



COMPANIES AS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

By *Daniela Campos*

Talking about knowledge management necessarily involves talking about education. And here I am referring to both academic and corporate education, which have been adding up for some time to deal with the enormous challenge, which is having leaders and teams that are well prepared and constantly updated to respond to the demands of a business world in constant transformation.

It is interesting to see how the two institutions – academy and business – have advanced over time beyond their initial boundaries. “Schools” invested in technical training, created practical

laboratories, incorporated the internship experience as an educational act in the work environment, developed professional master's degrees. In the other direction, the companies implanted their academies, created corporative universities, made partnerships of certification of its collaborators with teaching entities. They may still come a long way, but we already have excellent practices to report.

I believe one hundred percent in companies as continuous learning environments. The McKinsey report Insights to guide organizations in 2021,

from January of this year, Companies as learning environments brought important advisors from organizational practice, with a focus on culture and change, which have become crucial priorities for organizations. A central challenge is to inspire individuals and, in this sense, creating knowledge management programs that incorporate faster and more customized digital learning methods appears as a strategic differentiator. Corporate universities had already proven their worth, but remote work shed even more light on them. In today's society, knowledge and

understanding are important criteria to organize relationships. The hierarchy guided by power wins secondary role, while the search for equity and representativeness assumes vital importance. However, in the pyramid of privileges, access to knowledge suffers the same unequal distribution by gender, race and income as so many other rights, and this seems to determine the place of each one in society from the very beginning. And if there is no equality of access at the starting point, there will be no equality to compete later, neither of rights nor of opportunities.

In this sense, professional education, in addition to the results it generates for the business, gains an ethical dimension, insofar as it democratizes access to knowledge and even contributes to the issue of representativeness within companies. Continuous learning environments are a potent tool to expand diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) and a strategic effort also to attract and retain talent. The same report reveals recent McKinsey research data, in which 39% of job seekers were more likely to turn down an opportunity if they perceived a lack of inclusion and were 47% more likely to stay with the organization if it was inclusive.

This data is already strong enough for development and diversity to enter the strategic agenda of companies in a combined way, but the fact is that there are many others. Agile models ask for a greater degree of adaptability. Companies accelerate their organizational redesign processes. Jobs become obsolete and many will go extinct with the digital transformation. At the other end, almost 100 million new jobs will emerge in five years, according to the World Economic Forum.

In this scenario, organizational development enters as a key factor to success to increase the adaptability of people and the business in the face of external conditions and once again

gains ethical contours, related to employability; transparency in communication and alignment of culture, values and purpose; emphasis on interpersonal relationships and collective processes; formation of change agents and innovation mindset and training of its employees. Concepts such as reskilling and upskilling gain weight in Industry 4.0, as the need to improve skills is a logical consequence of jobs that require further qualification or requalification. Just to remember, skill means ability. Upskilling would then be enhancing your current skills, further specialize in your field of expertise in order to increase the value of your delivery to yourself and the company. Reskilling, on the other hand, would be to requalify oneself for a new function,

that is, to learn new skills from the ones one already has to use them in different areas of the company or even in a completely new activity.

The manifesto launched in Davos, in 2020, on the universal purpose of companies in the fourth industrial revolution highlights: "The company must treat its people with dignity and respect, honor diversity and seek the continuous improvement of working conditions and well-being of employees. In a world of rapid changes, should encourage continued employability through continuous improvement and reskilling".

So mote it be!



ISADORA LEONIE

Daniela Campos is a publicist, specialized in Knowledge and People Management | LinkedIn: [in/dani-campos](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dani-campos)

