70:20:10
Technology, Tools and Process: Is Your Organization Ready?
Abstract

Many organizations around the world are investing time and effort to redesign their learning and development strategy and practices using 70:20:10 principles. This paper, the second in a series of three focused on successful 70:20:10 implementation, discusses the challenges relating to technology, tools and processes to support 70:20:10 and provides guidance for addressing each of these. It also includes a technology, tools and processes readiness checklist to help you identify what you may need to support 70:20:10 and where potential obstacles may occur.

“If you look at the change today, the scale is enormous, it’s increasingly global, and it’s happening at what our ancestors would have regarded as an unbelievable speed. You’ve got to think about big things while you’re doing small things, so that all the small things go in the right direction.”

— Alvin Toffler, author of Future Shock

About the Author

Charles Jennings is a leading thinker and practitioner in learning, development and performance. Charles has consulted on, and led, learning and performance improvement projects for multinational corporations, government agencies, not-for-profits, and other organizations for more than 35 years.
Introduction

This paper is the second in a series of three explaining the requirements for successful adoption of the 70:20:10 model for learning, development, and high performance.

The first paper addressed the issue of organizational readiness. This paper looks at readiness in terms of technology, tools, and processes.

Organizations need to ensure that access to infrastructure and tools to support 70:20:10 is readily available if the framework is to be successfully implemented. This is not limited to the technical infrastructure and tools (although, of course, it’s essential to get those right) but also to the human infrastructure. This human infrastructure includes enabling the right people, resources, and processes to support the additional focus that 70:20:10 brings to learning in the workflow.

This paper addresses the following major considerations in preparing to implement the 70:20:10 framework:

• The technology required to support 70:20:10 learning
• The tools required to support 70:20:10 learning
• The processes required to support 70:20:10 learning

The paper also provides a practical checklist to use to help evaluate technology, tools, and process readiness.

Beyond the Training Mindset

The use of learning technologies exploded in the latter part of the 20th century.

Learning Management Systems (LMSs) and associated technologies and tools emerged from the need to manage the delivery and administration processes for large-scale training initiatives.

The dominant mindset behind the early LMS was one focused on automation of process and scalability. LMS technologies developed alongside the automation of other organizational tools and processes—such as financial management systems, HR management systems, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems.

The management modules of learning technologies such as PLATO (arguably the first LMS) were conceived as “computer-assisted instruction systems” to bring standardization and automation to teaching. The focus was primarily on the efficiency of delivery and the ability to scale rapidly across the organization.

There is no doubt that these systems and other learning technologies that are part of the LMS sphere of influence (for example: content development and storage tools) have, overall, contributed positively to improving teaching (and learning), both in academic institutions and in the business and work context for learning.

“The meta-analysis showed that computer-based instruction made small but significant contributions to the course achievement of college students and also produced positive, but again small, effects on the attitudes of students toward instruction and toward the subject matter they were studying.”

— Kulik, Kulik, and Cohen¹

However, the mindset behind the vast majority of the first generation of learning technologies was one of “teaching” rather than “learning.” They were designed to make teaching and course or curriculum design more effective and efficient. The primary objective was seldom increasing the flexibility or improving the learning experience for the individual learner or worker.

Learning content production systems have a similar pedigree. They emerged alongside the development of computer-based training (CBT) and web-based training (WBT), and the prime objective was to make the creation of learning content faster and simpler.

Although the 70:20:10 approach (particularly for the “10” part) requires the functionality contained in most LMSs—including the administration of classroom programs, workshops, and other structured learning events, as well as the delivery and tracking of e-learning modules—a 70:20:10 strategy also requires much more than this.

The 70:20:10 technology landscape is underpinned by a “pull” mindset based on the need for workers to access, use, and share their learning from within their daily workflow² rather than having content “pushed” at them.

This “pull” mindset needs to be supported by learning technologies that, as seamlessly as possible, enable social networking, sharing experiences, working with others, and accessing performance support resources in real time from within the workflow.
Beyond “Adding Learning to Work”
The 70:20:10 framework extends the focus on learning beyond
the classroom and other structured learning interventions (such
as e-learning modules) and out into the workflow.

However, it focuses on more than “adding learning to work.”

Adding Learning to Work
Although many organizations have already commenced
redirecting their focus away from training as an independent
process and toward linking structured learning to work, a
majority of the activity is still focused on what can be called
“adding learning to work.” This is where structured learning
is extended into the workplace to embed and enhance the
learning that takes place in the classroom, workshop or within
e-learning modules.

Examples of adding learning to work can be seen in most
management and leadership development programs.
Technology is used to capture feedback and specific activities
in the workplace that reinforce and support the learning
that has taken place in the formal learning program. The
technology may be as simple as a 360-degree online feedback
tool or more complex, such as an observational assessment
mobile app. Either way, the objective is to link back and
support the structured learning event (the “10”).

Although important, adding learning to work is only a part of the
evolution toward 70:20:10. Mature 70:20:10 environments also
support learning that is embedded in work. Technology offers
huge potential to support each of these types of learning beyond
the classroom. Many modern learning technologies are developing
to support this rich, learning-and-working environment.

