

For L&D: 8 Tips to Encourage Knowledge Sharing

To help you encourage employees to pay learning forward through better knowledge sharing, here are 8 tips for L&D:

- 1. Educate employees and leaders about knowledge sharing, its value, and how to do it.** During live training, talk about taking learning back to team members, and remember to include discussions about the feelings and reactions that may accompany knowledge sharing and peer learning. For online training, embed quick visual reminders in learning assets. Create handouts that make it easy for training participants to pass along what they've learned.
- 2. Use training methods that encourage knowledge sharing.** Most L&D strategies incorporate a blend of learning methods. Add job shadowing, rotations, and other interactive methods that involve sharing knowledge and expertise.

Add another twist to blended learning by creating a regular program of brainstorming sessions. Ask experts in functional areas to facilitate by doing a short presentation on an emerging or critical business topic followed by a 15—20-minute session to elicit and share ideas. Instead of thinking long term, start with a pilot: Schedule sessions during one quarter of the year, and see how it goes.
- 3. Start early.** Onboarding often includes talks by organizational leaders. Expand that idea to the peer level by inviting functional area experts to do presentations and share their know-how with new hires. Talk about paying learning forward during onboarding.

To encourage knowledge sharing and continue training during and after the transition from onboarding/re-boarding to new job, assign experienced employees to act as buddies or mentors to new hires (and internal movers).
- 4. Encourage (and teach) multidisciplinary teamwork across silos and business functions.** Provide training in effective collaboration, networking, and communication skills to drive knowledge sharing company-wide.
- 5. Create special events (live and/or virtual) to promote ongoing knowledge sharing and continuous learning.** Include round-table chats on varied topics at large learning events or internal career fairs, using departmental subject matter experts as presenters. Sound like old hat? Try a refresh similar to speed-dating to make knowledge sharing and learning fast-paced and fun. Take it virtual, if your organization has the resources. Offer small prizes as added incentives.
- 6. Volunteer L&D to spearhead a project to capture and share internal best practices.** One idea: interview internal subject matter experts or project leaders and write short case studies on innovative solutions or work processes. Draft a team of helpers from multiple disciplines.
- 7. Advocate for time in meetings for people to share and contribute new ideas.** Model how it's done by building knowledge sharing time into L&D staff meetings, then challenge leaders in other business functions to do the same. Some companies invite employees to take turns facilitating meetings.

8. **If your organization has an online collaboration tool or knowledge sharing platform, forge an active role for L&D.** By taking ownership of all, or some, facets of enterprise collaboration platforms, L&D can monitor and curate employee-contributed content and ensure frequently sought topics or types of information are easy to find. Reviewing reports and analytics on platform activity enables L&D to identify emerging trends and hot topics, seed discussions, and set up related online communities.

For more on this topic, including

- Statistics on how knowledge sharing helps organizations
- Why some people resist knowledge sharing (and what to do about it)

Please read [Knowledge Sharing: Are Your Employees Paying Learning Forward?](#) on the Media Partners blog.

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