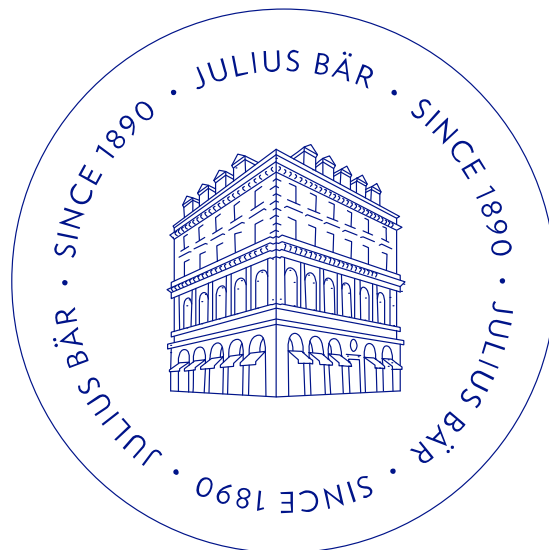


Julius Bär

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QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY
DAVID SCHLUMPF



Fascinated by the power of learning, Head Julius Baer Academy David Schlumpf elaborates on how he wants to instill an employee-centric learning culture throughout Julius Baer.

DAVID, WHY IS LEARNING IMPORTANT FOR AN ORGANISATION?

In an environment which is changing ever more rapidly, learnability – the ability to quickly absorb information and adapt to new situations – becomes even more important as information and knowledge are outdated at a much faster rate. Therefore, learning agility is crucial for the success of a company, and that's where I would like to tie in and make a difference for Julius Baer.

'LEARNING' IS A BROAD TERM. CAN YOU PLEASE ELABORATE?

We need to understand that work is learning and learning is work: we are talking about two sides of the same coin. Around the turn of the last century, organisations started to prioritise efficiency. As a side effect, learning was banned into the classroom. This led to a separation of learning and work. However, reality shows that we are learning a lot more about our work on the job, for example by networking or through communities (informally), than in a classic classroom setting (formally) – I'm sure you've already learned something today by googling or discussing a topic with a colleague. Learning is thus both an organised and self-organised activity, and that's why our definition of learning ultimately has to consider the whole spectrum of an individual's learning and development activities.

WHAT DOES THIS IMPLY FOR US AS AN ORGANISATION?

Learning should not be seen as a series of one-off trainings but rather as a continuous experience with different formal and informal touch points. It is an organisational function, present in every role, process and action. This also implies that the responsibility for learning and development will be with the employee – empowered by the organisation and promoted by the corporate learning and development function, namely JB Academy.

IN SHORT, YOU SEE JULIUS BAER AS A 'LEARNING ORGANISATION' – WHAT DOES THIS VISION ENTAIL?

Considering myself a lifelong learner and believing in the power of learning, our vision is to establish an employee-centric corporate learning and development environment which will facilitate the ability to continuously learn and innovate – and ultimately impact our organisational performance on a high level. Reaching the state of a learning organisation, however, implies in itself a longer journey of transformation, driven by leadership on all levels and a true learning culture.

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HOW DO YOU PLAN TO FOSTER DIGITAL LEARNING?

The goal is to instil a flexible, employee-centric learning model – enabling learning around the clock via a wide range of platforms. On a similar note, we have entered into collaboration with a provider of massive open online courses from over 150 universities and organisations around the world. With this offer, you decide when and where to learn in small video sequences followed by questions and community interactions. It is fun, high-impact continuous learning.

ON A CLOSING NOTE, HOW CAN I AS AN EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING THE 'LEARNING ORGANISATION' A REALITY?

Stay curious and make it your ambition to become a lifelong learner – not just for the benefit of the Bank, but also for yourself. Learning begins with you, continues in a learning community, and succeeds as a learning organisation.

David Schlumpf

