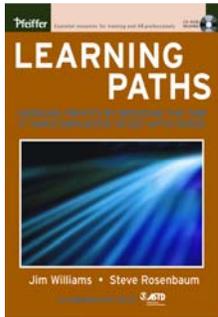


LEARNING PATHS: How to Speed “Time to Proficiency”

New Training Method Cuts Start-Up Time by 30%... in 30 Days



A Revolutionary Training Approach

That's the premise behind the accelerated learning method in the new Pfeiffer/Wiley book, co-published with ASTD: *LEARNING PATHS: Increase Profits by Reducing the Time It Takes Employees to Get Up-to-Speed*, by [Steve Rosenbaum and Jim Williams](#).

“This is the first real critical look at training that I have seen in 20 years,” said Allan H. Kennel, Senior Vice President of Human Resources, GE.

Learning Paths is a double-edged solution because it can be customized to any organization, no matter the type or size, and it guarantees *measurable bottom line results*. The authors, expert training consultants, have designed and developed creative training solutions for America's leading companies. Their approach promises to cut start-up time *by 30% in 30 days*.

How People Learn: It Takes Time to Reach Proficiency

The Learning Paths philosophy can be explained with the common example of learning to drive a car. Trainees can learn a lot in the classroom, but getting behind the wheel for the first time in traffic, is still a long way before you no longer have to think about every action as you drive. It takes several years of driving to become a good, safe driver.

Mapping Out a Learning Path

To identify learning gaps, you need to map out the Learning Path. There is one for every job or function. The goal is to get everyone on the *same* Learning Path so you can begin improving the path. In the process, you will capture what was learned by employees who excelled, versus those who struggled or needed a longer time to reach proficiency.

Learning Paths demonstrates how to define and measure “Time to Proficiency.” You need to know the *level of performance* required to do the job and *how long* it takes to get there. The first time you look at a Learning Path, the authors say it will be obvious what you have to do to make a 30% improvement. Some suggestions include:

“Graduation Day” is the day formal training ends. “Independence Day” is when employees reach proficiency. The goal is to *shorten* the estimated time-gap between them: When you can get employees up-to speed in far less time, productivity rises at far less expense.

The Strategic Benefit

Any change in direction has a corresponding effect on a Learning Path. With measurement, an organization can quickly determine the *shorter time* to proficiency and the *lower cost* of training the workforce, in terms of ROI.