However, there are still some significant gaps in the technology
solutions to support on-the-job learning (or on-the-job
training—“OJT”) that occurs outside of courses and classes.
This is where most of the “20” and “70” learning occurs.

Elliott Masie, the well-respected learning expert, makes the
case for the gaps in this provision well:³

“Do an Internet search for LMS, authoring
tools, leadership seminars or assessments and
you will see dozens of ads from vendors of
these products and services. Do a search for
OJT, and you will rarely see any ads and few
providers. Ask an instructional designer for his
or her models of developing OJT assets, and
you may see a blank stare.”

Although the situation is improving with more and more
technologies being brought to market each month, there
continues to be a limited number of robust technologies that
can effectively support learning beyond the classroom and as
part of the workflow.

Just as important is the need for organizations to have the
capability—the tools and processes—to embed learning into
the daily workflow and to extract and share learning from work.
To effectively implement a 70:20:10 strategy it is necessary
to support each of the component parts: structured learning,
social learning, and workplace or experiential learning. They
need to be supported with the right technologies and tools
and the right processes.

Each of the three core learning approaches in the 70:20:10
model—structured, social and experiential—can be enhanced
through technology in some ways. Invariably, there is a need
to support the gathering of near real-time flows of knowledge
sharing and expertise insights.

Technology and Tools to Support
Structured Learning (the “10”)
The learning technology landscape provides an overwhelming
array of technologies and tools to support structured learning.

Most major LMS providers offer robust systems that deal
with the administration of formal learning courses and
programs, and store, launch and track e-learning content.
Their technologies are continually developing with improved or
additional tools added in almost every upgrade. Most support
complex workflows and authorization processes, capture
detailed management information data, and offer some
analytics tools.

The technology and tools landscape for supporting the “10” is
mature and sophisticated.

Any organization preparing to exploit the 70:20:10 framework
needs to have a set of robust technologies in place that can
support structured learning and help improve the efficiency of
managing the “10.”
Technology and Tools to Support Social Learning (the “20”)

There are an increasing number of technologies available to support social training as well as the social learning and collaboration that make up the “20” part of the 70:20:10 mix.

Social Training and Social Learning

Jane Hart, founder of the Centre for Learning and Performance Technologies, makes a clear distinction between social training and social collaboration. Hart describes social training as “the use of social technologies in organized learning events (face-to-face and online) in learning communities.” She describes social collaboration as “the use of social technologies to support ongoing knowledge sharing and collaborative working in work and project teams, and in communities of practice.”

At a more fundamental level, social technologies for learning need to support what is called group cognition. Group cognition is the collaborative knowledge building that occurs when ideas develop through interactions between groups of people. It is the way in which the “20” in 70:20:10 can have some of its greatest impact.

Support for this type of social learning requires a new and more comprehensive suite of technologies than those used to support the “10,” and because in the main this technological landscape is still emerging, organizations are taking varied approaches to supporting the “20” with mixed results.

Consumer and Enterprise Social Technologies

Some of the consumer social technologies such as Twitter, Yammer and Socialcast have been incorporated into enterprise talent and learning suites, and some are embedded in corporate IT infrastructure, often as part of organization-wide communications systems.

A significant number of organizations, and groups within organizations, are also using public social platforms for private use. Many have private groups on LinkedIn and Twitter that are used for working and learning. Others have deployed in-house instances of similar social technologies. Others still have deployed the social tools within their learning suites.

Telus, the Canadian telecom company, has adopted a new approach for its 35,000 employees that is tied tightly to social and collaborative technology-supported learning. Telus is typical of many organizations around the world that are taking this approach.

“By focusing on the capabilities of our social tools, team members are in turn creating extensive learning materials that allow others to learn through their own experience and knowledge contributions. As a result, both adoption and the amount of social shared across the organization have increased significantly.”

— Dan Pontefract, Chief Envisioner, TELUS

The potential gains of using social technologies and supporting the “20” are huge. A McKinsey & Co. study suggested a potential unlocking of $900 billion–$1.3 trillion in value in four industry sectors alone through the use of social technologies. McKinsey reported, “Two-thirds of this value creation opportunity lies in improving communication and collaboration within and across enterprises.” It could be argued that the role of social technologies in improving learning and sharing make up a significant percentage of these potential gains.

Selecting the right social technology for your own organization will depend on a range of factors including your existing IT infrastructure and policies, your specific needs for collaborative team learning, your 70:20:10 strategy and the extent of your desire to focus primarily on social learning from the outset. Ideally for it to be most effective, the social technology should integrate with the LMS to provide a high level of coherence.

Learn more about how informal learning delivers significant benefits. Start small and build on success.
Technology and Tools to Support Experiential Learning (the “70”)

Performance support is a critical element of the “70” in the 70:20:10 approach. This has been one of the most under-exploited and under-valued elements of L&D’s toolset. Yet the evidence points to the fact that performance support just in advance of, or at the point of need, is one of the most impactful ways to enhance learning and improve performance.

