

Changing the game: 5 strategies for future-fit learning and development practices in SA organisations*

By [Melinde Coetzee](#), issued by [Juta and Company](#)

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Skills development is of crucial importance in SA, and its legislation stipulates that an employer must plan for organisational and individual learning and development as part of its human resource strategy. A learning and development (L&D) manager analyses the company's skills requirements, and plans, co-ordinates and reports on employee development. Future-fit L&D practices subscribe to five strategies that ensure continuous, optimal workforce development.



Melinde Coetzee

Strategy 1: Reshape skills development for Workplace 4.0

In uplifting the skills profile of your workforce, use new technologies to also improve business processes. Help workers become future-fit by developing digital skills and competencies that enhance their employability and keep the business sustainable and competitive.

Strategy 2: Harness the psychology of learning

Understand how and why adults learn and acquire skills, to more easily diagnose performance problems, assess L&D needs and identify person-fit development strategies. L&D interventions should make learning fun while optimising learning and performance. Learning approaches that emphasise an individualised and self-directed learning strategy, and use other group members as knowledge resources, are most likely to succeed.

Strategy 3: Establish a blueprint for L&D design, delivery, assessment and evaluation

L&D initiatives are expensive. Following a systematic approach in outcomes-based L&D design is therefore essential. We suggest five key stages:

- *Stage 1:* Assess the organisation's skills requirements and employees' L&D needs
- *Stage 2:* Design need-supportive, future-fit, competency-based L&D interventions

- *Stage 3:* Deliver quality-assured L&D interventions that add value to stakeholders
- *Stage 4:* Assess and moderate learners' achievement of competencies
- *Stage 5:* Quality-assure and evaluate whether the L&D intervention was effective in addressing stakeholder needs.

Strategy 4: Craft an L&D strategy that encourages organisational learning

L&D strategy should ensure a shared vision, embrace learning systems and knowledge management, guide active, innovative and creative learning, involve employees in change initiatives and provide the digital support to enhance competence.

Strategy 5: Adopt a culture of life-long learning for continuous innovation

The relentless speed of innovation constantly demands new skills and knowledge. Enable continued employee learning and performance improvement, and apply learning models that help employees become adaptive and build skills quickly and continuously, to keep pace.

Today, changing the game in business is about adopting future-fit, quality-assured practices that create adaptive learning cultures. Such organisations harness technological innovation to ensure strategies, practices and interventions that uplift South Africa's skills profile while remaining sustainable and globally competitive.

**These five strategies are expanded on in the book, Practising Learning and Development in South African Organisations, authored by Melinde Coetzee (Ed), Jo-Anne Botha, Jerome Kiley and Kiru Truman, experts on learning and development theory and practice.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melinde Coetzee (DLitt et Phil) is a Professor in the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology at Unisa, Pretoria, with extensive experience in psychological interventions pertaining to organisational development, human capacity and career development, and talent retention.

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