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Making the most of benefits for users

Weighing it all up – how performance support can work better

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Approximately 250 million workplaces across Europe use IT applications, whether at desks or on the move. However, little more than 10 million people benefit from a performance support solution in their day-to-day work and only a very small number of companies have been able to fully embrace performance support in a way that maximizes its advantages for both individual users and the organization as a whole.

Dr. Pascal Guderian and Katrin Kulowski from **tts** have analyzed how important learning is in the bigger picture, what prerequisites need to be met and how a holistic concept can be put into practice.

Performance support concepts based on educational theory are more effective

The purpose of learning in organizations is usually to make staff better at their jobs. Learning by doing, trial & error, asking colleagues because training has faded to a dim and distant memory – all these methods will gradually hone employees' skills, even if they do miss a great many opportunities to improve efficiency and compliance. Performance support can harness precisely that potential. **tts** has incorporated all the latest learning concepts into **tt performance suite**, such as less formal learning, context-based support at the workplace, situation-based learning that accounts for how individuals learn and many more

besides. People learn through experience, creating long-lasting neuronal connections in the brain that can't be broken. Consider the age-old example of riding a bicycle – you never forget how to do it. This fundamental principle – along with theoretical concepts such as relevance, the capacity to absorb knowledge, channels of perception and learning types – is largely what drives product development at **tts**. For instance, tactile learners will absorb information from swiping on their tablet, while visual learners prefer graphics and videos, and auditory learners like to hear their content – **tt performance suite** supports all three learning types. Actually doing things yourself and putting what you've learned straight into practice really consolidates your learning, which is why **tt performance suite** features simulations in addition to documentation and step-by-step lists. All the same, it's important to ensure learners aren't overwhelmed and overstretched with irrelevant information –

something that QuickAccess takes care of with its context-based provision of digital content.

Unfortunately, there is no single simple solution for ensuring complete competency in all of these circumstances. "**tt performance suite** users benefit directly from a combination of formal digital training shortly before the system goes live and longer-term supporting measures", explains the Product Manager, Dr. Guderian.

Rapid access to relevant know-how right at the workplace

QuickAccess from **tts** puts a whole range of these theoretical aspects into practice. Even ready-made or pre-defined content can thus be offered in the various moments of need in a format that is tailored specifically to the needs of the employee and situation at hand. By simply clicking the orange in their taskbar, users can access application-independent, context-sensitive and crystal-clear support in just seconds. Logically structured and filtered content cuts to the heart of what users really need, thus cutting out the frustration that comes with information overload. QuickAccess is also geared toward all the various types of learning, with users able to stipulate whether content is presented using visual, auditory or tactile techniques. While some prefer simulations, others



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opt for documentation and others still for step-by-step guidance. The end result is a form of self-determined support and independent learning at the workplace that is satisfying and makes perfect sense – for good.

Drilling down to the details – our tips for your concept

Even though a growing number of HR IT departments know about the potential of performance support systems and the benefits of personalized learning, only a fraction of them actually utilize these tools. Even just the organizational rollout seems difficult. All too often, it is “just” the moments of need that take center stage, with organizations pursuing rapid support in the working process and disregarding users’ desires to learn and experience more. “An effective approach that covers all bases starts much earlier on, with a sound concept that explicitly factors in specific user needs and is suited to these needs for the long term”, emphasizes Kulkowski, Knowledge Transfer Consultant at **tts**, adding: “It is by no means an impossible task, and we are happy to help.” She sets out three methods:

1. Using the “persona” method to categorize employees. A persona is a fictional person who is representative of a typical user in a particular target group. Personas are thus used to group together users based on certain characteristics. Relevant considerations include – what is the user’s specific situation? How does the user consume learning content? What content, functions and services does the user need? This method often removes any limitation to a particular software application. QuickAccess, for instance, supports all applications at the workplaces of our “personas”.
2. Using the question method – How? What? Why? – helps to show employees the areas where they need support and additional learning packages. What is changing for users and why do they need to expand their expertise?
3. Using the multimedia learning method encourages users to learn. Text and images need to be close together so staff can take in content at a glance – content that of course must be relevant to them and therefore well managed.

Summary: Well managed performance support delivers the biggest learning effects for employees in both the short and long term, with the end result being an all-round improvement in performance when it comes to efficiency, compliance and creativity. Simple step-by-step guides are only the start.

Checklist for your concept

- Which groups of employees are involved?
- Which content is relevant?
- Which learning channels are you using?
- Which types of learning are relevant to you?
- How are you designing the learning objects?
- How are the learning objects embedded in your working process?
- How can users find the learning objects?

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