

Chapter 83

Moving from Corporate Training to Corporate Education: A Case Study in Accountancy from Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Corporate education is centred on introducing learning techniques to stimulate employees to think about what their organisation does, where it is heading, potential new opportunities for the organisation, and new and better ways of doing things. While the role of corporate training is to develop the operational competency of individuals, the purpose of corporate education is to promote the development of capability of both an individual and their organisation. Organizations operating in knowledge economies require a workforce that has knowledge about other business functions along with their specialized area. In the last decade corporate training turned into corporate education in Turkey. As an important business function, accounting is one of the most preferential training subject in Turkey. The purpose of the chapter is to identify differences between corporate education and corporate training. Additionally, the study explains growing importance of corporate education in accounting area for Turkish business life.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past several decades, a number of scholars and commentators have argued that the leading edge of the economy in developing countries has become driven by technologies based on knowledge and information production and dissemina-

tion. There is some consensus that a mismatch exists between certain workers' skills and the types of jobs that typify a knowledge economy. Technological change is often painted as one of the culprits for the growing wage inequality and increasing educational wage differentials in the U.S. labor market. Researchers generally agree that technological change has increased the demand

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for highly skilled labor relative to the demand for low-skilled labor (Powell & Kaisa, 2004).

Perceptions of the role of human interventions in economic transactions have changed. Appreciation of an individual's physical labour and ability to regulate and co-ordinate has given way to an emphasis on potential contribution to the production and application of knowledge. As knowledge will play a dominant role in organisations, not only at the top but at all levels, the day to day work environment should favour learning processes that support, it's can be described as the process of 'knowledge productivity' (Kessels, 2001).

The concept of management science is best understood within the framework of post-modern learning theories. The post-modern notion that all existence is interrelated can be applied to organizational learning by way of management science - purposing toward a new awareness. Peter Pawlowsky (2003) defines this organizational learning approach as the "transformation of informational and knowledge resources in integrated work systems." He adds that innovation, growth, and productivity gains do not result from separating tasks in the workflow of a knowledge-intensive operation but rather from integrating and combining knowledge in order to develop new ideas and jointly develop solutions through problem-solving processes (Dierkes et al., 2003). In the postmodern marketplace, there is no "best practice" to be followed, and new things need to be invented and discovered. That is why organizations need to become adaptive, to become "learning organizations" capable of getting information from the changing environment and to develop the most appropriate solutions to address new problems (Crocetti, 2002).

Knowledge has become a commodity as a consequence of industrialisation and society's entry into the post-modern age. The new knowledge economy in which it is the role of universities to train new knowledge workers to serve nation states in order to make them globally competitive (Thornton, 2001).

The education and skills of the workforce has become the key competitive weapon for the 21st century. Peter Drucker (1993) also stated that knowledge becomes the critical resource in wealth creation of society in this post-industrial era. The foundation of the post-industrial society is built on managing knowledge and continuous learning. The effectiveness and efficiency of the public service is an important element in this global competition (Malek Shah Bin Mohd).

Corporate leaders must keep in mind that the proper implementation of the learning organization will definitely bring tangible and measurable results. Several empirical studies on the practice and effectiveness of the learning have been done. The researchers found a positive correlation between the company's financial performance and the learning organization concept (Ermakov, 2010).

Industries undergoing technological change increase their demand for educated workers because education increases an individual's ability to learn new things and to adapt to environmental changes (Bartel, 1989). Learning organization concept requires key personnel (such as accounting, marketing or purchasing manager) to gain knowledge in all functions of business and perform continuous improvement in their tasks through analysing several functions of business. As one of the most important functions of a business, accounting provides information to help in making decisions about organisations by linking other information systems such as marketing, personnel, research and development, purchasing and production. In line with the learning organizations, accountants should expand their knowledge and expertise in other functions of business through training and education. To be successful an accountant must have organizational and business knowledge that helps accountants to understand work environment and economic forces that affect organizations. An accountant must also bring to the practice several general skills such as communication skills, intellectual skills, and interpersonal skills (American

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