

Tech Manufacturer Matches Workers to Experiential Learning Opportunities with Degreed

Client

ANONYMOUS

Manufacturer

Head Offices

North America

Industry

Technology

Employees

8,000+

Features Used

Degreed + Degreed Experiential Learning

Use Cases

Career Development, On-The-Job Learning, Internal Resourcing

Challenge

People wanted new learning opportunities, and leaders suspected a bold step could help people advance their careers by building skills through experience from within the company. L&D sought to scale and democratize the process of matching people to on-the-job development opportunities outside their current roles or teams.

Solution

Degreed-powered experiential learning provided an internal job exchange piloted to the Professional Services and Global Supply Chain teams.

Results

Experiential learning was a big success. In the first three months alone, people created 74 opportunities and made 27 selections for a 36.5% fill rate. The pilot saved the organization at least \$50,000 over a three-month period, a figure expected to expand dramatically. Workers gained new skills. Managers accessed new talent. And the company democratized development.

Summary

Leaders at a technology manufacturing company believed an important part of workforce learning was missing and more could be done to advance the development of their people and business.

Historically, workers only got chances to practice new skills when their managers directly offered stretch work or had a line of sight into a similar opportunity with another business unit. But L&D knew workers wanted to support their own advancement,

so learning leaders sought to scale and democratize opportunity matching — to give people new ways to connect and practice and apply knowledge in real work situations.

To start matching people to these key opportunities, learning leaders expanded their existing learning platform by launching experiential learning powered by Degreed.

Intuitive and easy to use, Degreed experiential learning helped workers build new skills by breaking out of their comfort zones. Managers, some of whom might have limited visibility to talent, were exposed to workers they might otherwise have interacted with — and got help getting work done faster.

In addition to saving the company money, the effort advanced a strong culture of inclusivity across the organization and helped standardize access to opportunity.



Challenge

Develop People in New Ways

Leaders at a technology manufacturing company knew more could be done to advance the development of their people and business. For several years, employee engagement surveys recorded lower than preferred scores, with respondents describing, in particular, a lack of career development opportunities.

To give people the learning they craved and help move the business forward, learning leaders realized workers needed a new way to build skills, especially emerging technology skills. In a big first step, the company's lean L&D team used the Degreed learning experience platform (LXP) and upskilling solution to power and scale an internal education network globally.

Employee engagement increased as workers accessed a wide range of internal and external learning content available online at their fingertips. Workers have self-rated their proficiency in 38,000 skills, completed 325,000 content items and given the network an average NPS, or net promoter score, of 29.

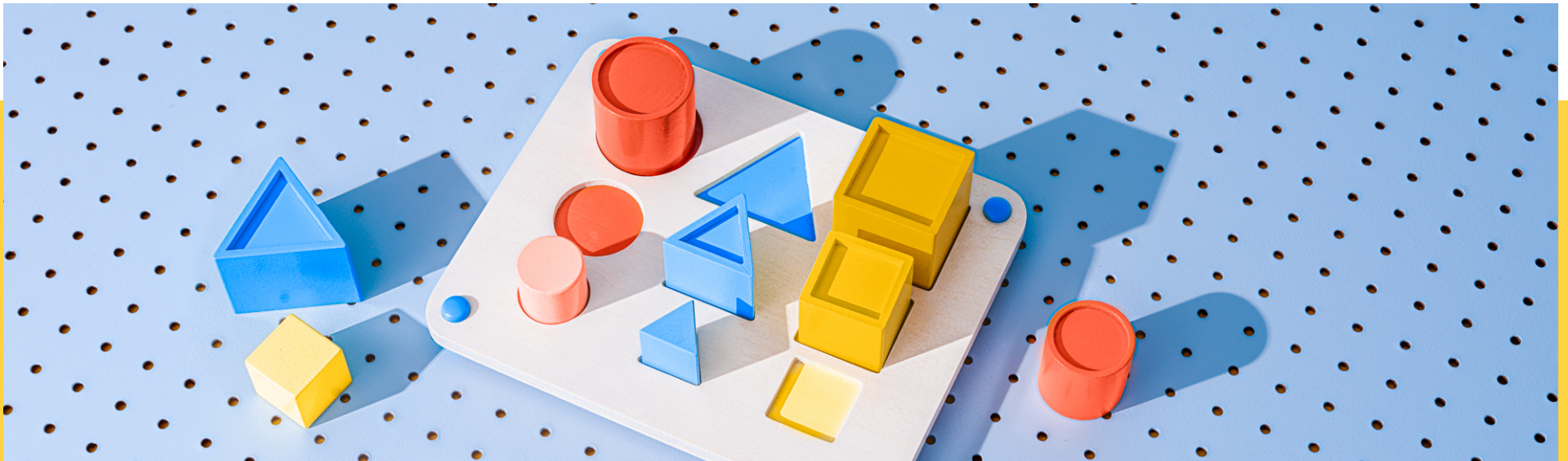
Still, learning leaders believed a bold next step could do even more to help people advance their careers — by matching them to on-the-job development opportunities outside their current roles or teams. The goal? Give managers the tools to make it possible, share talent and help people stretch and practice new skills while they're mentored in new ways.

