



5 BEST PRACTICES FOR GROWING TECH TALENT THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

Lessons from Leading Companies

skillsoft®

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic has turned years of talk about digital transformation into action overnight. Technology change, which was already happening at a fevered pace, has accelerated. And technical teams are carrying the burden of this rapid shift.

Not only are technical professionals facing new challenges due to distributed workforces, but that's compounded by their being remote themselves. Along with that pressure is the need to keep the business running, introduce new technologies, expand their skill sets, and often do it all with fewer resources. The situation is daunting and skills transformation can easily be the piece that falls by the wayside.

But maintaining a focus on developing and reskilling technical talent now is key to navigating the current landscape and positioning your company for long-term success. So, how do you upskill or reskill technical resources to meet the accelerated pace of digital transformation? What are the best companies doing to engage, develop, and retain their top technical talent?



5 BEST PRACTICES FOR GROWING TECHNICAL TALENT FROM LEADING COMPANIES

This ebook will deliver 5 best practices for how you can grow your technical talent — often using tools and capabilities that already exist within your organization — in the midst of this turbulent environment. Discover how leading companies are achieving outstanding results by committing to the development of their technical talent.

- 1. Listen to What Employees Want (Standard Chartered)**
- 2. Focus on Experience to Stimulate Demand for Learning (Atos)**
- 3. Embrace Informal Learning (Datacom)**
- 4. Chart the Course to Career Growth (Singtel)**
- 5. Invest in Reskilling for Competitive Advantage (HCL)**



#1 LISTEN TO WHAT EMPLOYEES WANT

STANDARD CHARTERED BANK TAPS EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE FUTURE

How should a global organization prepare its employees for the future? Standard Chartered, the multinational bank that employs nearly 100,000 people across more than 60 countries, set out to determine that — not by creating a committee or hiring a consultant, but by asking.

So, what were the employees saying?

- “It’s hard to find useful content and resources when I need them to learn.”
- “We need more on-demand learning that gives me the flexibility to learn when and where I want.”
- “So much mandatory learning is pushed to me, and I just don’t have the time to focus on other areas of development.”
- “Learning is not personalized to me.”



To address this feedback, Standard Chartered turned to a technology-enabled learning solution that provided access to top classroom learning content when and how it was needed. They also provided an always-on learning environment for employees that housed:

- Learning academies for business-critical topics, like data & analytics, digital, new ways of working, and cyber security
- Industry and role-specific learning
- Key skills initiatives
- Broader learning topics to guarantee a 360-degree learning approach

Moreover, Standard Chartered created learning champions in each country, go-to learning “cheerleaders” that created region-specific learning content and helped create awareness and drive an improved learning experience for their employees. Another key mantra was to “Curate not Create” when it came to content and program development.

“A big driver for change was the ‘Voice of the Employees.’ We really listened to what our employees had to say about how they wanted to learn.”

**CASEY MEE, DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE CAPABILITY,
STANDARD CHARTERED BANK**



#2 FOCUS ON EXPERIENCE TO STIMULATE DEMAND FOR LEARNING

ATOS INCREASES TECHNICAL LEARNING BY 400% WITH ENHANCED EXPERIENCE

Atos, the top European company in cloud, cybersecurity, and high-performance computing, set out to shift from a top-down “push” model to a learner-led “pull” model, enabling employees to stay up-to-date with new learning in a time and fashion that works best for them.

With over 110,000 employees in more than 70 countries — and the vast majority in technical roles — the team at Atos was hyper-focused on regular skill-building and rapid certification. With technology changing and advancing more rapidly than ever before, continuous learning had gone from a nicety to a necessity, particularly in the cybersecurity industry.

Listening to employee feedback, Atos began to focus on the end-user experience. If they could find a way to enhance the user experience for learners — specifically ease of navigation, quality of recommendations, and speed of certification — Atos could stay ahead of the curve by increasing the number and quality of courses their employees would take.

