



How Learning Can Drive Sales Performance

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Brandon Hall
GROUP

How Learning Can Drive Sales Performance

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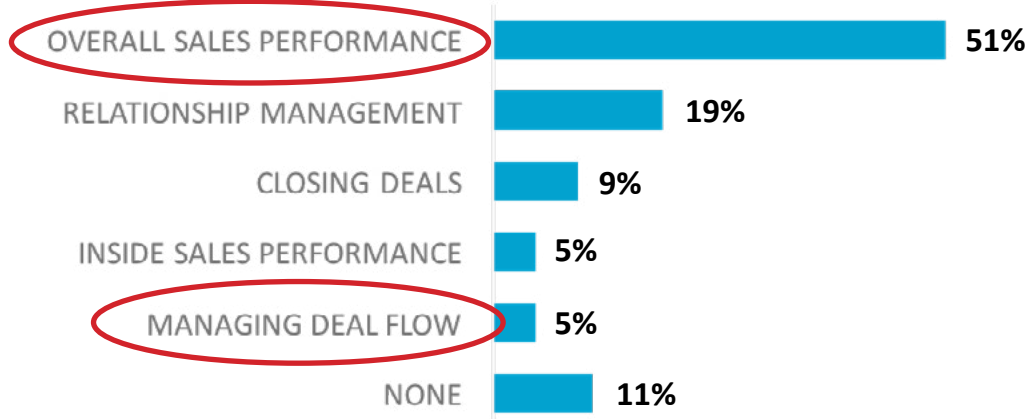
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Most Pressing Sales Training Needs

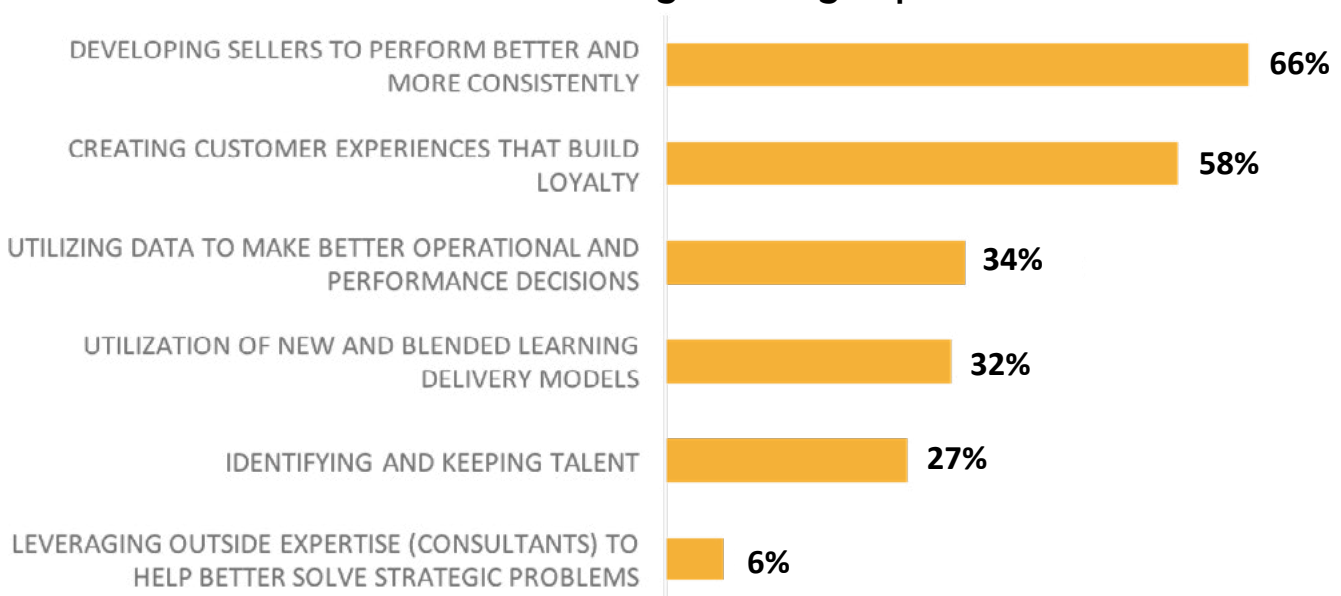
When organizations look at their sales functions, the most pressing need is overall sales performance. Even if everything is working perfectly, improved sales performance is always a goal. Only 11% of companies believe they have nothing they need to improve when it comes to sales.

