

Aligning the goals of departments

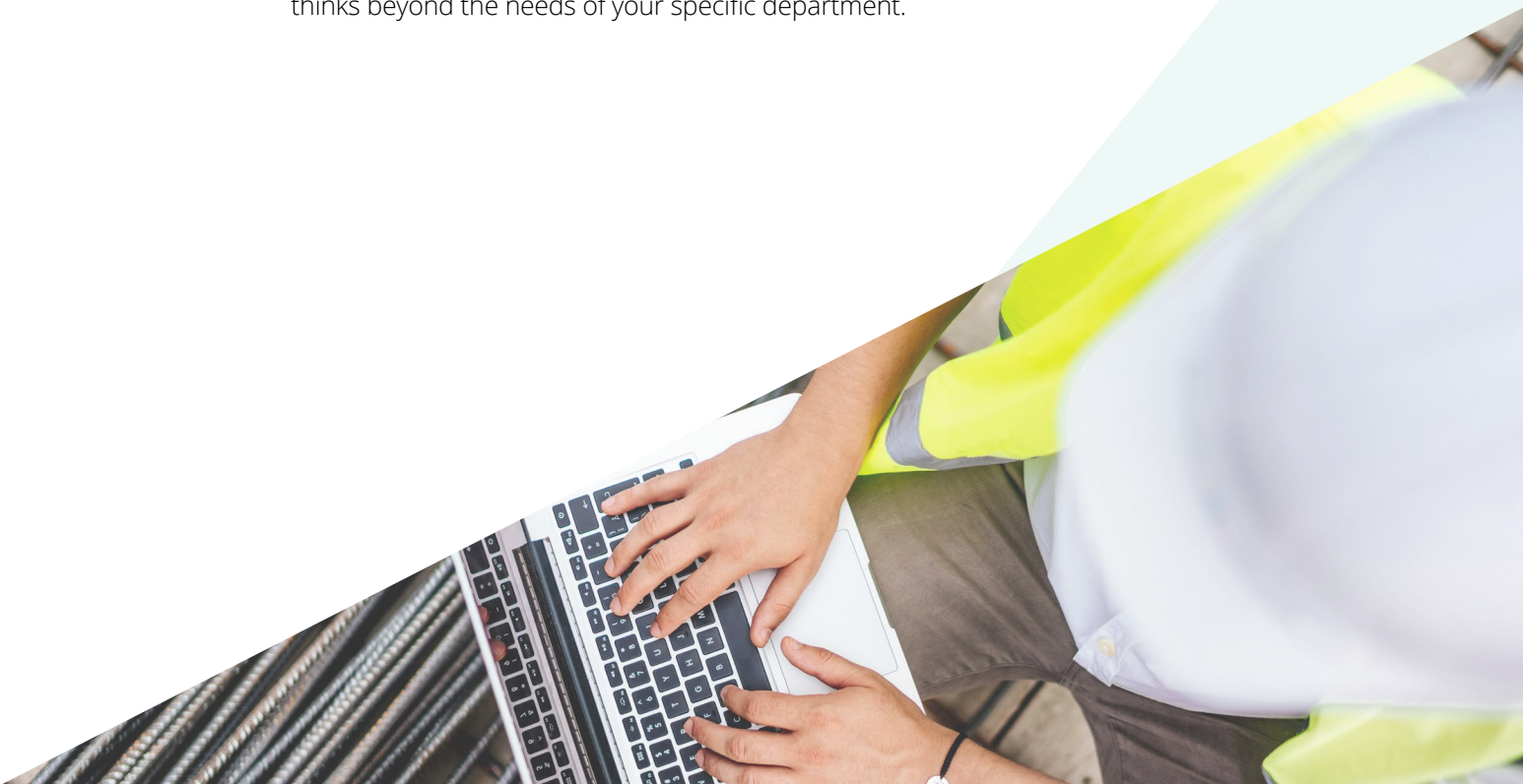


Foreword

When considering a new shiny piece of software or implementing big change in your organisation we are all guilty of wanting the spotlight to be on ourselves. You want to be the trailblazer, the one who changed the world, the one who protected your business and delighted your staff, the one who brought about this revolution. In order to protect your future glory you will shout as loud as you need to or speak as quietly as you have to so that you are not side-tracked or railroaded by another department taking charge...afterall this is your idea isn't it... Sounding familiar?

