

BUILD LEARNING THAT BUILDS COMMUNITY

According to the Harvard Business Review, when people feel like they belong at work, they are more productive, motivated and 3.5 times more likely to contribute to their fullest potential. When you create a strong workplace community in the way you train, learners become more networked, resilient and ready for change. Here are ways you can make the greatest impact in the short time you have people's attention.

INCLUDE EVERYONE

We are exchanging more information in the remote work space, but also more prone to bias. Make sure you are hearing from everyone.



Monitor the airtime – Notice who speaks up, or not. Disrupt dynamics that exclude those who tend toward introversion or people who speak English as a second language. **Do This:** Set the ground rule that pauses are OK.



Use breakout rooms – When you can, use your platform's breakout room feature so that people can discuss in pairs or trios. Passive learners tend to absorb information better through dialogue.

Include visual learners – Use an image to introduce a concept or recap a sequence of concepts. Some people are better able to understand complex information in the form of pictures, not lists. **Do This:** Summarize vital information with a visual metaphor.



USE THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

Did you know that Storytelling is a natural human behavior we evolved to provide a sense of belonging within a society? Don't skip these opportunities to make sure your messaging sticks.



Model vulnerability – Make room for a personal story from the facilitator. Sharing missteps or discoveries invites learners to do the same and sets the stage for a growth mindset.

Include Big Picture Context – Make sure learners understand how this course matters inside of the company purpose as well as in their own career.

Include 'Right Now' Context – Also include more immediate context – news headlines, acknowledging stressful times or disruptive news for the company. These realities are 'in the room' for learners whether you like it or not, so it's best to be authentic.

Close with a story – Provide an opportunity to put concepts together into stories. Ask learners to reflect with a partner about what their work will look like in using these new skills.

Do This: Do a quick, paired check-in at the beginning of a training. Check-ins are a proven path to creating a sense of community so people can engage in the learning.

MODEL RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

Set the tone for caring communication in how you run the room. Remember that you create a culture of community in the way you manage the dynamics in the (virtual) room.



Encourage "yes, and" thinking – In chat and discussion boards, encourage learners to acknowledge and build upon each other's insights.

Monitor Interruptions – Be aware of interruptions and how they impact people, especially women and people from marginalized identities.

Listen to understand – Listen for the context and the need behind what is said, especially in resistance or pushback. Affirm perspectives and build from there.

CAPTURE INSIGHT

Every delivery of your course is a community dialogue. It's a chance to check the pulse of what's changing for people. How are you capturing new concerns & themes?



Design exercises that generate actionable ideas for your organization. (And a plan on how to capture and act on them!)

Share an overview of how colleagues have responded to questions in past sessions to give learners broader context beyond their cohort.

Create a way to capture pain points and barriers that come up in debriefs. Put these in a centralized document and then review quarterly as part of the intelligence you can share with leadership.

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