hindering performance on the job? Do learners even realize the opportunity for gaining actionable information through casual interactions?

Organizations have begun to realize that the breadth of knowledge gained through informal channels is comparable to that gained through traditional formal methods. However, the specific steps needed to harness the vast potential of informal learning remains puzzling.

To better understand the effect of informal learning on organizational performance, the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) and the Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp) recently completed an exploratory study on the topic. The core was an online survey of 1,104 human resource and learning professionals, who completed the survey between March and April 2008.

To read the full article, [click here](#)

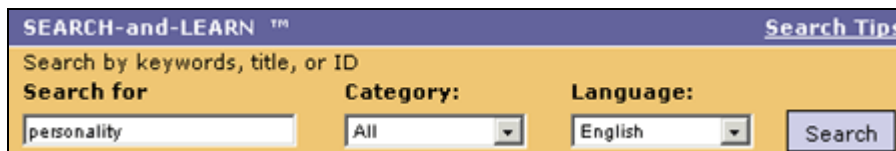
SkillPort - Tip of the Month

For those of you who have SkillPort.....

Highlighting the features of Search-and-Learn - Allow your users to cherry pick the assets they need!

Did you know that you do not have to take an entire course to get value from it? You are able to access the course to find the information you need to do your job, and then refer to the course at a later time for further information.

SkillSoft has made this easy through the SEARCH-and-LEARN feature within SkillPort which allows you to quickly find information on a specific subject or topic using keyword searches. You can search for all the different learning assets available on SkillPort, including courses, individual topics, simulations, books, SkillBriefs, and Job Aids.



1. In the SEARCH-and-LEARN panel, type a keyword or phrase in the Search for field.
2. Select a learning event category from the Category drop-down list. Alternatively, you can search all content categories.
3. If content in more than one language is available to you, choose a language from the Language drop-down list.
4. Click **Search**.
5. The search results appear below the SEARCH-and-LEARN panel. If you searched for all categories, the results will be grouped by category. The results will be ordered according to relevance, as indicated by a thermometer icon.

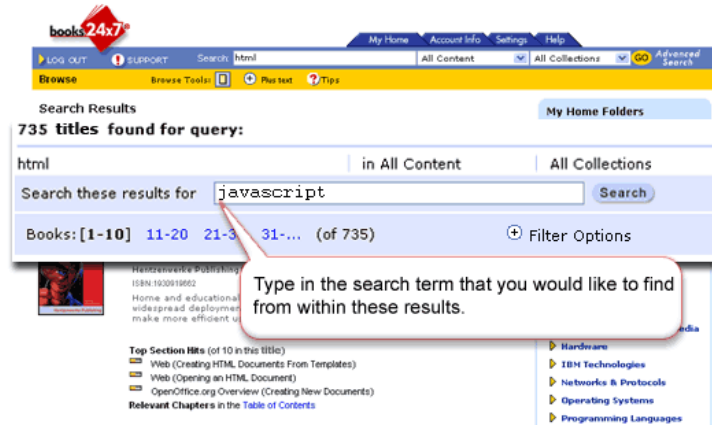
Books 24x7 - Tip of the Month

Highlighting the iterative search feature – Allow your users to find exactly what *they* need!

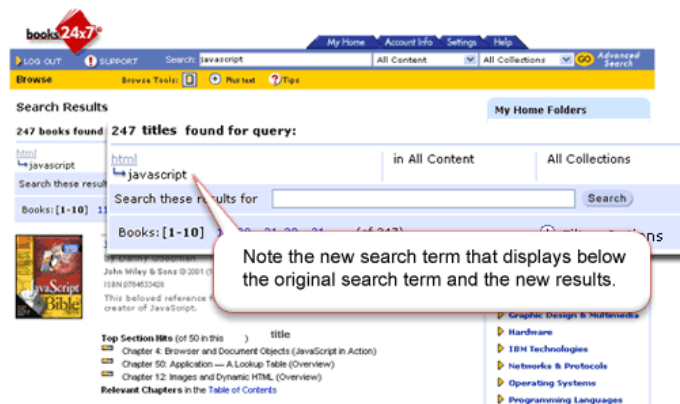
Iterative Search allows you to search within search results, highlighting this important part of the Books24x7® patented search service. As you search within search results, each of the keywords you use are listed as part of the search results. You can then go back to any of the previous results sets by clicking on that keyword.

