

Learning at Work Week

Ideas and Tips to
Create a Brilliant
Event



We love Learning at Work Week at the Campaign for Learning. It's a chance to be creative, do something different and, best of all, promote a love of learning to everyone.



We hope that this guide will help you to deliver a **brilliant Learning at Work Week!**

With **thanks to all of the companies, organisations and sponsors** that take part and support Learning at Work Week every year, and who are a constant source of inspiration!



For more ideas, resources and news about our planning workshops, visit our website and sign up for our newsletter at www.learningatworkweek.com



Contents

Let's kick off...	4
Ways to Motivate and Inspire	5
Think of a theme	6
Many ways to learn!	7
Looking for ideas for sessions?	8
Time to experiment	9
Create a buzz	10
Quick wins and activity ideas if you're short of time!	11
Rounding up	12
and finally...	13

Let's kick off...

It's time to decide what to do for Learning at Work Week. **So, where do you start?** Here are our ideas for making your Learning at Work Week relevant, engaging and successful.

Heads together!

Two heads may be better than one, but for Learning at Work Week bringing a few more heads together can make an even bigger difference.

Create a planning group with a mix of colleagues from different departments, disciplines and levels. Invite representatives from your work networks and learning representatives. Ask colleagues from internal communications or marketing to join, so they can give advice and support on the promotion of the week. Your group will offer a range of perspectives, create new connections to generate ideas, provide insight into what might or might not work, and be ready-made champions for the week!



What will drive your Learning at Work Week?



Learning at Work Week is all about giving learning the profile it deserves, but it's also a chance to design activities that address priorities or challenges for your employees or business and deliver these in different and interesting ways. By focusing on what's needed in your organisation, you can ensure that Learning at Work Week will be beneficial. It will also help you make a persuasive business case if needed. Remember, you don't have to run activities for the whole week - start with one day, or even a lunchtime.

- increasing collaboration
- better working relationships
- breaking down silos
- developing resilience
- supporting wellbeing
- better business understanding
- improved customer relationships
- becoming more innovative
- improved communication
- fewer mistakes
- better digital & numeracy skills



Why just-for-interest learning can be a powerful tool...

We are more likely to be enthused about learning something new if it gives us an emotional or practical payback. So, focusing Learning at Work Week on just your business needs may not be enough to get colleagues excited and engaged. By including activities that support colleagues in their wider lives or tap into their passions and interests, you will make the week stand out and create a powerful feelgood factor that has numerous benefits. You can also offer work-related sessions that benefit home life too - for example, negotiations skills are useful for all sorts of life situations!

"But it's not work related!"

If you need to justify offering activities during Learning at Work Week which aren't explicitly linked to work, see below for our top reasons.



Communicating Values Offering lifestyle and non-work-related activities is a powerful way of saying that your organisation values learning and the personal development of its employees.



Building Motivation and Morale Employees' personal passions, interests and values (also known as psychographic factors) are powerful motivational drivers. Offering learning that supports these can help make employees feel positive about your company, build morale and make them more open to work-related learning.



Building Connections Lifestyle and non-work-related activities can have a broad appeal and bring together people from across your organisation. It's a great way for colleagues to get to know each other, connect and build relationships. Strong social networks at work not only provide psychological and health benefits for individuals, but can also stimulate new ideas and innovations.



Introducing Ideas and Tools for Learning Enjoyable and engaging activities are a great platform to introduce general ideas about how we learn as well as tools and platforms to help us access learning, and learn quicker, easier and better which can be applied to our work life too.



A Positive Taste of Learning For people who have strong barriers to learning or haven't taken part in learning for a while, offering informal, fun and bite-sized activities linked to personal interests are a great way to give people a positive taste of learning – a key motivator for future learning.



Create a strong and engaging identity for your Learning at Work Week with a theme

A theme should act as a common thread that runs all the way through your Learning at Work Week. Think of it representing the internal 'story' of your week. If effective, it will set the tone for your Week, and bring together and shape your activities in a way that promotes your central message.

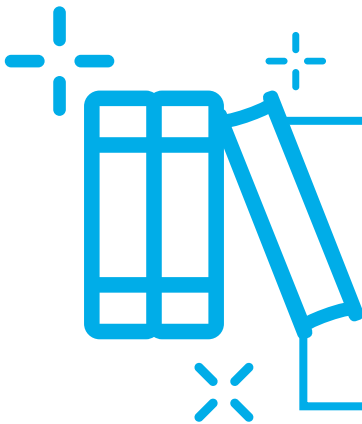
Themes are useful as they can help us to see familiar ideas with fresh eyes.

Once you have a theme, you can develop linked imagery, a strapline and messages for your Learning at Work Week audiences, helping you to create a strong identity and brand.

