

The LRN approach to ethics and compliance education

Inspiring principled performance through high
impact, engaging instruction

Today more than ever, companies must focus on developing corporate cultures that value legal and ethical conduct in every business interaction and transaction. An ethical corporate culture enhances customer loyalty, builds investor interest and improves employee recruitment and retention. Companies that build strong values-based cultures will achieve the highest levels of compliance, productivity and performance to ensure lasting commercial success.

Educating employees about ethics and compliance is a fundamental component in developing ethical corporate cultures. An *effective* education program teaches employees not only to understand the letter of the laws governing their work, but to adopt the spirit of those laws in their daily actions and decisions. An ethics and compliance education program that engages employees in becoming stewards of their corporate values promotes a workplace of accountability that reduces the risks of wrongdoing and promulgates responsible business conduct.

A pioneer in ethics and compliance education, LRN has worked with hundreds of the world's leading companies and developed significant expertise and experience educating millions of employees around the globe.

Ten key features of LRN's robust approach to learning

Tapping into the science of cognitive psychology and the work of leading educational theorists, LRN courses are based on research and proven models of how adults learn best. Our knowledge and application of leading-edge instructional design concepts and teaching methodologies distinguish LRN courses. LRN leverages the following nine key features to create an engaging and effective corporate ethics and compliance educational program.

Trustworthy, legally accurate content across a wide spectrum of ethics and compliance topics for business

LRN is first and foremost committed to providing accurate, up-to-date legal information about ethics and compliance. Founded in 1992 as a legal research company serving corporations and law firms, LRN established a network of 1,700 legal experts to research and write about more than 3,000 legal topics. Building on this background, LRN began developing corporate ethics and compliance education courses in the late 1990s with the same commitment to legal accuracy.

All LRN courses leverage our ability to research, identify and explain the laws, regulations and standards related to each subject. Recognized legal experts in each respective field write or review each course to ensure its treatment of the topic reflects the most accurate, detailed and current understanding of how any pertinent laws apply to corporations and their employees. The precision of content and clarity of explanation in LRN courses ultimately give employees confidence that they have all the tools they need to make the right decisions in their own work.

LRN offers the broadest ethics and compliance course library in the industry. Our curriculum continues to expand, especially in the areas of international ethics and compliance. LRN courses are available in more than 40 languages, and non-English language courses are not simply translated word for word but are fully "localized" to reflect language and cultural differences while retaining their legal accuracy. LRN's attention to language and cultural relevancy allows organizations to deliver appropriate and effective ethics and compliance education to global employees.

Progressive learning approach that reinforces comprehension and helps employees internalize principles to go beyond mere compliance

Based on proven instructional theory, many of the core topics in our library are delivered in a progressive sequence over two or three courses. For these topics, instruction begins with a foundation course that provides employees with an overview and basic understanding of concepts and facts. The education progresses to a second exploration course that puts the concepts into action, as learners observe situations in which people apply the rules and standards in a realistic business scenario. Some essential education topics add a third level of learning in a simulation course, in which employees participate in realistic business situations, using interactive media to apply their knowledge of the topic by making decisions that affect the outcome of the presentation. Each decision they make allows them to see the consequences of their judgment and validate or fine-tune their understanding of that topic's laws and principles.

LRN's progressive learning approach offers several advantages in ethics and compliance education. First, the progressive approach enables employees to go beyond merely complying with laws to adopting principled behavior that supports a self-governing culture. Through the sequence of courses, employees move from conceptual understanding to practical analysis to application of the course's rules and principles – a progression designed to help employees internalize the underlying values of behavior, not just understand the laws.

Second, as companies require employees to periodically revisit and update their education on ethics and compliance topics, the progressive approach adds variety to the learning experience and helps keep employee interest with the fresh content of the two or three courses in a sequence.

A third benefit of LRN's progressive approach is that organizations can choose the level of proficiency required for different segments of their employee population. Some workers may need only the basic conceptual familiarity with a topic in the foundation course; other employees who are more deeply involved in that area of business operations and decision making may need advanced knowledge and ethical dexterity that can be developed through the application and simulation courses. The progressive approach thus lets companies customize their education programs to match the relevancy of each sequence to an employee's job. Selecting just the necessary courses also maximizes the efficiency of each employee's schedule, with no time wasted on content that does not pertain to his or her work.

Learner-centered design to increase effectiveness and motivation

Instructional design research indicates that adult learning is most effective when learners can direct and control their own work. According to the studies of many educational experts, adults who are allowed to take initiative in their learning absorb information faster, retain what they learn longer, and make better use of what they learn compared to those who are treated as passive learners.

In line with this research, LRN courses give employees extensive control over their learning experience. Courses are built around a user-friendly interface that puts employees in charge, allowing them to stop a course at any point, bookmark it, and return to the same point later without losing any work. The interface also lets users go to any point in the course to review content at their discretion. If enabled by their company, employees are also allowed to test out of content they already know.

