

Stimulating work-related learning: very important!

In the face of societal challenges and changes in the labor market, lifelong development should be obvious for everyone. However, research by Maastricht University's Research Center for Education and the Labor Market (ROA) funded by the LLO-Katalysator shows that participation in work-related courses has been relatively stable since 2004, remaining at 53 percent.

“Whether or not to participate in such courses depends on both one's own learning attitude, and the learning climate in the organization,” says research leader Annemarie Künn. Workers who want to learn and believe they can do so are much more likely to take courses. We also see that employees in organizations that use development/HR tools, such as individual learning accounts and performance reviews, are much more likely to take courses.

Also, the extent to which a person learns by performing tasks at work - also known as informal learning - is primarily driven by a person's own learning attitudes and the learning climate in the organization. Important aspects of employers' learning climate for informal learning include the extent to which employees help each other learn, among other things, and give each other open and honest feedback. Coaching also contributes to higher levels of informal learning.

Informal learning remains a hugely important form of learning. As much as 92 percent of total work-related learning time relates to informal learning. Informal learning also appears to be very decisive for the knowledge development of workers.

In addition to participation in LLO activities, the learning climate in organizations also appears to be important for keeping up with technological developments, job satisfaction and perceived job loss opportunities. “These findings should encourage employers to invest in their organization's learning climate,” says Annemarie Künn. After all, fewer and fewer employees can keep up with technological innovations at work. By 2024, only two in three employed people could keep up with the technological developments they experience. Keeping employees happy, too, is very important in these times with unprecedented labor shortages.