



Putting people first: How LinkedIn Learning has enabled IT Naturally to develop a culture of open opportunities for career progression

Success story

Putting people development at the core of the business

When Julie Bishop and her business partner, Richard Gardner, co-founded IT Naturally in 2019, they knew that they wanted to use technology as a force for good and to put people at the heart of the company. In year one, the IT managed service provider recorded a multi-million-pound turnover. Together, Julie and Richard had launched a business that was not only making a profit, but also employed a happy and empowered workforce that was delivering exceptional customer experience. But how?

“I never had a burning desire to launch a company, but when the opportunity arose to create IT Naturally, I knew I wanted it to be the company that I’ve always wanted be a part of,” explains Julie, CEO of IT Naturally. “Richard and I knew that our company would have strong ethics; we knew we’d give some of our profits to charity, we knew we wanted to be socially and environmentally conscious, and we knew our people would be our most important asset. It was paramount that we invested in our people and put their development first. It was for all these reasons we engaged LinkedIn Learning.”



Challenge

Empowering employees to develop their careers

IT Naturally was born from the demise of Thomas Cook. Julie and Richard were working for the tour operator when it went into administration. One of the group's airlines knew it had to go it alone to survive but needed someone to run its IT infrastructure services. Within one month of Thomas Cook collapsing, Julie and Richard had founded IT Naturally and signed its first client. The pressure was on. As a new company with a big contract, IT Naturally had to hit the ground running and create internal policies and procedures, as well as offer its new workforce training and development. However, it was Julie's wish to offer more than mandatory skills training.

"We're an IT company and a people company," Julie continues. "We deliver IT services to people so our priority must be our people."

Personal and professional development were crucial. "Our company operates 24/7. We are on the end of a phone, ready to listen to our customers so that we can understand their IT issues before fixing them.

"We have a huge variety of people working for IT Naturally. Shift workers, people who are new to management roles, and various technical disciplines – each member of our team has a different talent and there's a requirement for training that meets a wide variety of individuals' needs. This is where LinkedIn Learning has been a huge support. The platform has enabled our employees to take control of their own training and career development."

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Results



Create a learning culture

4hr 52mins – average time each employee spends learning per month



100% activation

100% activation of LinkedIn Learning licenses for all employees since launch



Engaged workforce

12,258 – number of video views in last 12 months



Solution

Investing in a workforce

According to Julie, customers that phone IT Naturally's service desk are often stressed, so they have invested in their teams' training to meet customer requirements, soothe their anxiety, and solve their problems – quickly and efficiently. She believes it's these customer service skills which are key to IT Naturally's net promoter score (NPS) of 90.

"We believe in our people and trust them," she says. "Our view is that if an employee makes a mistake, it's probably because we haven't put a process in place for them to learn how to do something right. We assume the mistake is not deliberate and that it's an issue we need to sort out. It could be that we need to write a knowledge article so that our employees know how to deal with a particular issue in the future or that we need to train people. Whatever the outcome, we invest and support our people."

“

Our adoption of LinkedIn Learning has been key to our progress. LinkedIn has supported us on our business journey and has enabled Richard and I to offer training to a workforce that is eager to learn. I strongly believe that putting our people at the heart of the business has been central to our success and we wouldn't be where we are today without the many benefits of personal and professional development that LinkedIn Learning brings.”



Julie Bishop

CEO at IT Naturally

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Taking control of leadership training and career progression

IT Naturally adopted LinkedIn Learning in 2020; each employee has access to a LinkedIn Learning license. The platform empowers employees and allows them to take control of their learning at a pace that suits them.

Julie reveals: “We use LinkedIn Learning for mandatory skills training, but we also use it for diversity and management training. But what’s exciting is that everyone in the business is encouraged to learn something for at least one hour a week so that they can develop themselves.”

Employees are encouraged to learn a breadth of skills – from project management to customer service. IT Naturally has developed learning pathways for each role within the business and there are learning pathways with a specific focus on leadership for employees who want to progress further.

Awakening the possibilities in a workforce

Renowned English conductor Benjamin Zander considers it is his job to awaken the possibilities in others. His insight resonated with Julie, who believes that IT Naturally’s adoption of LinkedIn Learning is highlighting all the possibilities that are open to employees.

“We’re helping people to take charge of their own career and development,” she says. “When people join our company, it’s often the first time they have been given an opportunity to learn. We always look for someone with the right attitude and aptitude because we know we can give them the training so that they can be what they want to be.”

What the learners say



The fact that IT Naturally provides everyone with a LinkedIn Learning license is another demonstration that they do really invest in people. LinkedIn Learning has more than 13,000 courses. They cater to everyone’s development whether that be in their current area of employment to enhance the skills they use daily, or if they wish to learn a new set of skills in a different IT sector. At IT Naturally, we use LinkedIn Learning for both reasons. For example, there may be a set path for new starters to learn the basics of a new role or a new application. Likewise, we have people (including myself) who wish to learn about a new topic in a different area of IT with a view to a potential new career path.”



Stephen Hopps

IT Service Desk Team Lead
at IT Naturally

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On average, the IT Naturally team spends four hours training per month. Employees are encouraged to recommend pathways to their colleagues. Courses and pathways are tracked so that progress can be monitored. Sometimes if someone recommends a particular training course or programme, it can become part of the on-boarding process for that role.

“Giving our employees access to LinkedIn Learning is basically the business saying: ‘Here’s an opportunity to get wider training and qualifications.’

“Our service desk employees are given basic training but because they are taking control of their careers, they are watching more videos, finishing more courses, and getting further and further down the line with their development. They won’t just look at the skills needed for their role, they’ll do courses in behavioural and influencing skills, which are critical if you are on the front line and a customer’s first port of call.”

The adoption of LinkedIn Learning has been remarkable with 100 per cent activation of LinkedIn Learning licenses for all employees since launch. Strong results have been recorded in employee satisfaction surveys and extremely high customer satisfaction scores have been registered too.

Julie concludes: “Our adoption of LinkedIn Learning has been key to our progress. LinkedIn has supported us on our business journey and has enabled Richard and I to offer training to a workforce that is eager to learn. I strongly believe that putting our people at the heart of the business has been central to our success and we wouldn’t be where we are today without the many benefits of personal and professional development that LinkedIn Learning brings.”

What the learners say



LinkedIn Learning is a great tool for both self and business learning. There are all sorts of courses that can be tailored to everyone’s interests, and by creating a Learning Path that aligns with your own interests and aspirations, you can ensure the material that is made available is relevant. I like to use LinkedIn Learning to look at courses that I think could align a way of working within my own team, as well as further adapting my own understanding of things. Sometimes, I can rely on LinkedIn Learning to give me tips about things I am stuck on, and I have even created my own personal Learning Path for my own self interests.”



Patrick Neal-Wright

IT Service Desk Team Lead
at IT Naturally

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