



The Foster + Partners blueprint for building a learning culture

Industry: Architecture & Planning

No. of Employees: 1,500

Foster + Partners

Foster + Partners is a global studio for architecture, urbanism and design, all rooted in sustainability and founded by Norman Foster in 1967. Since then, he and the team around him have established an international practice with a worldwide reputation. With offices across the globe, we work as a single studio that is both ethnically and culturally diverse.

The Challenge

- Provide a mobile-friendly learning experience
- Deliver in-depth content on a range of technical and personal skills
- Offer an alternative to classroom learning

The Solution

- 1,500 LinkedIn Learning licenses, to cover entire firm
- Bespoke learning paths uploaded, curated and distributed on the platform
- Influencer-based campaign for raising awareness

The Results



- Over 30,000 videos watched
- More than 400 courses completed
- 289 customised learning paths completed

Less than a year after launch, more than half of all employees at the leading architecture firm are already advocates of LinkedIn Learning.

Education and training are fundamental to an architecture firm. At Foster + Partners, the architects behind London's iconic 'Gherkin' building and Apple's flagship Fifth Avenue store in New York City, that commitment involves running a fully fledged university for graduate architects completing their qualifications. And as Head of Learning and Development Laggi Diamandi explains, it also involves providing any learning opportunity that can help colleagues to do their jobs better.

"We look at tactical training that relates directly to professional development, helping people to learn the skills they need when they need them," he says. "And we combine these with personal skills such as management and leadership."

Foster + Partners had experimented with different options for online learning, but it was only with LinkedIn Learning that Laggi discovered an experience that met the firm's needs. "We wanted something really sharp and easy to use that would deliver a good experience on a mobile – and nobody else does mobile learning as well as LinkedIn Learning," says Laggi. "We were impressed by the user interaction and how easy it is to find what you're looking for."

Content was another key factor persuading Laggi and his team to invest in a company-wide LinkedIn Learning License. "The depth of content on the platform is well-known among architects," he says. "I'd say 90% of the creative software that we use has a course available on LinkedIn Learning – and the level of detail that they go into is ideal for us."

That depth of content has swiftly turned those using LinkedIn Learning into advocates – and built momentum across the firm’s 1,500 employees worldwide. Within just eight months of launch, 54% of those employees are engaged on the platform, consuming over 30,000 videos and completing 400 courses between them.

“We’ve swiftly reached a point where I can say to people asking me to go on a course that they should try LinkedIn Learning first, before considering face-to-face training,” says Laggi. “As a result, we’ve been able to reduce our classroom training budget and put more emphasis on online learning. We’re at the start of a real cultural shift, and I anticipate 90% of our employees being active on the platform within the next year or so.”

Designing a strategy for a learning culture

Foster + Partners took a gradual approach to rolling out LinkedIn Learning, with an emphasis on engaging influencers within the business, and developing learning paths to suit a range of training needs. “We’ve been introducing the platform to key people in in-depth sessions so that they can share their experience and advocate for it,” says Laggi. “Our HR Director is a great example of an influencer who’s now pushing for everyone to engage with LinkedIn Learning. It’s an approach that works particularly well for a business this size.”

When employees approach Laggi and his team with training needs, LinkedIn Learning is seen as either the best option or an important supporting platform. “Planning training can take a couple of weeks, but with project deadlines our people often need to pick up skills or grasp a concept more urgently,” he says. “There’s no better way to meet those needs than on LinkedIn Learning.”

To reinforce the value of LinkedIn Learning content, Foster + Partners has created a range of bespoke learning paths that are emailed as follow-up content for those attending courses – and highlighted for employees logged into the platform. “We’ve created paths around managing people and leadership, and others around architectural software like Rhino, Revit and AutoCAD,” says Laggi. “Our Adobe training team has also created content around InDesign, Illustrator and Photoshop. It’s easy and straightforward to upload this type of content using LinkedIn Learning.”

What the learners say:

“LinkedIn Learning has been a game-changer for me in regard to eLearning resources. In previous jobs I’ve used platforms like Global eTraining or CADLearning, but they didn’t have the variety of courses that LinkedIn Learning does.

At a firm like Foster + Partners, we’re always exploring new ways of doing things. This requires a continuous learning culture. The fact that we can find content targeted to specific learning objectives is always very helpful. It means we can overcome challenges incredibly quickly, and learn new things every day.

At the beginning I set myself a learning objective of one hour a week, thinking that it would be difficult to achieve. As it happens, I actually spend one hour each day listening to LinkedIn courses while I’m working, from technical content to personal growth, management, and more. It’s a very engaging way to learn.”

Lola Carbajal Moro
Associate,
Foster + Partners



“My team needs a range of multi-disciplinary skills, from running a Service Desk and Contract Management through to Budget Management and more. LinkedIn Learning has been a key tool for improving capability. It allows my people to build on existing skills to complete their day-to-day job, and then explore other areas they would like to develop themselves in. The course material is relevant, engaging, effective, and very little encouragement is required to get the team to use the platform. It’s easy to evaluate and assess your training efforts, and so the return on investment is a no-brainer.”

Saty Gahir
Head of IT Service Delivery,
Partner Foster + Partners