Companies use [sales training](#) to achieve many goals, the most important of which is to improve the performance of their sales professionals and cultivate strong customer relationships. Many organizations also want to use the data they are collecting to make better decisions as well as explore a wider variety of learning modalities and technologies.

Selling Skills Needing Improvement



Areas of Sales Training Needing Improvement



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Training Challenges

Some challenges are universal to all types of training. [Sales training](#) presents its own set of unique challenges, as well:

Employees are too busy for training. They have too many other priorities.

Employees think they already know the material, so they don't want to attend.

Training has a bad reputation, so employees avoid it like the plague.

Systems are hard to use.

Nothing seems relevant.

Products are being improved constantly.

New products are launched.

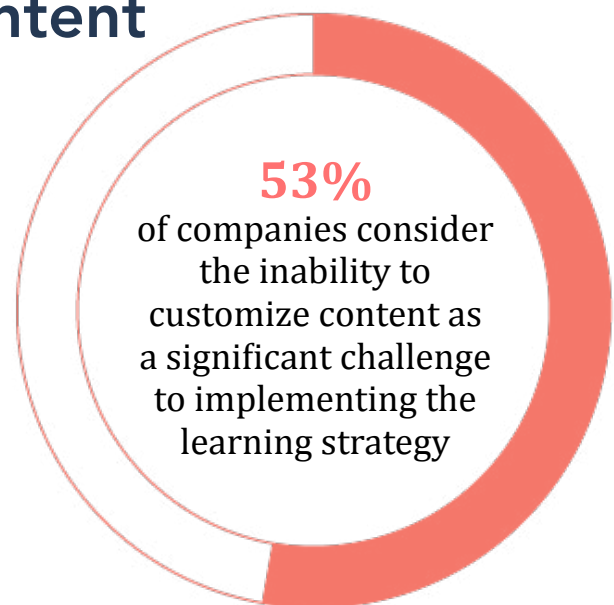
Competitive landscape is always changing.

Customer needs are adapting.

Sales best practices are evolving.

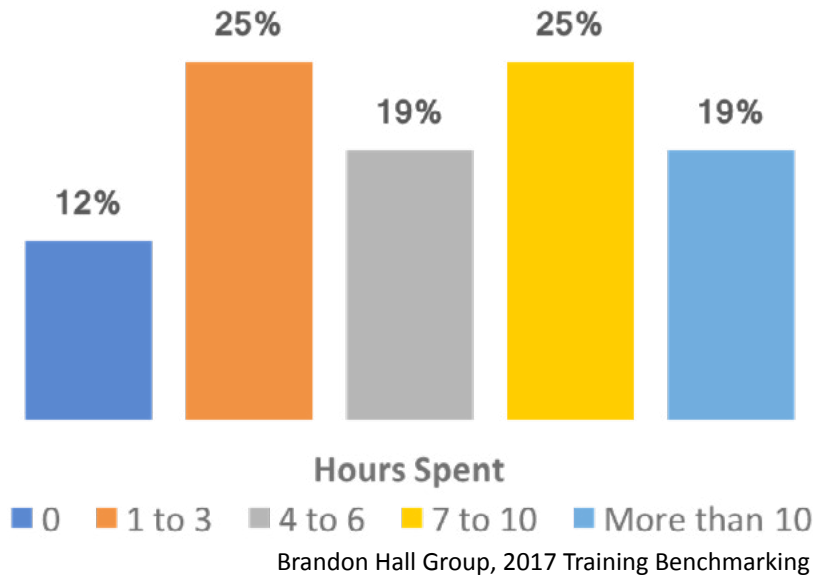
The Impact of Tailored Content

With relevancy and redundancy being such challenges, organizations need to be able to [customize learning](#) to meet the sales team's needs. However, more than half of companies say they can't do that.