There is always a national theme for Learning at Work Week, but you can use your own if this works for you.

Try these for size:

- Happiness
- Many ways to learn
- Creating connections
- Live long & prosper
- Fit for work, fit for life
- Everyday brilliance
- Made for Learning



Remember: Your theme is your internal 'story' from which you develop your external communications. Sometimes, a theme and strapline may be the same, but often they are different. For example: 'Creating Connections' could be your theme, and 'Take Time to Connect' would be the strapline.



Learning at Work Week is all about making a splash, raising the profile of continual learning and getting everybody excited about what learning can do for them and their organisation.

Doing things differently and making it a social occasion, where people come together to learn and celebrate, will make it stand out from your usual activities. It's also a great opportunity to highlight the many ways we can learn at work. Even topics which can be seen as quite dry can be made fun and interesting!

There are lots of different ways to get people buzzing about learning during Learning at Work Week. Many can be adapted to be online. Here are some ideas linked to potential goals for the week - but note, there will be crossover between categories.

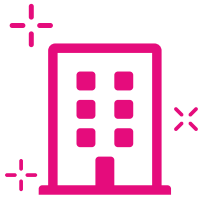
<p>We want to raise awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch events• Special announcements• Stands and marketplaces• Competitions• Blogs• Videos	<p>We want to increase knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talks and lectures• Panel sessions with guest speakers• Debates• Webcasts• Quizzes• Knowledge exchanges with other organisations• Job Shadowing• Online learning• Highlight experts on social media• Partner and supplier demonstrations
<p>We want to build skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Masterclasses• Workshops• Skills Swaps & tasters• Microcredentials• Launch of mentoring and coaching schemes• Job swaps and placements• Internal career pathways• Skills for different roles• Apprenticeship opportunities	<p>We want to change attitudes to learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebration events• Interest/hobby & taster sessions• Senior manager talks about how they learn• Sessions run by colleagues on things they are passionate about or skilled at• Author visits and visiting speakers• 'Back to the floor' activities for senior people and support colleagues



Ask colleagues to deliver a short session on their passions and interests. Tapping into the hidden talents in your workplace can give people a chance to shine and enrichen your Learning at Work Week in a powerful way



Check out the hobby and interest magazines in your local newsagents. Search online - websites like Pinterest are full of ideas



Explore your community – try:

- Local libraries and bookshops for information on local authors and speaker
- Local businesses, e.g. florists for flower arranging, bike shops and garages for bicycle and car care, gym and dance studios for new ways of getting fit
- Colleges, training providers, universities or local clubs for speakers and workshop leaders
- Specialist organisations, e.g. charities, businesses, existing partners, university research departments for knowledge exchange sessions



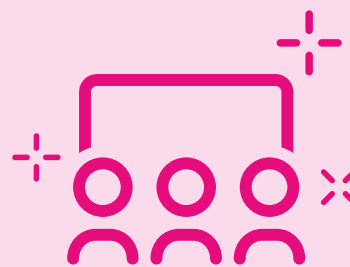
Invite departments to run a session or demonstration

- e.g. 'how to make a healthy snack bar' by the catering department or 'how to get a good deal' by the sales team

What can you teach?

How to take the perfect photo? What's the best way to oil a bike? How do you write a short story?...

There are probably lots of hidden talents waiting to be shared in your workplace. Inviting people in your workplace to teach a skill or share their passions is a great way for everyone to meet and see a different side to their colleagues. For those who haven't taught before, offer guidance on how to deliver a great session.



Looking for ideas for sessions?



Learning at Work Week is not only a good time for people to do something different and learn new things, but also for you as an organiser to try something different and test a new idea or approach linked to learning.

It's easiest to start with a need or problem that you've identified as a team and then create a hypothesis which states your assumptions:

If [we do this] then [this will happen] because [this will help with the problem or identified need]

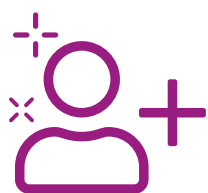
Here are some examples based on common Learning at Work Week activities:



If we **ask a director to give a talk** about the many ways he or she learns, then we will widen people's views of how they can learn in the workplace because it will enable them to see that the company values and encourages learning in all its forms.



If we **instigate breaks at the same time for everyone**, then new ideas will be fostered as people will have more chance to meet and learn from each other because it will enable people to make connections and not work in isolation.



If we **offer lifestyle learning activities**, then this will make people more positive and open to learning in the workplace because people currently associate learning only with mandatory training.

The evidence you collect will need to test if your hypothesis was correct, or whether you need to modify your approach - **or try something else!**



Get your colleagues excited about Learning at Work Week and eager to join in.

