

*Ardent*

SEIZE MULTIPLE  
OPPORTUNITIES WITH  
A PROGRAM AUDIT



## How long has it been since you audited the content, delivery methods, and user experience of your learning and development initiatives?

By staying up to date on new research and technologies in the L&D space, you can incrementally improve your assets and increase employee satisfaction. Additionally, you can successfully deliver on your Employee Value Proposition (EVP), also known as the support and environment your employees need to do their best work.

According to Gartner, organizations that effectively deliver on their EVP can decrease annual employee turnover by just under 70% and increase new hire commitment by nearly 30%. These are compelling figures. When you review the current state of your L&D strategy, look out for opportunities to improve EVP factors including career development, work environment, and company culture.

Another area to consider during your L&D audit is sensory overload. Today's global concerns and political chaos take a toll on your team, especially when these issues require a drastic change in work environment. As you evaluate your L&D strategy, examine your reliance on virtual solutions, which contribute to sensory overload. You may want to replace some technology-dependent assignments with custom solutions that actually allow learners to take a break from screens. Other contributors to sensory overload include the stress of balancing working in your living space and supporting children with distance learning. While you may be unable to change these stressors, it's important to understand what impacts your teams as you create flexible and impactful learning programs.

Now that we've discussed two major concerns for today's workforce, we want to equip you to discover other potential gaps in your program. Below, we've outlined five major steps for auditing your learning strategy through surveys. In each step, you'll find several sample questions to incorporate into your own survey.

## PLANNING IS KEY FOR THE DESIGN OF YOUR SURVEY

### Determine scope:

- Are you looking to assess learners for very specific conditions such as the amount of screen time or impact of social isolation? Or are you assessing general overall sensory overload issues?
- Are you looking to design/redesign a specific training or learning initiative?
- Are you looking to align the survey with specific Key Performance Indicators or other internal initiatives?
- Who should receive the survey?
- Determine an implementation timeline that provides ample time for recipients to respond, as well as for data compilation and analysis

### Look forward and look backward:

- Take a look at where your organization expects learners to be in three months, six months, or a year. What about their environment is certain to change? What physical, social, or emotional changes are expected?
- Take a look at the history of working over the past three months, six months, or a year. What has changed? What has been consistent?

“

**Organizations that effectively deliver on their EVP can decrease annual employee turnover by just under 70% and increase new hire commitment by nearly 30%.**

### **Determine internal capabilities:**

- Do you currently have internal tools to create and implement an assessment survey?
  - We recommend leveraging an online survey provider like SurveyMonkey. If you are unsure if your organization has a license, check with your IT team.
- Do you have the capabilities to compile and analyze the results?
  - While Excel is a great tool for compiling your results, consider using a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software, such as SAP Analytics Cloud or Tableau if you are planning on generating a fairly complex survey or intend to include multiple open-ended or open response questions. Most QDAs are cloud-based and provide several options for importing, organizing, and exporting data.

### **Get buy-in from key stakeholders and leadership:**

- Be specific as to why you are collecting information
- Review and align key KPIs or cultural initiatives
- Unify efforts under a problem-solving flag
- Compile a unified communication plan

## **DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY**

### **Set up the collection framework:**

- Determine the evaluation categories for which you will be collecting information – this will make your job easier when it comes to compiling and assessing the survey results
- Determine which areas or fields of your survey will be mandatory
- Determine if you will accept incomplete surveys
- Create a data collection framework that aligns to the elements of your scope (i.e. includes KPIs, historical performance data, or other internal initiatives)

### **Craft effective survey questions:**

Varied and well-written questions will communicate the desired information so that all participants understand the expected type of response. Use these overarching guidelines to write survey questions that yield informative and accurate information:

- Be clear and specific
- Ask only one question at a time
- Use vocabulary familiar to the recipients and write questions conversationally
- Avoid bias and loaded words
- Create multiple questions that address each of your predetermined categories to ensure you are getting a clear perspective – start with broad, general questions and progress to specific ones
- Keep answers mutually exclusive. If a participant can only select one response, then each answer should be distinct and not cross-over
- Unless included as part of a scale, avoid the use of words like “never, none, always, all”— participants might be hesitant to commit to one extreme or the other
- When using scales, such as a Likert scale, ensure scales are symmetrical and balanced by including equal number of positive and negative responses