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Time Spent in Sales Training

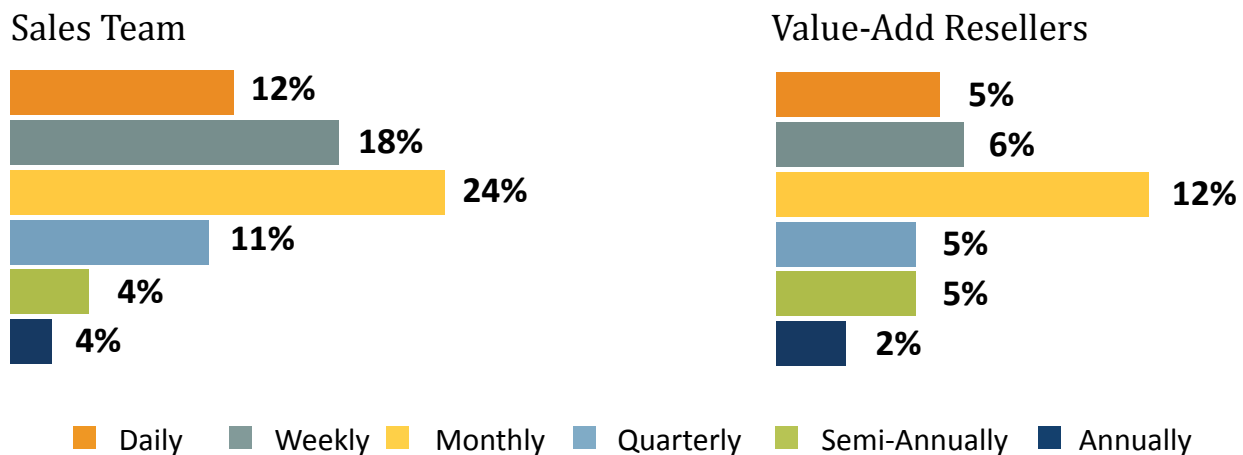


Another factor is that people can spend a significant part of their time in sales training. Nearly 20% of companies say their employees spend more than 10 hours annually in sales training, and that is across all employees, not just sales professionals.

Extended Learning Audiences

Another aspect of sales training is [delivering training to groups external](#) to the organizations. It could be an external sales team, or a series of channel partners, or resellers who sell the company's products along with others. Making sure these audiences have the best, most current knowledge is critical in a competitive market. More than half of companies say they need to reach an external sales audience with learning more than once per month, with 12% saying it is daily.

Frequency of Outreach

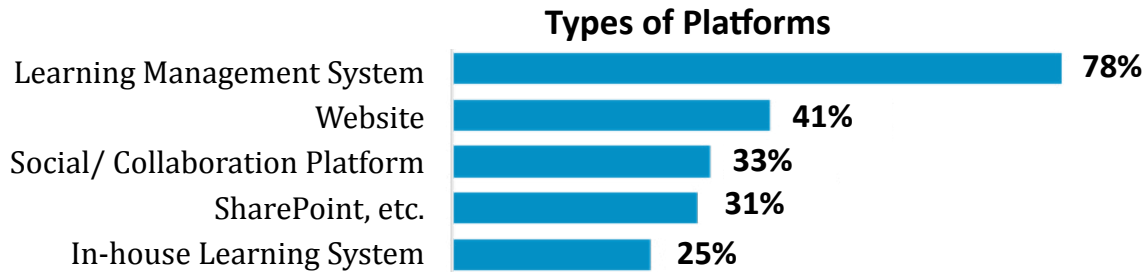


Brandon Hall Group, 2017 Extended Enterprise Learning

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External Learning Platforms

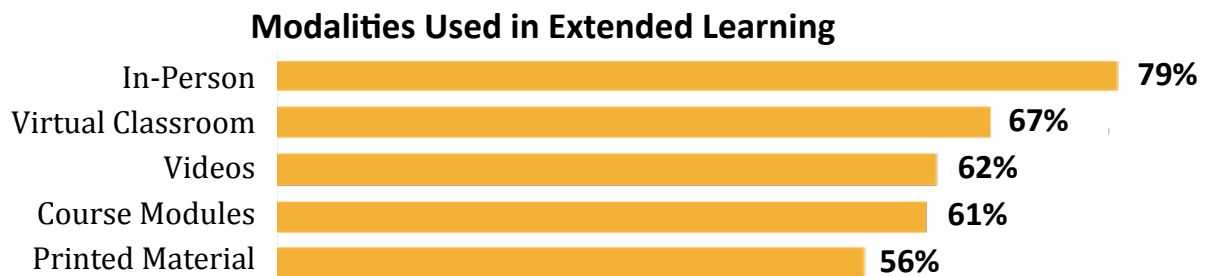
Companies that need to reach these external sales audiences use a variety of tools to do so, but the most common method is an [LMS](#).