Gloria Gery’s early exploration of the use of technology for electronic performance support demonstrated the potential of providing both technology-enabled learning and performance support in the workflow. This takes learning beyond adding learning to work and toward embedding learning in work—one of the key tenets of the 70:20:10 approach.

The goal of using technology-enabled performance support has been clear for many years and can be described as follows:

“To provide assistance in learning and in performing some set of tasks. Some authors go so far as defining the role of an EPSS as an “electronic infrastructure that captures, stores and distributes individual and corporate knowledge assets throughout an organization.”

However, performance support is an important aspect of the 70:20:10 approach that has remained in relative neglect, save for the use of small “micro-learning” pieces of content often delivered from an LMS or CMS.

Any organization preparing to exploit the 70:20:10 framework should investigate the technology options that provide performance support functionality, whether the technology is designed to deliver just-in-time content or “social performance support” in the form of expert locators, knowledge networks or professional community links.

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Learn how Express, a $2 billion clothing retailer, embraced 70:20:10 to engage and develop its workforce.
Process Readiness for 70:20:10
Without the right set of processes and the ability to execute those processes, even the best technology and tools are likely to fall short in an effective 70:20:10 implementation.

If nothing else, 70:20:10 is a change process. It provides a means to re-focus L&D's efforts beyond structured development—courses, programs, learning paths and structured e-learning modules—and to exploit the learning that happens in the workplace.

Traditional L&D skills and processes have developed to serve the “10.” If L&D is to serve the “20” and “70,” then learning managers and professionals need to develop new capabilities and processes to support learning and performance in the workplace.

Addressing performance problems
70:20:10 requires a new way to identify performance problems. For example, training needs analysis almost inevitably leads to a training solution—the “10.” Performance analysis, on the other hand—including elements such as business analysis, critical task analysis and performance analysis—is more appropriate for 70:20:10 solutions.

Developing 70:20:10 solutions
Instructional design is a core L&D skill that is required to develop effective structured learning. 70:20:10 requires “designing for the 100.” This means starting with “70” and “20” solutions and then with “10” solutions. New processes and capabilities are required in order to adopt this new approach.

Campaigns not courses
L&D can provide greater value in the 70:20:10 context if a new “campaign” perspective is adopted. Using this perspective, performance challenges are addressed as “campaigns” rather than as simply a series of learning interventions. This often involves coordination with internal marketing and corporate communications departments—work that is often new to L&D. Companies such as Citibank have had success in the implementation of 70:20:10 with their “campaign” approach.

Tracking performance
The 70:20:10 framework requires new processes for evaluating the value and impact of L&D—whether learning professionals are designing for the “10,” the “20,” or the “70.” In some cases the learning design will involve creating and structuring content, and in others it may involve establishing a social learning or performance support environment. Traditional learning metrics models are not likely to be useful for the latter activities. New stakeholder-driven measurement approaches are likely to be required.

Learn more about how Saba’s Learning@Work LMS supports the 70:20:10 model.

Summary
These three readiness elements—technology, tools and processes—are each critical for a successful migration to 70:20:10. Only by giving each careful consideration and selecting the most appropriate solutions for your own organization are you likely to achieve the best results.
## Technology, Tools and Processes Readiness Checklist

This checklist has been designed to be a reflective action tool. Use it to carry out a quick assessment of your organization's readiness for 70:20:10.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist Item</th>
<th>Level of Readiness</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Our organization’s learning technology infrastructure provides robust support for the “10”—scheduling and managing structured learning events.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Our organization’s learning technology infrastructure can support social and workplace learning associated with courses, e-learning modules and external sources.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Our organization’s technical infrastructure can also support social learning that is not linked to formal courses, e-learning and external sources.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Our IT policy supports the piloting and use of new learning technologies and tools. We have a clear understanding of IT requirements and regulations.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Our L&amp;D managers work closely with IT managers to ensure technologies required for our 70:20:10 strategy can be deployed and supported.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Our organization’s technical infrastructure can deliver point-of-need performance support and learning seamlessly.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>7. Our organization’s learning infrastructure can be accessed on mobile devices in the workplace and beyond.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>8. Our organization has a suite of tools to effectively develop, store and deliver content, including user-generated content.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Our L&amp;D team has the capability and experience to support “the 100”—structured, social and experiential learning.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Our L&amp;D team has experience working with senior stakeholders to define performance metrics and measures of success.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Our L&amp;D team works closely with our corporate communications and internal marketing colleagues to develop learning “campaigns.”</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Our L&amp;D team has an ongoing review process for new technologies, tools and processes that can support extending learning into the workflow.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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References


Saba delivers a cloud-based intelligent learning and talent management solution used by leading organizations worldwide to hire, develop, engage and inspire their people. Saba Cloud’s Learning@Work has been specifically designed to support and drive the processes used in deploying a 70:20:10 learning strategy. Including virtual classroom, assessment, social, collaborative, mobile and intelligent capabilities, Learning@Work supports formal, social and experiential learning to deliver more effective and engaging learning campaigns. Saba Cloud is built on a highly scalable platform that exceeds industry security and reliability standards. Saba has more than 31 million users and 2,200 customers across 195 countries and 37 languages. Learn more about intelligent talent management at www.saba.com.

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