**Use a combination of closed-ended, scaled, and open-ended questions to establish historical situations and gauge current environmental and personal response factors:**

CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS	SCALED – I.E. LIKERT SCALE	OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS
<p>Use closed-ended questions to collect specific details. These might include historical information or specific information on the participants' environment such as screen time, solitary tasks, lighting, noise pollution, smells, and tactile elements.</p>	<p>Use scales to determine where participants fall within a range or frequency of occurrences.</p> <p><b>Consider these common scales:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement: Disagree to Agree</li> <li>• Familiarity: Not Familiar to Very Familiar</li> <li>• Frequency: Never to Always</li> <li>• Important: Not Important to Extremely Important</li> <li>• Likelihood: Not Likely to Extremely Likely</li> <li>• Quality: Poor to Excellent</li> </ul>	<p>Use open-ended questions to find opportunities for personalized solution discovery and insights into an effective blend.</p>
<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where is your primary workspace located?</li> <li>• How long have you been in your role?</li> <li>• On average, how much of your day is spent in front of a screen?</li> <li>• On average, how much of your day is spent on solitary tasks?</li> <li>• When learning a new skill, do you prefer to watch a video or read a booklet?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a scale from one to five, respond to the following:</li> <li>• I get tired very quickly</li> <li>• I have problems thinking clearly</li> <li>• I have trouble sleeping</li> <li>• I find myself fidgeting</li> <li>• I find myself bothered by bright lights</li> </ul> <p><b>Ranking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rank your preference in how you interact with training material.</li> <li>• Video</li> <li>• Audio</li> <li>• Booklet/Manual</li> <li>• Virtual instructor-led</li> <li>• In-person instructor-led</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you could change anything in your environment, what would it be?</li> <li>• How would you describe your learning style?</li> <li>• What methods of learning work best for you to retain the information?</li> <li>• How can we make training more accessible for you?</li> </ul>

**Implementing the survey:**

- Provide clear communication so participants understand the purpose and scope of the survey
- Set expectations and be consistent in messaging – consider using diagrams and visuals to explain options, timelines, or processes
- Give ample time for participants to respond to the survey
- Have a pre-determined person or team who monitors the progress of the survey and provides support to encourage survey completion
- Make sure participants are provided with contact information of a team member who can respond to specific questions or concerns



## DATA COMPILATION

Once you receive participant responses, you can start compiling the data. Having clean data that aligns to your initial survey goals will help you identify ways to design and develop training initiatives that support learners.

- Compile results and align key factors using Excel or a QDA based on the evaluation categories you predetermined in your collection framework
- Clean data by highlighting or removing inconsistent/incomplete values
- Ensure values and datasets are in the same units or have consistent wording
- Check for typos or spelling errors

## COMMUNICATING RESULTS

Whether ongoing or as part of a change initiative, communication back to the survey participants is key – you decide the best way to communicate with teams. Some organizations offer a monthly company or department meeting, or a series of emails may serve your teams best.

- Provide each respondent access to their individual results
- Highlight the impact of the results on KPIs or cultural initiatives
- Provide information on how to identify personal sensory issues
- Include recommendations on how to adapt personal environments to minimize sensory overload
- Include any strategies or plans on how this information will be used to adapt training or learning programs
- Be consistent in your communication efforts, but remember, you can vary the delivery through use of calls, prerecorded webinars, emails, and report findings.

## KEEP UP THE MOMENTUM

Once you've completed your survey, make a timeline for edits and updates. Don't leave your findings to collect dust. Instead, develop a plan to quickly add new delivery channels that don't rely on technology, and adjust content where needed. Keep up the momentum by:

- Evaluating current and future changes that can impact those who are at a higher risk to be affected by a transitioning work environment
- Consider survey feedback when designing and developing your learning solutions. What non-virtual, yet self-paced, learning elements can you blend in your solution? What experiential learning opportunities exist?
- Check in with your learners often – continue to share best practices with your learners so they can become more self-aware
- Consider adding questions that gauge sensory overload to your ongoing course evaluations



**Interested in an assessment  
for your organization?  
Ardent can help.**

 **GET IN TOUCH**

*Ardent*

[www.ardentlearning.com](http://www.ardentlearning.com)

© Ardent Learning Inc. All Rights Reserved. 2021