Brandon Hall Group, 2017 Extended Enterprise Learning

Extended Learning Modalities

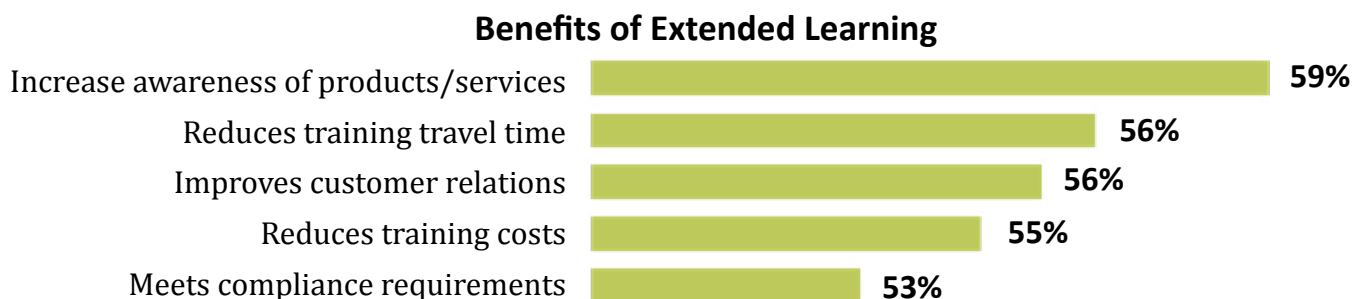
The most common learning delivery method for external audiences is [in-person classrooms](#), as it is for just about any type of training. This represents a challenge because sales professionals are the people that can least afford time away from the job, both from an organizational and a personal perspective.



Brandon Hall Group, 2017 Extended Enterprise Learning

Extended Learning Results

Delivering learning to external audiences reaps great rewards. Companies that have this type of model report positive outcomes across many metrics, including reducing travel time and training costs, improving customer relationships and increasing sales.



Brandon Hall Group, 2017 Extended Enterprise Learning

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The Cost of Face-to-Face

A face-to-face sales training event can be quite expensive, depending on the size and scope. When you pull sales people off the phone, the floor, or the road, there are always lost opportunity costs because deals aren't being closed and sales cycles are being extended.

- Sales Program - \$3,500 - \$25,000
- Airfare - Average \$800 per person
- Hotel - 3 Nights @\$200/night
- Meals - \$150 per day
- Group Activities - \$300/person
- Room Rental \$2500/day
- Other "stuff"

An event for 25 people could conservatively cost more than **\$100k**

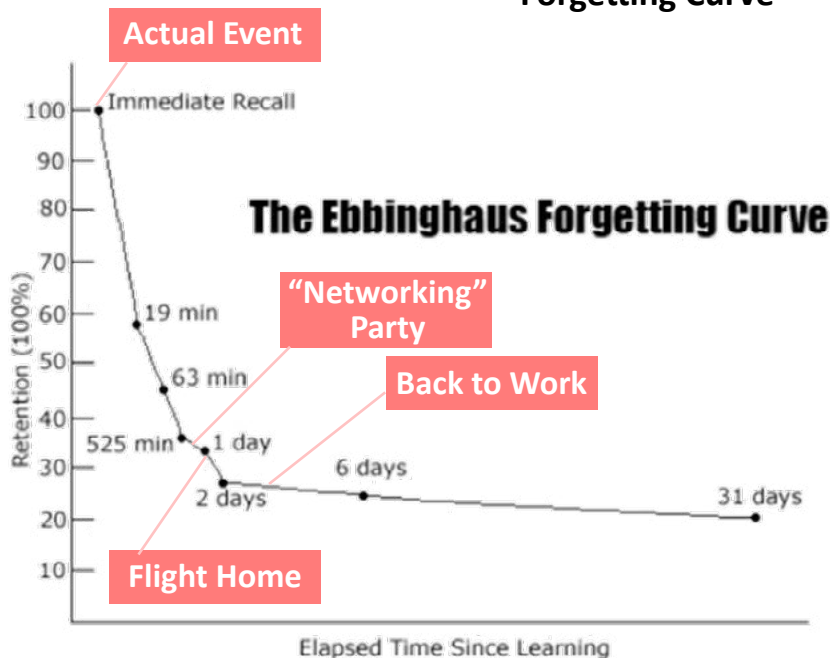
Don't forget lost opportunities!

Source: Forbes

What Are You Getting for That Money

Unfortunately, research says that most of knowledge imparted at the event will be lost in a matter of weeks. By the time people get back to work just days later, they are operating on only about 25% retention. Companies need to find ways to prevent retention from falling off so steeply and having sales teams fall back on old habits.

