



Kearney Elevates Global Manager Excellence Through Dynamic Blended Journey

Kearney

Best Use of a Blended Learning Program

November 2024



Company Background

KEARNEY

| Company-at-a-Glance | |
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| Headquarters | Chicago |
| Year Founded | 1926 |
| Employees | 5,700 globally |
| Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to) | Global: Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East and Africa |
| Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered) | Kearney is a global management consulting firm. Kearney works with Fortune Global 500 companies, governmental and nonprofit organizations. |
| Industry | Management Consulting, advising across the following industries: Aerospace and Defense, Automotive, Chemicals, Consumer and Retail, Energy, Financial Services, Healthcare and Life Sciences, Industrial Goods and Services, Infrastructure, Media, Metals and Mining, |



| | |
|---------------------|--|
| | Private Equity, Public Sector, Technology, Telecommunications, and Transportation and Travel |
| Stock Symbol | N/A; Kearney is a partnership firm |
| Website | www.kearney.com |

Budget and Timeframe

| Budget and Timeframe | |
|--|--|
| Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation? | 8 Global Learning team members across regions |
| Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation? | 20+ senior leaders, mentors, and HR across regions |
| Number of contractors involved with implementation | 3 external vendors as SMEs |
| Timeframe to implement | 5 months |
| Start date of the program | Mid-2022 |

Fit to the Needs

Kearney is a global management consulting firm with its professional services employees spanning multiple ranks. At the junior level, the consultant base consists of Business Analysts, Senior Business Analysts, and Associates. These are typically college and business school graduates with little to limited experience in a corporate setting. The Manager rank consists of experienced professionals with at least two years of consulting experience. This is followed by Principals and Partners who own more senior relationships with clients and are subject matter experts.

The role of Managers at Kearney is crucial, as they are in the center of every client engagement and often hold the key to the success of those around them. Managers need to oversee project teams that consist of juniors; handle client relationships and expectations; align and communicate effectively with the project leadership, who are the Principals and Partners; and contribute to the firm's growth through proposal and business development efforts.

Therefore, the Manager's role is critical, and the success of a client engagement often lies on the shoulders of capable Managers. The promotion from Associate to



Manager at Kearney is a significant one and encompasses multi-faceted responsibilities: (1) managing the team, (2) managing client relationships, (3) managing upstream expectations with firm leadership, (4) stepping into an official mentor role for 1-2 junior consultants, and (5) executing on firm development through proposals and business development. With the promotion to Manager, the role changes from leading a single workstream with 1-2 junior-level colleagues to now leading an entire team, consisting of multiple workstreams and multiple junior-level colleagues. Managers must support their juniors in terms of providing direction, removing bottlenecks, giving feedback, and offering coaching and development opportunities. There is also a critical evolution from analytical roles to leadership positions—the imperative shift from transactional task execution to fostering relationships. Managers are the day-to-day face of consulting engagements with clients and are responsible for delivering on the project, which entails managing relationships and expectations with key client stakeholders. Managers also must work with senior project leadership (Partners and Principals) in setting expectations, escalating any issues, identifying further client opportunities, as well as ensuring that the project can be delivered to scope, in a timely manner, and within budget.

Outside of active project work, Managers also take on an official mentor role upon promotion. Within Kearney, the mentor role requires that Managers are talent stewards for their mentees, advising and coaching their mentees on their career journey and representing their mentees in their bi-annual performance evaluations. Other Manager responsibilities include, for example, working on further business development opportunities and contributing to firm building through a variety of avenues, such as building intellectual capital, developing and delivering training, or assisting in recruiting efforts. Over and above the day-to-day responsibilities, Managers are at a critical juncture in their career where they are evaluating what direction to go in next. They are deciding what areas and industries they want to specialize in. At this point in their career, Managers typically begin experiencing changes in their personal lives, such as starting families and navigating care-giving responsibilities. This career stage naturally leads them to evaluate whether they want to continue their career within consulting, a career known for its fast-pace, and long, demanding hours. The promotion to Manager brings with it lucrative opportunities to leave consulting for industry sectors, prompting them to further evaluate their career prospects. As such, Kearney recognizes that the Manager group requires additional support to aid their development, and more specifically, would benefit greatly from offerings that are tailored to each person's specific needs.

With the onset of the Covid pandemic, it became rapidly evident that the Manager base was under immense pressure. Prior to the pandemic, Managers had access to formal in-person programs, which brought them together on a yearly basis for an interactive learning experience. At this point, virtual learning was introduced but not as accepted as in-person learning. The pandemic resulted in a rapid move to



virtual learning. The virtual learning journey evolved quickly and was accepted due to the external circumstance, however Managers struggled to find a network of peers they could easily access or avenues through which they could receive thoughtful developmental experiences, feedback, and coaching.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kearney had to respond swiftly to the repercussions across various fronts, in terms of business operations, human capital, and the individual well-being of Managers and their teams. On the business front, Kearney experienced rapid growth, both in terms of business volume and workforce size, which required a prompt and efficient onboarding of new Managers to meet operational demands. Additionally, there was a significant impact to Managers' job satisfaction rate, as highlighted by the 12% decrease in eSat category of Kearney's Global Employee Survey (GES), Managers attributed to the lack of learning opportunities and in-person interactions available to them. On an individual level, Managers grappled with feelings of uncertainty and disorientation, and also sought meaning and purpose in their work.

Kearney's Global Learning team pivoted efforts to ensure that Managers within the firm could continue to learn, develop, and connect with others in their network. As a result, Kearney's learning team leveraged insights gained from the virtual curriculum experience during Covid and recognized the value of in-person learning that had been absent. Kearney amalgamated the strengths of both modalities, mixing them into a blended and comprehensive learning journey based on the needs of the Manager experience. This involved integrating sequenced sessions of in-person and virtual learning, supplemented by on-demand learning opportunities. These opportunities included engaging in coaching; utilizing asynchronous e-learning via the Kearney Learning Portal, which is hosted on the learning experience platform Degreed; and participating in specific virtual and in-person learning events.

This flexible and structured learning framework is a notable advancement over pre-COVID and COVID learning initiatives. Those often fell short in aligning with Managers' career paths and were prone to cancellations due to work-related commitments, leading to significant gaps in necessary learning experiences. The blended learning not only accommodates the varied schedules of Kearney's Managers, but also ensures that the learning journey is closely integrated with their individual career trajectories, offering a more coherent and impactful development experience.

Contrasting with the conventional one-size fits-all learning models, this program provides a bespoke developmental path that cultivates critical project management, leadership, and client relationship building skills. It deeply integrates Kearney's core values—curiosity, generosity, boldness, solidarity, and passion—and promotes an environment that contributes to professional advancement, thus enhancing job satisfaction and a sense of community among Managers.