Atos rolled out a digital learning experience platform that put the learner at the center of the experience. With a wide variety of course topics and mediums including books, video, live boot camps, recorded sessions, and audio-only summaries, this new digital learning experience software helped employees find what they needed, when they needed it, and in a way that worked for them.



“If learners don’t have a great experience with how they are learning, then it would be better to not have the experience at all. A bad experience can block people for a long time.”

**GUNTER DEUTSCH,
DEPUTY GLOBAL
HEAD OF
LEARNING &
DEVELOPMENT,
ATOS**

#3 EMBRACE INFORMAL LEARNING

DATACOM EMBEDS LEARNING IN THE FLOW OF WORK

With 50 years' experience in technology, Datacom has grown to be one of Asia Pacific's leading locally-owned IT-based service providers. However, in this industry, there is no resting on your laurels. Datacom knew they needed to be future-focused to stay competitive in an ever-evolving industry.

Datacom conducted a needs analysis to chart their path forward and focused on addressing two issues immediately.

Move from formal to fluid. Training occurred largely as point-in-time events at key sites and many employees struggled to take advantage. They were hungry for more flexible courses that could fit into their busy lifestyles, time zones, and locations. In response, Datacom implemented courses employees could take anywhere, anytime — even on their commute. Certificate programs provided structure and accountability, but employees were empowered to sharpen skills in a way that works for them.

Change the narrative. Learning was happening in a vacuum at Datacom, but a strong learning culture extends far beyond training and certificates. Datacom improved its communications to encourage micro-learning moments every day and elevate the role of their technical experts. Plus, they're recognizing employees upskilling their peers. They are seeing this organic learning happening in pockets and socializing it throughout the organization to inspire others.

While Datacom has made significant strides in their learning culture, they're just getting started. Establishing Datacom as a learning organization will help them continue to build credibility in the marketplace, attract top talent, and make employees feel like they work for an organization that values their development.

“Our goal is to create an environment where learning happens in the flow of work.”

**KAREN ROSS,
LEARNING AND
ORGANIZATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
MANAGER, DATACOM**

#4 CHART THE COURSE TO CAREER GROWTH

SINGTEL READIES EMPLOYEES FOR FUTURE ROLES WHILE REDUCING TRAINING COSTS

How do you future-proof your organization in a time of rapid technology change? This was the challenge that Singtel, the Singapore-based communications technology group, faced. To meet business needs in new areas like 5G, IoT, and cybersecurity, Singtel had to upskill its employees to enable them to thrive in the digital economy and prepare for future roles.

Creating a strategy to train employees for their current roles was challenging enough. To do so for roles that did not yet exist was uncharted territory. Without a training roadmap, employees would not be well-equipped for their careers in the longer term. An already limited talent pool in Singapore for emerging technologies meant that Singtel also needed to ensure its existing workforce developed the competencies to address the company's new businesses and technology needs swiftly.

Singtel mapped a clear direction to future roles and helped employees gain new knowledge and skills through curated learning channels. In addition, Singtel rolled out initiatives to raise awareness across the company about the 150,000 courses available to develop skills on key topics, including blockchain, IoT, and analytics. It aimed to turn every employee into a "digital citizen" and ensure everyone participated in this digital transformation journey.

With this 24/7 digital experience implemented, Singtel optimized its resources. Not only did Singtel bolster the skillsets of employees and accelerate the conversion to new roles, but by digitizing learning, Singtel also reduced its learning and development spend while expanding learning opportunities for employees.

"We always like to believe that employees will naturally turn to digital learning, in the way they are hooked to Netflix or Spotify, but this is far from the truth. Every organization needs to find its catalytic mix of 'ingredients' for employees to engage in digital learning actively."