These features make LRN courses highly learning-centered. They provide the flexibility for employees to proceed at a pace that matches their rate of learning and to take a course in small time increments if appropriate.

High-impact, engaging presentations using rich media and interactivity to increase involvement and active learning

To be effective, an ethics and compliance program must capture the employees' hearts and minds with content that rings true and motivates them to recognize and accept the company's commitment to responsible business conduct.

To address this challenge, LRN courses are creatively conceived, written and produced to engage employees through sight

and sound, novelty and challenge. LRN carefully designs courses using rich multimedia – including distinctive audio tracks, eye-catching graphics and captivating video scenarios. These elements are thoughtfully planned and combined to maximize active, participatory learning experiences. From LRN's intelligent screen design, to the use of realistic video enactments of scenes, to the interspersed requests for learners to answer questions or make selections – LRN's instructional design features draw employees into the course and enable them to become active participants in learning, not passive listeners to “talking heads.”

LRN's new simulation courses are especially designed to tap into the instructional power of interactive video. In these courses, employees become actors in a scenario that simulates a realistic business situation. As the scene progresses, employees are given multiple opportunities to make decisions that alter the progress of the action. Through the use of branching, they then see the consequences of their decisions acted out in the next segment. This interactivity aids employee understanding because they learn from their choices and thus improve their ability to make right decisions in the real world of their jobs.

LRN rigorously adheres to sound instructional design principles to guide the structural flow and media elements used in each course. Attention is paid to the writing, design and layout of the courses to avoid misusing technology for effect or show. Rich media is employed only when it can enhance learning, not distract from it. Overall, LRN blends content and technology to produce high impact, motivating educational experiences that achieve effective learning, skill development and employee sensitivity to the importance of the issues.

Realistic business world scenarios to make learning relevant

As technology advances and business affairs become more intricate and globalized, ethics and compliance risks grow in complexity. Clearly understanding certain types of compliance regulations and ethical issues can be tricky, filled with gray areas and challenges. Learning how to navigate such issues as conflict of interest, harassment, and financial risks cannot always be reduced to black-and-white rules, but often requires an in-depth exploration and modeling of complex situations.

To capture the richness of these complex ethics and compliance situations, many LRN courses are created with storylines based on true-to-life business cases. Such scenarios are planned and written to help employees see workers in realistic business situations facing the same types of challenges and decisions that they themselves could one day face. These enactments resonate with employees and help them understand how concepts apply, giving them practical experience in analyzing choices and building their skills in making the right judgments.

Validated learning assessments to measure effectiveness and increase learner confidence

An important part of the instructional process is the validation of learning and progress. LRN courses provide regular opportunities for learners to demonstrate their progress and confirm and clarify their understanding of the topics they are learning. These self-assessments ensure that employees have mastered each section's content before proceeding to the next. In each evaluation, learners receive feedback and, if necessary, remediation. Evaluation milestones serve to reiterate and reinforce the content and help prepare learners for a comprehensive assessment at the end of the program. They also build employees' confidence in their grasp of a topic. The final assessment allows organizations to verify not only that employees have completed a course, but also that they sufficiently understand the topic.

Customized instruction capabilities to enhance relevancy and engagement

LRN provides opportunities to customize elements of courses to increase their relevance to employees and heighten their engagement in the content. In many courses, for example, companies can substitute their own examples, policies, images or links into screens in order to reflect their specific business. Company spokespeople, such as the CEO, can append a video or written "welcome" message to introduce many courses. Companies can also annotate a course with their own terminology and references so that the language can be mapped back to the vocabulary of their industry. In most courses, companies may also add their own bulletins, contacts and instructions to make the screens and dialogue more personalized. LRN provides these customization hooks to heighten employee learning with content and language that is more immediate and realistic to each company. Employees experience a greater degree of relevancy, and as a result, they are more motivated to give their attention to the learning and to recognize how it fits into their own world.

Extendable and adaptable tools for offline and blended learning

Organizations today often have a wide diversity of employee situations that require more than just standardized online instruction. In some companies, the employees don't have consistent and regular Internet access that allows them to use online ethics and compliance education, so offline learning is required. Many programs also augment online ethics and compliance education with other activities, so a blended learning approach is required.

LRN provides a variety of additional tools to support a company's specific program design in these situations. For offline learning, LRN courses can be downloaded and run locally or from a CD or

DVD, or printed out or stored as PDF files for delivery directly to employee computers. For blended learning, many LRN courses offer an extensive set of tools that wrap around the online course components. Tools include top-of-mind reminder posters; short scenario-based vignettes that are designed to act as introductions and refreshers to courses; and single-page summary reference cards that focus on a topic and further drive home interaction with the material. Many of these offline tools can serve as the basis to fuel discussion groups, to use as handouts and e-mail reminders, or to enhance communications on particularly topical ethics and compliance issues of immediate import to the company.

