



# Best People Development & Training Strategies

Examples From  
10 Top Companies



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If you're reading this, then you already know, skills are the biggest challenge facing our future workforce. According to research from McKinsey, among workers open to changing jobs, 45% say the main barrier is needing more experience, skills, or credentials.<sup>1</sup>

To stay competitive, innovate, and sustain growth, companies—from the corner bakery to the Fortune 500—need better and faster ways to develop their people. This ebook is designed to give you recent, real-world examples from top companies running successful employee training programs.

#### Inside, you'll find:



Trends in learning  
and development



Best training and  
development  
programs examples



The strategies and  
principles that make  
them successful

Hopefully, you'll find something here you can adapt  
and take away to your own organization.

<sup>1</sup> McKinsey, "The Upskilling Imperative: Required at Scale for the Future of Work."



# What's buzzing in people development for 2026?

Here are the trends that are shaping how to develop people effectively in 2026.



## Skills-first learning takes priority

We're facing a "skills crisis". LinkedIn reports 49% of executives worry employees don't have the right skills to execute business strategy.<sup>2</sup>

To keep up with market changes, organizations have to invest in continuous, role-based learning. Many are focusing on just-in-time resources, targeted upskilling, and building a culture of continuous learning.



## AI personalizes the learning experience

Employees want learning that adapts to them, just like their favorite apps. Companies that use personalized learning effectively see an average of 10-15% revenue lift, with some companies gaining up to 25%.<sup>3</sup>

AI will assist in creating customized learning paths, with recommended resources based on individual progress and goals. Microlearning and modular design step in to help busy employees and leaders learn in bite-sized pieces, when it fits their schedule.

<sup>2</sup> LinkedIn, "Workplace Learning Report 2025: The Rise of Career Champions."

<sup>3</sup> McKinsey, "The Value of Getting Personalization Right—Or Wrong—Is Multiplying."



## People-centered learning presents an opportunity

In a world where AI handles routine tasks and skills quickly grow outdated, human-centered approaches still matter: empathy, emotional intelligence, and resilience will become more important (not less). People-based learning strategies like coaching, mentorship, and peer-to-peer learning offer the connections and real-time knowledge transfer that automated training simply can't.

Smart organizations scale their coaching or mentorship programs through platforms that match participants, track progress, and provide support along the way.

## Data drives learning decisions

The days of measuring success through completion rates are over. With access to detailed analytics, you can identify skill gaps, track progress against goals, and easily prove ROI to executives.

Instead of vanity metrics, the right tools can help you measure skill progression, business impact, and how learning translates to better job performance and business outcomes. Beyond making the execs happy, you can use the data to optimize learning for participants.



# Examples of companies with great people development and training programs

These 10 companies are running some of the best employee training and development programs out there. Let's see what we can learn from them.

## 1. Amazon



Amazon has not one or two, but nine upskilling and training programs for employees.<sup>4</sup> Here are a few highlights:

**Amazon Technical Apprenticeship Program** - By combining paid classroom training with hands-on apprenticeships, this program creates direct pathways to technical roles like cloud support associate and software development engineer.

**Career Choice Program** - Amazon's pre-paid tuition program has trained over 250,000 employees across 14 countries for high-demand careers—including aircraft mechanics, medical assistants, and IT specialists. In response to employee demand, they later added foundational skills like GED completion and English language learning.

**Mechatronics and Robotics Apprenticeship** - Participants receive two significant pay increases during the program (23% after classroom phase, additional 26% after on-the-job training), earning them up to \$21,500 more annually than entry-level roles.

**Machine Learning University (MLU)** - This flexible program helps tech employees gain ML skills through six-week modules requiring just half to one day per week, taught by 400+ Amazon ML scientists.

<sup>4</sup> Amazon, "9 Free Skills Training Programs That Help Amazon Employees Land Higher-Paying Roles."



### Why we love it



Amazon's programs showcase multiple learning formats, clear career progression, and measurable financial outcomes. They also demonstrate the power of feedback loops—when employees requested foundational education options, Amazon responded by creating GED and English language programs that have since graduated thousands of workers.

## 2. General Electric (GE)



GE has built a reputation for developing leaders at every career stage, from new graduates to career changers.

