

Desjardins' Blended Learning Program Has New Managers Asking for More

Desjardins

Best Use of Blended Learning

December 2018



Company Background



Company-at-a-Glance	<p>The Federation is the organization that supports the Desjardins caisses (credit unions) in Québec. Its mandate is to provide the credit unions with the services they require and to coordinate the efforts of all other Desjardins Group components, some of which report directly to the Federation such as Capital Desjardins and Desjardins Trust.</p> <p>Desjardins is the leading financial cooperative in Canada and the largest association of credit unions in North America with 7 million members and clients and 45,547 employees.</p>
Headquarters	Lévis, Quebec, Canada
Year Founded	1900
Revenue	Assets: CAD \$275.1 billion; surplus earnings for 2017: \$2.215 billion.
Employees	45,547
Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)	Heavily present in North America, operates in 50 countries.
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	Through its personal and business services, wealth management, life and health insurance and property and casualty insurance business segments, Desjardins Group offers a full range of financial services to members and clients designed to meet their needs.
Industry	Finance, banking, insurance (life, health and property).
Stock Symbol	N/A
Website	Desjardins.com

Budget and Timeframe

Budget and Timeframe	Five-digit budget, 17 days to prepare the program, deployed in a cohort system starting in April 2017 and ongoing to this day.
Overall budget	5 digits.
Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	6
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	2
Number of contractors involved with implementation	2
Timeframe to implement	17 days
Start date of the program	April 2017

Business Conditions and Business Needs

The Institut Coopératif Desjardins caters to 10,000-plus leaders every year and had been looking to provide a more efficient integrated and social learning experience for employees promoted to their first management role. Leveraging the existing in-person seminars with a digital platform made the most sense in helping drive this program as the first of many more to come.

- Goal of the program:
 - Develop the competencies in management and leadership of new managers to help them succeed in their role while aligning to Desjardins' values and behaviors.
- Targeted audience:
 - Employees who are in their first management experience within their professional career (three months into their management role).
- A blended learning was strategic in helping manage a standardized learning experience for eight different cohorts of 15 to 20 managers dispersed between Quebec and Ontario.

- CrossKnowledge suggested testing the BlendedX for the first two cohorts and after a promising first two months with positive reviews from the participants, the decision was made to roll out the rest of the program throughout 2017 and early 2018.

Overview

New managers are enrolled in a new manager program focused on developing their leadership skills. The curriculum is made of three blocks each with their own set of activities.

The delivery methods were:

- ILT.
- eLearning – curated content.
- Asynchronous learning.
- Psychometric personality assessment.
- Peer-to-peer sessions.

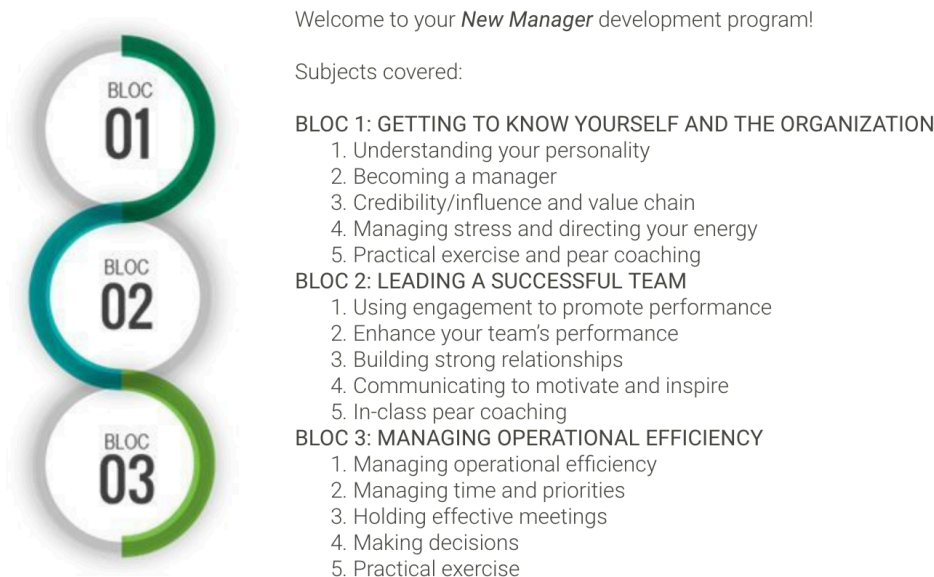
The established goal was to provide an engaging training experience not solely based on classroom learning and that was achieved. Participants rated the course positively with a focus on the power of exchanging with their peers online — as a result, the main goal was achieved.