**CHEE KEAT KOH,
DIRECTOR OF
LEARNING &
DEVELOPMENT,
SINGTEL**

#5 INVEST IN RESKILLING FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

HCL SAVES 30% BY RESKILLING TO MEET EVOLVING NEEDS

One thousand jobs were at risk. HCL Technologies had staffed up to focus on an industry that was going through difficult times. If they didn't figure out something fast, 1,000 employees would lose their jobs — people who counted on HCL to pay the bills and take care of their families.

Those 1,000 people had skills, but industry-specific skills HCL couldn't use as planned. Instead of eliminating the roles, the company committed to retrain them so they could be deployed in other places. That was the genesis of their STAR (School of Talent Acquisition and Reskilling) talent development program, a fundamental competitive advantage that has become critical to their growth.

Given the nature of being a technology service provider, they needed fast-moving, in-depth technology training. But they also needed engaging material that could adapt to employee needs and be delivered outside of the formal classroom. The changes resulted in a 150% increase in employee engagement via active learning. Just like the technology they teach, their learning approach also evolved.

Everything they've invested — in time, in money, in mindshare — has led to cost savings, employee loyalty and higher customer satisfaction. Best of all, these efforts benefit not only the company but also their people. Employees know when they come to work with HCL, they are likely to have a long, secure career that will evolve as quickly as the technology they support.



“An investment in our people has been an investment in our growth. Learning is our competitive advantage.”

**ASHOK MADAN,
ASSOCIATE VICE
PRESIDENT &
HEAD OF TALENT
TRANSFORMATION,
ENGINEERING AND
R&D SERVICES,
HCL TECHNOLOGIES**

SUMMARY

There are numerous ways to engage your employees in skills transformation and professional growth — even now. And focusing on employee development doesn't have to be onerous. The key is to make it a priority and to commit to making progress consistently.

- 1. Listen to what employees want.** Whether it's a broad study, a quick team survey, or as simple as asking a few questions in your regular one-on-one meetings, asking for input is an important step to building a culture of learning within your organization.
- 2. Focus on experience to stimulate demand for learning.** An inflexible or poor learning experience can squelch your employee's desire to invest in growth. Once you understand what your team considers a great experience, give them more of it. You'll often find that high-quality digital and remote learning also reduces costs while encouraging employees to build both required and desired skills.
- 3. Embrace informal learning.** Often, corporations get stuck in the belief that formal training courses are the primary way to learn new skills. Whether it's logistics or cost or availability of the emerging topics, this mindset can be very limiting. Instead, encourage your team to build knowledge any way they can, whether that's narrowly focused elearning, ebooks or audiobooks, virtual practice labs, or peer-to-peer education.
- 4. Chart the course to career growth.** Most employees are looking to grow in their careers, but most also don't understand exactly what it takes to get there. You can accelerate their readiness by providing prescriptive paths for building the skills required to take on a new role or grow to the next level.
- 5. Invest in reskilling for competitive advantage.** Securing top technical talent is competitive, costly, and time-consuming. At the same time, most organizations have dedicated team members who are looking to learn new skills and pursue in-demand careers. Migrating existing resources from traditional to emerging technology roles not only helps you fill new needs quickly and cost-effectively, but it also enriches your company culture and bolsters morale when employees see the company investing in them.

ABOUT SKILLSOFT

Skillsoft delivers digital learning, training, and talent solutions to help organizations unleash their edge. Leveraging immersive, engaging content, Skillsoft enables organizations to unlock the potential in their best assets — their people — and build teams with the skills they need for success. Empowering 45 million learners and counting, Skillsoft democratizes learning through an intelligent learning experience and a customized, learner-centric approach to skills development with resources for Leadership, Technology and Development, and Compliance.

Skillsoft and SumTotal are partners to thousands of leading global organizations, including many Fortune 500 companies. The company features three award-winning systems that support learning, performance and success: Skillsoft learning content, the Percipio intelligent learning experience platform, and the SumTotal suite for Talent Development, which offers measurable impact across the entire employee lifecycle.

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