



5 Keys to Success for Building Any Development Program

Learning Curve Consultants® has spent more than 10 years building development programs with curriculum specifically designed to grow knowledge, skills and talent. Through these different partnership experiences, various themes have emerged. We have consolidated these themes into five keys we believe to be vital in ensuring program success:

1. Secure executive buy-in and involvement FIRST.
2. Determine what the program's objectives and desired outcomes are; build curriculum around that.
3. Involve the business throughout the curriculum design process, as well as during program implementation.
4. Constantly evaluate the program and identify ways for improvement.
5. Involve graduates in different capacities of future programs.



Secure executive buy-in and involvement FIRST.

Align executive leadership's vision for the development program with those responsible for building and overseeing it. In addition, make sure leadership buys in to plans for the program. Secure the commitment of financial and physical resources necessary to its success.

We recommend – where possible – employing a Leaders as Teachers approach. Having various leaders share relevant success stories and lessons learned with program participants demonstrates the value the organization places on development.



Determine what the program's objectives and desired outcomes are; build curriculum around that.

Conduct a thorough needs analysis on the front end. Ask those closest to the roles being learned what success looks like for the program; then work from that to build your curriculum. For many companies we have worked with, specific competencies were identified for the development program. We then determined how to ensure every initiative supports these competencies.

Write objectives for every activity or event that development program participants go through. This ensure you are "connecting the dots" both within and across the program. It is important to constantly evaluate success in achieving desired objectives, as each event is a reflection of the total program experience.

We have found it very helpful to write objectives, build curriculum and then assess the effectiveness against desired objectives. A general roadmap of tasks and content to cover help keep the program curriculum moving in the right direction. It also ensures consistency of experience.



Involve the business throughout the curriculum design process, as well as the program's implementation.

We suggest interviewing teammates who are experts in the role, supervise the role and frequently interact with the role to articulate success. Collecting this information from multiple sources is crucial to designing the right curriculum.



Constantly evaluate the program and tweak to make it better.

Regardless of budget, success or buy-in to the program, it is important to constantly evaluate it and determine what can be done to make it better. The same approach should be taken when evaluating the curriculum's effectiveness as when building it. Get multiple perspectives from those who go through the program, manage aspects of the program and come into contact with participants in the program. This 360° perspective allows you to evaluate the program real time.

Where possible, make subtle, small adjustments while in the midst of an existing program to improve the experience going forward. However, it's important to introduce major curriculum changes and enhancements outside the program to maintain continuity.



Involve graduates in different capacities of future programs.

Allowing program graduates to serve as peer mentors, speak to existing program participants or serve in different support capacities allows program participants to learn directly from those who have been through it. This “pay it forward” element to the program allows you to build a community and further strengthen your bench of talent.

Spend time on the front end of building your development program determining what success looks like. Allow stakeholders to weigh in and document feedback and input. Start small – don’t over engineer the program’s design, objectives or activities.

“*Millennials are at the core of business growth and development. They provide a unique approach in the workplace and need an employer that can offer a strong culture, flexibility, ongoing development and fast-paced growth opportunities. These factors are essential to retaining top talent.*”

-Jason Manis
Development Program Graduate

Learning Curve Consultants® was established in 2012 to assist organizations with maximizing their most important and crucial investment – their people. We partner with companies to create programs, curricula and specific, targeted learning events. We also assist with developing and implementing strategic learning solutions.

For assistance with one or more elements of program (curriculum) design, email us at info@lc-consultants.com or call us at 770.633.7202.

We want to help you ***Unleash Your Talent®***.