

How do organisations create a compelling learner journey: what we've discovered

At the roundtable Cathy Hoy, Chief Learning Officer at the LPI, opened discussions by reviewing the considerations that need to be made at the various stages in the learner journey to ensure each learner receives a positive experience. This then enabled the group to discuss in detail the impact of technology, culture, and learner expectations. Here we summarise our findings.



Considerations for the learner journey

- It must start at onboarding. L&D can play a big part in retaining new staff by starting their journey before they even commence in their new role.
- L&D professionals need to understand the current needs, forecast the future needs and meet expectations of their learners
- Be aware of learner's expectations. They may be asking questions such as: am I going to be able to develop? What training will be available? Is there coaching or mentoring?
- Always consider their full journey, and what they think and feel at each stage
- The learner journey can be broken down into three stages:
 - Delegate state (Engage, Communicate, Prepare)
 - New Knowledge (Develop)
 - Application (Embed, Refresh)



What cultural aspects need to be considered?

- Culture issues and barriers lie with senior management / high level stakeholders' attitudes. Learners are keen to engage and embrace new ways of learning, whereas SLTs are still focussed on completion and compliance metrics
- SLTs need to shift their value perception of L&D to a more strategic approach - tying in L&D with business objectives and work across the business in a partnership way, instead of keeping L&D siloed
- L&D still need to be able to balance the business impact against the learner experience
- Emphasis has to be on connectivity with staff, helping them to connect and build relationships with colleagues
- If managed, remote ways of working and training staff can result in much closer relationships with colleagues across the business



What technology or new technologies can they utilise to aid with this journey?

- Technology, such as video, allows the trainer to introduce themselves prior to the course, set expectations and put learners at ease
- It is beneficial to the learner if they can access the information on their own devices such as mobile phone or tablet or even through an app
- Organisations should look to utilise existing and familiar software and tools where possible, such as Teams, so learners aren't daunted by new unfamiliar technology
- Through developing social collaboration, technology can help build a culture of learning; for example, peer-to-peer group discussions, sharing best practice and knowledge, and setting up communities
- Importantly, technology should aid the journey, making it easily accessible and flexible from the learners' perspective



How have new learner expectations and behaviours impacted planning for this journey?

- Learners now expect easier availability, any time, any place, any where
- Organisations should allow a more self-guided approach to learning
- Learning should be bite-size, easy to digest and available on demand
- Organisations need to consider how to plan for interactivity with learning
- Allow learners to try new ways of learning, particularly creating a blended approach and mixing old with new
- Learners want to be rewarded after learning and feel that it forms part of a bigger picture in their development