



Creating a Culture of Learning in 6 Steps

By Britt Andreatta, PhD

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What is a culture of learning?

Whether you know it or not, your organization has a learning culture. If you employ humans, learning happens in your workplace every day. We're biologically wired to learn. We can't stop ourselves.

Learning is necessary for survival. It's a natural instinct. We constantly absorb information, determine what's important, and decide how to act.

Learning experiences happen all around us. Are you directing them? Or are you allowing them to happen on their own?

This guide explores six steps you can use to successfully create a transformative culture of learning at your organization.

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What are people learning?

People learn about their positions, job skills, policies and procedures, and colleagues.

They also learn who has power and influence, whether leaders are trustworthy, if risk taking is rewarded, and if harassment is tolerated.

In other words, they learn about the real values of your organization, not just those posted on its website.



LEARNING HAPPENS EVERYDAY.

Are you **tending** it?

Are you **cultivating** it?

Are you **driving** it?

Transformative Learning

Transformative learning is the expansion of consciousness through the transformation of worldview and capacities of the self. It's an act of changing how we see and do things.

According to researchers, the three dimensions of transformative learning are:



Psychological

Change In Understanding

Knowledge, information, models, and theories shift the learner's understanding and provide the "why".



Behavioral

Change In Actions

The learner uses observation, application, and experimentation to do something differently.



Convictional

Revision of belief system

The learner permanently shifts a perspective or view, often through "Aha!" moment or insight.

Do you have a transformative learning culture that makes your organization more successful? Or do you have a neglected learning culture that breeds conformity and stagnation?

Organizations with neglected learning cultures experience high talent turnover, struggle to keep customers, and ultimately fall behind competitors. These organizations may be profitable in the short term, but they ultimately fail.

Organizations with a transformative culture of learning thrive. At these organizations, it's understood that learning is a natural process, that people yearn to grow. These organizations cultivate potential through learning opportunities and experiences.

POTENTIAL: THE CAPACITY TO BECOME OR DEVELOP INTO SOMETHING IN THE FUTURE. UNREALIZED ABILITY.

The role of learning is to maximize the potential of your organization by maximizing the potential of all the people in it.

The benefits of transformative learning

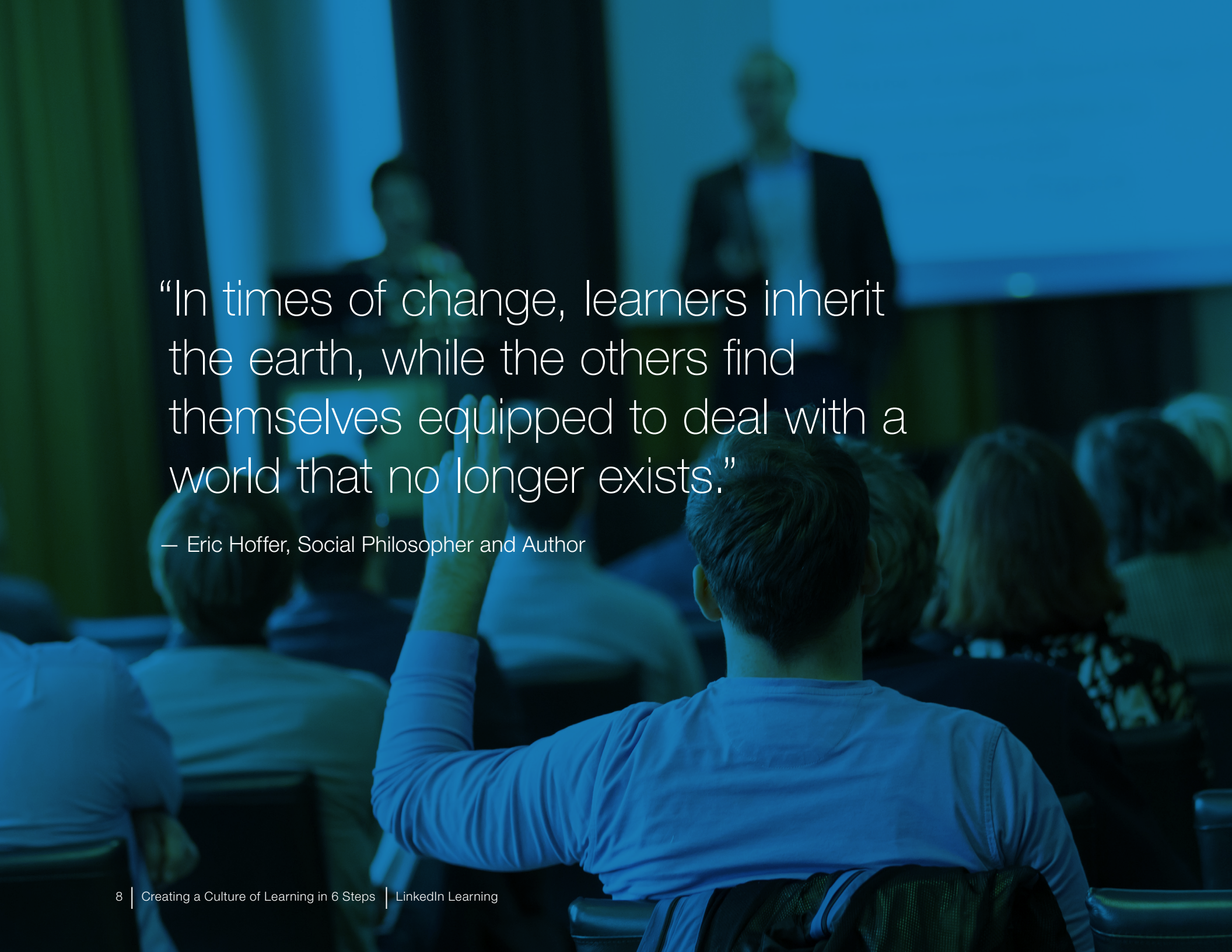
Creating a transformative culture of learning pays off. Consider how these benefits would affect your productivity and profit.

