



Maximize Your Training Investments with Learning and Development Specialists

Medical affairs teams must train regularly to stay up to date with existing and emerging therapy areas, products, and devices. But finding time to train is tough, so what can you do to ensure your training programs are as cost-effective, time-efficient, and high quality as possible?

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Working with a specialist learning and development (L&D) team can make a huge difference to the value and impact of your training investment, and play a critical part in maintaining the credibility of your medical affairs team as a key partner in the healthcare industry. The healthcare and pharmaceuticals markets have specific compliance and regulatory requirements as well as diverse, complex data and scientific content. It is crucial to partner with training providers that can combine clinical expertise, professional competencies, and confidence boosts with andragogical and digital innovation to maximize your teams' potential, and contribute to improving patient outcomes.

What does a great L&D team look like?

There are numerous training providers available across the globe. Deciding who to partner with can be a minefield. This can be made more challenging by jargon-heavy websites and opaque professional titles. Here are some tips on what to look for when identifying your partners for medical affairs training.

A range of expertise: L&D teams work at the intersection where scientific content, regulatory and compliance requirements, learning theory and practice, digital tools, and professional practice meet. Teams that have experts in each of these areas with cross-sectoral working experience are best placed to meet the needs of medical affairs professionals. Seek out teams that combine former medics, pharmacists, medical affairs professionals, and specialists in adult learning practice or instructional design, alongside medical writers and account managers. Colleagues with industry insider knowledge can facilitate real-world, patient-focused training programs with more applied learning opportunities, while andragogy experts can ensure the resources are designed to maximize effectiveness, engagement, retention, and impact. Teams that have in-house studio, digital, and editorial teams are often able to be more efficient than those who need to outsource.

Digital innovators: In our increasingly virtual world, L&D teams should be well-versed in a wide variety of digital tools and platforms, and able to adapt their recommended tools to your learners' needs, existing systems, and budget. More importantly, they should be adept at aligning the most suitable technologies with andragogical best practice and high-quality content to create a robust, integrated training program that equips your learners for their real-world roles. Keep in mind that it is not necessarily the flashiest, newest technologies that provide the best learning experience; you may get more value for money from reliable and familiar tools used in innovative, practical, and accessible ways.

Excellent communicators: Creating a training program or event from start to finish can be any combination of complex, intense, extended, and fast-paced. In addition to knowing you are working with experts who can handle the content, virtual tools, and andragogical considerations, you need to work with a team that communicates clearly, consistently, and concisely. Being deluged with endless updates and queries is as counterproductive as being kept out of the loop. Keep your eyes open for teams that provide transparent processes, realistic timelines and budgets, and offer a communications plan that outlines how your training partner will liaise with you throughout the development process, as well as how they can work with you to communicate best with your learners.

Committed collaborators: Training programs need to meet your team's requirements, so make sure that whoever you choose to partner with is willing to co-create with you. Strong L&D teams will get you and your colleagues involved from the outset, identifying needs and learning outcomes, sharing program, event, and content drafts and final versions, co-testing your learning platforms, and delivering clear metrics on program impact and success. This should be a seamless, streamlined process that ensures you are confident in your investment every step of the way.

How can working with an L&D team save you time and money?

Even if your current medical communications partner delivers good quality training that your learners find valuable and engaging, it can still be worth checking to see whether they have colleagues in L&D that they can bring on board, whether they will partner with an external L&D team, or whether there are better options available. L&D specialists look beyond traditional approaches that focus on content dissemination, and instead develop training programs that help people to apply their new or enhanced knowledge to their roles.

Learning specialists and strategists will ask different questions from content specialists during scoping and status calls, helping you to identify previously overlooked learning gaps, involve all stakeholders up front, solve problems with motivation, knowledge retention, lack of confidence, and future-proof your programs. They can also help with creating, reimagining, unifying, and maintaining coherence across a plethora of training packages across a multitude of therapy areas, such as overhauling your existing training materials by refreshing and forging connections between them to make it easier to navigate, access, and retrieve information.

Engaging with an L&D team early in the project timeline will enable them to provide better support from the start, ensuring there are no surprises in the budget, realistic cost-savings can be identified without sacrificing the learning experience, and that each program is tailored to your team's specific needs.

OPEN Health's L&D team brings together unique skill sets and a wealth of experience, which allows us to offer fresh, innovative approaches to learning to help with the development of effective internal training programs for our clients. If you would like to hear more about how we can help you, please get in touch.

CAN WE HELP?

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