



Delivering the spark: Inspiring learning **engages** deskless employees

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“You can’t start a fire without a spark.”

– Bruce Springsteen

As employers strive to engage deskless employees in retail, production, distribution and hospitality settings, the goal is to inspire them in ways that help them view the organization as a place where they can find meaningful, worthwhile employment. But “starting the fire”, although important, is not being delivered in ways that truly engages these important work groups.

new world new rules of engagement

For the last ten years, BI WORLDWIDE has been researching the factors that predict an engaging and inspiring workplace. We call this model the “New World, New Rules of Engagement”. Our research clearly shows that when employees feel like they are receiving the learning and development that is of value to them, they are more likely to report being engaged, committed and happy at work:

- Those who said they received learning or development opportunities to further their career are **two times more likely to be committed** to the organization and are **three times more likely to put in extra effort** at work.

Research from Axonify confirms this – **nearly 92% of employees suggest their engagement levels rise with access to well-planned employee training programs.**¹

If this is an important link to engagement, how are companies doing in delivering learning to their deskless employees?

In short, not great.

In our most recent New Rules study, we learned some sobering facts regarding deskless employees. In comparison to employees who worked in locations such as offices, **deskless employees were more likely to report lower scores** on the following survey items:

- I received learning or development opportunities to further my career.
- My job allows me to master skills that are important to me.
- My employer provides opportunities for me to develop my skills.

These important work groups are not feeling like they have access to learning that not only helps them in their current role but that will help them as they strive toward future career goals and opportunities.

As Mr. Springsteen sings, no spark means no fire.





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Here are a few comments from employees which are representative of the broader patterns we see in our research:

"I am disappointed I am not able to take advantage of some training because they are not available for someone in my role. I want to grow here, but they limit training to only what is necessary for my current job."

"I believe the lack of training is one of the biggest issues here. I have employees who would be more satisfied with their work, and likely willing to stay, if we offered more training."

"If you are not in the headquarters location you are not offered training."

What this tells us is we need to provide learning to these employees in ways that are easily available and consumable. The learning should also use the latest in gamification techniques to give learners confidence they are doing well and can feel a sense of progress. When employees have access to great learning experiences paired with meaningful and motivational rewards, they'll be more likely to report higher levels of engagement because they'll feel supported in the continued development of their skills.

Let's deliver that spark and, in doing so, create more engaging, productive, workplaces.

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¹ "How eLearning Benefits Employee Training and Development. <https://www.instancy.com/blog/how-elearning-benefits-employee-training-and-development/>