Forgetting Curve



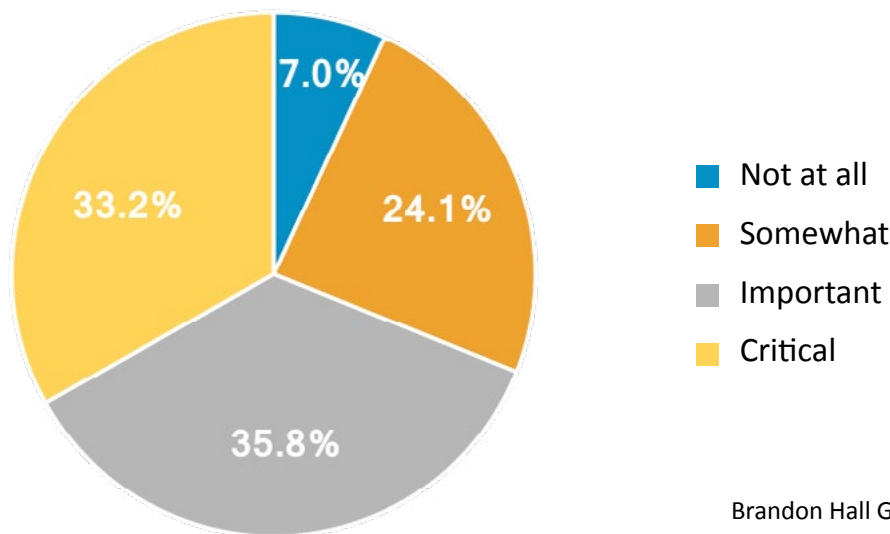
Hermann Ebbinghaus



Knowledge Sharing

A big piece of boosting retention is allowing learners to share their knowledge with each other, especially in the wake of a more formal learning event. Ninety-three percent of companies say that [knowledge sharing](#) is important to the success of their sales and marketing efforts, and one-third say that the need to enable sales is a primary driver of their entire knowledge-sharing strategy. Mobile and video are also becoming more important tools for getting learning into the hands of sale professionals.

Importance of Knowledge Sharing for Sales & Marketing



Brandon Hall Group, 2017 Knowledge Sharing

33%

Companies that ID Sales Enablement as a driver of their knowledge sharing strategy

67%

Companies that provide mobile devices to sales professionals

48%

Companies using video for products and services training

Brandon Hall Group, 2017 Mobile Learning

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Learning's New DNA

In order to fit into the modern sales professional's life, sales training needs to have an entirely new genetic makeup. Course and classes will still be at the core, but they require more flexible access to learning while they are on the job. That means looking to develop, acquire, and deliver learning that has these characteristics.

"I want to be relevant to my role, location and development path."

- Contextual -

"It needs to be short, I prefer videos and quick updates."

- Small -

"I learn better everyday and on an ad hoc basis."

- Informal -

"Learning should be when I have time and when I need it."

- Mobile -

"I prefer peer discussions and recommendations."

- Social -

2017 Brandon Hall Group

Apply Knowledge Sharing

Then organizations must utilize a [blend of methods](#) of sharing knowledge and driving performance.

- **Ask the Experts**
- **Get Answers**
- **Create New Knowledge Assets**
- **Track and Reward**
- **Capture and Upload**
- **Validate through Peer-Review**
- **Distribute and Use**
- **Track and Reward**



Sales Training Strategies



Virtual Role-playing

What was once traditionally a face-to-face exercise can now be done anywhere, anytime. Sales professionals can put their product knowledge, objection strategies and messaging to the test by working together through virtual scenarios. Virtual sales role-playing is a technique that allows learners to make constructive mistakes when it won't cost them a deal. More importantly, managers can track how well a rep performs in a controlled environment.



Gamification

- By nature, sales professionals are a competitive group. [Gamification](#) engages and empowers sales teams by adding a layer of game-like elements and ranking to non-game situations.
- You can benchmark a standard of performance while rewarding the right selling behavior. You can use it to deliver positive reinforcement and manager feedback.
- Under-performing team members can see how they stack up against peers and access the training tools needed to help them climb the leaderboard.



Short videos

Sales professionals are typically very pressed for time. There isn't much daylight between opportunities for huge chunks of training. Bite-sized videos have proven to be more effective than hour or day-long sessions. As attention spans continue to shrink. Providing short bits of information can lead to an overall increase in learning retention. Mobile video allows team members to watch training videos on their own time, at a comfortable pace.

