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PLAYBOOK

# The L&D Playbook: A Learning-First Approach to Talent Management

# Learning: The Heart of Growth

## Growth: it's what drives businesses forward and inspires employees to reach their full potential.

And it doesn't happen by chance — it's fueled by learning. Learning sparks innovation, strengthens engagement, and turns potential into achievement. That's why investing in Learning & Development (L&D) is more than a business strategy; it's a commitment to building a workforce that can meet any challenge head-on.

L&D works best when it's connected to broader HR goals like recruiting, performance management, and long-term talent strategy. The right tools make that possible. A complete talent management system with a **built-in Learning Management System (LMS)** streamlines and centralizes development efforts, helping you identify skills gaps, automate workflows, and align learning with business priorities.

This playbook is your guide to embedding L&D into every stage of the employee journey. Whether you're enhancing recruiting efforts or making learning a core part of goal-setting, these strategies will help you empower employees and drive lasting success.

## Recruit: Build a Reputation for Development

### The Link Between L&D and Smarter Hiring

Designing an effective L&D strategy doesn't just benefit current employees — it starts driving results before new hires even join your team. Connect L&D and recruiting strategies to strengthen your hiring process and attract top-tier talent who are eager to grow with your company.

Before you begin a hiring campaign, you should first understand your team's current skill gaps. A skills gap analysis can pinpoint areas where your workforce needs reinforcement — information you can use to create job descriptions and screen candidates. This way, you can be sure you're hiring candidates who have the expertise you need to reach your business goals.

### Why L&D Attracts Top Talent

Research from the World Economic Forum shows that employers believe 44% of their people's skills will be disrupted by 2030. So, it's no surprise that L&D is at the top of the priority list for employees today. 86% say they'd switch jobs for more **career development opportunities**.

Highlighting L&D programs during recruiting signals to candidates that your organization is one that invests in its people. You'll naturally attract job seekers who want to grow in their careers and strengthen your company's culture of continuous learning.

Stats  
Sheet

90%

of Millennials say growth opportunities are a top priority in their job search.

# Recruit: Build a Reputation for Development

## Key Benefits of L&D in Recruiting



Increasing business resiliency by proactively closing skills gaps



Attracting growth-minded candidates who are motivated to learn



Improving new hire loyalty and retention

## Your Next Move: Pro Tip Plays

### 1. Analyze your skills gaps

Evaluate the skills your team currently possesses and compare them to your business goals. Which skills will you need to achieve those goals? Tailor your job descriptions and screening questions to fit those needs.

### 2. Highlight L&D in recruitment materials

Put L&D front and center during recruitment by mentioning learning and training programs in job descriptions, screenings, and interviews. You can also highlight those opportunities on your career site.

### 3. Ask candidates about their growth potential

Add interview questions or assessments that help you identify candidates who value learning and skill-building.



# Onboard: Set the Stage for Success

## The Link Between L&D and Onboarding

L&D in your onboarding process sets new hires up for success from the moment they sign the offer letter. It makes a positive first impression, helps them get up to speed faster, and establishes an early connection to company culture, values, and expectations.

## Why L&D Matters for New Hires

Structured onboarding can be the difference between engaged, well-equipped employees and unprepared, disenchanted new hires. It sets expectations and gives new hires essential knowledge about your organization so they can more quickly adapt to their roles. Onboarding processes that include a mentorship program spur relationships, encouraging increased collaboration and engagement.

Onboarding lays the groundwork for new hires to feel comfortable in their work environment and confidently take on the full responsibilities of their roles.

Stats  
Sheet

# 80%

of new hires who didn't receive adequate training during onboarding say they plan to quit.

## Key Benefits of L&D in Onboarding



Ramping employees faster so they can contribute sooner and disruptions to team productivity are minimized



Reducing turnover in the critical first year with strong guidance and support



Fostering camaraderie so every employee feels welcome and part of the team from day one

## Your Next Move: Pro Tip Plays

### 1. Start a mentorship or buddy program

You can help new hires start building connections right away by pairing them with a mentor or a buddy, an experienced member of their new team. Those team members can offer guidance, answer questions, and support a smooth onboarding experience.

### 2. Create role-specific training module

Compile onboarding resources that fit the demands of each position. For example, a new hire joining the sales team at a car dealership would complete different training modules than one joining the service department.