This curriculum was a pilot program within the institute in leveraging CrossKnowledge’s portal for blended learning. Its success drove the Institut Coopératif Desjardins to introduce two new programs for directors and front-line managers leveraging the same blended learning modality. By the end of 2018, Desjardins expects an average of 500 participants to be engaged in a similar blended learning journey.

Design of the Program

The audience were employees promoted to a management for the first time in their professional careers and who had been in the role for less than three months.

Figure 1: New Manager Development Program



Source: Desjardins

- The design of the program was the following:
 - Block 1: Changing role, getting to know the organization.
 - A psychometric questionnaire to provide a personality assessment.
 - Manager one-on-one (with participant's own manager).
 - Curated CrossKnowledge content for impactful micro-learning resources (faculty videocasts plus sessions plus essentials).
 - Block 2 and 3: Leading a successful team and managing operational efficiency.
 - Two days of in-person classroom training for each block.
 - Curated CrossKnowledge content for impactful micro-learning resources (faculty videocasts plus sessions plus essentials).
- Course concludes with peer-to-peer sessions.

Delivery of the Program

- The blended learning program was delivered to its audience using a streamlined interface provided by CrossKnowledge with a focus on a description of the course and direct entry into the curriculum.
- The curriculum was designed with CrossKnowledge, more specifically with CrossKnowledge's BlendedX technology. It consisted of four steps, each containing its own set of activities to guide the learners through the three-month program.
 - Three additional workspaces were provided with the course:
 - **People** — To help the new managers discover the members of their cohort and connect.
 - **Share** — A workspace dedicated to discussion between cohort members.
 - **Activity** — Designed to help the participants track their classroom activity, online modules and various activities.
- CrossKnowledge's My Learning app facilitated the mobile learning experience for the participants by providing the same experience on-the-go as in the office.

Change Management Efforts

- Most of the challenges encountered focused on how to keep the participants engaged for months at a time, not just in the very first 30 days.
- The participants from the first two cohorts demanded to have access to the classroom content in the blended learning course.
- Communication was not frequent and needed to be improved to help drive the participants toward connecting more in the final month of the program.
- Recommendations were made by Desjardins' L&D team to improve the experience and create a lasting learner engagement:
 - Review the learning path to make certain online modules necessary for the in-classroom events.
 - Make the portal accessible to the facilitator to better coordinate the learning activities with the classroom ones.

- Make use of the push-and-pull communication features available with the CrossKnowledge portal.
- Build a continuing learning-model for after the program that's focused on core competencies.
- The first three recommendations were taken into account for the following six cohorts while the last recommendation is under consideration for this year's program follow-up.

Measurable Benefits

- The ROI of the blended learning program was measured using a course survey mandatory for the participants finishing an NPS score. The first two cohorts (roughly 40 participants) granted the overall blended learning experience an NPS score of 93.
- The participants' review and results were carefully analyzed to help make the recommendations discussed above. The impact of the course was very positive and the participants expressed the desire to see more of this modality as part of their development.

Overall

The main takeaway was that online learning had great potential for the Institute's programs and could help modernize the current learner experiences. Since this blended learning pilot curriculum for new managers was launched, one similar blended program was designed for directors as well as one for front-line managers.

For the upcoming cohorts in 2018, Desjardins is looking to design a continuing learning experience with a more comprehensive portal focused on helping the participants improve their skills on Desjardins' core competencies after completing the curriculum. Desjardins also is looking to further empower the coaches so that they may leverage the portal's new facilitator features to engage with the participants and provide a deeper tie-in between the classroom content and the online experience.



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