

New AR toys announced by Playshifu at CES

FE BUREAU

PLAYSHIFU, THE augmented reality (AR) educational toy company that teaches foundational STEAM skills through physical and digital play, launched its newest products ahead of CES 2020 in Las Vegas. These include Shifu Tacto, three new gaming kits for Shifu Plugo, and a new experience of its popular AR globe, Shifu Orboot, with two new planets to explore.

While the Tacto turns any tablet into an interactive board game, the Plugo is an AR gaming system that helps build STEAM skills through story-based challenges. With the Orboot, parents and teachers can teach children about planets through interactive experiences.

"As we enter a new decade, our latest toys will continue to positively integrate physical and digital play to develop foundational learning skills," said Vivek Goyal, CEO of PlayShifu. "Whether your child is discovering new cultures around the world or learning physics using a catapult, our toys use the benefits of modern technology combined with tactile play to enhance the STEAM learning experience."

PlayShifu is already popular among schools in the US and India, with the Orboot opening up children to the world of dinosaurs and planets. It was founded by IITians Vivek Goyal and Dinesh Advani, and has offices in the Bay Area in the US and in Bangalore in India.

What to learn at workplace in 2020

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IRWIN ANAND

THERE HAS BEEN a fundamental shift in the way we work, and learning and development (L&D) leaders have the task of preparing the workforce in this changing environment. Learning at work has to be redefined so employees can cope with automation and AI in the business sphere. Employees must not only be very good at their jobs, but also be agile and continuously learn new skills to stay competitive.

As per a PwC report, automation is set to affect all processes, making it a priority to upskill or provide training to current employees. So it is imperative that L&D leaders have insights about skills such as AI, data science and machine learning.

A recent report by Udemy for Business focuses on the top learning predictions for 2020. It outlines the learning trends that L&D leaders around the world are practising to help upskill employees, and foster an environment where the new retention narrative is to focus on skill fluidity.

Skill-mapping will chart the future

Automation has led to new responsibilities to existing roles and upskilling has



become a bigger priority at the workplace. Today, upskilling for future responsibilities has gained momentum and L&D leaders are trying to get ahead of that. Skill-mapping has emerged as an area of focus where organisations are focused on predicting what kind of skills will be relevant for their workforce next. Organisations are even hiring experts to map their current workforce and bridge the skills gap and prepare the workforce for the future.

Focused capability academies will replace ad hoc training

Ad hoc training for current employees or hiring fresh talent has been a standard practice when organisations fill their skills

gap. But since the workplace is evolving, the approach to fulfilling the demand for skills needs to change. There is an emergence of academies that are focused on providing workers with in-depth training and upskilling across all areas of expertise.

Communities will help keep skills up to date

The aim of social learning communities is to harbour an environment of collective learning. For example, if a group of employees knows a certain skill, it can share the knowledge with peers and help them better understand the context of the job. L&D leaders are integrating social communities to create a structured learn-

ing programme, and while online resources can be a prerequisite, live sessions within groups can help identify key areas that need to be addressed.

The L&D function is set to radically transform

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has cultivated an environment where technological processes are taking the front seat, disrupting businesses such as education, healthcare and real estate, among others. In 2020, L&D will continue transforming by implementing processes such as adaptive AI and chatbots to personalise learning paths. Leaders are set to be more agile in terms of content, imposing a shift from the era of creation to curation.

Organisations will build an internal talent marketplace

In 2020, much like the gig economy jobs, the workplace is transitioning to an area where employees will be chosen based on the skills they can offer for projects and short-term assignments, and not because of their roles. The aim of shifting to a roleless organisation is to provide existing workers with the chance to build themselves, mitigating the need to shift to other companies for the sole purpose of identifying a new role. The internal talent marketplace will provide them with a number of tasks with varying degrees of effort, so that at the end of it all they can choose what they want to do.

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