Kearney remains steadfast in its support for its Managers and committed to a process of continual evaluation and adaptation of the program to meet the changing needs of the business and the feedback from Managers. This approach exemplifies Kearney's ongoing dedication to nurturing a culture of leadership excellence.

Overview

The Manager Learning Journey at Kearney stands as a central pillar in the firm's approach to leadership development. The Global Learning team leveraged blended delivery methods in a strategic design to equip Managers with the necessary skills to navigate the complexities of the management consulting industry, while simultaneously fostering a sense of community and supporting network development.

Detailed Objectives and Outcomes

To address the multifaceted challenges caused by the pandemic and the rapidly changing business world, a comprehensive Manager Learning Journey was developed. Its structure integrates diverse learning approaches, encompassing dynamic virtual modules to maintain the successful virtual learning introduced during the pandemic; experiential in-person sessions to foster a sense of connection among Managers; personalized coaching to address individual concerns and promote personal development; and flexible self-paced online content for on-demand learning. This comprehensive approach is tailored to meet the diverse needs of Managers at different career and life stages, ensuring accessibility and relevance. Importantly, the program's scalable design allows the learning team to adapt to the yearly increases in Manager headcount efficiently. The scalability also accommodates Kearney's fast-growing business with increased client demands, a major factor impacting work-related cancellations, which accounted for 32% of total cancellations in 2022. Having a blended learning curriculum was the ideal way to accommodate these multifaceted challenges and provide the necessary learning for Managers to perform well without leaving learning gaps or sacrificing the quality of learning experiences.

Launched with those specific goals in mind, the learning journey has delivered significant outcomes. These achievements highlight the program's success in attaining its objectives and underline its role in promoting sustained professional development across the organization.

Enterprise-wide Integration for Global Consistency

The uniform deployment of the Manager Learning Journey across Kearney's global operations ensures that all Managers—irrespective of their geographical location, level of experience, background, or area of specialization—benefit from a



consistent and high-quality learning experience. This global integration is vital for aligning the program with Kearney's wider objectives, such as advancing leadership development, stimulating business growth, and enhancing the sense of community and inclusion within the firm. The Global Learning team plays a crucial role in this process; team members in each region are responsible for coordinating the curriculum's delivery on an international scale, while working closely with the local Human Resources teams to adapt to regional nuances and needs. The team introduces the Manager Learning Journey to the Managers during each monthly onboarding and following every promotion cycle to ensure awareness and consistency. This effort has achieved an impressive 95% global participation rate among Managers in 2023, a stark increase from 54% in 2022, indicating the program's broad appeal and effective integration.

Strategic Alignment with Organizational Goals

Reflecting Kearney's strategic focus, the learning journey prepares Managers for advanced leadership roles, emphasizing critical areas, such as strategic thinking, client engagement, and business development. As Managers progress within their rank, the program evolves to accentuate these focus areas, crucial for senior leadership roles and organizational expansion. The learning journey employs a cohort-based approach to facilitate peer learning and networking, fostering a collective sense of unity and collaboration among emerging leaders.

The inclusion of self-paced learning through Kearney's Degreed platform plays an indispensable role in reinforcing the firm's culture of apprenticeship and knowledge sharing, due to the rich, Kearney-specific content contributed by Principals, Partners, or other senior leaders. Additionally, Degreed complements the in-person and virtual live programs for specific learning needs. This approach ensures that learning resources are not only highly relevant but also readily accessible to Managers, whether in the office or on the move, making the program exceptionally responsive to the diverse needs and backgrounds of Kearney's Managers.

In essence, Kearney's Manager Learning Journey is a forward-looking initiative crafted to empower the firm's critical workforce to effectively tackle the challenges of the modern business landscape. By fostering a culture of continuous learning, adaptability, and connectivity, Kearney aims to secure its continued growth and maintain a competitive edge in the global marketplace. The program's comprehensive and blended learning approach is specifically designed to cater to both the collective needs of the organization and the individual requirements of its Managers, ensuring wide-ranging participation and providing a bespoke pathway for every Manager's development.



Design of the Program

The Manager Learning Journey is designed with Kearney's values at its core—curiosity, generosity, boldness, solidarity, and passion—with the aim of equipping Managers to navigate the complexities of their role. The curriculum's blended, flexible, and inclusive approach ensures that all Managers, regardless of their specific needs or career stage, can benefit from targeted, relevant learning experiences that directly contribute to their professional development and Kearney's organizational goals.

The learning journey was crafted in-house by instructional design experts on the Global Learning team with the support of internal consulting colleagues who help ground theories in real-life cases and perspectives. In addition, Global Learning occasionally involved external coaches and facilitators who are leadership experts for fresh perspectives. This mix of expertise made the program both reactive to current business needs and proactively aligned with emerging industry trends, maintaining a balance between innovation and cost-efficiency.

The Manager Learning Journey adopts a practical "Collaborative Outcome-Based Design" philosophy, focusing initially on defining specific desired outcomes, like key behaviors and impactful changes, and then tailoring the curriculum to meet these goals. To ensure the curriculum's close alignment with both immediate and future needs of Managers and the broader organization, Global Learning conducted over sixty interviews with a wide range of stakeholders within a month. This included discussions with Managers, their direct reports, mentors, senior leadership, HR, and external executive coaches who have previously worked with Kearney. This extensive stakeholder engagement helped uncover the diverse needs within the organization, providing a robust foundation for the curriculum's development. Those conversations highlighted the set of core skills necessary for Manager success at Kearney, including project management, emotional intelligence, influencing, and coaching. However, it was also clear that not all skills were universally needed at the same level across the board—skills like executive presence or storytelling varied across regions and individual Manager maturity. This insight, for example, led to a personalized learning approach, giving managers the flexibility to develop specific areas identified during their performance reviews with support from coaching and self-paced learning resources.