Overall, LRN recognizes that adults have diverse learning styles and companies have diverse education needs. As a result, LRN has designed in support for extended learning options that ensure our education program can fulfill the requirements of as many types of learning situations and styles as possible. LRN's experienced team can work with companies to provide additional offline and blended learning materials as required.

Opportunity to add supplemental or complementary creative learning experiences

As a further extension of our offline and blended learning capabilities, LRN offers a separate instructional design team to produce highly creative, customized learning experiences that coordinate with or supplement the online courses. This team works closely with LRN partners to analyze special ethics and compliance issues or situations such as awareness or branding initiatives, mergers, acquisitions, crises and complex organizational conflicts that might benefit from customized education modules. These solutions focus extensively on developing unique video scenarios, vignettes, games, posters, slide presentations and other rich media tools to capture the ethics and compliance issues while employing many alternative, proven adult instructional design methodologies that highly engage employees and motivate change.

Leading-edge technological innovation to revolutionize the engagement process

LRN's instructional design team is continually progressing next generation solutions for partners willing to push the boundaries of education. Drawing best practice from new digital media and Military training, LRN develops captivating content that emotionally hooks in the learner and establishes deep connections with the information. LRN is pioneering the use of life-like avatars (animated 3D characters) that lip synch with audio streaming, and the automatic conversion of typed text into a convincing voice-over.

Mobile delivery comes to the fore in reinforcing key learning messages. Succinct reminders or refreshers deployed to workers' mobile devices help underline the essential topic points and layer

the material into a solid comprehension. Moreover, serious (or epistemic) gaming has proven a powerful medium to encourage employees to reflect on ethical issues and test the validity of their decision-making around values and compliance.

LRN brings together adult learning theory and new-to-the-world techniques in coordinated programs that genuinely change behaviors over the long term. By wrapping sound subject matter in rich graphics and the most appropriate, accessible delivery methods, LRN creates ethics communications that staff actively want to engage with and utilise in their roles.

Translation of learning theory into effective learning practice

LRN courses are built according to the leading models of adult learning that cognitive psychologists have proven to be effective.

Our courses incorporate the teaching strategies of some of the world’s most renowned educational experts and researchers, including Albert Bandura, Richard Bandler and John Grinder, Benjamin Bloom, Edgar Dale, Robert Gagne, John Keller, Malcolm Knowles, Ralph Tyler, and Max Wertheimer.

In translating their work into practice, LRN’s teaching framework takes into account the realities of the corporate setting, including the diverse learning styles of workers, the manner and pace at which adults assimilate information and the time frame that working adults have to learn and master subjects. Practically, this allows LRN to deliver an effective learning experience to adult workers.

Two theories on adult learning that have especially influenced the design of LRN courses are Robert Gagne’s conditions of learning and Malcolm Knowles’s importance of self-directed learning.

Table 1

Correspondence of Robert Gagne’s learning theory to LRN instructional design	
Gagne theory	Product description
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gain the learner’s attention 2. Inform the learner of objectives 3. Stimulate the recall of prior learning 	<p>LRN provides templates and tools for internal managers to get the learner’s attention. These include resources and promotional items such as posters and visual aids that focus learners on the topic and provide an overview of the objectives.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Deliver the instruction 5. Provide guided learning 6. Elicit performance 	<p><i>Foundation course</i></p> <p>LRN’s Foundation courses present conceptual information on the topic aimed at initial basic comprehension. Learners are given concepts, regulations, and other information in a variety of engaging ways – realistic scenarios, explanations from a coach, top 10 facts, frequently asked questions, facts, etc. Learners develop knowledge and comprehension of the basic principles of the topic by interactively responding to and verifying their understanding of the subject matter.</p> <p><i>Exploration course</i></p> <p>LRN’s Exploration courses use interactive scenarios that show how the concepts and principles are applied by others (i.e., third-person learning). This strategy provides employees with an opportunity to observe a situation and see how other people handle the ethics or compliance issue. They then witness how a panel of “judges” reacts to the choices made, which helps them evaluate and improve their own reactions.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Provide feedback 8. Assess performance 9. Enhance retention and transfer 	<p><i>Simulation course</i></p> <p>LRN’s Simulation courses fulfill Gagne’s last three steps through their interactive design features and assessments. In these courses, viewers are asked to provide feedback by stepping into the process to apply what they have learned about the concepts and principles (i.e., first-person learning). Using interactive video and branching, they become one of the central characters of the scenario who engages in the action and makes decisions that alter the outcome of the enactment. As they make choices, they can see the consequences of their own decision-making.</p>

