



Driving positive change: How LinkedIn Learning has transformed the way Lotus employees learn

Success story

Winning at transformational change

In October 2021, high-performance sports car manufacturer Lotus was named 'Manufacturer of the Year' at the News UK Motor Awards 2021. The judges proclaimed Lotus as a worthy winner and cited the company's impressive additions to its range and pioneering and exciting product developments as reasons for the win. Two months later, Lotus Engineering – the consultancy side of the business – was honoured as 'Dynamics Team of the Year' in the prestigious Vehicle Dynamics International Awards.

Both honours were embraced by Matt Windle, Managing Director of Lotus Cars, who said they were testament to the hard work and dedication of Lotus' employees, who had worked tirelessly to transform the business. In fact, both are a fitting tribute to extensive organisational changes that have been implemented in recent years – including product development, employee development and performance management – because Lotus had big plans for its future.



Challenge

Engaging the workforce to communicate a vision

When Alex Taylor, Learning and Development Manager, joined Lotus Cars in 2019, the business was already undergoing large organisational changes. It had entered a period of huge growth; fresh new talent was being hired rapidly and changes were being made to the company's site, infrastructure, and manufacturing processes.

To explain these changes and to help employees understand the company's new vision, it was important that Lotus engaged its workforce in the most effective way. Especially as Lotus had launched a performance management programme and systemised it on a tool called Success Factors, which it had also implemented in 2019.

It was crucial that all employees learned how to use the system. But how could Lotus engage all employees quickly and train them in the company's new systems? And how could Lotus motivate employees to learn new skills and embrace performance management as a positive process?

Solution

Accessing relevant learning modules quickly

The adoption of LinkedIn Learning was one way in which Lotus could have a positive impact on employee development. Alex explained: "When I joined Lotus, the company was undergoing a massive transformation. Training was sporadic and very traditional, delivered in a classroom. It needed to change. There was a need to reach larger audiences and we had to translate content. It needed to be highly accessible and high-quality, but we didn't have years to get to that point."

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Results



High activation rate

LinkedIn Learning licence activation rate is 99%



Thousands of video views

70,293 videos and 4,417 hours watched since launch



200% above target

In the last three months, Lotus has recommended 98 pieces of content to employees – almost 200 per cent above target



Alex oversaw the adoption of LinkedIn Learning and it was being used to successfully deliver technical and soft skills training to all Lotus employees. Then Covid-19 hit. “Our adoption of digital-based learning methodology was not driven by the pandemic but it was accelerated. For example, suddenly there was a need to deliver new content that we’d never previously required, such as remote working guidance and support.

Alex explained further: “LinkedIn was influential. Our learning and development team at Lotus is small and so we don’t have the resource to craft and create only bespoke content. We needed something that we could pick up and run with and supplement with bespoke content as needed.”

He added: “One of our immediate challenges was to relaunch and look after Lotus’ performance management process, rewriting it and systemising it; looking at the different strands within the business and analysing the skills needed to drive quality into that process.”

Adding value with training

Talent development and career pathways were new concepts to Lotus employees who had not previously worked in progressive working environments. Performance management, in particular, had negative connotations attached to it; immediately, some employees thought that they would be told that there was something wrong with their performance and so it was important that Alex and his team managed any negative undertones associated with performance reviews and management.

He continued: “We couldn’t leverage all our training from pre-existing LinkedIn Learning content, but we could see where it could add value. We created learning paths that talked about: What is performance management and what does it mean to have feedback conversations? Then, we created our own bespoke content – short modules that looked at the fundamentals of how to use Success Factors and what performance management means to Lotus. We had 1,300 colleagues who needed to know how to use the new system, but we couldn’t pull that many people away for a day’s training – it just wasn’t feasible in the timeframe.”

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For Lotus, LinkedIn Learning has delivered a platform which has allowed our employees to learn and develop into a variety of different areas. The ease of access has been a real valuable asset both to employees and our business ensuring we have continued to grow and gain new skills. 24669 LinkedIn Learning videos have been watched in the last 12 months which is helping us achieve our ambitious targets for growth and people development.”