Key Takeaways

- **Sales teams require agile, accessible training.**
- **Limit the amount of time away from the job.**
- **Sales teams learn best from one another. Connect them!**
- **Sales professionals respond to incentives.**
- **Sales performance is one of the easiest things to measure. Use it!**

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Authors



David Wentworth is Principal Learning Analyst at Brandon Hall Group, focusing on all aspects of learning and the technology that supports it. David has been in the human capital field since 2005 and joined Brandon Hall Group as senior learning analyst in 2012.



Josh Squires is currently serves as the Chief Learning Officer of [Docebo](#) EMEA. Josh has spent the past 15 years researching and implementing creative learning solutions within corporate and higher education environments. With clients ranging from Motorola to Disney, he has been on the designing and implementing stage of a wide range of learning solutions with customers spanning the globe. Josh has also taught Instructional Technology theory and tools as a consultant and faculty member for over eight years in both Corporate and Higher Education environments.

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About Docebo



Docebo (from the Latin “I will teach” and pronounced “Docēbō”) is a powerful cloud [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) that allows you to incorporate formal, informal, social and experiential learning in a single platform. Docebo has clients in over 70 countries worldwide and is available in over 30 languages, making it a perfect learning platform for companies of any size, anywhere in the world.

Regularly ranked among the world’s top 10 SaaS eLearning platforms, Docebo is regarded as one of the industry’s most comprehensive solutions for training management, and has been chosen by some of the world’s most respected companies to achieve operational efficiency.

Docebo has offices in Europe, Asia and North America, and is currently one of the fastest growing learning technology companies in the market.

Curious how Docebo can help your company drive business results?

Start a free 14-day trial today

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About Brandon Hall Group

Brandon Hall Group is a HCM research and advisory services firm that provides insights around key performance areas, including Learning and Development, Talent Management, Leadership Development, Talent Acquisition, and HR/Workforce Management.

With more than 10,000 clients globally and 20 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

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Our Services

GET HELP TO DRIVE RESULTS FOR YOUR TALENT

In today's volatile and global business climate, managing talent for high-performance plays an increasingly crucial role in an organization's growth and future success. Effective talent management is a top priority in organizations everywhere because, while organizations recognize the need to obtain and retain people with the very best skills, they continue to struggle to implement effective strategies to do so. HR and Learning professionals need to be able to successfully define organizational talents needs and skills, identify talent strengths and career goals, and align organizational needs to individual needs. Rethink your strategy, validate your assumptions, transform your business, and optimize your time with the use of reliable data, tools, and guidance.



PLAN



ATTRACT



DEVELOP



PERFORM



RETAIN



OPTIMIZE

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Our Services (Continued)

GET HELP WITH YOUR HR SERVICES MANAGEMENT & DELIVERY

As described in the employee lifecycle, processes are linked to employee transactional processes (e.g., compensation, benefits, compliance, contingent workforce management, etc.) via workforce planning and analytics.

- Policies/Process/Procedure
- Payroll
- Expense Management
- Benefits & Compensation
- Contingent Workforce Management
- Compliance
- Time & Labor Management

GET CONSULTING HELP WITH...

- Strategy and Planning
- Governance & Business Alignment
- Executive Management
- Team Development
- Measurement & Analytics
- Program Design & Deployment
- Technology Selection, Management & Integration
- Organizational Structure
- Measurement & Analytics
- Change Management
- Budgeting & Forecasting

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Membership Offers Tailored Support

At the core of our offerings is a Membership Program that combines research, benchmarking and unlimited access to data and analysts. The Membership Program offers insights and best practices to enable executives and practitioners to make the right decisions about people, processes, and systems, coalesced with analyst advisory services which aim to put the research into action in a way that is practical and efficient. Membership also provides you direct access to our seasoned team of thought leaders dedicated to your success, backed by a rich member community, and proactive support from our client services team.

RESEARCH ACCESS & EVENTS

- Reports
- Case Studies, Frameworks & Tools
- DataNow® & TotalTech®
- Webinars and Research Spotlights
- Annual HCM Conference

ADVISORY SUPPORT

- Ask the Expert
- 1 on 1 Consultations
- Research Briefings
- Benchmarking

CLIENT SUCCESS PLAN

- Your Priorities
- Executive Sponsor
- Client Associate
- Monthly Meetings

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