

Mini eBook: Building a Business Case for Your Learning Solution

May 2024





Introduction

Struggling to figure out which HR tech systems are worth your time and which ones are just hype? Know that GenAI can boost productivity but not sure where to start? And once you choose a solution, do you need to convince your team and prove its value to the business?

Here's how to make a compelling case, without drowning in jargon or tech talk.

Where Are We Now?

In today's economic climate, securing development budgets can be like trying to find a needle in a haystack, depending on whether we're in boom or bust times:

- **Boom Times:** Companies often find it easier to justify investments in learning, thanks to increased profits and optimistic future projections.
- **Bust Times:** Companies may cut back on spending, including learning and development funds.

It might seem obvious, but when is the best time to secure a budget for learning solutions?

Yep, you guessed it, during Boom Times... which makes it all the more challenging if we look at the economic outlook below.



Current Economic Outlook

UK GDP Growth: As of 2024, projections indicate stagnant economic growth. This can lead to tighter budgets and a more cautious approach to spending on areas like employee upskilling/reskilling.





The Power of 1

It costs your business time and money to implement new systems. You've likely recently implemented a large HCM system, and the goal is to ensure minimal systems while optimizing capability with what you have.

There are sometimes gaps, though. Ensuring an integrated user experience and connected data are critical considerations.

Challenges in Learning and Development:

Aside from the economy being a bit worse for wear (we can't fix that!), here are some other challenges L&D and HR leaders are facing:

- **Proving ROI:** Demonstrating the return on investment for learning; organizations need tangible proof that learning initiatives are worth the expense.
- **Skill Gap Impact:** A widening skills gap is impacting productivity, making effective reskilling and upskilling strategies more critical.
- **Reskill or Hire:** Companies are evaluating whether to invest in upskilling/reskilling current employees or hire new talent with the needed skills.
- **Measuring Impact:** There's no one-size-fits-all method for linking learning directly to business outcomes, making it tough to draw clear lines between the initiatives and their effects on performance.



Step 1: Understand the Importance of Learning in Your Business

Think about where your business is today and where you envision it in the next five years. Consider the role of learning in achieving this growth. Identify metrics you want to move that can be measured, like talent attrition, promotions, or an increase in relevant skills.

BONUS Steps:

- Map Your Stakeholders - They don't have to be formalized or official—consider people who might show interest further down the line. Choose a meeting that you're designing an impact report for, making it as realistic as possible rather than hypothetical. Think about timelines and attendees as this will impact objectives.
- Empathy Map: Spend 10 minutes “getting to know” your stakeholder—what do they think, say?

Example: “We're growing fast and need a learning solution that can keep up. As part of our expansion, we're embedding GenAI across all team operations. To make this work, each team must grasp GenAI's potential and its specific applications to their functions quickly.

Generic learning programs won't cut it—if the learning isn't relevant to their actual roles, we'll lose their engagement. If we lose their engagement, we risk the business falling behind our competition. We need a solution that ensures learner engagement while keeping pace with technology.”

Step 2: Evaluate Your Current Learning Ecosystem

Take a look at how your current learning strategies are performing. How well are they serving your teams, the learners, and ultimately the business?

- Solicit and analyze employee feedback on existing learning resources.
- Consider if the learning is landing—Is the learning being applied?
- Understand if there are other indicators of ineffective learning (e.g., workplace performance surveys).

Feedback on Learning:

- How do you measure whether your learning initiatives are meeting your goals?
- What feedback do you have on your current L&D program?
- Can you track people's engagement levels and completion rates?
- Do your learning programs allow people to go at their own pace? If not, would it help completion rates?
- Would you like to increase social learning?
- Can you measure the impact of learning initiatives on business performance?

Example: "Feedback highlights a real need for learning that fits naturally into the workday, as lack of time is a major hurdle for professional development. The way people are learning has changed. Look at social media—everything is short, bite-sized content and we need to move with the pace. Meet learners where they are. If we continue to push them through a one-size-fits-all strategy, we're not building the learning culture we need to help the teams grow in their careers or even make the most of their time. We need to invigorate the skills we have in our business."

Step 3: Understanding Your Learners with Data

Use both quantitative and qualitative insights to understand your learning needs. The better you understand the learners' world, the greater your chances of choosing the right learning solution.

The quantitative data will show you what your learners are doing or thinking. For example, how much learners use or appreciate the learning program you have today. Qualitative data tells you why they behave and think the way they do. Together, these data can provide strong evidence for change.

The best way to know future behavior is past behavior. If you ask how likely someone would be to do something in the future. And make sure to do this at every step, and every opportunity.

Bonus Step:

Don't just rely on one set of data. For example, if you only look at completion rates, this gives you no insight into whether the learning is being applied. If you only look at surveys, this might reflect unrealistic achievements. Ensure there is alignment in how you are assessing learning.

Example: "Our data shows a 30% engagement rate with current modules. With interactive, personalized, and tailored content, we aim to double this. And if we double this, what does it mean for the business? It's double the number of people who now have the critical skills to deliver on the business strategy within 3 months."

Step 4: Learn What the Rest of the Business Needs from You (Yes, You! in L&D)

Engage different departments in the business to get a full view of learning needs and expectations. Imagine if every team member you spoke to had a fake £100. Where would they want to spend their money? It might be as scary as going into the Dragon's Den pit, but understanding this is important.

Some questions you might ask:

- Which jobs are we having a nightmare filling, and why?
- How well do we measure skills now, and how could we do it better?
- When should we be checking in on skills?
- What new skills will we need for the future?
- Are our current L&D efforts matching our brand and values?
- What do the teams really think about our learning tools?
- What would make your work life a whole lot easier?