Moreover, the design team worked with and tested three assumptions that informed overall curriculum design: first, successful individuals possess clarity regarding their values and talents; second, continual feedback and introspection are catalysts for growth; and third, cultivating adaptability fosters both team and individual resilience. Consequently, this design process culminated in a concentrated emphasis on three primary domains: enhancing Managers' self-awareness and self-assurance, refining their capacity to establish authentic connections with others, and empowering them to effect broader and more

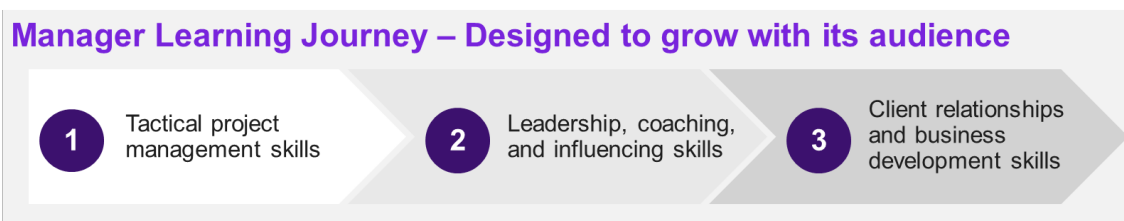


meaningful contributions within their professional endeavors. These priorities highlight the curriculum’s focus on both the personal and professional development of Managers and the relevant skills needed to address these aims.

| Design Commitments | |
|--|--|
| Three Core Design Assumptions | Three Primary Design Outcomes |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Successful individuals possess clarity regarding their values and talents 2 Continual feedback and introspection are catalysts for growth 3 Cultivating adaptability fosters both team and individual resilience | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Enhance Managers' self-awareness and self-assurance 2 Refine capacity to establish authentic connections with others 3 Empower to effect broader and more meaningful contributions |

With all these data and insights in mind, the team worked for over four months to create a comprehensive program structured to progressively build essential management skills, thus ensuring relevancy and applicability at every stage in the Manager’s tenure. This initiative reflected the journey of an individual from Manager to the next destination, Principal. This strategic design is intended to grow with the Managers, ensuring alignment with their career trajectories.

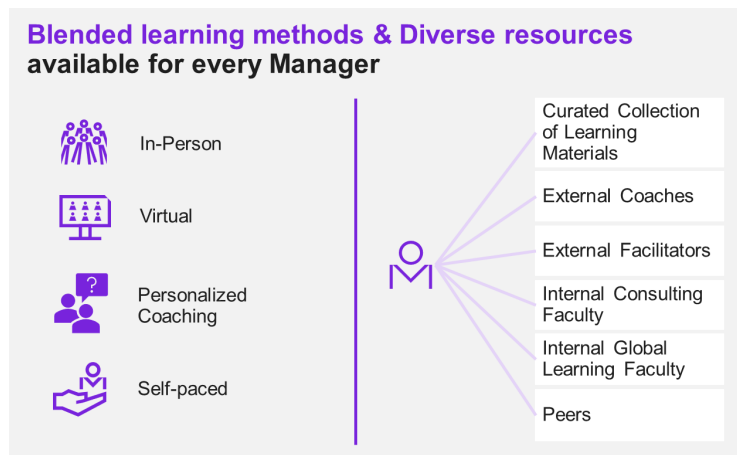
It begins by laying a solid foundation with essential tactical project management skills, equipping all Managers with the fundamental tools needed for success in their roles. As Managers grow in their careers, the curriculum shifts focus towards enhancing team leadership capabilities, coaching techniques, and influence strategies. The program then delves into more advanced topics, such as in-depth client relationship management and business development strategies. This advanced stage is designed to refine senior Managers' skills in navigating complex business environments and securing new projects, which are crucial for their progression to higher leadership roles within Kearney. This structured progression ensures that the program not only supports Managers at every stage of their career but also remains directly relevant to their evolving roles and responsibilities within Kearney.



In addition, multiple features were considered and integrated into the curriculum design to enhance the learning experience for Managers. These features include encouraging Managers to learn from both successes and failures, fostering networking through group activities and peer coaching, and incorporating a diverse

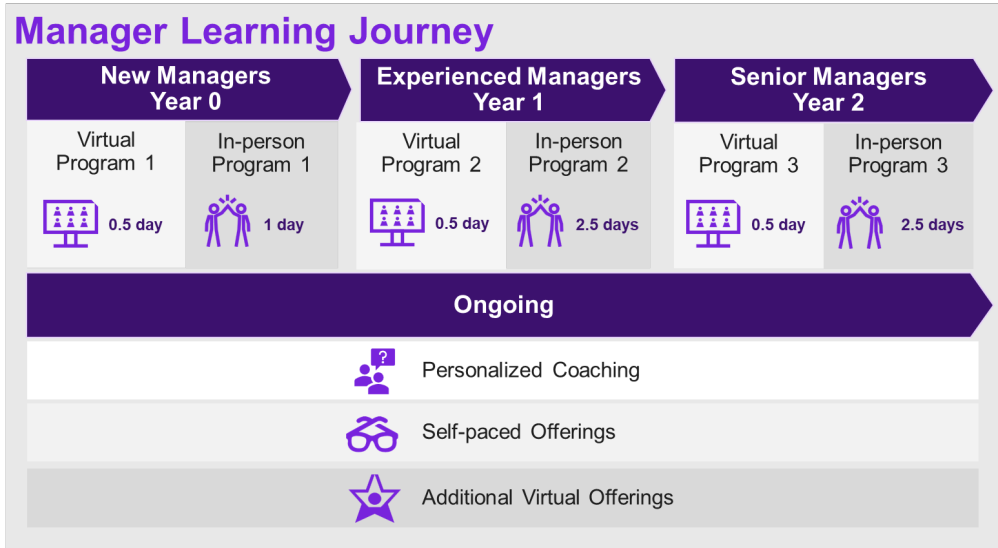


mix of teaching methods. These methods cater to various learning preferences and schedules, ranging from simulations and e-learning modules to traditional lectures, and are supported by various learning resources including peers, external coaches and facilitators, as well as internal faculty or curated collections of learning materials. This variety ensures the program is accessible and engaging for all Managers, regardless of their learning style or work commitments. Furthermore, the program incorporates elements like personalized coaching and opportunities for social networking and team building, extending the learning experience beyond formal sessions and embedding it into the Managers' daily work life.



Delivery of the Program

The Manager Learning Journey at Kearney is set up to specifically address the varied needs of its Managers through a blend of learning methods. It consists of sequenced sessions of in-person and virtual learning that build upon each other to ensure the intentional progression of the journey and topics for each manager. This is supplemented by personalized coaching, self-paced offerings, and additional virtual offerings.



A team comprised of regional learning coordinators, HR, and mentors oversees each Manager's development, tailoring interventions to fit individual needs. This approach ensures Managers get the right support at the right time, making their development paths clear and manageable. Furthermore, during the monthly onboarding and after each 6-month promotion cycle, Managers and their mentors receive detailed briefings about upcoming learning sessions and opportunities. This ensures they are well-prepared to integrate these sessions into their personal development plans and busy schedules.

