

DRA Global engineers a deeper learning culture



HQ: Perth, Australia | Industry: Mining & Metals | Company size: +4,500 employees

The solutions partner for the mining industry is giving a new generation of engineers the continuous, on-the-move learning experiences they need. DRA Global is a diversified global engineering, project delivery and operations management group with an impressive track record spanning more than three decades.

The Challenge

- Make online learning accessible to engineering consultants in the field
- Strengthen DRA Global's talent brand for an audience of engineering graduates
- Build a culture of self-directed learning and continuous skills improvement

The Solution

- 1,200 LinkedIn Learning licenses, covering DRA Global's roughly 1,000 knowledge workers, with scope for growth
- Segmented approach to launch, with divisional leaders making recommendations to their teams
- Gamification strategy for driving take-up, with managers competing to drive learning among their teams

The Results

- 65% of LinkedIn Learning licenses activated within the first year
- Average of 149.5 hours of content consumed every month
- DRA Global nominated for Best Culture of Learning at South Africa Talent Awards
- 50% of Learners are logging in twice or more per month

When your employees spend up to six months at a time working on location in remote parts of the world, fitting in time to learn new skills is a challenge. And yet for DRA global, which designs and manages engineering projects for the mining industry, such continuous learning is a vital element of its proposition to customers. It's also what talented graduate engineers expect from an employer.

"Engineering expertise is what we offer – and so continuing to develop our people's skills is really important," explains Tarryn Phillips, Talent Specialist at DRA Global in South Africa. "The millennials that our industry is now employing expect to be able to learn all the time and keep building their skills. However, a large proportion of their time is spent on-site rather than behind a desk – so we needed to give them the opportunity to learn from anywhere."

The appetite that engineers already had for learning helped to point towards the best solution. "As engineers, the people we employ are characteristically driven to learn," says Louise Dercksen, Vice President for EMEA HR at DRA Global. "Some employees were already using LinkedIn Learning individually, as consumers, and so that's where we started looking for the solution."

Comparing LinkedIn Learning to other online learning platforms confirmed why it was the ideal solution for DRA Global's mobile but learning-hungry workforce. "Our engineers work on billable hours and for them to be motivated to learn, it's important that they have the flexibility to fit learning around work," says Tarryn. "The fact that LinkedIn Learning works so well on-demand and has flexible, bite-sized modules makes it ideal. The intelligent learning suggestions that the algorithm makes help as well. Finally, it's also great that we can develop our own bespoke content and video and distribute them within the platform. That's got an important role to play in the learning culture that we're building."

Feeding its engineers' appetite for learning has helped to drive rapid adoption of LinkedIn Learning across DRA Global's roughly 1,000 knowledge workers, with an activation rate of 65% and an average of 149.5 hours of content consumed every month. Results like these and other results earned the business a nomination for Best Culture of Learning at LinkedIn's South Africa Talent Awards for 2019.

Building DRA Global's learning culture

Louise and Tarryn worked with DRA Global's senior management to develop a segmented approach to rolling out LinkedIn Learning. They reached out to leaders within each function and department to introduce the platform and recommend courses. "We worked hard on getting buy-in and commitment from the leadership team as we recognised that would be one of our key success factors," says Louise. "We didn't want to launch LinkedIn Learning with just a generic email from Tarryn. We wanted the recommendations to come from somebody our engineers would trust – the person they talk to about their career choices."

One of the senior leaders introducing content to their teams was DRA Global's Senior Vice President Engineering, Erich Meintjes. "I think the idea of senior managers sending out content links for colleagues in their teams has been really effective," he says. "It seems to play really well in getting people's attention – and they are much more likely to explore those courses."

It all plays into the culture of self-directed learning that Louise and Tarryn have made a conscious effort to cultivate at DRA Global. They've chosen to give employees wide-ranging freedom to explore the courses that they believe to have most value. "We're happy for this to be driven by users' needs rather than by company policies and procedures," says Erich. "We don't prescribe how people use it and many of them have the freedom to explore this in their own time."

One technique that the team has used to incentivise spending time on particular skills is gamification. "We thrive on competition," says Tarryn. "When we want to focus on a priority business area, or one of our company values, we hold a competition or launch an incentive for learning about it. It's just another way of engaging people that helps to fill out this broader experience of learning that we're trying to create."

What the learners say:

"I've been working towards my Project Managers Professional Certification, which requires me to log 60 hours of training in a year. Flexible learning through LinkedIn Learning has made a huge difference as I can easily find myself working on location at a mine for a year at a time. The quality has been really consistent and the functionality works really well for me, as I can search for accredited courses from the Project Managers Institute. Before we had LinkedIn Learning, I would need to book three days off work and physically go to do a course somewhere. Being able to learn at lunchtimes and outside working hours, wherever I am, makes all the difference."

Bradley Kiggan,
Mechanical Project Engineer,
DRA Global



"When we first made the call on getting LinkedIn Learning, the natural concern was how good the content would turn out to be. I have to say, there's been no issue with that at all! It's like a great library where all you need to do is find the right book. There's such a broad range, the quality is never lacking, and it's a simple platform to use."

Erich Meintjes,
Senior Vice President, Engineering,
DRA Global

