

Starting a Learning and Development Unit from Scratch: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners

Category: Learning & Development
12 September, 2023



Introduction

Learning and Development (L&D) units play a crucial role in fostering growth and enhancing skills within organizations. If you're new to the world of L&D and want to establish a successful unit, this article is for you. We'll guide you through the step-by-step process of building and running a thriving learning and development unit.. Let's get started!

Step 1: Understand Organizational Needs

- Conduct surveys, interviews, and focus groups to gather data on employee skills, performance gaps, and training needs.
- Review organizational goals, strategic plans, and performance metrics to identify areas for improvement.
- Engage with department heads, managers, and employees to understand their expectations and challenges.

Step 2: Define Objectives and Learning Outcomes

- Clearly articulate the purpose and scope of the learning and development unit.
- Develop specific objectives aligned with organizational goals, such as improving sales performance, enhancing leadership skills, or fostering innovation.
- Use the SMART framework to ensure objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

Step 3: Develop a Learning Strategy

- Consider a range of learning methods, such as instructor-led training, e-learning modules, webinars, coaching, job rotations, and self-paced learning.
- Balance formal and informal learning approaches to cater to different learning preferences and needs.
- Determine the frequency and duration of learning activities, and plan for reinforcement and ongoing development.

Step 4: Create Learning Content

- Identify subject matter experts (SMEs) within the organization who can contribute their knowledge and expertise.
- Collaborate with SMEs to design and develop training materials, including slide decks, handouts, online

courses, and interactive resources.

- Explore external resources, such as industry publications, best practices, and external training programs, to supplement internal content.

Step 5: Deliver Training and Development Programs

- Select appropriate delivery channels based on factors like the target audience, content complexity, and budget. Options may include in-person workshops, virtual classrooms, learning management systems (LMS), and video conferencing tools.
- Create a training calendar that outlines the timing and sequencing of learning activities to ensure a structured and coherent learning journey.
- Assign qualified facilitators or trainers to deliver the programs, ensuring they possess strong presentation, communication, and facilitation skills.

Step 6: Evaluate Learning Effectiveness

- Design pre-training assessments to establish a baseline of participants' knowledge and skills.
- Implement post-training assessments to measure learning outcomes and identify areas of improvement.
- Gather feedback from participants through surveys, focus groups, or one-on-one discussions to gauge their satisfaction and understanding of the content.

Step 7: Foster Continuous Learning and Development

- Encourage employees to take ownership of their learning by promoting self-directed learning and providing access to learning resources like books, articles, and online platforms.
- Establish communities of practice where employees can share knowledge, discuss challenges, and collaborate on learning initiatives.
- Support individual development plans by offering

mentorship, coaching, and opportunities for stretch assignments or job rotations.

Step 8: Collaborate and Seek Feedback

- Encourage cross-functional collaboration and knowledge sharing by organizing workshops, seminars, or conferences where employees can learn from one another.
- Regularly seek feedback from stakeholders, including managers, employees, and executive leadership, to understand their evolving needs and align learning initiatives accordingly.
- Stay updated with industry trends and emerging technologies in learning and development to incorporate innovative approaches into your unit.

Conclusion:

Building and running a successful learning and development unit requires a strategic and systematic approach. By following these simple steps, you can establish an L&D unit that effectively addresses organizational needs, enhances skills, and fosters continuous learning. Remember to adapt and evolve as the organization grows and the learning landscape evolves.



Meet Kehinde Omiyale

Kenny Omiyale is a Consultant and trainer spanning across areas of Governance, Learning & Development, Finance & Investment, Business Acumen, etc

He is the Learning and Development Consultant at StreSERT Integrated Ltd. He is passionate about helping entrepreneurs build business models and systems for success as well as raising creative minds armed with global problem-solving acumen.

kehindeo@stresertintegrated.com