The curriculum is designed to be both globally consistent and regionally relevant. Global Learning achieves this in several different ways. Firstly, the team cooperates with regional external facilitators to deliver Kearney's learning journey in a way that is sensitive to regional differences. These regional instructors are thoroughly trained to ensure they present the content in line with Kearney's global standards, while still accommodating the unique cultural and operational nuances of their region. Secondly, regional Kearney Principals and Partners contribute by developing on-demand content, driving virtual sessions on the latest industry trends, and sharing their real-world experiences during in-person sessions. This high level of involvement from senior leadership not only enriches the learning experience but also aligns the program closely with Kearney's strategic goals and apprenticeship culture. Thirdly, the curriculum's timing and structure are adapted to fit into the Managers' working hours across different regions, facilitating participation and engagement. If a Manager moves to a different region, the curriculum is flexible enough to allow them to continue their learning journey without interruption, ensuring a uniform learning experience worldwide.



In-person Components

The in-person components of Kearney's Manager Learning Journey are designed to enhance managerial development through immersive and interactive sessions, which are set in environments that encourage relaxation and openness.

The Manager Learning Journey begins with a 1-day, in-person program delivered in the regional offices and led by internal Principals and Partners. It is designed for freshly hired or promoted Managers to equip them with basic project management skills that are necessary to successfully kicking-off their Manager career at Kearney, while concurrently ensuring their full integration into the company culture and ways of working.

Over the next two years as Managers, the learning journey consists of two, in-person sessions of 2.5 days each. They are held in locations convenient to regional offices, yet away from the city bustle, with the aim of fostering intimate networking and deep peer engagement. These sessions are led by one external facilitator and one Global Learning team member. The external facilitator brings a fresh perspective and different expertise, while the internal facilitator weaves the Kearney ethos and real-world relevance into the learning experience. Kearney Principals and Partners join certain sessions to share personal insights and experiences, bridging theory with practical application and reinforcing the firm's apprenticeship model; additionally, professional actors support Managers as they practice role-playing realistic business scenarios.

Ditching traditional slides and presentations for flipcharts and printed guides, those sessions encourage Managers to break away from routine and fully engage with new concepts, while being tech-free and disconnected from the outside world. These workshops combine lectures, hands-on exercises, discussions, walks and talks, and role-plays that play a crucial role in bringing concepts into real-life scenarios. Managers participate as themselves in these simulations, which promotes an environment of genuine learning and impactful growth, without performance pressure. This setup provides a risk-free space for Managers to practice and refine their responses to real-world challenges. Time is also allocated for informal peer interaction with the goal of utilizing the venues amenities for bonding and relaxation, thereby enhancing the learning experience through shared activities and discussions.

The focus on experiential learning means Managers actively contribute to and shape their learning journey, making the insights gained directly applicable to their roles. Through this approach, Kearney's in-person learning programs not only build managerial skills but also foster a sense of community and shared purpose among participants, preparing them to tackle leadership challenges with confidence and creativity.



Virtual Components

The COVID-19 pandemic brought the realization that virtual programs could not only be very cost-effective but also highly effective, particularly when focused on delivering lectures, upskilling, and introducing new frameworks and concepts. They allow Managers a wonderful opportunity to familiarize themselves with these new learnings, setting the stage for deeper, experiential exploration in subsequent in-person sessions.

Based on insights uncovered during the interview phase of the design, the team ultimately chose to adopt half-day virtual sessions. The Manager Learning Journey includes three, half-day virtual sessions, which are strategically scheduled between the in-person programs to strike the right balance. This keeps Managers consistent with their learning development, while allowing them to look forward to future in-person opportunities. Additionally, the sessions are lengthy enough to encourage Managers to disengage from their work and immerse themselves in the learning experience, yet concise enough to allow them to manage their daily responsibilities. The programs are scheduled regionally to accommodate global teams, ensuring they fall within standard working hours to maximize concentration and participation without overextending the Managers' commitments.

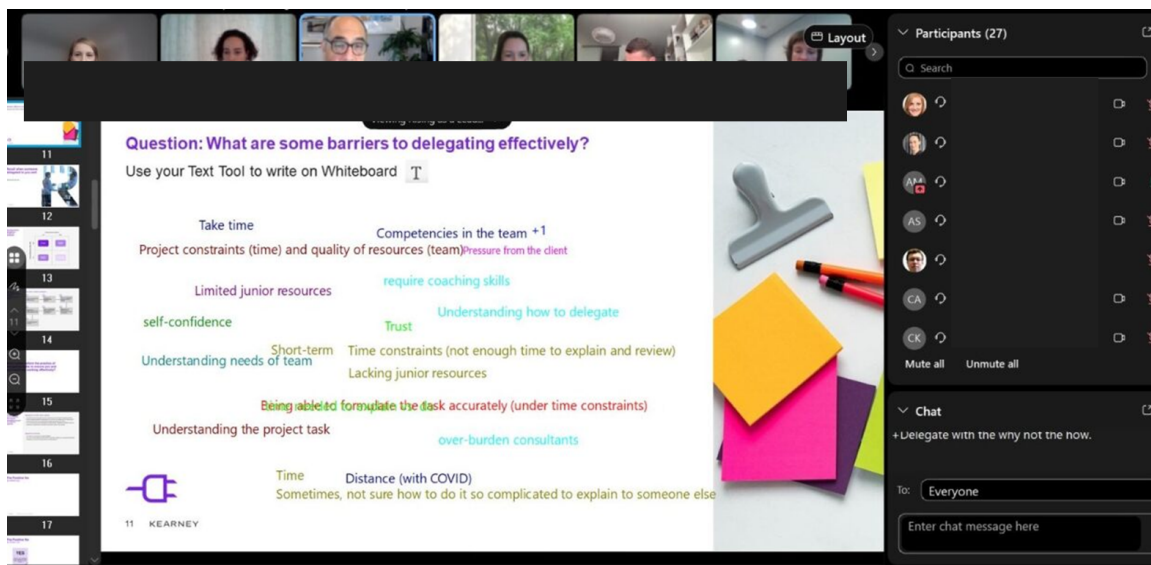
Kearney opted for Webex as its conferencing platform after evaluating several options. Webex was chosen for its ease of connectivity, robust security features, and array of interactive tools that enhanced session engagement. Each virtual



session is always supported by a dedicated “producer” from the Global Learning team, who is responsible for managing technicalities and participant coordination. This allows faculty to focus on delivering content and engaging with participants, creating an optimal virtual learning environment where Managers actively participate with their cameras on, fostering a sense of immersion and interaction.

