

Learning & Development Policy



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Purpose

Learning and development is closely tied to the City of Kenora's Human Resources Management Strategy and Strategic Plan. This document is intended to outline a learning and development city-wide framework for employees at all job levels and divisions. To be successful at an individual, team or corporate level, employees need the right knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies that support the City's strategic priorities and goals. Training alone is not development, but rather one component of a complete development plan. This framework emphasizes that learning, development and knowledge sharing is a responsibility of all employees.

The City recognizes the benefits of investing in employee development in order to:

- Build a competent, diverse, and professional workforce;
- Increase employee engagement and job satisfaction;
- Maintain public confidence in the quality of the City's service delivery;
- Position the City as an attractive employer in the job market;
- Create a skilled and versatile workforce that can adapt to changing needs;
- Reduce risk and exposure to liability due to non-compliance of legislated training;
- Foster employee career growth, high performance, and innovation;
- Act as an important input to workforce planning including succession planning.

For details on what learning and development activities qualify for reimbursement, refer to the Tuition Fees Reimbursement and Professional Affiliation Fees Reimbursement policies.

Definitions

Learning & Development: happens everywhere and encompasses a wide range of activities designed to improve the capabilities of people. While the definitions of what encompasses learning and development vary from one expert to another, they share four dimensions key to building a learning organization: legislated, corporate, team, and individual. These include not only the technical skills and knowledge, but also an employee's attributes, attitudes and behaviours. Learning

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and development activities can be designed to deliver specific skills in a short period of time to meet an immediate need, or designed to achieve broader requirements over a longer period.

Learning and development includes on-the-job training such as manager coaching, special projects, acting transfers, mentoring, and job-shadowing. It also may include more formal learning opportunities such as conferences, e-learning, webinars, and formal classroom training.

There are four main categories of learning & development opportunities as follows:

- 1. Legislated:** refers to required legislated training for employees. Examples include health and safety, accessibility standards, legislated certifications and licenses, violence in the workplace, and emergency management.
- 2. Corporate:** refers to development activities linked to the corporate strategic plan and applicable to employees across the entire City. Examples include corporate new employee orientation, respectful workplace training, continuous improvement, and change management.
- 3. Team:** refers to development of team capabilities and competencies. Examples include team building, leadership development, knowledge sharing, management coaching, mentoring, job shadowing, trust building, and other team related competencies.
- 4. Individual:** refers to enhancing individual capabilities and competencies to improve on-the-job performance and for career development. Examples include lunch & learn sessions, acting transfers, e-learning, webinars, volunteering, job-specific training, taking on new responsibilities, conferences, workshops, special projects, on-boarding, and professional & technical training.
- 5. Learning & Development Plan:** is completed by an employee together with his or her Supervisor, during the *Performance Review and Development Form* and *Job Planning and Review* process. It outlines what competencies require improvement or further development, what action needs to be taken, and the target completion date. The Learning & Development Plan is prepared for those looking to develop for future roles aligned with career goals.

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Learning & Development: Key Principles

Principle One: Make Learning & Development a Strategic Priority for the City

The City is committed to provide learning and development opportunities to help employees work flexibly to meet the constant changes of day-to-day operations. In order to create a skilled, innovative, and respectful organization, it is critical that learning and development continue to be a strategic priority for the City. This means continuing to invest time and budget to support employee learning and development. Over time, the City will instill a learning culture where employees are motivated and rewarded for developing new skills and provided opportunities to do so. This involves providing development assignments horizontal and vertical loading to give employees a chance to develop and apply new competencies. A learning culture has been shown to be a critical part of developing a high performing workforce.

Principle Two: Align Learning with the Business Needs

Learning activities need to support the City of Kenora's strategic objectives. This can be done by creating a departmental organizational learning and development plan in alignment with the City of Kenora's Business Lines as found in the Strategic Plan. Adult learning theory and practice indicate that learning is most effective when the activity is directly related to needs and is immediately relevant. Timely access for immediate needs is critical for effective business outcomes as are longer-term development strategies.

