Champions of Learning

In 2021, ATD was pleased to have 65 champions of learning (54 companies and 11 ATD chapters) who celebrated ATD Employee Learning Week. It was remarkable to see their efforts to promote the value and importance of workplace learning.

Companies

AIS
AIS invested in their emerging leaders by offering a leadership boot camp to prepare them with a foundation of common language and share leadership best practices that they could incorporate into daily interactions with their teams.

American Auto Shield’s talent development team delivered email communications each day with different learning resources across all audiences within the organization, incorporating nuggets of information and helpful videos. Additionally, they assessed the effectiveness by obtaining feedback via a competition in which participants answered a survey question each day.

AmeriCU Credit Union implemented micro-training sessions on sales, service, product knowledge, and brand initiatives, hosted brand and culture training sessions, utilized their learning platform to offer professional development courses, implemented a new leadership training program with participation from their chief leadership team, replaced manual trainee evaluations and exams with software for more efficient grading and feedback, and launched an internal training podcast with special guests from all lines of business.

American Hospital Dubai’s ELW program blended on-the-job visits, interactive training sessions (on subjects such as work-life balance, mental health, and body language), and engaging daily emails with lists of top-recommended books, traits of most successful people, and self-development tips. It also drew on employees’ spirited nature with Wheel-of-Fortune-style quizzes, as well as individual and departmental competitions.

AmTrust Financial focused each day on a different learning aspect, including DEI, professional growth, and employee well-being. Daily activities included new e-learning courses, live webinars, just-in-time resources, and internal contests.
B1BANK curated a list of popular podcasts for staff. Focusing on one new podcast each day within a specific topic ranging from banking knowledge to leadership development, the employees listened and shared a summary of what they learned.

B&D implemented a two-week ELW program featuring 17 virtual learning sessions. Employees were invited to participate, attending sessions of their choosing from one of four tracks. Hosted by colleagues, sessions covered topics like growing business, understanding strategic partnerships, setting personal career goals, gaining a window into new markets, intersectionality (as part of a DEI initiative), and reflecting on company culture.

Cameron Ashley Building Products took the opportunity to encourage self-care and empower their workforce with the knowledge to increase productivity and overall health. They sent out two resources per day—one 15-minute audiobook summary and one micro course—culminating with an open dialogue opportunity via a virtual coffee chat with colleagues and a certificate of completion.

County of Orange’s ELW program promoted the top learning content from 2021 through outreach and carousels in the learning management system. Employees who completed an online course within the week earned a custom ELW 2021 participation badge.

DataArt increased employees’ awareness of and engagement in their learning opportunities through a series of webinars followed by Q&A sessions. Each webinar was dedicated to a specific learning opportunity, such as soft skills training, learning English, and enhancing tech skills in professional communities or capability centers.

Delta Community Credit Union highlighted their values and how they relate to the world we live in, focusing on remaining connected and bringing them back to the essence of their business practices. Each day one value was highlighted with a blurb about its importance and relevance along with an internal resource (such as an article or course) available for employees to deepen their knowledge.

EPAM hosted a global ELW with the theme “See Beyond” as part of their annual software engineering ZED conference. The week-long event offered 100 virtual sessions focusing on different aspects of the world today: going hybrid, minding well-being, respecting diversity, being creative, managing change, learning to learn, and working from home. Employees from more than 40 countries participated in webinars, panel discussions, and workshops, all of which were held on EPAM’s digital community and events platform.
During this year’s ELW celebration, Equifax invited approximately 1,500 employees to participate in daily professional development challenges, including completing a career aptitude assessment, performing a personal skills assessment, setting goals, networking, and creating a career action plan.

**Ferris State University**

Ferris State University created a learning buffet to engage employees in the wide array of learning resources and activities available virtually and in person. Bite-sized sessions topics included time management, conflict resolution, disability barriers, first aid training, and more, plus there were other fun activities such as a poker walk and games with prizes for participation.

**Fulton Bank**

In order to encourage all employees to drive their own career and development and create goals today, Fulton Bank held four webinars discussing professional development—its purpose, benefits, and best practices—as well as providing access to internal and external resources and tools. Each webinar included a podcast-style interview of an employee who shared their perspective about how professional development helped them reach their goals and shape their career.

**Georgia State University.**

To introduce their talent management office and encourage employees to attend their asynchronous learning programs, Georgia State University kicked off ELW with a scavenger hunt. Throughout the week, employees were encouraged to sign up for certificate programs, begin courses associated with these programs, and create individual development plans to target their career aspirations and obtain coaching.