Example: "In the past, we've rolled out big, blanket learning programs that didn't really hit the mark for our business, our teams, or individual needs. This approach kind of left our L&D team out on their own, disconnected from the rest of the company. Hive Learning could change the game here—it offers learning that's actually tailored to our specific needs. And the best part? Their AI created the content fast, so we're not stuck in the slow lane for months."

Step 5: What Is the Cost of Doing Nothing?

If you've ever dealt with your head of sales (or pretty much any big boots in the business), ultimately, the main thing they care about is the cost. So this step is crucial; you need to demonstrate the damage of doing nothing for the business.

...Negotiation mode loading...

Example: "It currently takes us 3 months to onboard our beauty specialists who are on the shop floor on the latest product updates. That costs us £X per specialist. With an agile learning solution that integrates with our existing ecosystem, we can:

- Personalize learning to each beauty specialist, meaning that they only learn what they need to know, reducing overall learning time by 20%.
- Provide the team with insights about each specialist's performance—what are they doing well, what are they not, where do they need to improve—reducing the time taken to review performance.
- Update learning in real-time, saving 1 month for every staff member a year.
- Have learning in the time of need, meaning our team has the skills needed to sell, and ultimately grow revenue by X% every year.

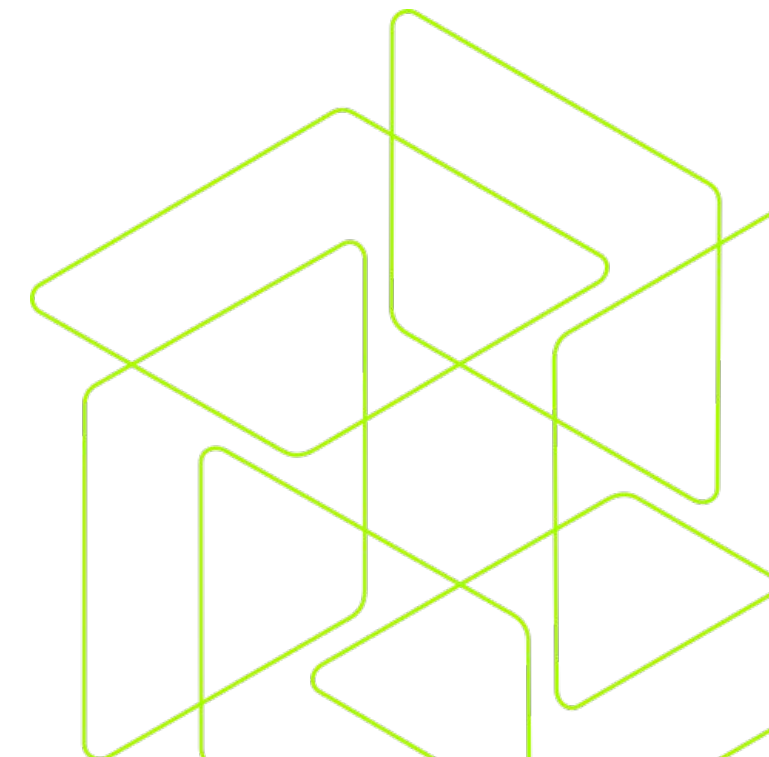
And let's be honest...who can ignore these numbers?

Final Steps: Testing Testing 1, 2, 3?

You've got your story, you've analyzed the data, and you've chosen your solution.
Now you need to test and launch.

Putting Skills First - Launch a Pilot:

- Develop three proof of concept programs—this should give you a good idea of use cases with different teams.
- Your learning solution should be your partner—so collaborate with them closely on designing the learning program.
- Test and refine these pilots to establish a blueprint for future learning initiatives. Consider what conditions are necessary to achieve the desired outcomes.



Exemplar Business Case: Revamping Leadership Development at a Leading British Universal Bank

Overview

We're looking to transform the traditional leadership skill development at a top Universal Bank into a more engaging and continuous learning journey. Hive Learning's Sprint model offers the perfect fit, ditching outdated methods for something that truly sticks.

Understanding Needs and Opportunities:

- Who? Developing leaders already familiar with basic learning but needing more.
- What's Missing? Current learning methods lack real-world applications and don't inspire ongoing interaction or community among leaders.

The Hive Learning Sprint Model:

What Is It?

A four-week cycle of actionable tasks, tailored to real challenges these leaders face. Each week introduces a practical task, promoting not only learning but doing.

Implementation Plan:

- **Customize:** Adapt tasks to reflect the bank's specific leadership challenges.
- **Engage:** Launch as a collaborative, slightly competitive learning experience.
- **Iterate:** Use feedback to refine tasks, making each sprint better than the last.

Expected Impact:

- **Increased Engagement:** More interactive setups mean leaders are more involved and likely to apply what they learn.
- **Boosted Effectiveness:** Continuous learning that's practical helps leaders grow in their roles and stay engaged long-term.
- **Community Building:** Leaders learn with and from each other, strengthening team bonds.

Cost-Benefit Snapshot:

- **Investments:** Initial setup and subscription costs.
- **Returns:** Less turnover, better internal promotions, and a more robust leadership pipeline thanks to effective skill development.

Conclusion

Putting together a business case for a learning solution isn't about using flashy terms or vague promises. It's about presenting a clear, data-backed story that demonstrates the solution's alignment with your company's strategic needs.

Show how the solution can make a real difference in preparing your teams for the challenges ahead, with concrete examples and genuine feedback from your employees.

Solid data and a strong story tell the what and, more importantly, the why. That's what lies behind a brilliant business case. It takes a lot of learning to get there, but that's where L&D shines.





Ready to Make Your Business Case Shine?

Don't wait!

[Chat with our team today and let's get started on creating a
standout business case for your learning solution.](#)