The virtual format includes interactive features like quizzes, breakout rooms, whiteboards, and practice rounds to maintain engagement and facilitate knowledge exchange, not just from facilitators to participants but also among peers. The continuity of cohorts from virtual to in-person sessions helps maintain intimacy and fosters an open, collaborative atmosphere, ensuring that the Manager Learning Journey at Kearney is a cohesive and impactful experience for all involved.

Furthermore, thanks to their easy scalability and short lead times, the virtual segments of Kearney’s Manager Learning Journey provide a prime opportunity to address the latest business developments and the pressing needs of Managers. The nature of these virtual programs allows for a faster and more cost-effective response than their in-person counterparts, making them ideally suited for timely topics. Consequently, Global Learning launched a 2-day virtual “Manager Learning Festival”, where a series of sessions are delivered across all regions with a focus on the latest business-world opportunities and challenges. For example, the theme of 2023 was “Innovate to Elevate” and addressed topics around artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact specifically on the Managers landscape. Other timely topics included Kearney’s aim to foster ESG efforts in the client work and mental health and well-being. This agility in program development means that Managers are equipped with the knowledge and tools to navigate the evolving business environment effectively, ensuring they remain at the forefront of industry trends and technological advancements.





Let's tackle together a real-life client example –

Think about a recent or current client project.

1. What 'flows' are applicable for your client?
2. What Circularity strategies could be used?
3. How could Kearney support the client in implementing these?

Client example

Sanitized

Let's breakout into groups to brainstorm solutions!

Spend 10 minutes in your breakout groups to discuss 2-3 client situations.

Then we'll regroup to share out opportunities!

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On-demand Online Components

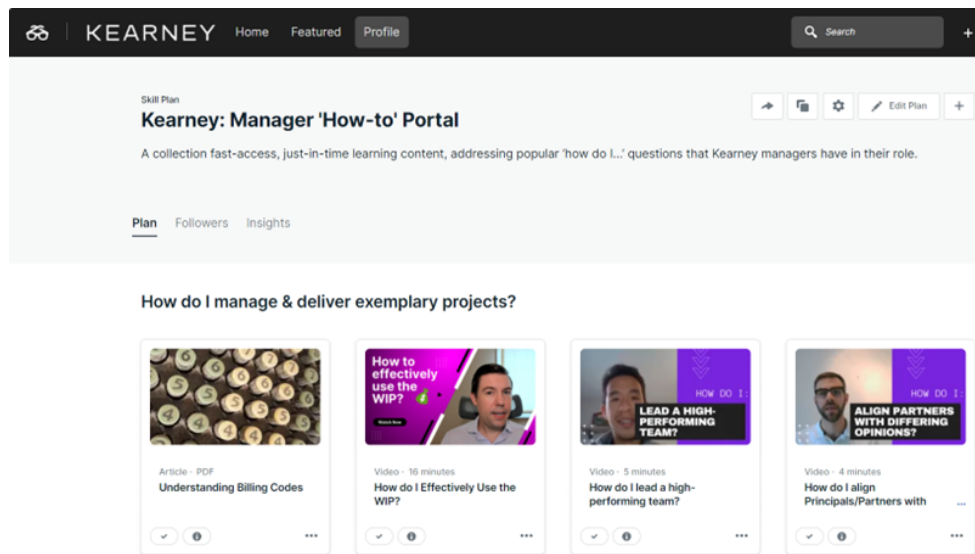
The virtual, on-demand learning components of Kearney's Manager Learning Journey have garnered popularity due to their flexibility and convenience. This format allows Managers to access essential learning materials online whenever and wherever needed, seamlessly integrating into their demanding schedules. The on-demand element of the virtual portions enables Managers to engage with step-by-step guides that deliver learning at the most relevant and impactful moments. These on-demand components are designed to cover key skills required by all Managers, although at different stages of their careers, depending on individual backgrounds, regions, and progression through ranks. For instance, mastering project budget management is crucial for all Managers, yet the need for this skill does not arise simultaneously for everyone. Moreover, mastering such competencies requires repeated engagement rather than a one-time exposure, underscoring the value of on-demand learning for providing iterative, practice-oriented experiences.

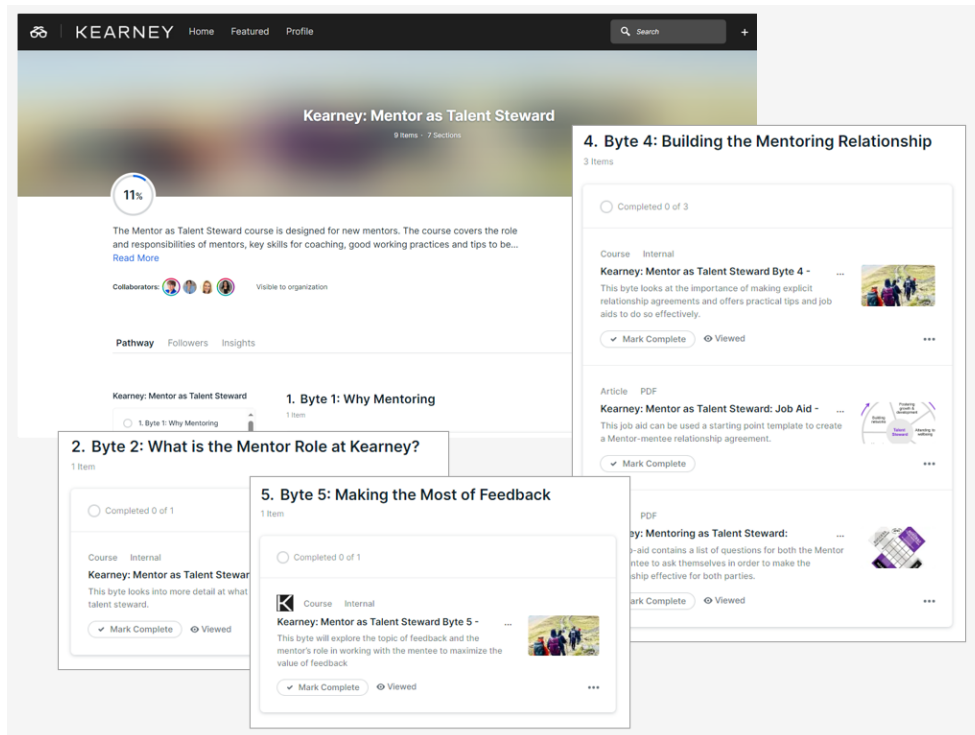
Kearney's online learning portal, Degreed, stands out by featuring a curated library of content that supplements on-the-job learning. This includes brief video segments, typically 3-5 minutes in length, where the firm's senior leaders share their insights on specific areas of project management, offering Managers direct and quick access to Kearney-specific knowledge. This approach reinforces the firm's commitment to an apprenticeship model, while ensuring global accessibility to expertise. Furthermore, the platform hosts a carefully selected collection of both external and internal resources that complement the virtual, in-person, and coaching segments of the Manager Learning Journey. These additional resources serve to deepen understanding and expand upon the foundational knowledge provided, enriching the overall learning experience for Kearney's Managers.



