

# 70:20:10 Guide

Providing Structure to the 70%



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Cindy Pascale, Vado, Inc. CEO



As a teenager, my first job was working at a Dairy Queen making ice cream cones, sundaes and shakes. On my first day, my manager showed me how to make the famous DQ swirl that sits on top of all DQ cones. First, he showed me how to make a cone identifying all the minor movements that

need to be made to create the perfect ice cream cone. Then he handed the controls to me. The first few were sloppy and lopsided. He told me to keep practicing and practicing until I got it. And I did. Within a short while, I was able to create the signature swirl.

Without giving it a name, my manager had me develop my skills to create the perfect DQ swirl by practicing and developing my skills on the job.

Call it developing on the job. Call it leveraging the natural way a person develops. Call it experience. Call it the 70% in the 70:20:10 model.

## 70:20:10

So, what is 70:20:10? Most L&D professionals will describe this model or framework as:



- **70% of Learning is Experiential Learning:** people learn and develop on the job through day to day tasks, challenges and practice

- **20% of Learning is Social Learning:** people learn and develop through coaching, mentoring and interaction with peers
- **10% of Learning is Formal Learning:** people learn and develop through structured events, which includes on-line courses and programs

This is a learning mix.

## Where the Majority of Learning Happens



In a recent Performance Support social networking chat session, Charles Jennings, generally considered one of the 70:20:10 thought leaders,

explains 70:20:10 is a framework. It *“forces us into a mindset of extending learning solutions beyond classes and courses and out into the workflow. It creates great opportunities to leverage work for learning and to bring learning closer to work. As the workflow is where the majority of learning happens, re-focusing there is not only a sensible approach, but it’s an effective one as well.”*

He goes on to explain:

*“Adults in work learn....*

- *Through the opportunity to practice (and then practice again...)*
- *Through establishing and exploiting networks and rich conversations*
- *Through regular reflective practice, alone or with others*

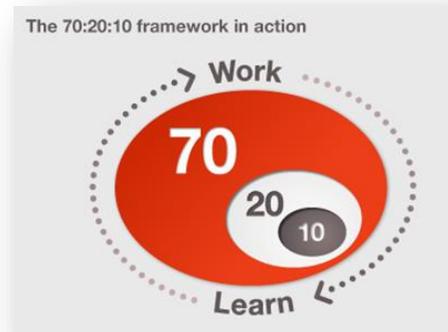
*The “70” links to experience and practice. The “2”0 links to networks and conversations.*

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*Reflection links across all activities, whether it's reflecting on the success or failure of a new challenge, reflecting on improvement following practice, reflection with other, with our boss, with our colleagues or our partners or reflection carried out in the bath or on the way home from work."*



## This is Intuitive

We grew up with parents, teachers, and coaches saying *"practice your spelling words"*, *"practice taking the shot"*, *"practice playing the piano"* and so on.

The same applies to work. When you think about your expertise and all the things you know how to do, did you learn them in a formal setting such as an instructor led workshop, or an online learning module? Most of us will answer *"not much"* or *"very little"* or even *"I did not receive any training, I had to learn everything on my own"*.

### Bottom Line...

formal training and development only plays a small part in the overall development of employees, with experience and on the job development providing the majority of development.

*"The 70:20:10 framework is fast becoming the preferred strategy to improve workplace performance. It is applicable across all sectors and organizations, regardless of size, because of its holistic and agile nature."*

**Charles Jennings, 70:20:10 Forum**

The research shows that by helping employees and leaders develop on the job we leverage the natural way people develop.

What are the benefits of doing this? According to the 70:20:10 Forum, *"Organizations have reported up to a 75% reduction in training spend through introduction of the 70:20:10 framework."*

Gary Wise, an expert in performance support, who recently wrote in a blog post titled *"Performance Support & The Art of War"* (January 2015), comments on the results organizations achieve when they move to performance support and helping employees at the point of need:

*"We cannot view workforce performance and sustainable business results as anything but the real brass ring....sustainable workforce capability....reducing time to competency or improving time to impact."*

Clearly, people develop on the job and organizations see significant results when they help them develop on the job.

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## Is 70:20:10 Happening?

So are companies moving to deliver development on the job? According to recent research published by Lumesse titled *Achieving the Right Learning Mix*, the answer is no.

In fact, their research shows that:

- 49:26:25 is the average learning mix that most L&D professionals think exists across the workforce they support.
- 39:24:37 is the amount of time they think their HR department spends supporting on the job, informal and formal learning initiatives.

