

***Michelle Ockers:***

Welcome to another episode of Learning Uncut. In the spirit of reconciliation, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community, and to pay respect to elders past, present, and emerging. From a different land, a land that we haven't had any guests from before, from the Netherlands, we have two wonderful guests joining us today. Henriette, would you like to kick off with introductions?

***Henriette Kloots:***

Yes. It's good to be here. First of all, my name is Henriette Kloots. I'm a senior learning and development consultant and also the co-creator of the world of learning and development and the world of impact, which we're going to talk about today.

***Michelle Ockers:***

Yes. I'm very excited to have this conversation. We've been talking about doing this for a while and Evitha, the co-creator of both of those worlds, the world of L&D and the world of impact. Would you like to introduce yourself for our listeners?

***Evitha Scharloo:***

Yeah, thanks so much for having us. My name is Evitha Scharloo. I'm also an L&D consultant and together with Henriette, I have a company that's called Interlocked based on years of experience being in L&D, a field of work and a passion we absolutely share together.

***Michelle Ockers:***

How did the two of you come to work together? Tell me a little bit about the story of your connection.

***Evitha Scharloo:***

That's one good story.

***Henriette Kloots:***

Yeah, it started in a bar, like all good stories do. So we met in college. Well, Evitha was not in college, but we met through friends. And then we stayed in touch. So Evitha was in HR before, but somehow we always reconnected. And suddenly, Evitha was at this massive learning and development conference in the Netherlands. And I thought, what are you doing here? This was a bit out of context. And then when we talked about the first map, I asked her to review the very, very first draft. and I could see in her eyes and all the energy that she wanted to be involved and that's how we got in touch again, which is now three years ago.

***Evitha Scharloo:***

Now it's weird that we actually know each other like more than 20 years already and that we're now having a business together. If you would have asked me 20 years ago it would not be something we would think about and all of a sudden it just clicks and that I think is something I'm so excited about and it's quite exhilarating. I think like, it's getting to a point where you just look at each other and think, wow, where did this come from?

***Henriette Kloots:***

We're finishing each other's sentences by now.

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**Michelle Ockers:**

So Evitha, Henriette had started working on the world of L&D map, which is where we're going to start the conversation. By the way, do we call it the world of L&D map or do we just say the world of L&D?

**Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah, we just say the world of L&D. Yeah.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Okay. So very modest. When Henriette first spoke to you about what she was trying to do with the world of L&D, what was your reaction? What did you think about it? Why did you think this was a good idea? What did you think the need was for the world of L&D in the world of L&D?

**Evitha Scharloo:**

Yeah. So for me, I'm a very visual person and I'm a very creative person. And when I started, so I just kind of accidentally rolled into learning and development because from HR, I went to recruitment and all of a sudden learning and development was in my portfolio and I immediately fell in love with it. I struggled really to have, I would say a mutual language that I could use in the business. And when the map was shown for the first time, it was completely new. It was something that hasn't been done before. It was non-existing. And if you look at it, and I can't explain it really, but we've noticed it throughout working with it, it attracts you to it. And when I saw the content, it really helped me in understanding what I'm actually doing, because it was all there on the map. And it was visualized in a journey that I understood. And I knew from the minute that I saw it, this will help me get the conversation going in organizations as well. Because all of a sudden I had something tangible that I could use to get that conversation going. Whereas people who don't understand L&D or are not working in L&D, it's a concept that's quite hard to grasp because immediately people used to think, oh, that's training. And you're thinking, no, there's a whole nother world behind that. And this map really gives that. So when I saw it for the first time, I was like, Oh my God, this is going to help me so much. And it also triggered my creativity. So when somebody asked me to like give feedback, I go full in. Like I can't hesitate. And that's how it started. And when, of course, Henriette explained like, this is the reason, this is for dialogue, this is to get people to understand what we're really doing, that we're not doing training, but we really have a focus on performance and we want to go move towards performance consulting. And this might be an interesting tool to do that. Yeah, it got me going. And I immediately was enthusiastic and we started to bounce ideas and just get things going. And from that moment on, we were both like two, I don't know, skippy balls, I think.

**Michelle Ockers:**

So, you've made it sound really exciting and it's almost like these little teasers. We know it's something visual. There's this map idea, but what are we talking about here, Henriette? What were you trying to do? Where did the idea come from? What is it? And how did you go about putting it together?

**Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah. Well, it started with leaving something behind on a desk, something tangible for any person who's involved in learning and development that they can work with that will help them. And I was familiar with the concept of associative cartography, before coming up with the idea of this map. And associative cartography basically means creating a fictional map that is not related to geography or whatsoever, that actually visualizes a complex idea or

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concept. I started thinking about, you know, putting the two together. And I talked about the people that have designed maps like this in the past, MapsValve. And I said, what if we create one that's around learning and development, but help me because I wouldn't know what to put on it. So we started brainstorming, what would be a good representation for the issues that you talk to with your clients in the last couple of years? And it's been a very frustrating process to be really honest with you, because the designers of the map don't talk your language. They don't know learning and development, and they want to create something that everyone understands. So I had to come out of my own learning and development bubble in order to create the narrative that I talked to my clients on an actual landscape that has mountains and rivers and islands and peninsulas, and I don't know what else. And those are all deliberate decisions that you have to make. So the whole process of creating a map took us about 9 to 10 months.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

But how wonderful to be in a position where people who aren't part of learning and development ask you to explain it in plain language, because we have so many people move into learning and development. There are no barriers to entry to it as a job role or a profession or a practice. So to be able to put things into simple, plain language in a representation that people can kind of get their head around visually. It's a map. We all work with maps. We understand maps. That is such a great opportunity, Henriette.

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah, it was. And it was a frustrating and both fun because you know, you're working towards something. And he kept asking me, is there a particular process or a particular thing that you L&D people do? And the first thing that comes to mind, obviously, is maybe we should put Addy on a map. And he said, oh, and he got all excited. Oh, we have something tangible. I said, no, I don't want to put Addy on a map because it's not the message. And that took us a bit.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah. So what was the message? What was the problem or the opportunity you were trying to help people with? You said it was about things that were coming up a lot in your consulting practice. So what were you saying that you were trying to help people with?

#### **Evitha Scharloo:**

Yeah. So what you see on the map and especially the top part is about the journey to move from traditional training, offering training, being an order taker, actually moving towards the position of performance consulting and having that real impact within the organization and the stages that you go through to actually get there. And we wish, of course, that it was a one-time journey that you take. But what we've noticed is that every single project, every single stakeholder that you work with puts you in a certain process or a certain area where you think, hey, is this actually moving me forward towards that impact? And so that journey is something that you see on the map. And we have given an explanation about the journey, the things you run into, the challenges, the opportunities, the struggles. And for us, and we say that a lot of time, we are humbled and absolutely shocked in a positive way how much acknowledgement we get and how many people are saying, oh my god, this is really, this is the process that I'm in. So we've had the first, I would say, exposure, in I believe it was April, 2022. that we've launched the map and that we've done our first workshop on a big event in the Netherlands. And since then, we talk about this often, we haven't had one person said, I do not recognize that journey. Every single time somebody, we hold sessions and we see the faces of people laughing and like nodding their heads of like, oh my god, yes, that's where I'm at. That's exactly the process. So by doing that, we have given them also a, I think

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an outlet of like, hey, we get you, we see what you're going through in that process, moving towards really that impact that you want to create. So that's what you see in that journey.

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

And I think what the difference is if you, what we could have also done is create a slide and a PowerPoint and go, these are the 10 steps to move from traditional learning and development to impactful learning interventions, right? And I think what you then are missing is what Evitha is saying is the challenges. So we've created an area that's called silting that we talk about getting stuck into not feeling that you're not going anywhere, having that the idea of I'm not having impact, but how can I change? But we also have the challenging mountains. And the interesting thing is that people are drawn to it, like Evitha. So they go, oh, you understand that it's a challenge for me not to get into impact. So it's not a 10 step program. And then you have impactful learning and adventures. No, it's a journey, and it has challenges along the way.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

So I'd like to get or help to paint a picture for people of how you work with an L&D team with the map. So how do you typically introduce and use the map with an L&D team? And if we can just bring it to life with some examples along the way.

#### **Evitha Scharloo:**

So what we've noticed once we launched the map and we've done several events, when we worked with a client, we use the map as an analysis tool to really see like, hey, where are you with the team? What are things that you run into? And we actually build on the map. So they get like multiple questions, they have to put themselves on the map. And by doing that, we visualize where is the team right now? What are they struggling with? How do they feel about it? And once that in the picture, you actually have a starting point. Because what we've noticed, which is really interesting, is that we are getting in contact with clients and they say, hey, we want to focus on a specific area. And then we say, OK, but before we do that, let's just first really make an analysis that is this really what you need to focus on? Let's start with the map to get a blueprint of like where we are.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

So the map is big, right? When you say place yourself on the map, you mean literally on the map, on the floor. How big is that?