EMPLOYMENT ENGAGEMENT goes up, directly impacting productivity, staff retention, and customer satisfaction, according to studies by Gallup, BlessingWhite, Bersin, and McLean and Company.

A **“GROWTH MINDSET”** takes root yielding ever-higher levels of performance. Research by Dr. Carol Dweck shows that people with a growth mindset learn from mistakes and actively seek out new challenges.

ENHANCED CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION drives individual and team success. Dr. Brené Brown’s research on vulnerability and shame shows that risk-taking invites valuable lessons that come from failure.





“In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the others find themselves equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.”

— Eric Hoffer, Social Philosopher and Author

Benefits of transformative learning (continued)

EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION goes up. According to the book *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* by Dan Pink, studies show that humans are most motivated by autonomy, mastery, and meaningful purpose. Learning contributes to all three.

NEW TECHNOLOGY SKILLS are easier to obtain. People need frequent training on new and ever-changing devices, software applications, and social media tools. On-demand learning not only saves time and money but empowers learners to find their own answers.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT gains priority. “Human” skills like leadership, self control, empathy, communication, conflict resolution, and cultural competence are critical to the success of any organization. These skills can be learned and honed through learning experiences.





Honor the Ever-Present Nature of Learning



STEP 1

Honor the Ever-Present Nature of Learning

Don't treat learning as an event to be scheduled. It's an unbounded resource because it's in our very DNA to be lifelong learners. Cultivate potential to boost performance.

TIP: OFFER VIBRANT EVENTS FOR EVERY EMPLOYEE—ON DEMAND AND IN PERSON.



Value Learning as a Path to Mastery



STEP 2

Value Learning as a Path to Mastery

Make it safe to take risk—and to make mistakes. Celebrate “Aha!” moments as much as easy wins. Encourage risk taking and failure. Understand that the cost of not encouraging failure is a shortage of innovation.





Make Learning Easily Accessible



STEP 3

Make Learning Easily Accessible

Empower employees to find their own answers. Neuroscientists say that people retain this type of learning far longer than just being told what to do. On-demand instruction lets learners find their own answers right when they need them.





Use Blended Learning to Maximize Options



STEP 4

Use Blended Learning to Maximize Options

Consider every person and situation. In-person learning allows hands-on application and collaboration. On-demand learning offers flexibility and empowers people to learn at their own pace. Combine the two to effectively achieve your learning objectives.





Teach Managers How to Coach



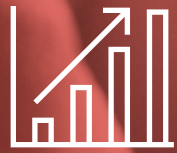
STEP 5

Teach Managers How to Coach

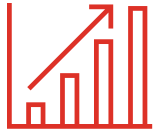
Build employee competence and confidence using appreciative inquiry, which is a method for learning from peak performances. Make sure managers know how to ask coaching questions that help employees cultivate their own wisdom and confidence.

TIP: USE THIS RESOURCE TO GET STARTED, YOUR GUIDE + WORKBOOK TO DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES INTO LEADERS.