Try these ideas:

- **Pique colleague's interest with a teaser campaign.** Team big visuals with quotes about learning, half-finished statements or questions on posters, deskdrops and emails to get people curious.
- **Highlight first the benefits of taking part,** not the features of what you're offering - e.g. 'talk to friends for free' (benefit) vs 'learn how to skype' (feature).
- **Use a simple Call to Action.** Make it easy for colleagues to sign up to activities - and, if it can't be avoided, cancel - so you know how many places you have free!

Work with your key influencers and promoters...

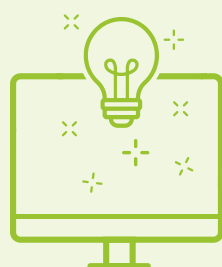
- *Senior managers can show that the company supports the week
- * Union learning representatives and learning champions are powerful advocates for learning and can encourage peers to get involved
- * Colleagues who come into contact with people every day can help spread the message e.g. colleagues on reception or in catering

Use different and novel ways of getting your messages to colleagues - if they see it in different places, it's more likely to catch their attention and stick!

Get creative

- Use big images to grab people's attention linked to your theme
- Think of a catchy strapline to use on your materials
- Describe your activities in a fun and engaging way - is it 'learning how your brain works' or 'the secrets of your brain uncovered!'

Remember: The Learning at Work Week website has free graphics and materials you can use to promote your events!



NEED INSPIRATION?
THE WEB IS YOUR BEST FRIEND!

If time is short but you still want to mark Learning at Work Week, it's best to keep it simple, but do create a sense of occasion and offer a mix of activities that benefit employees as well as the business.

Here's some quick win ideas:



Promote everyone's talents

Invite colleagues from across the business to run a short taster session (30 - 40 minutes) on something they can teach - both work and just-for-interest topics e.g. languages, photography, hand massage and Excel formulas



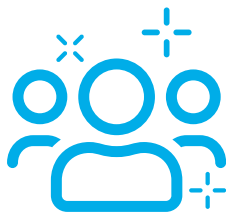
Show a TED Talk and have a discussion

Tap into the vast range of online lectures, talks and panels sessions and screen a film followed by a debate or activity. Ted Talks are well known and popular, but there are lots of other organisations too - try Intelligence Squared, the RSA and the Royal Society. It's a stimulating and social way to introduce colleagues to new thinking on all sorts of topics, from brain science to becoming more creative.



Get the view from the top

Ask senior managers and leaders to give a talk about their own experiences, including how learning helped them get to where they are, their attitudes towards learning and how they learn. This is a powerful and often popular way to draw attention to the power of continual learning.



Run an innovation workshop

Bring people from across your organisation together to talk about common workplace challenges and issues. Agree on one and focus on how it might benefit from a new approach. Try NESTA's DIY Toolkit for practical tools you can use to generate new ideas.



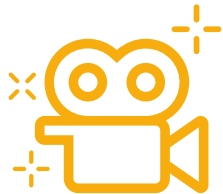
Make learning visible

Create wall art or a graffiti board by inviting colleagues to draw or write their response to activities they've done, or things that would make them happy to learn.



Quick wins and activity ideas
if you're short of time!

Don't forget to capture your Learning at Work Week highlights as well as evidence to show the difference it's made. Try these ideas:



Maximise the impact

If people can't get to your activities or they are oversubscribed, film popular talks and sessions, upload slides or write short reports on key points so you can cascade the learning to them after the event.



Picture this

Take lots of great pictures and close ups of learning in action, celebrations and your champions for the week. Use them in round-ups of the week, in your evaluation and for reminding people what a great time they had when you're promoting next year's event!



Capture stories

What did people love about the week? What do they want to do more of? What would they change? Do short video interviews with people from all levels of your organisation. Invite colleagues to tweet or blog their thoughts.



Measuring up

If you are looking to show changes in behaviour or attitudes as a result of your Learning at Work Week activities, record a 'baseline' so you have information on the situation before the Week so you can compare it to what happens after. Take activity measurements before linked to your goals - e.g. use of your LMS or intranet; changes in productivity; requests for learning support; downloads of resources; sign-ups for courses; enquiries about new roles and opportunities; customer satisfaction ratings.



The Learning at Work Week website has lots of ideas, special offers from our partners, inspiring stories and free graphics and materials. You can find out about our planning workshops where you can meet and share ideas with other organisers.

Find out more and sign up for our newsletter at www.learningatworkweek.com



and finally...

Get in touch if you'd like to talk to us about getting involved in Learning at Work Week as an organiser, learning provider or sponsor.



020 7798 6067



info@cfllearning.org.uk



Follow us on twitter **@lawweekwire**