Immediate access to targeted learning content through the on-demand platform not only fosters better job performance but also ensures that the acquired knowledge is readily applicable. The platform facilitates connections with subject matter experts and provides instant access to learning materials, allowing Managers to apply their new skills directly in their work contexts.

By eliminating prescribed schedules, on-demand learning empowers participants to progress at their own pace, enhancing the personalization and effectiveness of the learning experience. Although the learning journey is self-directed, completion and engagement with the on-demand programs are diligently tracked by dedicated regional coordinators. This ensures that Managers remain engaged with the journey and are regularly reminded of the extensive, curated learning library at their disposal.





Coaching Components

One of the goals for the coaching component includes providing agile, personalized, and career development-focused opportunities for Managers. This supports the development of specific skills, such as executive presence or storytelling, in a bootcamp-style setting and opens a platform for Managers to discuss relevant issues and challenges they face in their day-to-day lives. This approach not only builds engagement, community, and a knowledge-sharing culture but also serves to enhance the satisfaction and purpose of Managers. On an organizational level, this initiative increases retention and promotion rates and helps sustain talent that is eager to invest in the firm's success.

The Global Learning team's approach involved designing a coaching program comprised of two pillars. The first pillar, known as Manager Matters (MM), centered on one-on-one coaching with an executive coach so that individuals would have an experience tailored to their needs. The second pillar, known as Experienced Manager Groups (XMGs), supports small group-based learning from peers under the expert guidance of an executive coach. Each pillar, XMG and MM, is a 4-6-month commitment, with a new cohort selected for each pillar every 6 months. Individuals can go through both pillars of the program. The pool of coaches selected for both pillars are vetted by the Global Learning team through a rigorous selection process and cover different geographies, making this program globally accessible.

Managers taking part in Manager Matters are nominated by their local HR teams based on their developmental needs. They can select a professional coach from a



vetted pool of coaches and then work with this coach over the course of 4-6, one-hour sessions with a focus that is entirely up to, and strictly between, the coach and Manager. The investment in this type of development allows for 10-20% of all Managers globally to go through Manager Matters every year, with each Manager being nominated to participate by local and regional HR based on discussions with mentors and other leaders in the firm.

Experienced Manager Groups are based on self-registration. They are made up of groups of five or fewer Managers who meet every 3-4 weeks for one hour across 4 to 5 months. In these groups, Managers discuss relevant issues, share best practices, focus on career development areas, and more under the guidance of an external leadership coach. This gives Managers an opportunity to learn from each other and receive small group coaching. There are two categories of coaching groups within XMGs: a) the first category is focused on a particular relevant topic, b) the second category allows groups the flexibility to address topics that are of primary concern to the participants.

The Manager coaching initiative is integrated throughout the enterprise and rolled out globally. All Managers are aware of this offering and can express interest and/or be nominated to participate. Additionally, the program receives a strong commitment and investment from practice and project teams, so that each Manager is empowered to take the time—during work hours and amid client work—to actively participate in these programs.



KEARNEY

Join an Experienced Manager Learning Group (XMG)

XMGs are groups of five or fewer Managers who meet every 3-4 weeks for one hour, 3 to 5 times across the next 4 to 5 months, to discuss relevant issues, share best practices, focus on career development areas, and more.


XMGs are facilitated by an external leadership coach and provide an opportunity for Managers to learn from each other, as well as receive small group coaching.

In the second half of 2023, we are offering XMGs which focus on a particular topic as well as XMGs without a specific topic focus.

Read the XMG descriptions, pick your favorite one and sign up by **Wednesday, Sep 6, 2023**.

Important:

- You have the opportunity to select one XMG track.
- The registrations work on the first come first served basis. For groups that reach capacity, there may be a brief gap between when a group reaches capacity and when we are able to close the group on the portal. In this case, we will ask you to either join the wait list or select a new XMG.
- Each track consists of 3-5 sessions. By signing up for an XMG track, you are committing to complete all sessions within the track.
- Please pay attention to the different time zones and choose the group similar to your local time. Session times follow the group coach's local time zone. Also, some session timings will be impacted by the switch to standard time.
- Each XMG track requires a minimum of three Managers enrolled in the group to be initiated.



We're offering the following XMG tracks in the second half of 2023:

If you are interested in an opportunity to flexibly address any topic please join:

- [Exploring My Path to Manager Success](#)

OR choose between the following four topic-focused XMGs:

- [Expanding My People Leadership](#)
- [Learning Into My Authentic Leadership](#)
- [Strengthening My Executive Presence](#)
- [Taking My BD Efforts to the Next Level](#)

What your peers say about their XMG experience

"Excellent course with a highly effective coach"

"My favorite coaching so far in Kearney. Group setting helped to see the perspectives of other participants and learn from them. Great training experience, would like to see more of these"

"It helped to see that others are having similar issues and to speak about it in a group."

"Great program, like the small group, making it very interactive."

"Very productive and interesting program, well facilitated"


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Manager Matters (1-on-1 Coaching)


Manager Matters is an opportunity for Managers, who have been nominated by their units/offices, to receive 1-on-1 coaching by a professional coach.

Nominated Managers may select one coach from the curated list below. Prior to selecting a coach, please ensure the participation in the Manager Matters program has been approved by your HR representative.


To learn more about Manager Matters, we asked your peers to share how Manager Matters coaching impacted their personal and professional development. [Read here](#) If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to one of our [Manager Matters Ambassadors](#). Enjoy your coaching!




How does Manager Matters work?




Select a coach from the curated list mentioned below.



Complete the short registration form and your coach will be in touch shortly to begin scheduling.



Complete the self-assessment and coaching goals sheet shared with you by your coach.




Attend 4-6x 60 min 1-on-1 sessions prior to July 2024.

Select Your Coach


Select the coach with whom you would like to work.

Manager Matters Ambassadors


If you have any questions about the program or coaches please feel free to reach out to one of our Manager Matters Ambassadors below. They have completed Manager Matters coaching sessions last year and are happy to answer your questions to help you getting the most valuable coaching experience.