From Lumesse's blog "*Swiftly Compare your Learning Mix with the Best in the Industry*" "*the audience tends to be silent when asked how they actually plan to realize the perfect balance between informal and formal learning.*"

All of which leads us to ask:

- **How can we influence the informal learning that is already taking place?**
- **How can we leverage and harness the obvious power of informal learning?**



Paul Mathews in a blog post titled "*So you think you know 70:20:10?*" offers the following thought provoking question:

- "*How can you generate experience for people more quickly than simply waiting for the universe to haphazardly provide the right situations that help them learn what they need to know? Start thinking about delivering experiences and delivering social interactions rather than just thinking about delivering content.*"

David V. Day goes on to say in his article "*The Difficulties of Learning From Experience and the Need for Deliberate Practice*" that a "*potential risk to relying on experience as a primary means of ...development is that any learning from experience in the context of ongoing work would likely be happenstance and ad hoc at best.*"

According to the Lumesse study, the respondents "*...would like guidance as they evolve and adapt their formal learning resources for the new "informal" ecosystem.*"

## The 70:20:10 Challenge

One of the biggest challenges of using the 70:20:10 framework is how to do it. According to Charles Jennings in a webinar titled "*70:20:10—An Approach to Extend Learning into the Workflow and Support High Performance*" there are two ways to start 70:20:10:

1. Add experiential learning to the structured event—reach out to include real life examples
2. Revolutionary way—restructure the way people develop

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## Adding 70:20:10 in Your Organization

Charles Jennings points out that there are two ways to start 70:20:10 and I would like to provide guidance as to how to add experiential learning to the structure event.



## Best Practices to Provide Structure to Achieve 70:20:10

Here is a list of the five best practices e-learning courseware design elements, that when used together, can help your learners make the transition from the formal e-learning space to application on the job—thus moving you closer to achieving 70:20:10 in your learning mix.



### Specific Instructions

Rather than rely on simulations or exercises in your courses or workshops, which is still part of the 10%, provide the learner with step by step instructions on how to apply the course on the job.

This will eliminate the issue that David V. Day mentioned in his article about “*happenstance and ad hoc at best.*” The structure and guidance on how to handle the situation is provided—nothing is left to chance. The learner will know exactly what to do.



### Keep Courses Short

Most e-learning courses tackle more than one topic. Here is an example, communication skills training. Communication skills training covers numerous topics ranging from listening skills to non-verbal communication skills to knowing your audience and so on.

Instead of one long *communication course*, an alternative training method would be to provide short courses also known as micro-learning, chunked learning, or bite sized learning.

They all mean the same thing: learning content that is broken down into small bite sized chunks or one single learning topic or learning objective per course.

This allows the learner to select the exact course to meet individual need at the time of need. When too many topics are addressed at the same time, the learner wastes time getting to the point in the course that applies to their particular need.

Employees and leaders have no patience for wading through information, thus wasting their time. This can lead to low e-learning course utilization.



### Job Aids

Provide the learner with job aids they can use on the job in conjunction with the step by step instructions.

Job Aids make it easy for the learner to complete the exercise. Removing barriers to completing the exercise will help your learners start and finish the on-the-job exercise.



### Mobile

To help your learner complete the instructions on the job, in an actual work situation, the learning content needs to be able to be accessed on a hand held device.

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Each step that the learner needs to go through to access the information acts as a barrier. Eliminate as many of them as possible.

*learners and the organizations they work for more productive and profitable.”*



## **Self Assessment**

Most e-learning courses end with a quiz that measures knowledge acquisition.

This is appropriate in formal training.

However, if you are designing courses that provide structure for the 70%, add an assessment that asks the learner to reflect on his/her experience and the skill building activities after the step by step instructions.

As Charles Jennings suggests, this is an important component to learning in the 70%.

## **Incorporate the Best Practices**

Combine these five design elements to create e-learning courseware that will help the learner apply on the job to....

- Leverage the natural way a person develops
- Provide structure to the 70%
- Lower your training and development costs
- Increase personal performance
- Increase organizational performance

**David Patterson, a director of Learning Light**, which owns the E-Learning Center and provides advice and help to organizations using e-learning and learning technologies to improve their business performance, explained:

*“It’s now well accepted—and research shows—that 70% of development happens on the job, 20% happens through coaching and mentoring, and the last 10% comes through formal learning, including e-learning and instructor-led workshops.”*

*“Vado’s courses are the only off-the-shelf courseware that helps learners to make the transition from the formal learning environment to applying that learning on the job.”*

*He continued, “Basically, Vado not only espouses the 70:20:10 model but its e-learning courses embody the model’s principles, using the 10% to deliver the 70% and thus, make the*



## **70:20:10 in Action**

To see an employee soft skill development or management development course created using the five design elements listed above, visit BL&C’s website to request a demonstration:



[www.talentdevelopment.kk-blc.com](http://www.talentdevelopment.kk-blc.com)