This need is understandable, who wants to share the glory of an amazing idea? End of year bonuses, promotions and accolades may be swayed by the success of these ideas. However, taking this approach may actually be harming your effectiveness and stopping you from standing out. This document is designed to offer some insight to enable you to hold onto the reins of a project and still involve a wider spectrum of audiences to make the most of your superb idea.

For the purposes of this document we will be assuming that you have found an incredible new software as a service provider that can cover a multitude of your needs...for the sake of argument let's just assume you were looking for some basic health and safety courses and you stumbled across Safety Media's Enterprise Portal. Now please allow me to walk you through what some of the different departments in your organisation may get out of the Enterprise system so that they can help you, not only get Board level buy in for your project, but also showcase yourself as a multi-team player who thinks beyond the needs of your specific department.



Health and safety training may be the responsibility of several different departments depending on the structure of your organisation. Therefore, we will take you through the potential needs and benefits for the four main ones that we see; Learning and Development, Health and Safety, IT and of course, HR before hitting the final hurdle of the directors for sign off.

Whichever department you are in (apologies if yours is not covered, feel free to get in touch with me and I will be happy to amend this document), it is my hope that by reading this document you will better be able to communicate with your peers in other departments and ensure they get the most out of the investment that you are making.

Claire Williams, Divisional Marketing Manager, The Access Group.



Learning and Development

A lot of training schemes naturally sit within learning and development teams, this is regardless of the type or method of training being delivered. If a company has both a Learning Management System and a Learning and Development team, then chances are the two will be linked and managed together.

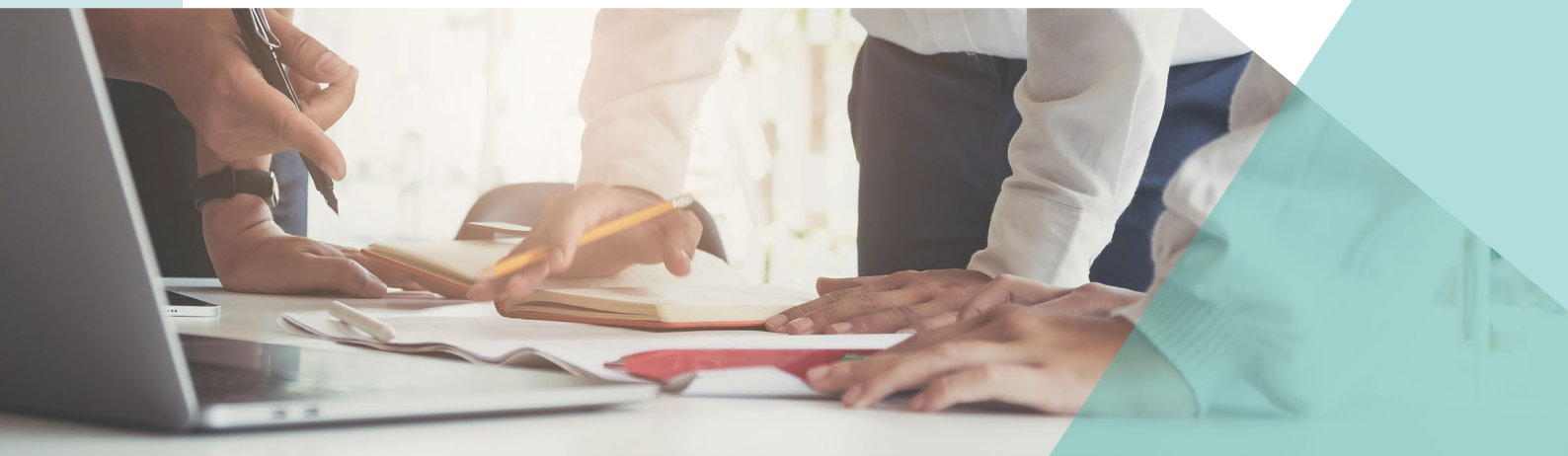
In most organisations, the objectives of a learning and development team will be likely to include:

- Align the training needs of the employees with the goals of the organisation
- Enable them to gain new knowledge and information that helps employees do a job well
- Facilitate the learning of physical skills quickly and efficiently (such as using machinery)
- Develop social skills such as leadership or teamwork abilities

The key aspects that the learning and development team will want to know about any learning system are naturally linked to these goals and drivers.

A lot of these considerations will be people focused and about the learners experience, alongside the implementation and administration of the system

- Training covered ✓
- Users happy ✓
- Board reporting ✓



Key Considerations

- 1 How good are the courses? What topics are covered? Is there a range to suit our needs?
- 2 How intuitive is the system for the end user?
- 3 Can I capture other types of training on the records, such as first aid courses?
- 4 Is there a way to automate the assigning of courses?
- 5 Will my learners engage and identify with the content?
- 6 Am I limited to the number of learners or courses to be assigned?
- 7 How can I report on number of courses completed, outstanding etc?
- 8 Are there additional training resources available?
- 9 How do we implement and access this system?
- 10 What ongoing support do we receive?



Health and Safety

The health and safety team are all about RISK. How to minimise risk, mitigate risk, manage risk, and ultimately, master risk. They will want to know about more than just the training capabilities of a system such as Enterprise, although this will of course be a major influencer as well.

The aims of the health and safety department in any organisation are to firstly keep the employees safe while they undertake their daily duties but also to safeguard the organisation against potential issues should an incident occur.

To put yourself in the seat of someone responsible for Health & Safety then consider this scenario:

If a fire rips through the building and destroys all paper records and injures a number of employees, how are you then going to prove as a business you have:

- Provided the injured parties with relevant information and training about fires, evacuation procedures, responsibilities etc
- Conducted relevant risk assessments to identify potential fire hazards and taken appropriate actions based on the findings accordingly
- Conducted regular site audits to ensure maintenance of equipment and facilities were up to scratch

If the answer to any of the above is "I don't know" then the health and safety team are at risk of ending up in court defending the company in potential HSE investigations and even civil suits for compensation.



Key Considerations

- 1 Is the training content an appropriate level & maintained / updated regularly to a suitable standard? Would updates incur additional costs?
- 2 Do the courses cover a suitable number of topics
- 3 Can I identify individual risk profiles?
- 4 Can I manage risk assessment and audits in the system?
- 5 Are users able to report incidents, especially from remote locations?
- 6 Does the platform allow me to easily generate reports to evidence compliance?
- 7 Is the platform flexible enough to mirror current company processes?
- 8 Are there adequate reporting and audit functions to keep me out of court?
- 9 Does the system help protect my business, are there examples of others in my sector using the system?
- 10 Are my records safe from fires, floods and other emergencies?



IT

The IT department are mentioned here as usually once they get wind of a new piece of software being considered they immediately see their own workloads increasing and they begin to ask questions about the requirements and potential impact on their infrastructure.

The IT team are likely to use a lot of terms and phrases that are only recognisable to other technologically savvy people. Therefore, it is worth getting any concerns they have in writing from them so the abbreviations don't get lost in translation and they can be passed directly onto to someone with the same level of technological understanding!

Some words and phrases they may throw at you include:

“interface” “operating system” “plug-ins”
“code-base” “content delivery” “SOAP”
“XML” “API” “Web-service” “SAML” “ADFS”
“Azure” “SSL Certificate” “Penetration testing”
“hosting” “cloud” “SCORM”

Is your head spinning yet?



