

# HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIAL REPORT

## THE ONLINE FUTURE OF TRAINING

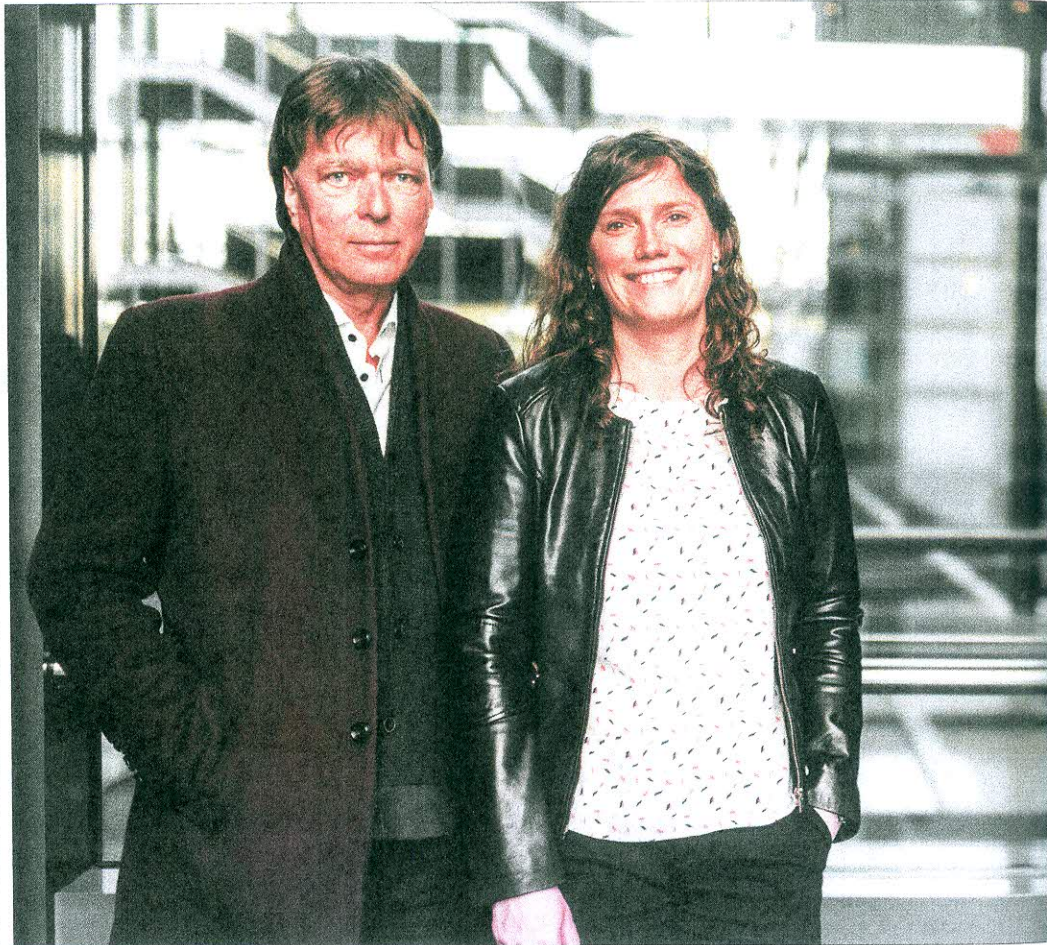
**An increasing number of companies are moving their training programmes online. So how does this shift to the digital age impact employees and employers?**

**T**he House of Training (HoT) in Luxembourg acts as a broker for the training needs of the 90,000 or so companies registered with the Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce. Whilst many of these firms are very large and have their own internal training teams, a notable number need to use external resources.

“Our main areas of focus are ‘formations pour le dirigeant d’entreprise’ (establishing a company) and ‘formations sectorielles’ (industry training),” explains Luc Henzig, CEO of the HoT. “The sector specific training is dominated by the banking and financial sector, which accounts for at least 50% of the courses delivered. However, sectors such as real estate and construction, engineering and architecture are also very popular.”

HoT utilises 800 trainers who are experts in their field of study, with 36 full time staff. “The trainers all come from the sectors they represent,” says Muriel Morbé, the organisation’s head of programme management. “This means that they are experts in the fields they represent and can bring ‘hands-on’ knowledge rather than quoting from text books.”

Whilst the training is not free, according to Luxembourg regulations, 1.5% of each firm’s total employee salary costs has to be put aside each year for training programmes. “This



**LUC HENZIG AND MURIEL MORBÉ**  
*All companies in Luxembourg have access to organised training courses*

means that all companies, particularly smaller ones, have the same access and level of training as the large corporations do,” states Henzig.