Principle Three: Provide Appropriate Learning Options

There are a variety of learning options that may be considered as part of an employee's learning and development plan. On the job learning may include project based opportunities, acting transfers, lateral career moves, vertical or promotion career moves, taking on additional responsibilities; or more traditional training opportunities such as courses, certificates, webinars, conferences, degrees, seminars, and literature review.

An effective learning and development plan follows the **70/20/10 Learning Model**, according to Princeton University Learning Process. This is a business resource management model that creates innovation, by having its employees utilize their time as follows:

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- 70% of Learning Time Dedicated to Experience. This occurs from on-the-job learning, real-life experiences, tasks, and problem solving. The real learning from a skill occurs on the job when the skill or feedback is applied and transferred to a real situation.
- 20% of Learning Time Dedicated to Learning From Others. This refers to coaching and mentoring, observing and working with role models, and peer-based learning.
- 10% of Learning Time Dedicated to Individual Development. This refers to formal training courses, seminars, and conferences as well as other activities outlined under individual development. This often involves self-directed learning and development such as reading industry and association published journals and newsletters.

Principle Four: Provide Learning & Development Opportunities to All Employees

Employees at all job levels, job functions, and divisions need to have access to learning and development opportunities to develop in their existing role, and grow into their next position. While it is acknowledged that not all employees may have a desire to move into a Senior Leadership position or supervisor role, continuous learning and development is important to stay current with changing trends and technology in an employee's existing role. Learning and development opportunities need to be offered to all staff in a fair and equitable manner.

Principle Five: Share Knowledge With Other Staff

As part of instilling a learning and development culture, an organization needs to make knowledge sharing a common practice. This means that when an employee attends a seminar, training or conference they need to share the content with their peer group. For example, the employee may choose to provide copies of the course materials to others who did not attend; or during a team meeting the employee may present the key lessons learned. Knowledge sharing goes beyond that gained in a formal institutionalized program of study. An organization must also ensure that knowledge and experience is shared between staff on an ongoing basis through management making time for the mentoring and coaching of high potential staff. This is particularly important to successful succession planning to retain corporate knowledge and develop future leaders.

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Principle Six: Create Customized Employee Learning & Development Plans

Individual Learning & Development Plans need to be designed to reflect the employee's individual needs and the operational needs of the section. Learning and development plans need to be customized based on the attributes, career aspirations, and performance assessment of the individual employee. The plan needs to further develop the employee's strengths as well as improve upon their weaknesses. When an employee goes through the performance review process, a learning & development plan needs to be created as part of that process. The learning & development plan will serve as a roadmap for the employee and their Senior Leadership Member regarding what competencies the employee needs to focus on during the upcoming performance year; and how to move towards meeting the employee's individual career development goals.

Principle Seven: Evaluate Learning & Development

Evaluation of learning and development serves two important purposes. It indicates whether money has been spent wisely, and tracks organizational adoption of this framework. It is important that evaluation is programmed in from the start. Proper consideration should be given to what to evaluate, when and how. For example, health and safety training such as WHMIS training must be tracked to ensure compliance with this required training. When assessing training options, it is recommended that multiple training options be looked at and the return on investment be considered to ensure value for money spent. For certain types of training like soft skills training it may not be possible to calculate the ROI of training.

Learning & Development Key Success Metrics

It is important that the City evaluate its progress towards implementing this framework and building a learning & development culture. Below are learning & development success metrics that the City currently has access to for tracking its progress towards adopting this framework.

The success of rolling out learning and development is dependent on the adoption rate of performance management across the City.

In addition, the Conference Board of Canada training and development report will be used to benchmark the City's progress on implementing this framework.

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- **% of Employees With Learning & Development Plans:** indicates the percentage of employees who have created a learning and development plan = a/b
 - a = the number of employees who have created a learning and development plan
 - b = the total number of City permanent employees
- **Number of Departments with Learning & Development Plans:** this indicates the number of departments that create annual learning and development plans

Roles & Responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team

- Identify key learning priorities that will assist the organization in meeting its business objectives based on the existing City strategic plan;
- Identify which corporate training is mandatory and optional
- Identify and make budget and resources available to meet the learning and development needs of the workforce;
- Communicate the importance of key Corporate learning priorities each year such as leadership development training;
- Create targeted learning and development opportunities that are aligned with business needs to prepare employees for future roles and opportunities;
- Hold senior leadership members and supervisors accountable for creating quality learning and development plans with their employees as part of the performance management process.