#### **Evitha Scharloo:**

Yes. Because it's two by three meters. And it's really funny because when you see a picture, you don't realize it. But once we lay it out on the floor, there's always whenever we have a session, we also have to make space because people just don't realize how big it is. So we need to move tables and chairs and like the audience is, is moving backwards because it's quite big. So people can literally, actually put themselves on the map, standing on it with shoes, no problem at all. So once you do that, you have a blueprint of where's the team at, at the moment. And the funny thing is usually we uncover really other things of where they started and that analysis needs to be done to really get a good starting point. It's the same when you have a learning question, you do an analysis first to really get to the core of like, where do we need to go? And that's how we started. And that's the reason why we always say you need to have multiple sessions because we really along the way realized that a one-off session just to get a blueprint is not enough. We uncover things that you need to and want to work with. So that's how we usually start.

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#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Which is funny, right? It's kind of ironic because the whole map is about getting an impact and doing performance consulting and not doing one-offs as an L&D team as well. And then you get hired for doing a one-off, which is sort of ironic. And then we had to not be, because it's a new product and you're excited and you want to get it out into the world. So you're tempted to do the same. And then we talked to each other and said, well, we're going to have to say no to the things that, you know, are just one hour or two hours and people think they have an impact. So events are fine. You know, it just has an inspirational thing.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

At a conference or something like that.

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Exactly. But if you want to have the change happening, you know, you need more than that.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah. And what do you find maybe Henriette, when you've got a team there and you're asking people to physically go and put themselves on the map, do people tend to go to the same place or do they spread themselves out? What's the pattern? What do you see when you've got different people in the team and you ask them to go onto the map?

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah, well, it's, it's different. It's so diverse, I couldn't even tell you. So there's a lot of stuff always happening around those challenging mountains, right? Because if a team is struggling, they come to you. And that's usually where the struggles are. The challenging mountains are in the middle of the of the landscape. So there's usually some action around there, but it's different for every L&D team that we've done. So we have to tell them that it's not socially desirable to be in the impact area. So there's an area that's called impact. It's about the next step they want to take. So if we ask them the question, where are you now? Where would you like to be? Of course, it's very tempting to go into, well, I'd like to be in impact. But the question is, where would you like to be in the short term in order to eventually get to impact? But the picture that you take, so the due diligence that you really do on that map says everything about what's going on in that team. So we either make a decision to do it with people standing on the map or we use markers. Those are like plastic thingies that they put on that represents their opinion. That's for us also easier to do it online. So we have the big floor mat to do it physically. And if we have a global team, we have to do it virtually and then they can put the online markers on the map. And the diversity there is huge. So sometimes we see a whole team that's standing on analysis and they go, well, we have too many issues here, we need to solve this before we do anything else. And sometimes it's spread out all over the map. So it's really different. And it says everything about where they're at.

#### **Evitha Scharloo:**

And I have to admit, I've had a situation where I've had a session with a team. And the whole thing was quite scattered around the map. But there was one colleague who within an instant was going to the silting. And I noticed that he was very hesitant, but very firm in standing there. And so I stopped the session. I said to the team, hey, let's look at this. He's the only one standing there and nobody's asking questions like, hey, what is it that you're standing there? And I told him like, hey, don't move. I'm going to ask another question and then let's see what the team does. But you're not allowed for five seconds to move. Just stay there where you are. And then I said to him, have you noticed that he is still standing there? Like, are we aware that he is feeling this? Are we aware that he is not moving while the rest



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of the team is moving? And that hit like a core with that guy who was standing on silting. And then we first had to have a conversation about that. Like, hey, what is happening in the team? Because are we aware of where everybody is at at the moment? And it turns out that that team really didn't know where was everybody working on? Like what are the projects? So that was already a very valuable lesson. Like, hey guys, you kind of want to know where your team members are. And like, what a project they are working on. And can we help each other? Is there an overlap? Are there projects that should we be working on that or not? And that was really already a lesson. And we didn't even, I think we were halfway, not even that, halfway in like the introduction and the first building of the blueprint. You have no idea the moments where things, I don't know, get to the surface of what's going on.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah. So that was like a team dynamics issue.