Some of these trainings--such as in the hospitality and finance sectors--have to be completed before businesses can be established in Luxembourg, according to government rules. However many courses are taken by people who aren’t legally required to do so. “As with all things,” explains Morbé, “it is never bad to be overly prepared.”

### GOING DIGITAL

The HoT uses various methods for conducting training, including courses held at their offices, onsite training

and an increasingly popular demand for e-learning. “In 2019 we aim to roll out a series of e-learning trainings, utilising the expertise that has already been established by existing international organisations, but specifically focused on Luxembourg,” says Henzig. “There is no point in reinventing the wheel if there are e-learning courses already available; we just work with our partners to ensure they are relevant to the needs of the Luxembourg market and authorities.”

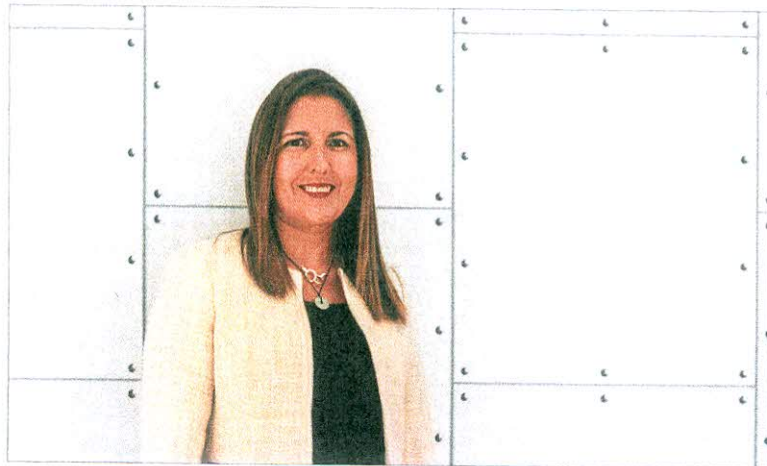
“E-learning is becoming more popular as it allows the employee the freedom to complete trainings at their individual pace and time,” Henzig reckons. Monica Jonsson, founder of





CoachDynamix, a consultancy, agrees: "The popularity of e-learning has increased quite rapidly in recent years and this is no surprise given the continuous efforts for companies to achieve overall efficiencies and reduce costs where possible. In addition to being cost-effective, there is, of course, also the benefit from an employee point of view that it allows for a greater flexibility for them to take the training when it works best for them."

At present there is still a large gap between those organisations able to offer e-learning (usually larger, multinational companies) and those who can only offer external training; this is something that the House of



**MONICA JONSSON**

*E-learning can be time- and cost-efficient*

Training hopes to remedy with the launch of its new platform. "E-learning will be available to all chamber members, regardless of the size," explains Henzig. "So that all individuals will have equal access."

E-learning is another example of how companies are moving to digital solutions to increase their cost effectiveness and speed of service, but does it come at a cost for employees? "I used to have time out of my working day dedicated to specific trainings," explains "Clare", who works for a large multinational organisation. "Now the onus is on me to complete the trainings without any allocated time. This means that often people are doing trainings at home or staying at work longer, which defeats the work/life balance objective."

"Frank", an employee of a large international finance company, concurs: "There is the danger that trainings are something else that 'has to be done' and that the contents aren't properly assimilated by the employee. In short, we are just ticking the box. This could become particularly problematic if it relates to trainings for regulatory or other legal requirements."

Jonsson can also see the dilemma of digital courses. "E-learning is very

valuable when it comes to developing technical skills, keeping employees up to date about company values, policies, processes, procedures--ensuring the same message gets communicated to everyone--and helping them learn latest updates on industry relevant topics such as regulations, compliance, ethics, etc. However, when it comes to developing 'soft skills', e.g., leadership, communication, time management or team work, the value of e-learning is not as straightforward. In my experience, e-learning can cover the 'basics', but is limited when it comes to really developing lasting skills in this domain. The reason for this is that as human beings we are all different and there is no 'one size that fits all'."

**ADDITION, NOT SUBSTITUTE**

Online programmes are certainly another way of developing training needs, but it is an addition to existing methods, not a substitution. As Henzig explains: "E-learning is not ideal for every situation, which is why the House of Training will continue to offer onsite and classroom trainings. However, it does open doors, particularly in terms of cost and efficiency that weren't previously available to smaller companies." <

**HOUSE OF TRAINING**

The outfit offers approximately 700 training modules. Around 20,000 individuals take its classes each year. Courses are organised by job sectors and industry roles, as well as for professional development.

www.houseoftraining.lu