Table 2

Correspondence of Malcolm Knowles’s learning theory to LRN instructional design	
Knowles’s principles	Each LRN course is designed to:
1. The need to know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide learners with a clear sense of the benefits of learning and the costs of not learning • Impart to learners how the course will improve their performance and the quality of their lives • Help learners discover for themselves the gap between where they are and where they could be
2. Self-concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower learners to take personal responsibility for their learning • Enable them to assess their own learning with positive reinforcement through on-screen coaching based on their responses • Provide a safe place for learners to practice new skills, building confidence and proficiency through guided practice and exercises that build success incrementally • Steer clear of jargon that confuses learners; avoid language that patronizes them and situations that create negative perceptions and reaction • Ask for feedback and provide opportunities for learners to give suggestions on class improvement
3. Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help learners recall what they already know from prior experience that relates to the topic • Include options so that learning activities can be adjusted as needed • Suggest follow-up ideas and next steps for support and implementation • Make sure that learners’ experience doesn’t work against learning. For instance, when appropriate, LRN courseware helps learners unlearn old habits or confront biases and predispositions, opening up learners to new ideas, fresh perceptions and alternate ways of thinking
4. Readiness to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt readiness to learn by inspiring learners with messaging from top performers and experts, providing thought-provoking questions and offering a compelling simulation • Provide a user-friendly design that allows learners to be in control of the learning process, including the ability to stop the program at any point, bookmark it, and return to the same point at a later time without losing any work • Allow learners to proceed at whatever pace matches their learning style and schedule so that each user receives an individualistic learning experience
5. Orientation to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize instruction around function and specific tasks to be performed • Provide a relevant context for learning via examples and activities that represent what learners are likely to experience in the real world • Provide overviews, summaries, practical examples and relevant stories that link theory to practice • Use a “whole-part-whole” approach where learners are first shown examples of how new knowledge or skills can be used, and are then provided with details; learners then circle back and receive reinforcement of the learning with another set of examples of the entire range of knowledge and skills and how they are applied. • Help learners plan for direct application of new information by presenting potential obstacles, barriers and problems; applying the new ideas in the real world; and giving learners the opportunity to explore strategies, tips and techniques for being successful • Help learners acquire just-in-time help by providing relevant job aids and resources

Robert Gagne and the model of learning steps

Robert Gagne's conditions of learning theory is one of the most noted models of adult learning. Through his research, Gagne discovered that adult learning occurs best when information is divided into small stages that accumulate towards proficiency. Gagne's work proved that adults maximize their learning when a task is broken down into simpler, smaller skills rather than presented as a large goal all at once, which tends to overwhelm learners. Gagne's model proposed that a sound instructional design incorporated nine steps, as follows:

1. *Gain the learner's attention*
2. *Inform the learner of objectives*
3. *Stimulate the recall of prior learning on the subject*
4. *Deliver the instruction*
5. *Provide guided learning*
6. *Elicit performance*
7. *Provide feedback*
8. *Assess performance*
9. *Enhance retention and transfer*

LRN's progressive approach draws extensively on Gagne's model of stepped learning. For each ethics and compliance topic we produce, LRN provides education items and materials to correspond to Gagne's learning steps.

As an example, Table 1 shows how LRN's progressive three-course sequence correlates with Gagne's events of learning.

Malcolm Knowles and the importance of self-directed learning

LRN's courses also implement the research findings of another leading educational theorist, Malcolm Knowles, who posited that adult learning is most effective when learners are self-directed. Knowles found evidence that when people can take initiative in the learning process, they learn more, retain what they learn, and make use of what they learn better and longer than people who remain passive learners. Knowles' concept of self-directed learning also aligns with the accepted psychological principle that adults seek to become self-directed beings who take responsibility for their own lives.

As a result of his research, Knowles put forth five general principles about adult learning that have come to be well-respected:

1. *The need to know:* Adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it.
2. *Self-concept:* Adults have a psychological need to be seen and treated by others as self-directed and responsible for their own lives.
3. *Experience:* Adults come into an educational activity with a reservoir of life experience that they use to help augment the learning itself.
4. *Readiness to learn:* Adults are more motivated to learn things they need to know or be able to do to cope effectively with problems they confront in real-life situations.
5. *Orientation to learn:* Adults learn most effectively when knowledge, skills, values and attitudes are presented in the context of real-life situations.

Table 2 on page 6 summarizes how LRN's instructional design incorporates Knowles' five principles.

Achieving results to advance corporate cultures of responsibility

Education is a critical component in transforming corporate cultures in the new world of business. Employees who understand the ethics and compliance issues affecting their work and who have developed the skills to accept responsibility for their business conduct are imperative for advancing an ethical corporate culture.

LRN's vast experience and expertise stand behind our leading ethics and compliance library. We are committed to helping companies become organizations of high standards and high performance. We would be pleased to work with you to plan an education program to meet the needs of your employees.



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