**Evitha Scharloo:**

Definitely. Yeah.

**Michelle Ockers:**

What other kinds of issues do you find surface in that analysis phase? Maybe Henriette, if you can give us an example.

**Henriette Kloots:**

What we find is that they're very often running and, and doing operational stuff and delivering training programs and running for the stakeholders that have a lot of requests. And the map sort of gives them an opportunity to stand still, reflect, and look at what they're doing, literally. That's why sometimes we don't use the actual people, but the markers on the map so that they have a visual of, look, that's where we're at.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah.

**Henriette Kloots:**

And we call it working in the store and working behind the scenes of the store as a metaphor for it. So very often they're working really hard in the store, selling stuff, putting things on the shelves, making sure everything is right. But the behind the scenes of the store is forgotten. So they come up with the processes are not in place. They don't have an aligned way of working. There isn't actually a learning strategy or a vision on learning. There isn't a very set strategy on how to work with the stakeholders, or if they do any stakeholder management, it's more on a project level and not on a relationship building type of thing that's continuous. So there are a lot of issues that suddenly surface, or they realize that they are so good at the analysis bit of doing the performance consulting that they forget about everything else, learning measurement. So what happens is there are all these themes that really are about organizing learning and about learning governance and learning operating models. And those suddenly surface, and then they realize, oh, it's not actually what we're doing in the store that's an issue. We have to work on ourselves first and how we are actually organizing learning within the organization.

**Michelle Ockers:**

It's all of what you might call kind of the enabling functions or foundational activities to ensure that they can work effectively as they execute things.

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**Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah. And it's like what you said, a lot of people roll into L&D. I know we've talked about this in the past, but you said it at the beginning today as well. And therefore they do what they think it's best. So it's not we're saying you're doing it wrong. But we're realizing that if you go back to, you know, theories about how learning is organized, or based on the science of how things work, then you suddenly get this fundamental issues that they haven't worked on because they came into the role, they had experience in a different field, and they just do what they think is best.

**Michelle Ockers:**

So there are gaps that are identified?

**Henriette Kloots:**

Yes, absolutely.

**Michelle Ockers:**

So what happens after that initial stage? There's an analysis stage, there's a whole stack of things that start to get surfaced and people become aware of where they actually are on the map. What next?

**Henriette Kloots:**

Well, Evitha and I just discussed this when we were preparing for the podcast. What we see is that completely depends on the resources an L&D team has. So if there's a steady team with a learning manager and they're big enough to service their organization, the only thing they need is for us to come in every now and again and work on the stuff that needs to happen behind the scenes. So we come in and we do workshops with them maybe once a month, maybe once every two months on a particular topic. So it could be learning operating model. It could be, let's talk about alignment of the way of working within the team. Could be about how are you conducting an analysis and how could you be doing that better. But that's if the team is steady. We also have learning managers globally that go, can you please just do one-on-one mentoring with me on the stuff that you know and bring that in. So that's very, very low-key, but still using the map as a language for that. And then we find some clients, and there are quite a lot right now, that are understaffed, under-resourced from what the organization is expecting them to do. And that's where we come in more. So it's Evitha and myself, but we also have freelancers and other people around us that we can really place into an organization to go, we're here one day a week or two days a week. and will help you to set everything up. So it's depending on the strength and the size of the L&D team, what sort of follow-up there is.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Right. Is there anything you want to add to that, Evitha?

**Evitha Scharloo:**

Yeah, what we've noticed also is that when we uncover those things in the initial analysis phase is that we've had a team where we worked, I think it was about 20 people. And what's really nice to see is that they actually divided things of like, hey, you know what? Yes, we want your help, but we should start with it as well. So in the end, it's not our mission to be the one that you depend on. We really want them to be able to do it if we leave, whether it's a one day, two days, longer period of time. In the end, they need to do it. So we want to help them. So it's not that we take over. We really want to guide and support and also teach the people that are there to be able to do it themselves. There's a difference in setting up things and also training the people that are there to do it themselves as well. So they always get, I