Sanitized



Sanitized



Sanitized

In essence, the Manager Learning Journey's deployment reflects Kearney's deep understanding of the needs of Managers. By incorporating global consistency with local specificity and leveraging high-touch in-person development with the scalability of virtual learning, the learning journey is perfectly tailored to the complexities of the Manager experience. This blend of strategic planning, personalized support, and responsive curriculum design ensures that Kearney Managers receive an unparalleled learning experience that is as impactful as it is clear.

Change Management Efforts

As Kearney embarked on creating its Manager Learning Journey, the organization confronted several hurdles, particularly in transitioning from a purely in-person learning model to a more versatile blended format. Traditionally, Kearney's learning sessions were exclusively face-to-face, which limited accessibility due to their infrequent scheduling and high resource demands. However, these sessions were highly valued for their peer interaction and depth. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a swift move to virtual learning methods. While this shift offered cost savings and logistical ease, it fell short in delivering hands-on managerial experiences due to the lack of in-person interaction and peer learning.



The primary challenge for Kearney was to combine the strengths of both in-person and virtual formats. The team accomplished this by strategically designing impactful learning experiences that were widely accessible and predictable and by offering more frequent learning opportunities, while remaining cost-effective and scalable to match Kearney's growth. To navigate these complexities, Kearney had to rethink its traditional learning approach. The rapid changes in the business environment and evolving expectations from a new generation of Managers necessitated innovative learning solutions that could offer flexible, just-in-time learning opportunities. This realization opened the door for the learning team to experiment with on-demand and personalized coaching learning methods, which previously had not been well integrated and used within the company.

The solution to spreading awareness regarding this new, blended-curriculum approach involved implementing a multi-tiered communication strategy. Global Learning began conducting regular briefing calls for both new and seasoned Managers, clearly outlining the range of available learning opportunities, setting clear expectations, and defining their roles in the learning process. Timely information about learning sessions was distributed through email newsletters and personalized program invitations, ensuring that all Managers were well-informed and could easily incorporate these opportunities into their development plans. Extending the communication strategy beyond the Managers was also crucial. Global Learning ensured that local HR teams, mentors, project leaders, staffing coordinators, and the senior leadership were all apprised of the new learning initiatives and the comprehensive curriculum. This broad-based awareness facilitated organizational buy-in at every level, which was crucial for garnering support and securing the necessary budget. Despite the typical scrutiny learning and development initiatives face, the budget for the Manager Learning Journey was preserved, reflecting the firm's recognition of its value and impact.

Additionally, the Global Learning team encountered difficulties in generating enthusiasm for the coaching components and emphasizing the significance of dedicating time to coaching, particularly as these aspects were considered completely optional for Managers. To tackle this obstacle, the team sought to generate momentum by engaging so-called "Manager ambassadors". These ambassadors actively participated in pilot sessions, provided valuable feedback, and championed the new initiatives among their peers during cohort meetings and gatherings. Leveraging their firsthand experiences and endorsements, the ambassadors played a pivotal role in gaining additional support for the program. Their endorsements highlighted the direct benefits of coaching and contributed to cultivating a culture of active engagement and ongoing learning within the organization.

Also, addressing the historically high cancellation rates within the Manager cohort posed another significant challenge. With Managers primarily focused on persistent project delivery, learning was perceived as optional, rather than integral,



to their professional advancement. The implementation of a blended curriculum proved instrumental to overcoming this issue. Its diverse array of learning methods facilitated Managers' development, fostering both momentum and consistency. Every 6 to 8 months each Manager is offered a learning program depending on their time in rank, in addition to the optional coaching and on-demand online offerings. Moreover, a stringent cancellation policy was enforced, necessitating approval from regional Managing Partners for attendance cancellations. In instances of approved cancellations due to urgent business matters, the Global Learning team adeptly reallocated Managers to forthcoming sessions in alternative regions, which was made possible by the consistency of the curriculum's global design. Shortly, a transformative shift in mindset occurred as Managers recognized the mandatory nature of these opportunities. As they began prioritizing time for participation, they experienced firsthand the value embedded within these programs, actively engaging to fulfill their development needs. Crucially, the organization's commitment to open communication and prioritization of learning played a pivotal role in this transformation, effectively dismantling barriers to participation.

Finally, the creation of a cohesive journey from a program that expanded to encompass multiple offerings, coupled with the notable increase in the number of Managers across regions (from 500 in 2022 to 650 in 2023), posed significant challenges for the Global Learning team. The expanded curriculum necessitated meticulous tracking of each Manager's journey at Kearney, including cohort allocation, attendance follow-up, cancellation management, and reallocation in case of scheduling conflicts. To tackle this challenge, the Global Learning team implemented a streamlined approach, rather than relying on just a few team members to support all regions. Specifically, one team member from each region was appointed to serve as the regional lead for the Manager Learning Journey. This decentralized approach facilitated more efficient coordination and management of the curriculum across regions, ensuring smoother operations and enhanced support for Managers' learning journeys.

By navigating these challenges through strategic communication, inclusive engagement, and a responsive, blended learning approach, Kearney successfully transformed its managerial learning landscape. The Manager Learning Journey emerged as a testament to the organization's adaptability and a commitment to fostering an environment of continuous, impactful learning for Managers at all levels.

Measurable Benefits

Kearney's multifaceted approach to blended learning, which includes in-person sessions, virtual learning, on-demand modules, and personalized coaching, has



not only improved the learning experience for Managers, but also demonstrated notable returns on investment and positive organizational impacts.

Post-implementation, Manager engagement in development opportunities increased; the average learning days per Manager rose from 1 day to over 2.5-days per year. Attendance surged to over 95% globally, in comparison to 54% in previous years. From 2022 to 2023, learning hours expanded from 3600+ to 13000+ hours, with 600+ Managers participating, reflecting the program's wide-reaching appeal, scale, and accessibility.

The Kearney's Global Employee Survey (GES) from year-end 2023 also revealed significant improvements in areas critical to organizational culture and employee satisfaction. These results highlight the program's role in creating a supportive environment that fosters growth, belonging, and satisfaction among Managers. A Manager in the year-end 2023 GES survey commented, "Opportunities to learn are many, and this is one of the factors that keep me here."

The learning journey design clearly and effectively tackled challenges faced by the Manager population, such as feelings of isolation within project teams, through a cohort-based approach to learning, which provided opportunities for them to connect with peers and build support networks. This initiative encourages Managers to share their successes and challenges, facilitating mutual learning and helping normalize the experiences they go through.

Managerial skills in client relationship management and business development have seen marked improvements, providing clear pathways for career progression. This not only lowers recruitment costs but also helps retain valuable organizational knowledge.