Department Leadership Team

- Create a departmental learning and development plan each calendar year to align with corporate and development key learning priorities. This plan needs to outline legislated, corporate, team, and individual learning activities at a department level.
- Implement the departmental learning and development plan; and communicate to staff the importance of these activities and why.
- Perform maintenance of training materials developed as part of selected departmental training offered
- Provide information, instruction and training to protect the health and safety of departmental employees. The health & safety curriculum must be managed with input from Human Resources

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- Has the discretion whether to offer Departmental New Employee Orientation (NEO). The best practice is to offer this once per quarter.
- Include adequate learning and development activities in annual plans and budgets.

Division Leads

- Create a divisional learning and development plan each calendar year to align with Department Management Team's key learning priorities. This plan needs to outline legislated, corporate, team, and individual learning activities.
- Implement the divisional learning and development plan; and communicate to staff the importance of these activities and why.
- Support employees in obtaining training when assuming a new management or supervisory position. Some form of mentoring is also encouraged during the early months of an employee's new role as a supervisor or senior leadership member to provide support and ensure a successful transition.
- Identify team specific competencies and existing gaps in current staff skill-set based on compiled employee performance reviews. For jobs with the same competencies, these need to be included in a divisional learning and development plan.
- Include adequate learning and development activities in annual plans and budgets.

Direct Supervisor

- Provide day-to-day coaching and feedback to employees to help facilitate high on-the-job performance and to provide learning and development for direct reports.
- Initiate discussions with direct report employees to create and implement an employee level learning & development plans as part of performance management process (PMP)
- Partner with direct report employees to identify existing skills, knowledge gaps and strengths; and support the employee in finding the most cost effective way to close those gaps and maximize their strengths.
- Support direct report employees in his or her career development planning. This is intended to prepare the employee for more highly skilled positions, promotion opportunities, or lateral moves.

Employee

- Participate in a Learning & Development Plan discussion with manager or supervisor on an annual basis as part of the Performance Management Process. This is a two-way discussion of career interests, aspirations, and learning goals; and creating a learning & development plan. This plan needs to benefit both the employee and the department.

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- Gain agreement with supervisor and senior leadership member on their learning and development plan. It is important that the employee commit to the actions identified in the plan, and that the employee follow through to accomplish the objectives and actions outlined in the plan.
- Participate actively to maximize benefits of all learning opportunities and satisfactorily complete all requirements to successfully complete the learning event;
- Apply the new skills and knowledge gained to their day-to-day job responsibilities; and communicate to immediate manager or supervisor where further support is needed.
- Share the skills and abilities with others within the organization to enhance the performance of the organization as a whole.

Senior Leadership Member

- Responsible to ensure consistency of framework adopted across all Divisions;
- Approves tuition reimbursement and professional fees requests from employees in accordance with policies.

Human Resources

- Execute corporate objectives and provide career development guidance and leadership to all employees.
- Communicate to all staff a summary of the learning and development framework and the associated Tuition Reimbursement Policy and Professional Affiliation Fees Policy;
- Provide coaching to supervisors and employees on creating and implementing a learning and development plan; this includes providing learning pathways for various roles that are competency based.
- Provide coaching, as requested, on creating departmental and divisional learning and development plans;
- Evaluate the City's progress towards implementing this framework through the learning & development success metrics listed in this document;
- Review this framework on a regular basis, and recommend updates as required.

Compliance

Failure to comply with this Policy will result in the appropriate disciplinary measure as assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Related Documents

1. *Professional Affiliation Fees Reimbursement Policy*
2. *Tuition Fees Reimbursement Policy*
3. *Business Travel / Conference Attendance Policy*