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don't like the word, but they always get homework like, hey, come on guys, you need to find out what's next and what are certain steps or what are things that we really need to get data on or do really need to get input from stakeholders or whatever. So they also need to do the work, which is really, really fun as well, because we get reactions back of like, wow, I did not realize that I had a conversation. Last week, I'm at a client and last week, I had a similar conversation as I have right now. And she came back to me and she said, Oh, I did not notice. Like you've asked me to ask this question. I did not notice just by doing that. And by guiding it and being on the sideline, just saying, hey, go to that person, have that conversation or find that data. They uncover things, which also get them enthusiastic of like, hey, I'm doing something new. I haven't done before, which gets me into the flow and new energy, which is really just lovely to see.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

So maps exist to help us plan journeys, or one of the purposes of maps is to help us to plan a journey to get from where we are now to a place we want to be. Is everybody's destination on that map the same? Is everybody ultimately trying to get to the same place on the map or not?

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Well, that would imply that there is a place where you're staying. And unfortunately that's not the case. So for us, there's a bit of the end of the map, it's a plane that goes in circles and it's called the never ending journey. And that's how we see it. So every time a new project comes along, new team members added, but also you're reporting to new stakeholders. That's when you start the journey all over again. And I, even myself and Evitha as well, after 15 or 20 years of doing L&D work, we still get tempted to do the quick thing, do the quick win, right? Our brain wants to have something very quickly solved. So us ourselves have to continuously go back to, why are we doing this? What's the impact that we want to deliver? What's the best approach? So unfortunately, there's not a place where you can stay because your context and your surroundings are constantly pushing you back on the journey, whether you like it or not.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

It's like the map is not the territory, right? You've heard that saying.

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

So the territory, the context you're in, the actual landscape keeps moving. So you need to keep repositioning yourself. Does the map have roads marked or pathways marked, or is it just this territory you have to figure out your way through? Is there more than one way to get from one place to another place? Tell me a little bit more about that and how that works to help. a team figure out their next moves and where they're going.

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah, well, the word associative is the key word in associative cartography. So the map is not prescriptive. It doesn't tell you, if you're here, you need to go there, and then it will solve this issue. So yes, you have to look at it and place yourself. What our biggest dream is, is that when a learning and development professional is stuck, or a decision maker within the organization doesn't know what it's doing with learning and development, they take the map and they look at it and they use it as a reflection tool. So we use it as an analysis tool, but everyone can use it as a reflection tool and go, where am I now? Where do I want to be?



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And why am I not there? Why am I not there? Answer is also on the map. That's the tricky thing. Because a particular city or a particular lake or something that's going on in an area can help you get unstuck. That's basically what it's trying to do.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah. How do people see the map? How do people take a closer look at the map? And is it something that people can work with themselves or not?

**Henriette Kloots:**

What we see is that the narrative of the map is continuously developing. And we are also developing that narrative continuously based on our experience and the workshops and the work that we do. So we can't just hand it over and say, here and enjoy it. I mean, if you look at it, I'm sure you'll get some story behind it. But what we've learned so far is that clients and the people that have heard us talk about it say, well, it's the narrative that actually brings the map to life. The premises that we're working on right now is that if you have heard the narrative and you've seen us speak about it, and we've explained to you how it works a little bit, then please feel free to do whatever you want with it and use it for projects and in your teams and et cetera. But make sure that you've heard the narrative first, because it really gives you a different feel and it helps you. It accelerates you in working with the map as well.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Right. So like somebody who's been to the country and visited it and knows a little bit about it and can help set you up to start orientating your way through it.

**Henriette Kloots:**

Yes. Yeah, exactly. Yeah, exactly like that.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah. What insights have you gained from working with the map?

**Evitha Scharloo:**

The first thing that pops into my head is I am always amazed that L&D professionals struggle with the same things of like stakeholder management, of like really doing a good analysis, getting the time to do it, really getting the L&D position at a level where they are not an order taker. And I find it, we've done bigger events of like up to 500 people. And once we get that conversation going in that group, I find it amazing how much we can learn from each other more. And by doing this, we've also created a dilemma game that we play with bigger audiences when we do an event. And what I've noticed is how much it helps to actually speak about it. So what we do in workshops as well is just have that dialogue, like, hey, dissecting, what's really going on with the project? So that's the first thing that pops into my head of what we've learned along the way. And by zooming out and how Henriette described it, it's like not working and running to get L&D just going, but really behind the scene of your L&D function, what I've noticed is that people actually really, you see them almost like okay, I have the time to dive into that because I'm struggling with it. And now I have an opportunity to talk about it and to see what we actually can do about it. So that's the first thing that pops into my head, apart from, of course, how we see companies develop themselves and the L&D function. I think Henriette has a great example of that. So I'll let her talk about it. But just by giving them room and talking about it is already helpful instead of just staying and running. So that for me is the first key takeaway that pops into my head.