Key Considerations

- 1 Where is the data held?
- 2 What system requirements do we need to meet?
- 3 What devices does the system run on?
- 4 Are there any security concerns?
- 5 How secure is the system?
- 6 What back up protocols are in place?
- 7 If there are connectors involved what input is required from us?
- 8 How long will it take before it is up and running?
- 9 Who is responsible for updates and how often do they occur, is there a cost involved?
- 10 Is there any technical support assistance?



Human Resources

The needs of the Human Resources department are a little different. They will largely be focused around compliance compliance compliance, with a little GDPR thrown in these days. This alongside many of the same concerns faced by the Learning and Development teams but with a large element of employee retention, attraction and engagement in mind.

The list of queries likely to be presented by HR will vary depending on the stage of the process that they become involved. It will also vary greatly depending on the structure of the organisation. For example, if you are part of a global organisation then questions regarding languages of content, navigation etc may be raised to ensure a fair learner experience throughout the organisation.

Don't forget you might also have an HRIS (Human Resources Information Systems) team dedicated to selecting HR related IT and data systems. Their queries are likely to combine those of the HR and IT as per this document and are definitely worth getting involved in the process.



Key Considerations

- 1 How secure is the personal data and how is it handled?
- 2 How is the training accessed by every different job function / department
- 3 What reports are we able to see?
- 4 Can data entry be automated or can it be linked to our HR Systems?
- 5 Do the users get any sort of recognition for passing the courses, eg CPD?
- 6 Can all of their training records be kept in one place?
- 7 What happens if our company restructures, can the system adjust?
- 8 How are new users added, managed and leavers removed?
- 9 Can I keep, manage and distribute documents securely in the system?
- 10 Can everyone else see what I see or can we set up specific permissions?



The final hurdle... Directors

Once you have answered all of the above questions for all of the above departments then you are ready to tackle your biggest hurdle...

The last stop in our journey around the organisation will be the board of directors. Once the board is on board with a project such as this then you know you are in a for a great annual review at the end of the year, but first they may need convincing...their questions will be likely to follow thus:

- ◆ How much is it?
- ◆ What contract length is it?
- ◆ How do we cancel it?
- ◆ Does this stand up in court?
- ◆ Am I comfortable going into an agreement with this organisation?
- ◆ What current systems does this replace / how does it improve our processes?
- ◆ Do I need to do anything other than sign the document?
- ◆ How do we know if this is worth the investment?
- ◆ Who else uses them that I've heard of?
- ◆ What do the other department heads think about this?

In conclusion, by understanding how the software that you are championing can impact all of these other departments you can potentially unite a number of departments, who would not normally work closely together. By simply taking the time to understand the needs of other departments and using that to help you build your case you will be demonstrating that this purchase decision has a wider business impact than simply servicing the needs of your own department.

If it is your idea to bring a solution of this size into your organisation then good on you, just be prepared to be patted on the back from a number of different directions when they realise how many problems this one solution can solve.



Editors Note

I sincerely hope that this information has been of use to you in your journey to successfully implementing your new health and safety training, recording and reporting system. For additional information about any of the Safety Media solutions please do not hesitate to contact us on (+44) 1745 535000 or visit the website www.safetymedia.co.uk.

If you have found this document useful, please don't hesitate to share it with your networks and any feedback should please be directed to c.williams@theaccessgroup.com

Thanks for reading!



About The Access Group:

The Access Group has been recognised in The Sunday Times Tech Track 100 in 2019 and is a leading provider of business software to mid-sized UK organisations. It helps more than 32,000 customers across commercial and not-for-profit sectors become more productive and efficient. Its innovative Access Workspace cloud platform transforms the way business software is used, giving every employee the freedom to do more.

Established in 1991, The Access Group, with an enterprise valuation of over £1billion, employs more than 2,300 staff.

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