### 3. Evaluate onboarding frequently

Get feedback from new hires on a regular basis so you can continuously improve employee onboarding.

# Engage: Keep Employees Motivated and Connected

## The Link Between Engagement and L&D

Keeping employees engaged is a constant effort and one that's become more important than ever — only 31% of employees say they're engaged, a **10-year low**. L&D is crucial for helping your people feel connected to their work and the big picture.

It's also highly motivating, given that professional development is something we know employees look for in their job searches and a top reason they choose to stay at a company. Build a positive, high-performing workforce with L&D.

## How L&D Drives Engagement

When employees can access continuous learning — for example, via an LMS — they see that their development is a priority for the company. It's not hard to understand why employees want to work for an organization where they're valued. They're gaining new skills and honing their strengths while the business benefits from their increased knowledge.

You can boost engagement even more with employee recognition. When your people earn certifications, master a new skill set, or complete continuing education, take the time to celebrate their accomplishments. That reinforces the value your org places on L&D and strengthens employees' sense of belonging.

## Key Benefits of L&D for Employee Engagement



Improving employee morale and higher job satisfaction



Increasing creativity and innovation thanks to increased collaboration



Motivating higher productivity as employees take ownership of their roles

## Your Next Move: Pro Tip Plays

### 1. Offer a variety of learning formats

Cater to different learning styles and preferences with eLearning, microlearning, interactive courses, and more. With an LMS, it's easy for every learner to customize their L&D materials.

### 2. Celebrate learning achievements

Recognize training milestones the same way you celebrate significant events like work anniversaries, birthdays, and promotions.

### 3. Encourage collaboration

Make learning fun and strengthen relationships and cross-functional skills with team-based training. With an LMS, you can gamify training sessions and offer prizes to learners based on exam scores or other metrics.

# Develop: Empower Career Growth and Create Leaders

## The Link Between L&D and Internal Mobility

Offering career development opportunities is a proven talent management strategy that promotes internal growth and prepares your company for future challenges. Targeted L&D initiatives that aim to grow employees' skills and increase internal mobility build confidence among your workforce and cultivate the next generation of leaders.

## Why Career Growth Requires L&D

Customized career development plans and leadership training are not just an attractive benefit for ambitious employees. They're a strategic method for aligning L&D with company goals, ensuring the company is equipped with the skills required to achieve those goals. With clear pathways for growth, you'll be more likely to retain those top performers and eventually promote them into leadership roles.

### Stats Sheet

**80%** of employees agree that learning adds purpose to their work.

**91%** of L&D professionals say their companies need more human skills.

**32%** Companies that champion career development are **32% more likely** to be deploying AI training programs in 2025.

*LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report 2025*

## Key Benefits of L&D for Employee Growth



Boosting retention and engagement by motivating and supporting growth-minded employees



Building a solid talent pipeline for critical leadership roles, filling gaps before they arise



Improving succession planning to promote business stability and resiliency

## Your Next Move: Pro Tip Plays

### 1. Map out career pathways

Whether there's a clear trajectory from sales associate to general manager or you're mapping a specific journey for a high performer, help employees find learning paths that align with their own goals and company objectives. An LMS can help create these paths, suggesting courses based on employees' skills, experience, and goals.

### 2. Provide leadership-focused programs

Offer workshops or training specifically designed to build soft skills that leaders need, like communication, decision-making, and team management.

### 3. Support external certifications

Give employees tools and resources to pursue certifications and continuing education programs in their areas of specialty. Those learning experiences enhance both their expertise and your business's capabilities.

# Retain: Reduce Turnover With L&D Opportunities

## The Link Between L&D and Retention

You don't want your employees to stick around out of necessity — you want them to stay because you're offering what other employers don't, including a plethora of L&D opportunities. L&D demonstrates to employees that your company is investing in their futures, and that's why it's the **number one retention strategy**.

## Why L&D Inspires Loyalty

Giving employees the tools, time, and resources to support learning and growth shows them you support them in their careers, not just in their current roles. Over 60% of employees say **they'd stay at their jobs longer** if they had more chances to learn. L&D helps you build a workforce of loyal employees who want to stay and grow alongside your company.