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**Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah. Henriette, how about yourself? What are some of the key things you've learned or insights you've gained from working with the map with teams?

**Henriette Kloots:**

What we see is that learning and development teams have the skills and the capabilities to really have an impact on the organization, that's not necessarily the issue. The issue is that they need to get the position in the organization in order to make that change. And getting that position, let's go on the seat at the table, I don't really like the expression, but you know.

**Michelle Ockers:**

I don't like it either. I had this conversation with someone recently. They were putting together a conference presentation and playing around with titles and they said seat at the table. I was like, you've lost me immediately.

**Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah. It sounds like an excuse. Oh, I don't have a seat at the table is kind of the way we use it. I'm waiting for someone to give me the seat at the table. So it's interesting. But you talk about taking and getting a position, I talk about credibility and influence.

**Henriette Kloots:**

I think it's also the idea that there is one table where everyone is sitting on. So that's the whole problem I have with it. It's like, there's not one table, there are a lot of different tables. And it's much more messy than you might think. But what we see is that if you can be a really good learning and development team, and you can run your business properly, but work in isolation of the rest of the organization, and then you can do a great onboarding program, a great leadership program, I've seen L&D teams do this, and then the organization goes I don't really know who's in the team or what they're doing, or yeah, we have something of an onboarding. And I think that's where the issue is. So along the way, we've learned that alignment with the organization and being aligned with the organizational strategy and the organizational goals and delivering towards that is making a huge difference. And I think that's where L&D struggles more than that they are not capable or don't have the skills or whatsoever. And the issue of having that organizational alignment is not new, we haven't invented it. It's been there for many, many years, and the map is standing on the shoulders of giants as anything else is in our industry. I have learned from you and from people in the UK and in the US as well. But what you see is that the organizational alignment is so complex that sometimes you need a bit of help in order to really grasp it. And if you can make it really tangible and really small and just start doing with small steps, and the map is an easy first step, then you see people are getting the motivation and the energy back to do something about it. So we see L&D teams that are tired, that are exhausted. They think they're working so hard to get stuff done. And at the same time, budgets are being cut, resources are being let go, etc. And so starting with something so tangible and small gives them energy to get going again. And that's, I think, what we see as well.

**Evitha Scharloo:**

Yeah, definitely. I want to add on that is what I've noticed also is that when an L&D person has done a project, for example, onboarding. They've really nailed it, there's a good onboarding, people who are in it are enthusiastic, managers are enthusiastic because they

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really have people who have like a good first impression, they really have it going. And then we, for some reason, we take it off, we've done the project and we move forward. Whereas for me, it also relates to building your portfolio to prove that the way you do L&D and that doing a proper analysis, really focusing on performance, really focusing on impact and measuring that, and that if you have cases where you can actually show it, of like, hey, I've done it first, how you want me to, I organized the training, ticked it off, and in one year, we don't see the difference, so we need to do something else. Whereas you have, even on a small scale, you have a project where you said, hey, I have the space, I get the room, I'm allowed to do it a little bit different how I would approach it. And I can show the numbers. Don't hide it, like use it. Show that that's something that actually had an impact. Build your portfolio. Like, hey, you see, I've done this, how we really should be doing this. This was the result. And if you ask me another question, use it and say, hey, can we approach it the same way I've done it right now? Because I can show you that I can have an impact on those organizational goals, on those teams, challenges, whatever it is. And building that portfolio, building that data to really show that you can make a difference. We, we, for somehow it's, it's forgotten. Like we ticked off the project. It was fun. It was good. We have the results, but we don't use it to our stakeholders of like showing we can make a difference if you give us enough room, if you give us that position or if you give us the opportunity to really work with it.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

And if you work with us, right? If you work with us.

#### **Evitha Scharloo:**

Yeah. So that is something that is actually really, I think, missing sometimes.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

So is this leading us into the world of impact? Is there a link between some of the challenges you just talked about and where we get to the world of impact? Are we there yet? Like the next thing like you've realized is that the L&D teams can be doing great work from a technical perspective, right? Great evidence informed work with a great skill set, doing the right things, producing great programs, but it's not having impact. So is this where the world of impact has come from? Who'd like to talk about that?