**Take2Flight Career Relaunch Program** - GE Aerospace's 12-week program helps people return to full-time tech jobs after taking time off for family, military service, or other reasons. Participants get personalized training, mentorship, and a support group of others making a career change.<sup>5</sup>

**Commercial Leadership Program (CLP)** - This 2-year program trains participants in sales, marketing, and commercial operations via on-the-job rotations. Participants get real business responsibility, structured training, mentorship from company leaders, and work with a cohort of other young professionals.<sup>6</sup>

**Early career development programs** - Other rotation programs for new graduates in different areas include supply chain, digital leadership, financial development, and engineering—each giving hands-on experience across multiple roles.<sup>7</sup>

### Why we love it



GE treats career gaps and non-traditional paths as strengths, not weaknesses. Their programs emphasize practical experience, offer clear paths for advancement, and pair participants with senior mentors—showing that the best companies invest in people at every career stage.

<sup>5</sup> GE Aerospace, "See Your Future Take Flight! Experienced Career Relaunch Program."

<sup>6</sup> GE Aerospace, "Commercial Leadership Program."

<sup>7</sup> GE Appliances, "Development Programs."



### 3. PepsiCo – Digital Academy



Like Amazon, PepsiCo offers a full landscape of learning programs from basic skills to full degrees, all company-funded. The cola maker's Digital Academy shows how strategic training can reshape an entire workforce.<sup>8</sup>

Employees get a foundational understanding of data and analytics and how to apply them in their daily roles. So far, roughly 27,000 employees have participated in digital training, with almost 140,000 views on digital training content. More importantly, employees are finding new career paths within the company.

The impact is real: One HR employee took data analytics courses through the program and landed a new role, where she now uses advanced analytics to solve HR problems.<sup>9</sup>

#### Why we love it



PepsiCo's Digital Academy ties training directly to business strategy. Instead of generic courses, it builds skills for digital transformation, opens career paths, and delivers measurable ROI through employee growth and business impact.

### 4. Walmart



Perhaps nothing can prepare a retail employee for the craziness of a Black Friday sale—except being there. Walmart uses virtual reality (VR) training to do exactly that<sup>10</sup>. Their VR training program simulates real-world scenarios like customer conflicts or a new store setup. PwC found that learners completed VR training 4 times faster than classroom training<sup>11</sup>. They also reported feeling more engaged, focused, and confident compared to other types of learners.

#### Why we love it



With VR training in effect since 2018, Walmart leads the pack in leveraging technology to train employees better and faster. They're mixing innovative formats with real-world scenarios to keep people engaged while solving actual business challenges—exactly the kind of tech integration and practical application that makes training stick.

<sup>8</sup> The Aspen Institute, "Case Study: Upskilling for Career Mobility at PepsiCo."

<sup>9</sup> CIO, "PepsiCo Transforms for the Digital Era."

<sup>10</sup> HR Retail, "Walmart Expands Its Use of VR for Training and Recruitment."

<sup>11</sup> PWC, "PWC's Study into the Effectiveness of VR for Soft Skills Training."





## 5. Chipotle



Turnover in the fast-food industry is high; a single KFC or Taco Bell store may easily churn through an entire workforce in a year. With managers scrambling to staff their stores, there's little time for strategic goals.

Chipotle attempts to buck this trend by investing more in its employees. The company offers a range of benefits and training programs for team members. Their robust internal mobility program shows new employees they'll have a chance to grow—nearly 90% of restaurant leadership started as crew members.<sup>12</sup>

Beyond career advancement, Chipotle has implemented new benefits to support employees' financial and mental well-being, a student loan retirement match, a special Visa card to help build credit, and free access to mental health resources.

### Why we love it



Chipotle's strategy works because it addresses the root cause of high turnover. They provide clear growth pathways, inclusive opportunities for all employees, and address well-being—showing they understand what employees care about most. By supporting its people, the company builds a more loyal and skilled workforce. Win win.



<sup>12</sup> Chipotle, "Chipotle Introduces New Benefits to Help Attract and Supports Its Growing Gen Z Workforce."



## 6. Marriott International



Marriott International prides itself on being a people-first culture, and it shows. With over 800,000 employees worldwide, the company is consistently ranked as one of the best places to work.<sup>13</sup>

As part of a larger strategy to attract and retain loyal team members, Marriott offers multiple training programs for employee development:

- **Early Career Programs** are intended to help recent university graduates build a career in hospitality management with support from the company. Programs and opportunities include internships and apprenticeships, direct placement opportunities, and the prestigious Global Voyage Leadership Development program.<sup>14</sup>
- **The Marriott Development Academy (MDA)** - Forget an MBA—get your MDA with the Marriott Development Academy. MDA programs are not tied to specific titles, with programs in finance, food and beverage, engineering, and more.<sup>15</sup>

### Why we love it



Marriott's approach is a great example of strategic upskilling. Instead of generic training, their programs link candidates directly to careers within the company. This helps to attract and retain talent by creating a pathway for long-term development.