**Hadeed**

During ELW, Hadeed hosted meetings for leaders to share their learning progress, created employee workshops on learning analytics and dashboards, hosted university students, and conducted on-site education about steelmaking to deepen understanding of their core business.

**Heritage Bank**

During a week-long ELW event, Heritage Bank reached out to employees with information about how to deal with virtual meeting overload, additional tools to address unconscious bias in the workplace, and six tips to take control of their careers. They reminded employees about the partnership with City University for tuition reduction and conducted lunch & learn sessions to further the conversation regarding diversity.

**HIDEP**

Working with the marketing department for ELW, hipexGlobal sent a series of daily emails, created micro topics for quick learning, and hosted an online summit with presentations, breakout sessions, and prizes for participation.

**Home HS Bank**

The talent development department at Home Bank kicked off ELW with a scavenger hunt for resources on their intranet’s department page and inside the learning management system. They facilitated employee training on email etiquette and overcoming burnout, and a guest speaker conducted virtual leadership development training. They shared a list of personal and professional development social media influencers to follow to close out the week.
Independence

Independence Blue Cross celebrated Employee Learning Week by focusing on the many learning and development opportunities available. Knowing everyone learns differently, they encouraged their associates to take advantage of all available learning resources and create their own professional development paths.

LHCM Solutions

During this past year, LHCM Solutions has focused its L&D efforts on team retention. More leaders have been open to learning what they do right, what they need to change, and how to focus going forward to hire right, develop, and inspire their teams.

Livingston

Livingston International put a lot of effort into creating a competitive employee learning week game, sharing resources on taking care of employees, organizing “Chat With a Leader” sessions for over 60 participants, facilitating workshops, and publishing new resources in their learning center. Livingston International also encouraged individuals to take time out of their busy schedules to learn something new and connect with others in the organization.

Maryland Department of Transportation

The Maryland Department of Transportation ELW consisted of virtual activities with a focus on interaction, showcasing their learning management system, MDOT-University. Each day, employees received an email with instructions on how to complete the assignment for that day, which made for a fun-filled learning week. The program concluded with a closing ceremony to recognize and thank employees for their participation.

Matrix Service Company

Matrix Service Company’s ELW program included a contest and a variety of employee-led educational sessions about their business, internal initiatives, and professional skills with active involvement from their senior leaders.

Medical Solutions

To prepare for ELW, Medical Solutions surveyed all their employees to find out what they wanted most from their development. Since they’re still working from home, employees overwhelmingly requested topics relevant to a remote work environment. To launch this content in a fun way, they kicked off the week with a Powtoon video created by L&D employees and a corporate email.

Mid-Continent Group

Mid-Continent Group (MCG) celebrated ELW by sending a company-wide email that announced the total number of learning events completed by their 200 employees. In 2021, MCG employees completed an impressive total of 1,992 learning events, such as reading an article, attending a multi-day training workshop, or obtaining a professional designation—a 90 percent increase over 2020. MCG also promoted ELW on their company LinkedIn page.

National Grid

In conjunction with Global Appreciation Week 2021, National Grid held a celebration of learning, featuring two daily sessions focused on creating a learner’s mindset. These sessions were designed to prioritize learning and personal development as an extension of National Grid’s Energize Together wellness program.
With the theme “workforce development is everyone’s business,” NBT Bank used ELW to shine a spotlight on the value of learning by creatively creating awareness of learning, promoting learning opportunities, recognizing learning achievements, and showing the impact of learning.

To reach both in-person and remote employees, NMC Group sent daily emails during ELW highlighting learning resources, classes, and opportunities at work. They conducted a survey to identify the most impactful things employees have learned at NMC: The top three results were teamwork, technical skills, and leadership skills. They facilitated two sessions for employees to learn during the week and even gave away a one-year subscription to Audible to one lucky learner.

Old Dominion University (ODU) hosted different learning activities during ELW. Each day had a specific theme, which was featured in the university’s daily announcements, ODU HR social media, and emails from the ODU department of human resources.

OneGroup developed annual learning and development awards that reward employees who dedicate time to their growth and development. They developed a knowledge-sharing program that allows those who have expanded their expertise in a topic to share with others. They started sending shout-outs to everyone in the organization when an employee earns a specific insurance industry designation.

Orange Coast College focused on highlighting two areas during ELW: the DEI resources available to employees and the vast opportunities available for employees to learn on the go, formally through college-sponsored funding or on-site at learning academies. To encourage fun competition, OCC created a learning bingo game. Each time an employee completed a row of activities, an e-ticket was generated for team prizes such as lunch for the office or OCC swag.