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

I'd like to be really honest with you about how the world of impact came into place because what we saw was we were doing great work with L&D teams, and they were using the map and they were having it with them in meetings, etc. And then it fell flat. So it helped them and it empowered them, helped them in the organizational alignment and the positioning. And irony is sort of the story of the podcast. So Evitha and I said to each other, how ironic is this? We've created something to give L&D a better position in the organization, but because they don't know how to gain that position in the organization, the map is not used for that. So how do we change this? And then it's a little bit of an anecdote, but it's fun to tell because that's a bit of how Evitha and our brains work together, is that we sat down, we literally looked at the map, we looked at the stuff we wanted to do with L&D teams, and we saw that issue of the organizational alignment, and then Evitha kept asking me questions like, what do you want to do? Do you want to put an island in? Or what do you want to change? And I said, well, I want to change the whole map, really. So we came about that the top part is the journey of learning to performance. And the bottom part in the world of L&D is about the skills and the traits that you need in order to make that journey. So the skills are consulting, change management, stuff like that. And so we looked at the map and thought, well, this is very L&D driven organization in this in this thing, and the skills and the traits are mostly focused on

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L&D professionals, which is nice for the L&D professionals, but it doesn't bring them into the organization. So we replace the whole bottom part of the map, which was kind of a bold thing to do into an organization bit.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

Yeah. Is it a replacement for the world of L&D or is it the next evolution, the world of impact, or would you still work with the world of L&D rather than the world of impact with some teams? Tell me a little bit about how the two work together.

#### **Evitha Scharloo:**

The world of L&D is really the starting point for an L&D team in a sense of, especially if you, for example, have a very new team, or if you have young people within your team who accidentally fell into learning and development to also get an understanding of, hey, am I having all the skills and traits and the baggage that I need to fulfill my role as an L&D professional, which is good. If you have a more senior team, or if the question that you have, and the help that you need is on that level of like, really alignment, then the world of impact comes into play. So it really depends on where your team is at, at which stage, and they can be beneficial towards each other, they can be consecutive after one another. And the world of impact is really the part where you look at, okay, we have the team, it is in place, we have the skills, we know where we are, we've worked at our own shop, we've worked behind the scenes, we've done that now look at the alignment part. So it really is it helps each other, but depends on the question that you have with your team, which is really funny, because can you imagine having one room where you have to put them both on the floor? It's the whole floor that takes place then.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

You are working sometimes with both maps at once?

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

What we sometimes do is that we show them the organization a bit in order for them to understand, but there's something else you need to do first. You have to get your stuff in order before you are ready to talk about alignment. If you go out there and you start working on your alignment, but the basics are not met yet, then there's no point in that. So it's far more about the maturity of the L&D team and what they are doing, which requires one of the other of the map. So one is not better than the other. It's just it has a different question to it.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

I understand. And I feel like I know we're almost at time. I feel like at some point we need to have a different another conversation about the world of impact. You've started working with the world of impact, right? You've been working with for a little while.

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah. It's fascinating. It really is because right now that map gives you two angles. So because they're really two distinctive parts of it, we can now work not only with L&D teams, but also with decision makers and management teams in organizations that don't know where to place L&D or how to work with L&D etc. So basically you can come in and there's two parts of an uncharted territory depending on where you're coming from. So if you come from L&D, usually the organization is somewhat of an uncharted territory. You're exploring that. What do I need to know about it? How much do I need to know about it? How is my relationship to it? How do I position myself towards it? But if you come from the other side of the map, you're standing on the organization that you are a decision maker or a manager or

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whatever. Somewhat the L&D journey is uncharted territory for you. So that leaves us with a very interesting angle that where if we have both stakeholders, I've had that a couple of times now, where you have both the stakeholders as well as the L&D team standing on the map and they have a conversation about where they think learning organization is, that's gold. I can't say anything else.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

I think we have to have a separate conversation about that at some point because it sounds really fascinating. But I'm glad we started with the world of L&D because the message is you need to get your own house in order before you can actually do a good job with organizational alignment before you're ready for that. That's kind of one of the key takeaways I'm hearing from this.

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Yes.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

So I think that leads us nicely into tips for L&D professionals who are looking to make the journey from learning or training to performance. What advice or what key tips based on the work that you have done? And some of that work is, of course, supported by the map. What key tips would you give L&D leaders who are looking to help their teams make that journey?