Feedback collection at the end of each session has been pivotal in refining the program, ensuring it remains relevant and responsive to Managers' evolving needs. To ensure comprehensive feedback, QR codes are provided to participants to share anonymous feedback via the platform "Qualtrics". This allows them to provide both quantitative and qualitative insights on various aspects of the entire Manager Learning Journey as well as individual components, including overall satisfaction, recommendation scores, facilitator effectiveness, module usefulness, and any additional feedback they wish to provide.

Average feedback for the program components has been highly positive, with ratings of 4.3 out of 5 for virtual sessions, 4.6 for in-person sessions, and 4.8 for coaching offerings. Notably, feedback scores remained stable throughout the year across all regions, affirming the value Managers place on these developmental opportunities.

Qualitative feedback from participants further validates the program's impact. The overwhelmingly positive comments highlight the well-coordinated, practical, inspiring and motivational components of the program, as well as the program's relevance to Manager career progression, networking opportunities, and access



to knowledgeable and engaging faculty. To ensure candid feedback, responses are collected anonymously, allowing participants to express their views openly. Consequently, names cannot be attributed to the comments received.



The qualitative feedback helps keep the program relevant and aligned with Managers' needs. For example, the decision to schedule virtual sessions on Thursdays—based on feedback preferring Fridays to remain open—illustrates the program's responsiveness to participants' preferences. Furthermore, expanding content around effective delegating and boundary-setting addresses a critical transition challenge for new Managers moving from analyst roles to leadership positions. This iterative feedback loop has been instrumental in keeping the program aligned with developmental needs and highly praised by participants and stakeholders.

Overall, as a service function, it was important for Global Learning to ensure that the blended learning program aligns with the firm's strategic goals. This involved prioritizing customized development, peer connection, and leadership excellence. The program's success is continuously monitored and measured through a mix of quantitative data—like GES scores, attrition rates, and promotion timings—and qualitative feedback, including testimonials and feedback ratings. This thorough evaluation process enables Kearney to continually refine the program, proving that focused investments in human capital can significantly benefit both individuals and the organization, while ensuring that the program remains relevant and effective in meeting the evolving needs of the firm.



Overall

In response to the dynamic shifts witnessed in the business environment, Kearney undertook the development of the Manager Learning Journey, a strategic initiative catalyzed by pressing factors such as the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the evolving landscape of workforce demographics. Transitioning from conventional, in-person learning models to the blended format presented significant challenges and required a delicate balance between ensuring accessibility and preserving interactive depth. This transition was imperative considering the rapidly evolving business setting and the evolving expectations placed upon Kearney Managers.

Within Kearney, the Manager role holds pivotal significance; the success of client engagements often resting upon their capable shoulders. Operating within the framework of a management consulting firm entails carrying multifaceted responsibilities. Manager responsibilities range from overseeing junior project teams to managing client relationships and expectations, navigating upward interactions with firm leadership, and contributing to the firm's growth through business development efforts. Recognizing the critical nature of Managers' roles and the unique challenges they encounter within this industry, the development of a blended Manager Learning Journey emerged as a vital initiative aimed at reinforcing their professional growth and competency.

Central to this initiative's success, it was imperative to address the diverse and demanding needs of Managers within Kearney. Given their busy schedules and myriad of individual conflicts, it was essential for the Global Learning team to provide them with learning opportunities involving various delivery methods. This multifaceted approach aimed to accommodate the unique circumstances and constraints faced by Managers, ensuring their continued development and empowerment within the organization. By offering a diverse array of learning modalities, ranging from virtual and in-person sessions to personalized coaching and on-demand resources, the Manager Learning Journey sought to foster a culture of continuous learning, peer connection, and skill enhancement tailored to the specific needs of Kearney's managerial cohort.

Kearney's Manager Learning Journey represents a significant leap forward in how the firm supports the growth and development of its Managers on a global scale. Achieving a remarkable 95% global participation rate, the curriculum has not only garnered widespread popularity but has also demonstrated tangible effectiveness, in line with Kearney's overarching objective of fostering continuous learning. Insights gained from the Global Employee Survey underscored tangible improvements in critical areas, such as professional growth, sense of belonging, and overall satisfaction, which points to the program's profound impact on shaping Kearney's work culture.

Lessons Learned



The journey to develop a blended program for Managers has unveiled several key lessons that are pivotal for its success. Foremost among these is the importance of tailoring the learning experience to the unique needs of individual Managers, while maintaining a cohesive and structured framework. This approach has proven instrumental in enhancing engagement levels and driving meaningful learning outcomes. The incorporation of diverse learning modalities—ranging from in-person sessions to virtual modules, on-demand content, and personalized coaching—has emerged as a particularly effective strategy in accommodating varying learning preferences and schedules. It provided flexibility and scalability, allowing for a diverse array of learning methods tailored to meet the needs of managers at different career and life stages.

A cornerstone of the program's success lies in its robust feedback mechanism, which facilitates continuous refinement and alignment to respond to managerial requirements and organizational objectives. Driven directly by insights gained from participant feedback, this iterative process has enabled the integration of new content areas, such as AI or mental health topics, and the expansion of on-demand learning options. Consequently, this dynamic feedback loop has not only bolstered the curriculum's flexibility but has also deepened participant engagement, ensuring its ongoing relevance amidst the rapidly evolving consulting landscape.

Furthermore, leadership support and active engagement have played an indispensable role in nurturing a culture that prioritizes learning and development within Kearney. This top-down commitment has not only enriched the overall learning experience but has also instilled a collective ethos wherein growth is viewed as a shared imperative, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.

Future Outlook

Looking ahead, Kearney remains committed to continuous evaluation and adaptation of the Manager Learning Journey to meet the changing needs of the business and feedback from Managers and stakeholders. Additionally, maintaining global consistency in curriculum deployment will ensure that all Managers benefit from a high-quality learning experience, fostering leadership development and organizational growth. Streamlined coordination and decentralized regional leads will also further facilitate more efficient management of the curriculum expansion, ensuring even smoother operations and greater support for Managers' learning journeys.

Lastly, the program is set for further growth and enhancement, with a strategic focus on incorporating cutting-edge technologies, such as data analytics and AI, to deliver even more personalized learning experiences. Additionally, vital topics such as sustainability, digital leadership, and inclusivity are slated for integration into the curriculum, which will equip Kearney's Managers with the essential skills and insights to effectively navigate the complexities of today's business landscape.



Above all, the Global Learning team is dedicated to infusing fun and purpose into Kearney's culture, building connections, and generating enthusiasm among Managers for their integral role in the firm's journey.





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