Valuing continuous improvement for processes, procedures, and people, Perlick’s ELW program kicked off with the launch of December’s LinkedIn Learning challenge, which is an extension of the program they share with associates each month. By creating an organization-centric crossword puzzle, they added an educational component to the chili cookoff and ugly sweater day celebrations. More than 30 of the 180 associates completed the puzzle.

The Pierce county executive signed a proclamation honoring Employee Learning Week. A guest speaker hosted a lunch & learn, and the county handed out their annual Employee Learning Week awards.

With the theme “Reignite: Time to Reignite Your Passion, Goals, and Career Development,” Quest Diagnostic hosted 20 learning sessions during Employee Learning Week with four tracks: leadership, career growth and development, virtual presence, and mindfulness and emotional Intelligence. Integrating the sessions into the LMS allowed attendees to earn badges showcasing their participation.
To help their team of L&D professionals learn and grow in their roles by gaining new insights and tools from an incredible lineup of speakers, Rocket Central created DevDays, a speaker series that offers professional development focusing on building connection, thriving in the new world of work, and revolutionizing virtual learning.

ELW was an international, virtual learning event across Rotary International in which all seven global offices participated in a week-long learning program. Select staff facilitated courses on topics of expertise related to the organization’s leadership competency model.

The talent development team within Samaritan Health Services L&D launched an exciting and engaging new resource for 6,000 employees: talent development curated learning. An interactive online resource, it provides connections to classes, articles, videos, trainings, and other opportunities relevant to employees’ needs in one convenient virtual location.

For ELW, Security Service Federal Credit Union sent out a series of announcements to promote learning, highlight resources, and celebrate the impact of their learning culture. They promoted content from their LMS on being a lifelong learner, summarized their 2021 Digital Learning Day courses and books, and shared an infographic with statistics about the credit union’s learning culture. They also asked their employees to share their ELW activities and 2022 Learning Goals on social media using #ATDEmployeeLearningWeek and #TeamSSFCU.

Summit Broadband used Employee Learning Week to launch its new learning and development team initiatives and resources. This allowed employees to develop a learning culture by participating in activities that encouraged them to find resources, discover items in the company’s learning portal, and provide feedback on what they want from the L&D team.

Takeda created a variety of activities and content to share each day of ELW, including an inspirational speaker, training on Microsoft tips and tricks, a session on how to develop employees in the QC Lab, daily emails recognizing employees’ learning, and information about patients and products from the business resource group. They closed the week with an email promoting free company resources, such as LinkedIn Learning, getAbstract, and goFLUENT, to help employees continue their learning journey.

TATA Consultancy Services had various offerings during Employee Learning Week, including a virtual emerging leaders conference—a workshop for their future leaders focusing on new and future skills and showcasing their key learning and development offerings. They also hosted a virtual awards ceremony to recognize groups and individuals who have been driving Agile and digital (T-factor) competency through group learning.

As a training and development organization, TDO engaged in and promoted employee learning for staff and clients, not just during ELW, but continuously.
With the continued focus “Learning Is Everywhere,” The Bancorp provided a mix of synchronous and on-demand experiences on topics across the spectrum of both personal and professional development. During ELW, they aimed to re-invigorate their community by creating memorable moments where attendees connected with one another and demonstrated the value of ongoing professional development through skill improvement.

The City of Dallas offered a lunch & learn series—Growing Forward—consisting of five workshops along with related activities and resources that highlighted the importance of holistic growth and development. Workshop topics reflected each of the city’s five well-being pillars—mental, physical, social, financial, and community—aligning with and reinforcing organization priorities. Approximately 1,000 participants took part in opportunities for growth in development areas of their choice.

For Employee Learning Week, the Georgia Department of Community Health launched an initiative to support employees’ knowledge about key offices and divisions within the agency. Employees learned more about various teams and their work by meeting leaders face to face to hear about their efforts to serve one in four Georgians.

During ELW 2021, the Port of Virginia led a weeklong campaign for its colleagues to complete custom e-learning courses that focused on their mission, vision, and daily operations. Daily communications featured a sample of the courses and promoted a forum for colleagues to share how they learn and develop at the port.

With an immense amount of learning opportunities, UKG hosted a virtual Employee Learning Week through their new LinkedIn Learning membership. UKG’s employees have drastically different roles from customer success to development, and UKG encouraged employees to learn about topics that interested them. The company aimed to ensure that employees knew that UKG strongly supported a culture of learning.

Using daily posts on their internal social media page, Vibrant Credit Union’s ELW program focused on informing employees about the development team, sharing stats on employee learning engagement in 2021, and surfacing ways that employees can request additional learning opportunities in 2022.

