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Have our learning institutions embraced the changes shaping how we learn today?

This week, I had an interesting conversation with a friend. She is a statistician by academic training but has since moved into operations and finance. She has had a dynamic career, and she always makes one critical point: as parents, we should be open to what our children want to learn, and our degrees do not define us.

Her perspective set the tone for my reflections this week. As we explored various issues, we identified a common challenge: managing learning across our respective spaces. She faces it in her workplace, and I encounter it in my consultancy work and in Rotary. One thing is clear: the way younger generations learn has evolved significantly.

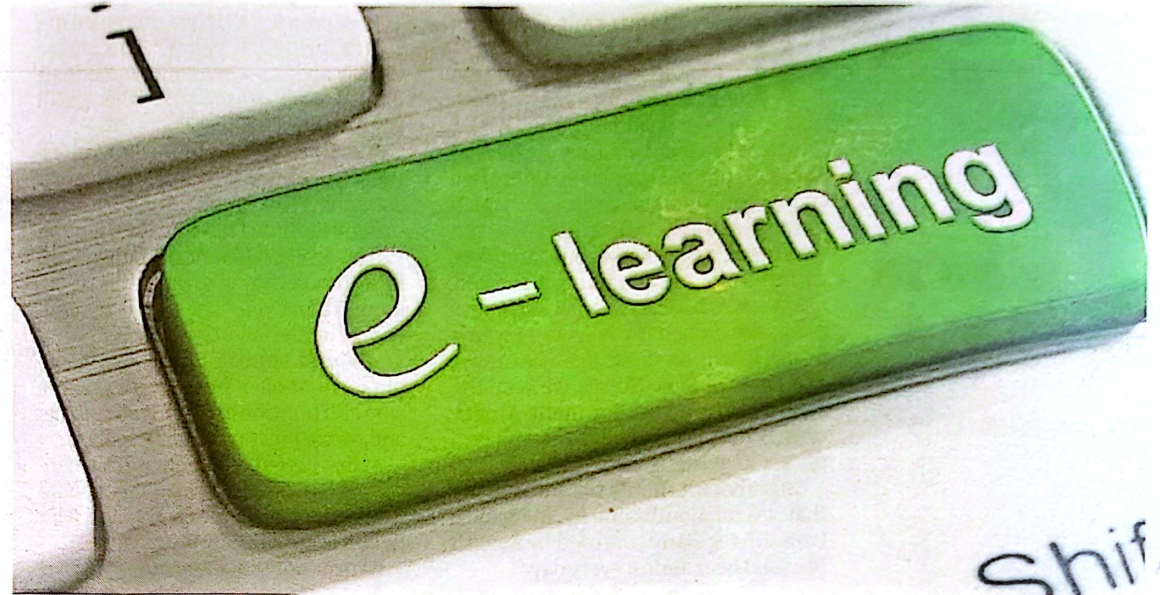
Gone are the days when sitting in a classroom was considered the only way to learn; that was always a narrow assumption. Today, learning is far more fluid, shaped by technology and shift-



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ing expectations. People learn in different ways, through short, focused content, practical experience, peer exchange, and digital platforms that enable them to learn at their own pace.

Technology is also changing how learning content is created and shared. It is now possible to take structured material and turn it into engaging learn-



ing experiences that combine visuals, voice, and interactive elements to hold attention and deepen understanding. However, this also brings responsibility. Content must still be carefully reviewed to ensure accuracy and relevance. At the same time, there is growing recognition that attention spans are shorter, so learning needs to be delivered in brief, focused segments, often five to seven minutes, which means content must be broken down into manageable pieces.

This approach marks a clear shift away from traditional classroom-based learning towards self-directed learn-

ing, in which ownership rests firmly with the learner. Naturally, this raises questions about certification. While learning methods may evolve, certification frameworks remain largely unchanged, with certification awarded upon completion of courses, assessments, or research.

The more pressing issue, however, is not certification but application. For HR professionals and workplace learning sponsors, the real challenge is ensuring that learning translates into performance. This is where performance management frameworks are critical. Learning must not end with acquisi-

tion; it must be demonstrated through tangible outputs in the workplace. Only then can we truly assess whether learning has been internalised and applied.

This conversation left me reflecting on a broader question: have learning institutions, trainers, and education providers re-examined how learners engage with knowledge? Technology has already reshaped how we work and continues to influence how we learn. As HR professionals, we must remain open to change and think more creatively about how we support those we lead and mentor on their learning journeys.