The Iterative search feature allows you to search the search results for particular phrases and keywords to better pinpoint the desired results.

1. Conduct a search using either the search box found at the top of every page or by using Advanced Search.
2. On a search results page, see the "Search these results for" text box. Simply type in the phrase you would like to find from within your results and click "Search".



3. The second search result term displays indented under the first and the number of titles found decreases. To go back to a previous set of results click on the search term (note that you will lose subsequent search results in doing so.)



PLEASE NOTE: If your contract does not currently include Books 24x7 and would like to learn more about this product, please contact your Learning Consultant

SkillSoft Corporate Website – Events

Client Advisory Forum Event (CAFÉ)

The **CAFÉ (Client Advisory Forum Event)** is designed to be an open forum where clients have the opportunity to provide feedback on SkillSoft's product direction and development.

Date: September 8-10, 2008

Location:

Sandpearl Resort
500 Mandalay Avenue
Clearwater Beach, FL 33767
Phone: 727-441-2425



Contact your Regional Account Executive for additional information regarding this event.

Emerging Challenges in Learning: Providing the Business Value – Webinar

Today it isn't enough to just report on how many students completed a course. Senior management wants metrics linked to business objectives. Learning professionals need metrics that will help them quickly see trends and act on those trends for continuous improvement. This webinar will provide best practices for learning measurement, and real-world strategies for overcoming the most common challenges. Some of the key challenges discussed include:

- Measurement trends & challenges
- What CEO's want
- The link between learning and talent management
- Business result linkage
- "Scrap" learning
- Predictive and forecasted metrics
- Roughly reasonable vs. statistically precise
- Actionable metrics
- Key indicators for dashboards
- Measure, communicate & improve

Date: August 6th – 12:00 pm EDT

To register for this 1-hour webinar, [click here](#)

What's New on Client Community?

NEW - Learning & Development Survey – Your input is needed

Recent Aberdeen research pertaining to recruiting, onboarding, performance management, and succession planning, shows that "learning and development" is central to talent management success. This study will identify how learning is utilized to attract, retain and develop top talent, as well as highlight the business operational metrics that can be impacted directly via learning and development efforts.

We invite you to participate in this 15-minute online survey. Each respondent who answers the survey will receive a complimentary full copy of the report containing this study's results (a \$399 value) – the report will publish at the beginning of October.

To participate in the 10 min survey please visit <http://www.aberdeen.com/survey/ld08skl/>

NEW - Sample Marketing Pieces added to the "Initiative Marketing" area!

Back in February we announced that we had added 17 text based files designed to help you promote initiative based programs. In an effort to make your life a little easier, we have now added sample flyers to each of the 17 initiative based areas, pretty cool right?



To access both the text files and the new flyers go to Marketing Resources/Targeted Marketing/Initiative Marketing (http://community.skillssoft.com/marketing/targeted_marketing/initiative.asp) portion of Client Community.

NEW - Take a Moment to Learn Something - It's not just courseware!

Recently we added new marketing materials designed to help you spread the word about various learning assets available to your learners, it's not just courseware!

These new pieces include the following topics:

LMS Featured Marketing and SkillPort Featured Marketing:

- Highlighting Job Aids
- Highlighting SkillBriefs
- Highlighting Mentoring

For SkillPort ONLY:

- Highlighting Search-and-Learn
- Highlighting My Plan
- Highlighting My Favorites

To access this new material go to Marketing Resources/Targeted Marketing/Product Marketing/SkillPort (<http://community.skillssoft.com/Products/SkillPort.asp#MarketingResources>) portion of Client Community.

Please Note: Registration is required for the Client Community. Please register at <http://community.skillssoft.com>. If you have any questions, please contact your Learning Consultant.

