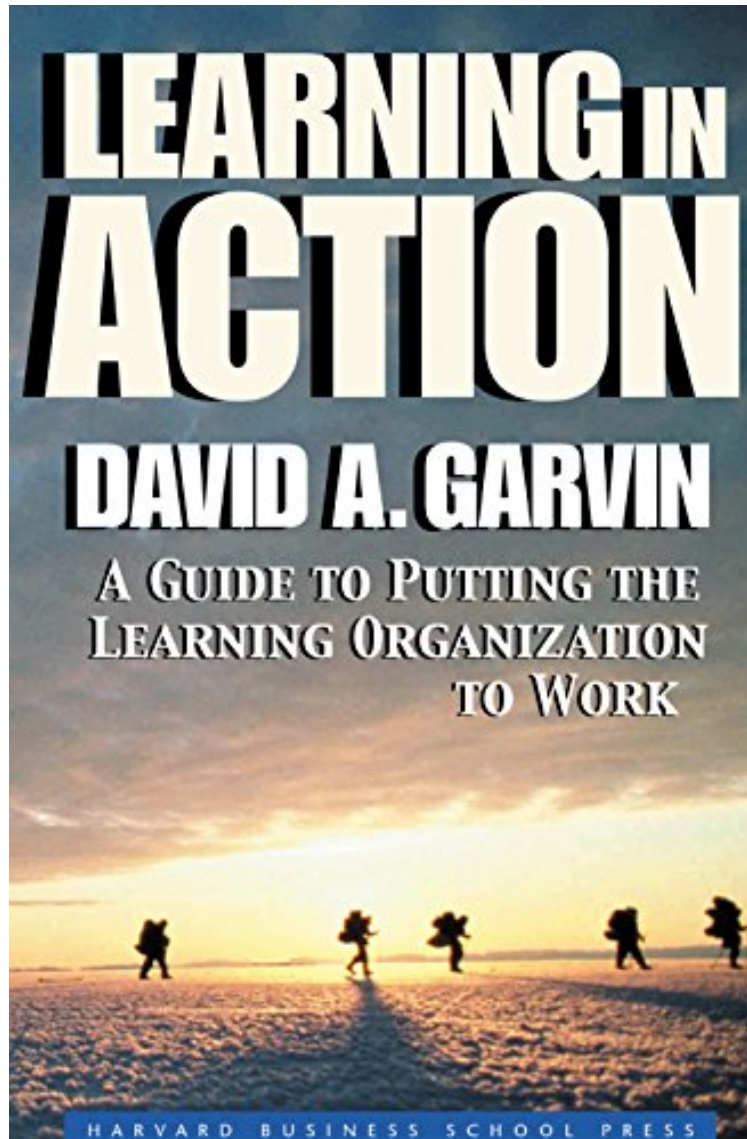


(Free pdf) Learning in Action: A Guide to Putting the Learning Organization to Work

# Learning in Action: A Guide to Putting the Learning Organization to Work

*David A. Garvin*

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**David A. Garvin : Learning in Action: A Guide to Putting the Learning Organization to Work** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Learning in Action: A Guide to Putting the Learning Organization to Work:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fails to live up to the promise  
By Gavin Cherrie  
Garvin starts by describing what he considers to be the process of learning which consists of "creating, acquiring, interpreting, transferring and retaining knowledge and purposefully modifying behaviour". Sadly this book only delivers on about

half of that list. The topics of "interpreting" and "modifying behaviour" are completely neglected. Information gathering and knowledge transfer get a lot more air time but even then there is not a lot of genuine insight. There are case studies but very little to guide the practicing manager. Over all it is a light and easy to read introduction to the topic, nothing more, nothing less. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you are Baking a Learning Organization, Garvin Will Give you the Right Ingredients. By Christian Finally a book written on learning organizations that moves BEYOND theory and academic jargon to concrete actions and examples. I've read and researched a lot and find Garvin's commitment to engineering a learning organization to be most helpful for practitioners. If you are in the CLO role or interested in what it LOOKS like to gain a competitive advantage by learning faster than your competition, this is a must read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Melody Bordeaux Class book.