Evaluate Performance Based on Learning

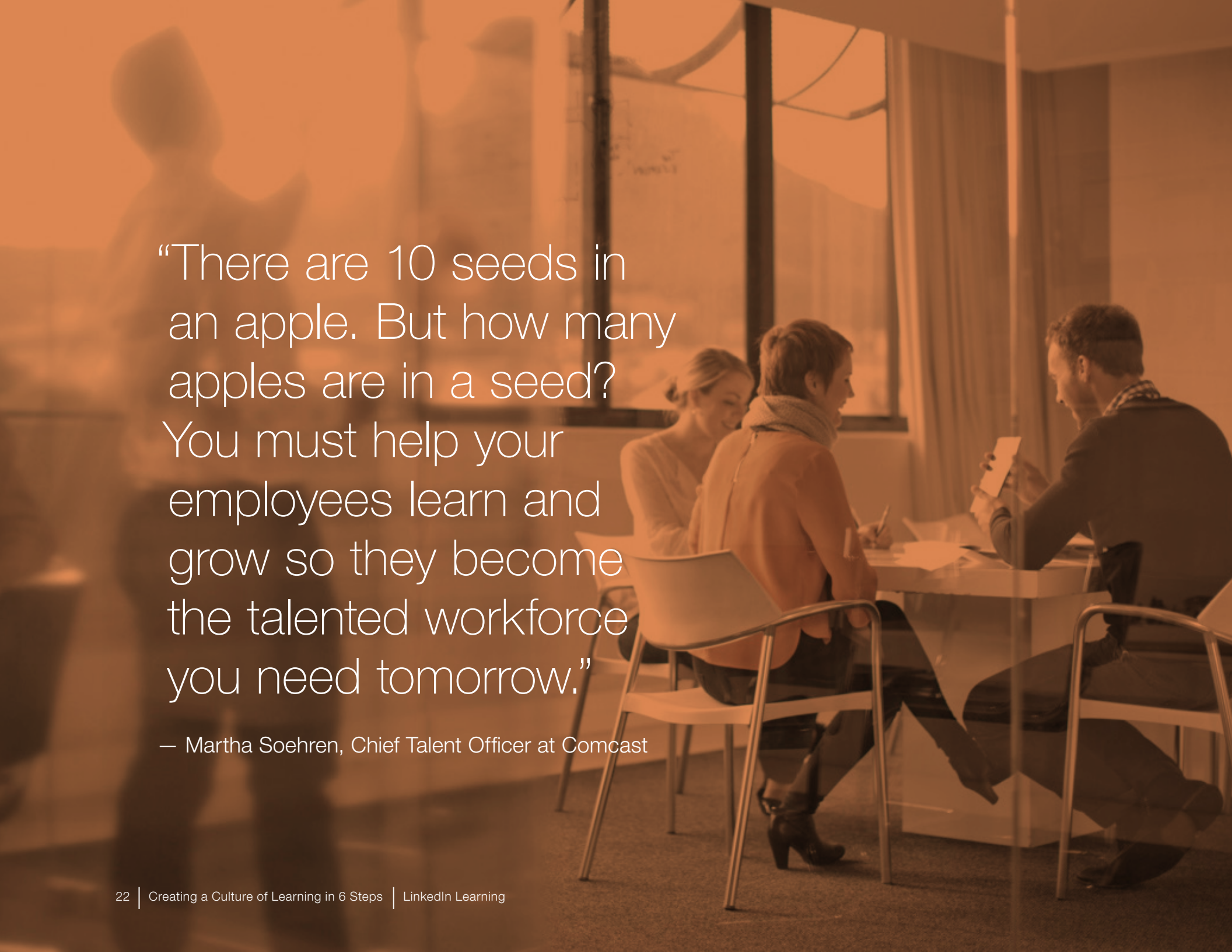


STEP 6

Evaluate Performance Based on Learning

Measure learning along with performance to boost both. Reward growth and improvement. Recognize learning hunger and commitment as a way to boost performance and productivity.





“There are 10 seeds in an apple. But how many apples are in a seed? You must help your employees learn and grow so they become the talented workforce you need tomorrow.”

— Martha Soehren, Chief Talent Officer at Comcast



Conclusion

Your organization as a whole, as well as every person in it, has unrealized ability. The most effective way to cultivate that potential is through building a transformative culture of learning. You can help your organization achieve new heights and develop employees who achieve great things.

Author



Britt Andreatta, PhD

Britt Andreatta is an accomplished author, senior consultant, and certified coach helping organizations rise to their potential. Drawing on her unique background in leadership, psychology, education, and the human sciences, Britt has a profound understanding of how humans are wired and how organizations can bring out the best in their people.

Britt is a seasoned professional with more than 25 years of experience consulting, coaching, and teaching. Using her research and expertise working with businesses, universities, and nonprofit organizations, she creates powerful solutions to today's most pressing workplace problems. She is the author of several titles on leadership and learning and her new book is titled *Wired to Grow: Harness the Power of Brain Science to Master Any Skill*. Learn more at www.BrittAndreatta.com.

Find out more

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