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Historically, workers only got chances to practice new skills when their managers directly offered stretch work or had a line of sight into a similar opportunity with another business unit. But for a worker who didn’t naturally network or worked remotely, finding new opportunities proved daunting.

“Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, this is even more challenging,” said the company’s learning leader. “Think about coming into a company where you haven’t established networks yet. How would you ever get this type of exposure?”

While some teams tracked opportunities using spreadsheets or other rudimentary methods, L&D sought to scale and democratize opportunity matching across the entire organization.





Solution

Experiential Learning Powered by Degreed

To start matching people to opportunities, learning leaders expanded their existing learning platform by launching experiential learning powered by Degreed and piloting it to the Professional Services and Global Supply Chain teams.

The Professional Services team is tied to revenue-generating projects, and leaders rely on plug-and-play resourcing. They joined the pilot to help people grow and to see if they could promote these engagements and then match people to them quickly.

Global Supply Chain, a larger group of 1,800 people, joined the pilot to explore how the Degreed experiential learning functionality allows greater visibility into unfinished work to help get it done, the learning leader said. “They had shelved activities because they didn’t have resources. These were projects they all thought were valuable but they just couldn’t focus on, because demand was so great within their business.”

To help make the pilot successful, L&D created job aids targeting the participating populations, which included managers lending talent, opportunity owners receiving that talent, the workers themselves, and the company overall.



“We focused on the value proposition and for each population answered: ‘What’s in it for me?’” the learning leader said. “If I’m the lending manager, for example, I might have some resistance. I might think, ‘If I have someone on my team who has bandwidth, why would I not have them work on what I have?’

“For the opportunity owner, we tried to address whether they’re going to get someone as skilled as they would from a contracting house.”

“A big part of our company’s culture is to develop employees. And so, the point was that this is about reciprocity, that this is about you too. If you have an opportunity, you too could post it, and maybe you get someone who’s even more skilled in that area. The message was that it’s a win-win for everybody.”

Results

A New Way of Learning

In the first three months after the job exchange launched, staff created 74 opportunities and made 27 selections for a 36.5% fill rate.

Participants described the exchange as intuitive and easy to use. The pilot resulted in an estimated payroll savings of at least \$50,000 during the three months, a figure expected to expand dramatically as the program grows, according to learning leaders.

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Personal & Professional Growth

Workers who participated built new skills by breaking out of their comfort zones and applying new knowledge.

One customer services specialist who normally focuses on renewals rotated into a customer experience manager role and got deep insights into the entire customer experience across the organization's entire product portfolio, she said. "During this time, I had an opportunity to meet many talented people throughout our organization whose knowledge, drive and positive approach I found very inspiring, and it helped me to grow professionally and also on a personal level."

While some built skills, other workers primarily benefited by expanding their professional networks, the learning leader said. "They chose gigs that they could already do. For example, maybe they've already mastered a skill and know they'll do it well but want to purposefully meet with and be exposed to a certain leader. Maybe a project manager in Product chooses to do a gig within Marketing because they want that exposure. That was an 'aha' moment for us."

In another important benefit, Degreed decreased unconscious bias in opportunity selection processes, by broadening people's exposure to opportunities, the learning leader said.

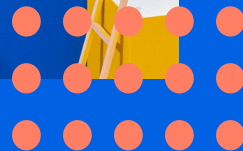
Positive feedback from workers answering questions like "Would you recommend this? Did you find it valuable? Did you learn?" was powerful, the learning leader said, adding managers also embraced the program.

Manager Support

Broadly speaking, managers tend to do well checking in with workers, rating people's performances, and providing feedback about goals specific to their workers' roles. But skill development and career coaching can be more challenging. The Degreed platform provides a vehicle and a structure for development.



“Degreed-powered experiential learning takes career development to a whole new level... It offers the business the capability of doing that at no additional cost.”



In addition, Degreed experiential learning provides managers anywhere in the world, some of whom might have limited visibility to talent, with exposure to workers they might otherwise never see.

Two senior managers said the program provided them with extra help and diversity of thought and helped them get work done faster. In one instance, time was limited and hiring a contractor didn't make sense. In another situation, a manager was able to help his team get work done thanks to help from a participant who tackled projects while learning Microsoft Power BI.


L&D Insights

Using Degreed, the learning team gained new insights that can help improve learning programs.

“For example, maybe there are opportunity owners who are not getting responses. That's reflected, giving us an opening to explore why,” the learning leader said. “Conversely, sometimes people gravitate to a project with a leader whose leadership is exceptional. And while there are certainly hard skills learned, perhaps just being able to see that manager's vision is valuable. The platform gives us data we can use to explore these factors further.”

Democratized Development

By increasing mobility and democratizing exposure to opportunities, the platform advances an already strong culture of inclusivity across the organization — and learning leaders hope to keep expanding access. The company's IT team is next, piloting Degreed-powered experiential learning to boost innovation by engaging with new talent.

“Degreed-powered experiential learning takes career development to a whole new level,” the learning leader said. “And while employee development has been our primary focus, Degreed has helped us in certain areas of our business where there are projects that we'd like to get after but perhaps we can't resource them or they're not prioritized. It offers the business the capability of doing that at no additional cost.” 





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