The Thrive Academy launched Virtusa Learners’ Week (VLW) 2021 with the theme Learnathon 3.0—Learning and Bridging for Scale. With 167 different programs across behavioral, domain, and technology arenas, 4,326 unique learners at Virtusa (a 23 percent increase from last year) clocked more than 22,000 learning hours. Overall participation count crossed 12,000 with an average of 4,400 learning hours learning per day.
**VW CREDIT, INC.**

VW Credit’s theme for ELW was Spark Your Curiosity, challenging employees to let the shared content spark new habits, ideas, and thoughts to bring back to their work environment. Each day, there were multiple sessions on topics such as finding flow, doodling, Microsoft tips, managing through disruption, compliance, the seven habits of highly effective people, learning management center and field training, and speed learning.

**Western Reserve Hospital’s 2021 ELW program consisted of four new live class offerings for all employees, as well as four additional course offerings of previously developed content. They also provided free bookmarks and stickers at an ELW table in a common space, where they highlighted a different learning resource each day. Finally, three employees who completed a word scramble contest filled with learning terms won gift cards.**

### Chapters

**Ann Arbor Chapter**

The Ann Arbor Chapter kicked off the week with a networking event where they shared the proclamation from the mayor of Ann Arbor, Michigan, declaring ELW for the city. Monday began a daily email campaign with the mayoral proclamation and a video from the president. Then, each day they emailed with videos created by different board members talking about how they used learning in their roles and resources from the events of the past year.

**Baton Rouge Chapter**

The Baton Rouge Chapter offered a weeklong series of programs combining experiences from the ATD website: a webinar on building high-performance work culture and employee recognition, a podcast on developing an employee first work culture, a reading of two ATD publications from Baton Rouge members, encouragement to complete the Talent Development Capability Model™ self-assessment, and a virtual event providing an opportunity for members to connect and share strategies around technology, DEI initiatives, and post-pandemic workplace experiences.

**Central New York Chapter (CNY)**

Central New York Chapter (CNY) promoted employee learning all year long through website, emails, social media, their Employee Learning Awareness (ELA) Committee, the monthly ELA Ideas series, quarterly ELA roundtables, the ELA buddy system, and recognition of CNY Champions of Learning. During Employee Learning Week, CNY ATD and ELA Committee members posted and shared ELW social media messages, and the CNY ATD Scholarship Committee kicked off an employee learning auction to benefit the CNY ATD scholarship program.

**Buffalo Niagara Chapter**

Buffalo Niagara Chapter held a full-day virtual conference: Connecting You to What Matters. They gathered a stellar slate of presenters and keynote speakers to focus on five key topic areas: learning, ideas, people, results, and the future. The topics selected were curated with the goal of providing a well-rounded learning experience to foster employee development, including effective communications, talent development, and disrupting bias.
In advance of ELW, the Central Pennsylvania Chapter sent an email to all their chapter members announcing ELW and what to look for during the week. During ELW, they posted daily to their chapter social media pages on LinkedIn and Facebook a learning tip using the images and topics from ATD. Their chapter board members engaged in discussions on those social media pages with their members to share examples and drive the conversations.

The Greater Atlanta Chapter supported ELW in several ways, including creating learning plans, offering free access to a content portal, providing marketing support, hosting a lunch & learn event, and celebrating with an end-of-year award ceremony.

The Greater Cincinnati Chapter combined a networking event with a discussion of various aspects of employee learning such as the most fun employee learning event, challenges of 2021, challenges of 2022, and what areas of employee learning members were most interested in. Groups shared their answers and contributed to each other’s appreciation for employee learning.

The Nebraska Chapter provided virtual opportunities throughout the week for both chapter members and nonmembers to invest in their own professional development by attending live webinars facilitated by ATD international representatives. The webinar topics included the benefits of an ATD Power Membership, how to utilize the Talent Development Capability Model™ to create a personal learning plan, and a breakdown of how to study and apply for an APTD® or CPTD® certification.

The San Antonio Chapter celebrated ELW with an in-person event—Employee Learning Can Drive Organizational Success, where members collected non-perishable foods for Alamo College’s food pantry, which benefits students, faculty, and employees. They reinforced this with two online learning activities, asking members, “How do you create the best learning environment?” and requesting members to take a selfie doing their favorite learning activity. The combination of the in-person event and social media activity created a buzz around employee learning.

The St. Louis Chapter hosted a social media campaign to focus on Employee Learning Week and recommend a few quick, professional development opportunities for their members. For example, they highlighted a couple of TED Talks, an emotional intelligence (EQ) online assessment, and more.

The Tulsa Chapter sent all members cookie grams during the week. They also did their annual Trainer Throw Down program during the week to allow members to showcase their skills to others.