<sup>13</sup> Egon Zehnder, "How a People-First Culture Has Paid Off for Marriott International."

<sup>14</sup> The Life at Marriott Blog, "Everything You Need to Know About Marriott's Voyage Program."

<sup>15</sup> Marriott, "MDA."



## 7. Compass Group



Managing over 10,000 employees across hundreds of locations isn't easy, especially when managers are asking for more support. Realizing that people want different things out of mentorship, Compass Group created two distinct programs. "Connect" offers casual peer support, while "Grow" provides structured, long-term career mentorship.

A "New Year, New Mentor" campaign drove a 39% spike in scheduled sessions, with participants continuing to book additional sessions independently. Both programs maintain high satisfaction ratings (3.86-3.96 out of 4).<sup>16</sup>

### Why we love it



Compass Group nailed personalized learning paths by offering two mentorship tracks that meet different employee needs. By using mentorship software to integrate with existing technology like Outlook and Teams, they made participation effortless and were able to deliver measurable engagement results across a dispersed workforce.

## 8. Netflix



Creating internal training at scale is expensive—unless you tap into the expertise you already have. Netflix's Developer Education (DevEd) team turns subject matter experts into part-time instructors for their peers.<sup>17</sup>

One standout example is "Oops Training," created by a Netflix team to help engineers get better at handling incidents. Instead of hiring external consultants or building a formal curriculum from scratch, they let the people who live with these challenges daily design and deliver the training.

Netflix also applies this peer-learning approach beyond engineering. Their Series Director Development Program identifies and develops directing talent from within, creating pathways for creative professionals to advance in their careers while keeping that knowledge and culture in-house.<sup>18</sup>

### Why we love it



Netflix shows how to scale learning by leveraging internal expertise rather than external hiring. They're creating multiple learning formats led by people who understand real workplace challenges, building a genuine culture of continuous, employee-led learning.

<sup>16</sup> Together, "Case Study: Compass Group."

<sup>17</sup> Plus Plus, "Netflix Shares Their Internal Training Checklists."

<sup>18</sup> Netflix, "Introducing the Inaugural Cohort from the First-Ever Netflix Series Director Development Program."

## 9. Siemens



Siemens recognizes that as the world of work changes, so should the way they manage, lead, and train. To reach more people within a highly distributed workforce, the company rolled out digital learning through Coursera and LinkedIn Learning. They also expanded training opportunities to include mentorship, work-study, and personal development programs. With Mentor Pod Marketplace, senior leaders (including the U.S. CEO and CFO of Siemens) lead virtual mentoring groups and host meetings with mentees through an online forum.

To embed learning and development into company life, Siemens set up support measures such as goal tracking, home screen reminders, and the opportunity for coaching support.

### Why we love it



Siemens shows how training models can adapt to changes, proving that the right systems can turn disruption into opportunity. They combined outsourcing, technology integration, and employee engagement to improve access to training across a global workforce.

## 10. AMD



People development is woven into the culture at AMD, with programs at every level. Some are specifically designed to support underrepresented groups in engineering and technology roles. For example, they have at least two strategic pathways for women to advance in technical leadership roles.<sup>19</sup>

- Women in Engineering Mentoring
- Female Fellow Pipeline Mentoring

AMD also runs active employee resource groups for veterans, women, and other communities, and partners with external organizations to develop STEM talent across the industry—showing their commitment extends beyond their own walls.

### Why we love it



AMD shows that inclusive and accessible opportunities aren't add-ons—they're core business strategy. Some say AMD's investment in leadership development, technical skills, cross-functional collaboration, and work-life balance is part of what keeps the brand competitive.

<sup>19</sup> AMD, "Driving Personal and Professional Development Through Mentorship."



# Types of employee training and development programs

When it comes to the “how” of developing people, most corporate training programs cover the basics: online reading materials, self-paced courses, once-a-month meetings, perhaps an annual compulsory training.

That’s all fine and necessary—but if you really want employees to feel challenged, motivated, and equipped to excel at their jobs, you need to go beyond basic.