Stats  
Sheet

# 3/4

Over three-quarters of employees say they'd stay with their company long-term if they had access to better L&D opportunities.

## Key Benefits of L&D for Retention



Raising retention rates, especially among high-performing employees



Reducing hiring and onboarding costs as retention rises



Building an agile team equipped to respond to changing demands

## Your Next Move: Pro Tip Plays

### 1. Personalize learning paths

Let your employees take charge of their learning experiences, working together to create paths that align with their interests and goals and address their unique skill gaps. An LMS can suggest the right courses and course materials to fit every learner's needs.

### 2. Foster peer-driven learning

Create opportunities for employees to share their expertise through mentoring programs, team workshops, or internal presentations. In addition to helping them hone leadership skills, this approach ensures important organizational knowledge gets passed on.

### 3. Survey employees about L&D

Ask employees what they find most useful or engaging in your L&D programs, as well as what doesn't work for them. Your employees might be looking for quick training modules on a specific topic.

# Analyze: Understand and Adapt Your L&D Approach

## The Link Between Analytics and L&D

To maximize the impact of your talent management strategy, you need to understand what's working and where there's room to grow in every area, including L&D. An LMS equipped with analytics tools empowers HR and L&D teams with actionable insights drawn from real employee data. Make smarter decisions and create better learning outcomes when you monitor L&D metrics with an LMS.

## How L&D Analytics Power Insights

Monitoring key metrics, including course completion rates and employee skill progression, enables your team to prove the effectiveness of your L&D efforts.

Analytics also reveal trends — like skill gaps or high-performing departments — so you can target L&D efforts to meet those needs. With analytics insights, you can make proactive changes to L&D and strategically plan for the future.

## Key Benefits of L&D Analytics



Enhancing decision-making with data-backed insights



Improving ROI tracking with clear evidence of the impact of L&D investments on goals



Enabling proactive workforce planning by making it easier to anticipate future needs

## Your Next Move: Pro Tip Plays

### 1. Build a dashboard for L&D metrics

Personalize your LMS with a dashboard that keeps you in the loop on key indicators like participation rates, progress toward learning goals, and post-training performance.

### 2. Analyze skill trends

Regularly review your talent data and company goals to identify new areas of need or growth and adapt L&D programs accordingly.

### 3. Integrate L&D and talent management analytics

Use an LMS with a talent management system to link L&D data and broader HR metrics around performance, engagement, and more. You'll gain a deeper understanding of how L&D impacts the entire employee experience.

# Unite: A Seamless L&D Strategy Across the Employee Journey

## The Power of Unified L&D

The most effective L&D strategies don't operate in silos. When L&D is an integral part of every stage of the employee lifecycle — from recruiting to performance management — you encourage higher productivity and engagement, create a cohesive employee experience, and improve business results.

When L&D is consistent and accessible throughout the employee lifecycle, you're supporting company goals at every turn. Alignment between what employees are learning and what the business wants to achieve strengthens culture, boosts performance, and helps your workforce respond more effectively to challenges.

## Key Benefits of an Aligned L&D Strategy



Enhancing the employee experience with continuous, relevant learning



Strengthening L&D's connection to business goals



Proving the ROI of L&D initiatives via measurable outcomes

## Your Next Move: Pro Tip Plays

### 1. Use data to refine L&D strategies

If you're using an LMS, it's easy to start digging into the data. Find out which skills employees are most interested in learning compared to your company's skills gaps, which types of learning content are most popular, and other insights that ensure your L&D programs make the maximum impact.

### 2. Leverage L&D and HR technology

Implement platforms that integrate seamlessly across recruitment, onboarding, and development efforts to simplify processes and improve data insights.

### 3. Set clear objectives

Define measurable success criteria for your L&D strategy. For example, your goals might include higher internal mobility rates, more employee learner participants, or skill proficiency among a certain number of employees. An LMS enables you to monitor these metrics in real time and adjust your strategy accordingly.

# Build a Future-Ready Workforce With L&D

L&D fuels success at every stage of the employee lifecycle. With tech-powered L&D processes and datainformed strategies, your people and your business are equipped to adapt, grow, and thrive.

Empower growth at every stage of the employee journey. Discover how ClearCo's Learning Management makes it possible.

[Schedule a demo](#)



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