Matt Windle

Lotus Cars Managing Director

Selecting meaningful and appropriate content

A digital and modular solution was the way forward. Lotus created two LinkedIn Learning pathways, a culmination of LinkedIn Learning and bespoke content. The pathways walked colleagues from all departments – those who were office-based and those within Lotus’ manufacturing facility – through the new performance management process. Alex used LinkedIn Learning’s Content Map tool and populated it with skills and competencies important to the business. This in turn created Learning Paths and Collections that increased LinkedIn Learning licence activation and engagement.

“We knew that if we drew people to the platform around a core process that they had to understand, we would drive engagement,” he explained.

However, Alex and his team faced a challenge – there is too much content on LinkedIn Learning. “There is just so much that you have to distil what is meaningful and appropriate to our employees. We took some of that burden away from our employees and found content that aligned with our behaviours, principles and values. If an employee had 20 minutes to spend learning, we didn’t want them to spend most of that looking for the best video. We created pathways that we thought worked and spent time adding value.”

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Once you start using LinkedIn Learning, you are on this journey of self-discovery and learning.”



Alex Taylor

Learning and Development
Manager at Lotus

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Engage, encourage, and congratulate

LinkedIn Learning was well-received. Lotus used gamification to increase engagement and leveraged the fact that leaders and managers take great pride in their teams being the first to complete a task, to be on track or on time. Alex created a league table. The results were fed regularly to leadership teams and an internal competition was created. LinkedIn Learning's promotional tools were used, and Lotus' exciting new adoption of the learning platform was shared across many internal communication channels. Employees were encouraged to explore content freely. As engagement increased, Learning Paths and Collections were suggested.

Action-based learning sets were also created. These worked especially within manufacturing where time management is critical. Specific learning frameworks encouraged employees to focus on content within a set period. Alex commented: "We shared the content and gave people two weeks to watch it. Employees would then come together to discuss the content and focus on actions because of it. As a result, the way we communicate as a business is better, manufacturing productivity has increased, and we are more transparent."

What the learners say



LinkedIn Learning brings together knowledge, experience and practical advice from around the world and puts it within our reach. The format and search function offer a great user experience and the way we have been able to tailor our learning, develop packages and pathways for our varied and diverse workforce, and focus on business priorities is extremely efficient and effective. Investing in personal growth is so important and LinkedIn Learning makes it easy to do, on your own terms."



Krishani Ranaweera

Employee Engagement
and Culture Lead

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A fit-for-purpose hub of learning resources

Transparency is key to Lotus' growth and transformation journey. The car manufacturer has made huge commitments to workforce development to aid growth, and this has been further amplified through Lotus' adoption of LinkedIn Learning Hub and the creation of a Management Development initiative. The latter includes training on coaching, feedback, mentoring and change management. Its implementation has been so successful that Lotus found a direct correlation between the top courses viewed – Leadership and Management – and its strategic rollout of the initiative.

But that's not all. The company has also adopted several new features from the LinkedIn Learning Hub that helps companies to combine all learning resources – LinkedIn Learning content, third-party training and custom content – and recommends them to employees.

For example, Lotus can now create content using LinkedIn Learning Hub's Campaign feature and target specific groups of employees. Furthermore, it can run multiple campaigns at once. This benefits the manufacturer as it allows it to make targeted content recommendations, guiding different sets of learners to specific content. This directly impacts on engagement.

Learning at the heart of Lotus

"By default, if you are not on LinkedIn, you are missing out on something," Alex concluded. "Once you start using LinkedIn Learning, you are on this journey of self-discovery and learning."

"We work hard to get new recruits onto LinkedIn Learning quickly and we're acquiring more licences. That's because this great eco-system has been built and it's going well. If we need anything, the support is there and where we've come from in such a short space of time is phenomenal."

"When I joined Lotus we had barely dipped a toe in the water of meaningful learning and development. Two years later, we have LinkedIn Learning which sits at the heart and core of what we do, and proud that we've managed to develop and deliver career streams, more integrated talent management, career pathways, competencies and skills, and LinkedIn has helped us to do that."

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