The most effective people development strategies include a mix of these three areas:

## Foundational learning (Getting people ready)



- **Onboarding & integration:** Comprehensive introduction covering culture, role-specific tools, workflows, and early mentorship
- **Compliance & safety training:** Essential legal, ethical, and safety standards relevant to roles and industry

## Skill development programs (Building capabilities)



- **Technical skills training:** Job-specific capabilities including software, certifications, and emerging technologies like AI
- **Leadership development and management training programs:** Strategic thinking, decision-making, and communication skills for current and future leaders
- **Soft skills training:** Interpersonal abilities like communication, time management, and emotional intelligence

## Growth & advancement programs (Long-term development)



- **Mentorship & coaching:** Personalized guidance through structured mentor relationships and professional coaching
- **Career development & internal mobility:** Upskilling, reskilling, and cross-functional experience through job rotation
- **Employee wellbeing:** Mindfulness coaching, financial literacy, or diversity, equity & inclusion initiatives

# What makes a people development program successful?

Now, here's the million-dollar-question: what makes an employee development program great? What takes it beyond obligatory, and turns it into something employees enjoy—something they post about on LinkedIn and brag about to their friends?

**The most successful employee training programs share several key characteristics:**

- 1 Clear alignment with business and product goals
- 2 Leadership buy-in and involvement from day one
- 3 Dedicated budget and resources for execution
- 4 Personalized learning paths based on roles, levels, and goals
- 5 Technology integration for program support and enhancement (LMS, mentoring software, VR, AI)
- 6 Multiple learning formats (job shadowing, group training, mentorship, online and offline components)
- 7 Measurement plans tied to outcomes (not just completion rates)
- 8 Feedback loops to continuously improve content and delivery
- 9 Accessible and inclusive opportunities for all employees
- 10 Company-wide culture of continuous learning
- 11 Career development pathways that include leadership training, internal mobility, and upskilling opportunities
- 12 Agile training models that can adapt quickly to technological changes
- 13 Gamification and engagement strategies to maintain learner motivation
- 14 Diversity and cultural sensitivity training components
- 15 Multilingual and accessible content for global workforces

If this sounds like a lot, that's because it is. Don't panic. You don't have to have every aspect in every program from day one. Use this list as a guideline. Consider the business and employee outcomes most important to you and build from there.



# The power of a blended approach

As we've seen, no single learning format can solve every challenge. The most successful organizations understand that the future of L&D isn't about choosing between technology and human connection; it's about finding the right mix.

While AI and online courses facilitate learning on-demand and help you scale, only people-based strategies—like coaching, mentorship, and peer learning—can provide empathy, real-time connection, and lived experience.

By combining multiple approaches, and applying them throughout the full employee lifecycle, you can build a comprehensive program that truly prepares your workforce for the future.





# Ready to turn insights into action?

The most effective people development programs are strategic, blended, and built for your unique workforce. To achieve that, companies must find a way to scale the human-centered learning that employees crave.

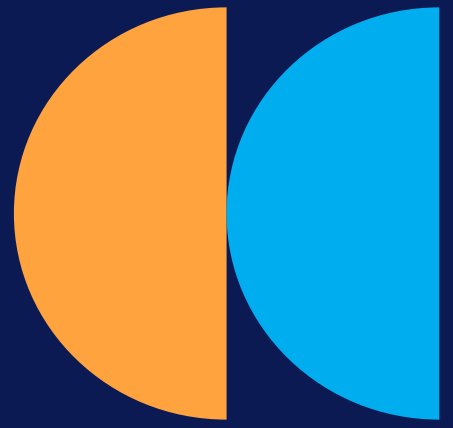
The good news is, a people-centered approach doesn't have to be high-maintenance. With the right tools, you can build and scale a human-driven program without the administrative burden. Mentoring software, for example, can automate time-consuming tasks like matching participants, marketing, and managing the program, all while collecting the data you need to prove its impact.

If you're ready to apply these principles to your own organization, the next step is to find the right platform that can help you get there.

## **Book a 15-minute call**

With our team to see how we can support you in your goals.





# About Together

Together's mentoring software empowers enterprise organizations to drive performance through relationships. Whether you're running traditional 1:1 mentoring programs, peer or group mentoring programs, or just want to connect employees over a cup of coffee, Together matches employees at scale.

Together has consistently been granted the #1 mentorship software award for user experience by G2, the world's leading software review site.

## Together Administrators Report...

**94%**



Improved  
Employee Skills

**95%**



A More Connected  
Company

**100%**



Improved Inclusion  
and Support

**79%**



Improved Retention

## Some of our customers include



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