#### **Evitha Scharloo:**

I think it sounds weird I'm saying, but align, align, align. Go to the business, every plan you have, the way of working, ask the business, like, what is it that you need from me in order to move forward together? What I see happening is that we forget who we do it for. And we forget that in the end, we have a job, because the company is running as it is, the people are making money. And those people need support. So if a manager is under stress because his team is not performing, stand next to him, find out what it is that is causing his stress, but align and then make a plan and don't push, but really do it together. I think the one thing I've noticed in quite some companies is that, as we said, we are really good at what we do. We just don't always get that the business might be under stress or that there are things going on in the company that have an effect on what we are doing. So we might as well make sure that we are aware of it and that we are standing next to the ones that have the stress of it to really see what we can do to help them. I think that would be my number one key tip. Use it in your plans. Use it in the goals that you want to achieve. Align with the strategy, with the goals, with the stress, with the change that maybe is going on. Instead of saying, oh, we need a good onboarding because it will make sure that new people are happy that they start with us. Yeah, that's fine. But is there an issue with that? Is there stress of that? Or is that really helping us towards the goals that we have as a company? Really align on that. That would be my number key thing to do.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

And how about yourself, Henriette? What would you suggest if there was a leader who was wanting to move from that order taker to performance partner kind of role?

#### **Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah, there are so many things I want to say right now. I can't pick one particular thing, but when Evitha was talking, I was thinking, stop running.

#### **Michelle Ockers:**

Oh, I like that. And that is a theme that's come up, right? Stop running.



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**Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah. Stop running, reflect, and be curious about what you yourself still have to learn in the process of becoming that business partner. I think that's the biggest one for me.

**Michelle Ockers:**

I love that. So speaking of curiosity, if people are curious about the world of L&D and want to take a look at it or want to understand it a little bit more, because we've talked about it a lot, but actually not kind of laid out anything about what it might look like. How might they? I think there's a video on your website which gives people a little bit of a sense of what it looks like when a team is working with the map and a bit of a feel for it. Is that the best way to sort of take a quick peek at it?

**Henriette Kloots:**

Yeah, it is. Although we're moving now towards obviously a joint company and a joint website. So that's all under construction. We're always happy to jump on any calls to talk a bit more about it, LinkedIn is the best medium for that right now. We're also running a couple of webinars in the fall that are free of charge that are just about us explaining the map and they're going to be in English too. So yeah, I think that's the best approach. And if you follow us on LinkedIn, both Interlocked as well as Evitha and myself, we will share when the webinars are.

**Michelle Ockers:**

Fantastic. If you can let me know as well, I'm happy to do a LinkedIn post and pop something in my monthly newsletter to let people know about those because I think it's well worth taking a closer look at. Well, thank you both so much for joining us today to talk, it's just fascinating. I just think it's, you know, it's an efficient way to get a lot of stuff on the table to get everyone to pause, it's different. So it's not like we're coming to a meeting to talk about the issues. We're actually going to do something that looks and feels really different as a way of starting the conversation and doing the reflection. So I think it's innovative and it's really exciting and useful. So thank you both, not just for talking to us about it today, but for bringing this to L&D for us to be able to think about our work and what we're doing in different ways. Thank you both.

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Learning Uncut are learning and development consultants that help Learning and Development leaders and their teams become a strategic enabler so that their businesses can thrive. We work in evidence-informed ways to drive tangible outcomes and business impact and are strong believers in the power of collaboration and community. We specialise in helping to build or refresh organisational learning strategy, update their L&D Operating Model, enable skills development, and conduct learning evaluation. We also offer workshops to shift learning mindset and practices for both L&D teams and the broader workforce – as well as speaking at public and internal events.

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#### About your host, Michelle Ockers



Michelle is the co-founder and Chief Learning Strategy at Learning Uncut. She is an experience, pragmatic organisational learning strategist, L&D capability builder and modern workplace learning practitioner. She also delivers keynotes, workshops and webinars for learning and broader professional or workforce groups at both public and in-house events.

Michelle received the following prestigious industry awards in 2019:

- Australian Institute of Training and Development Dr Alastair Rylatt Award for L&D *Professional of the Year – for outstanding contribution to the practice of learning and development*
- *Internet Time Alliance Jay Cross Memorial Award – for outstanding contribution to the field of informal learning*



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