

How authenticity improves employee learning

For upskilling employees, authentic learning experiences offer great value – and great results. An authentic learning experience is one where the learner practices a skill by doing real tasks in the real environment where the skill is needed.¹

1. Herrington et al., 2003; Jonassen, 1991

It's efficient



Classroom-based training	Authentic learning
Classroom Learn by studying concepts and rules	Workplace Learn by solving problems complete a task
Workplace Re-learn to transfer concepts and rules to work environment	skip straight to...

Use new skills to improve work

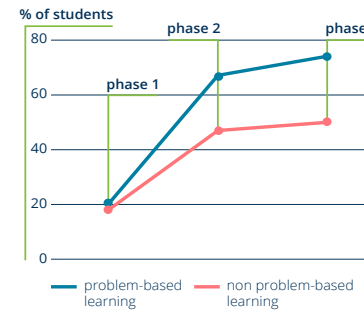
It's hard to transfer knowledge from a classroom environment to the real world.² Authentic learning addresses this transfer problem by closing the gap between the learning environment and the real one.

2. Gick et al., 1980; Nokes-Malach & Richey, 2015

After 7 months of authentic learning, a group of doctors-in-training was able to give more accurate explanations for medical problems than a group that received traditional instruction.⁶

6. Hmelo, 1998

Percentage of medics using science concepts in their explanations



It's value for money



Authentic learning means employees can be completing useful projects for the company at the same time as improving their skills. Most real-world workplace projects:

- are **complex**
- have **many possible solutions**
- require **working with others**

Studies have shown that learning by tackling problems with these same qualities improves knowledge transfer.³ This **problem-based learning** is an important element of authentic learning.

3. Hmelo-Silver, 1998; Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Lu, Bridges & Hmelo-Silver, 2014; Vernon & Blake, 1993; Walker & Leary, 2009

It produces highly skilled and engaged employees



With authentic learning, learners can easily tell how the knowledge they're learning is relevant to their real life. Studies show that when this is the case, learners:

- become **more engaged** and motivated to learn
- learn **more and better**⁴

4. Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020; Hulleman & Harackiewicz; Wigfield, Rosenzweig & Eccles, 2017