Most managers today understand the value of building a learning organization. Their goal is to leverage knowledge and make it a key corporate asset, yet they remain uncertain about how best to get started. What they lack are guidelines and tools that transform abstract theory into hands-on implementation. For the first time in *Learning in Action*, David Garvin helps managers make the leap from theory to proven practice. Garvin argues that at the heart of organizational learning lies a set of processes that can be designed, deployed, and led. He starts by describing the basic steps in every learning process: acquiring, interpreting, and applying knowledge; then examines the critical challenges facing managers at each of these stages and the various ways the challenges can be met. Drawing on decades of scholarship and a wealth of examples from a wide range of fields, Garvin next introduces three modes of learning: intelligence gathering, experience, and experimentation; and shows how each mode is most effectively deployed. These approaches are brought to life in complete, richly detailed case studies of learning in action at organizations such as Xerox, L. L. Bean, the U. S. Army, and GE. The book concludes with a discussion of the leadership role that senior executives must play to make learning a day-to-day reality in their organizations.

.com Today's business leaders must always know what their stakeholders are thinking--be they customers, employees, constituents, or competitors--and act upon that information in a timely and appropriate manner. How companies collect, decipher, and utilize this knowledge, in fact, may be the real determinant of their long-term viability. Harvard Business School professor David A. Garvin's *Learning in Action* authoritatively dissects these activities as practiced by so-called learning organizations, then clearly outlines the steps necessary to build one of them. "Sweeping metaphors and grand themes are far less helpful than the knowledge of how individuals and organizations learn on a daily basis," Garvin writes. "The key to success is mastery of the details, coupled with a command of the levers that shape behavior." His book's core offers a practical examination of the three primary routes to corporate learning: collecting intelligence from outside sources (via interview and observation, for example); accumulating data through targeted actions (such as postproject reviews and special programs); and experimenting with alternative outcomes by manipulating variables (including prototype creation and exploratory design testing). Combining research from myriad fields, detailed studies of successful models such as Xerox and the U.S. Army, and snapshots of specific practices at additional firms such as Intel and Wal-Mart, he succeeds in providing "a broad, integrated view of the topic that is grounded in scholarship." --Howard Rothman From the Back Cover "Garvin gives managers a rich set of action-oriented tools and procedures. This is a very helpful guide for translating the learning organization into action." - Thomas Schmidheiny, Chairman and CEO, Holderbank Financiere Glaris, Ltd. "Garvin has crafted the book on learning how to learn. It's full of smart research insights and superb practical wisdom. The experimentation chapter alone is worth the price." - Kathleen M. Eisenhardt, Coauthor of *Competing on the Edge* and Professor of Strategy and Organization at Stanford University "Garvin has done managers and scholars a great service by drawing upon a wealth of perspectives on learning, placing them in a coherent framework, and bringing the framework to life through an array of engaging, practical examples. If you are interested in how organizations can improve in the knowledge game, you mustn't miss *Learning in Action*." - Donald Hambrick, Samuel Bronfman Professor of Democratic Business Enterprise, Columbia Business School "One of the characteristics of today's successful organization is its ability to improve performance by learning on a continuing basis. *Learning in Action* provides an in-depth discussion of not only the types of learning necessary for success, but also the techniques for leading this process. An excellent addition to the modern manager's library." - Doug Ford, Chief Executive, Refining and Marketing, BP Amoco PLC "Garvin's new book is a tremendous achievement. The wealth of examples on how organizations and individuals can learn more effectively is truly impressive. *Learning in Action* will be very useful for both managers and general readers." - Michael A. Cusumano, Sloan Management Distinguished Professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management and Coauthor of *Competing on Internet Time* and *Microsoft Secrets* "Garvin combines a comprehensive intellectual perspective with rich data to produce a compelling case for organizational learning. *Learning in Action*, generous in spirit and positive in outlook, is an exciting, action-oriented guide for leaders who take organizational learning seriously." - Robert A. Burgelman, Edmund W. Littlefield Professor of Management, Stanford Business School

"Learning in Action is an excellent resource. Garvin understands the real-world difficulties of leading complex organizations and translates learning theory and management theory into practical applications in a most effective and useful manner. Garvin's keen insight into how leaders can promote and sustain effective learning organizations makes this book a must-read." -Elaine Ullian, CEO, Boston Medical Center

About the Author  
David Garvin is the C. Roland Christensen Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School.