



Instructional Design in a Digital Age: A New Model Is Taking Hold

Lisa M. D. Owens¹ and Crystal Kadakia²(✉)

¹ Learning Cluster Design Group, Cape Coral, FL, USA

LMDOWens@tdStrategies.net

² Learning Cluster Design Group, Atlanta, GA, USA

Crystal@LearningClusterDesign.com

<http://www.learningclusterdesign.com>

Abstract. For over 50 years, instructional design and development models for training have centered around the goal of designing one deliverable for a given learning challenge. Though learning is becoming more bite-sized, these bits are often considered accessories or in support of a formal program like a course or class. The Learning Cluster Design model, in use since 2016, provides an approach that re-examines traditional assumptions and evolves learning and development (L&D) for today's digitally enabled culture. The model centers around a new goal: delivering Learning Clusters, a set of learning assets across social, formal, and immediate learning touchpoints and moments of learning need, tailored to diverse learner personas to impact on-the-job performance for a given learning challenge. In this paper, we will share how L&D practitioners and professionals are using the model, what is working, and what is challenging. Overall, our study showed a 77% Net Promoter Score for the LCD model, indicating a high degree of loyalty and positive referral, by a wide range of L&D professionals, representing a variety of roles, industries, and experience levels. We share three different case studies of the model: an internal L&D "solo" practitioner, a non-L&D use case, and an L&D practitioner layering in the LCD model. The study showed that over half of the respondents are making the LCD model a norm. We also learned about the use of the language, leadership sponsor support, and the value of the model. Ultimately, the LCD model is helping to drive continuous learning culture through a more relevant and strategic approach for users.

Keywords: Instructional design models · Learning design · Modern learner · Continuous learning · Learning in the flow of work

1 Introduction

In 2015, the authors were asked to develop a workshop to teach learning and development (L&D) professionals how to better design training to meet the needs of the emerging group labeled "modern learners." In researching the topic, the authors discovered that there is frustration with L&D, both within the industry and outside the industry — from L&D practitioners, from learners as the end users, and from the C-Suite who set

their budget. Frustrations included lack of confidence of impact back on the job, lack of accessibility in the moment of learning need, and training seen as an extra to-do outside of work to do rather than an essential part of the work. In their former roles in corporate L&D, the authors had experienced these frustrations but had not realized how wide-spread the issues are.

The result of the authors' research and work is the Owens-Kadakia Learning Cluster Design (LCD) model, which addresses the frustrations with a new goal and, therefore, seeks to modernize not just training programs, but also the L&D Industry itself. The LCD model was first presented in 2016, and, more recently, described in the book *Designing for Modern Learning: Beyond ADDIE and SAM* [1]. This paper provides an overview of the model and reports the February 2021 research among current LCD model users to determine what is working, as well as where the model, or the teaching of the model, may need to evolve to assure greater positive impact for the L&D industry.

2 The Owens-Kadakia Learning Cluster Design Model

2.1 A New Goal for Learning and Development

L&D or Training organizations are charged with using their knowledge about how people learn to assure that the workforce is capable of doing their job. When viewed narrowly, this job description leads to L&D professionals being order-takers, with a goal of delivering one training program after the other, often based on management's view of what training topic will "fix" employees' work performance.

The industry's Instructional Design (ID) models reinforce this narrow view of L&D's goal. Today's popular ID models were primarily created in the 1960s and 1970s, and all of them focus on creating just one training course, curricula, or program for each given learning goal. Even the more recent blended-learning methods, which combine web-based or digital learning methods with traditional face-to-face methods, focus on formal, one-and-done programs, that usually must be completed in a sequence. This approach may have been sufficient in the past when the pace of business allowed for L&D to develop and deploy programs over months or years. Following the academic model for teaching, these one-and-done trainings were viewed as an efficient way to teach large numbers of employees on subjects that were relatively stable and unchanging.

As the authors reviewed the workplace context of today, many differences were apparent. The pace of change is exponential and CEOs worry that employees cannot keep up. Waiting for the next class or course is not feasible, except for static topics such as compliance. With today's digital resources, employees are finding their own learning content on a daily basis. In fact, research indicates that employees use L&D-provided training just once every three to four months [2]. Employees are learning when, where, and how they need to learn to do their job, albeit with reduced efficiency and with questionable resources, as they slog through search after internet search. Though unintentional, due to the "one-and-done" overall ethos and supporting processes, L&D fails to deliver sustained change on the job for business-critical talent development goals. L&D needs a new model to stay in the game, remain relevant, and be a major contributor to the business. The new model needs to move beyond andragogy and evolve to include heutagogy as a central design philosophy.

The Owens-Kadokia LCD model reveals that the key is to swap out the goal of creating training or a single deliverable with a new goal of creating Learning Clusters. With this new goal, L&D will surround learners with a set of strategically selected learning assets to change on-the-job behavior, to serve both during intentional and unplanned moments of learning need, in a way that addresses a business issue or “pain point” and accommodates learner-to-learner difference.

2.2 Four Principles Underlying the Model

The LCD Model is built upon four principles, as shared in this excerpt from the book, *Designing for Modern Learning*, below [1].

Go Beyond One-and-Done. L&D’s new role is to deliver and facilitate access to multiple learning assets to build employee capability. It’s no longer sufficient for L&D to design one learning asset — a class or course — to meet a business’s or an employee’s learning goal.

Design the Whole, Not the Parts. Multiple learning assets must be viewed and designed as part of an integrated whole (what the authors have coined the “learning cluster”), both as part of L&D’s design and from the learner point of view. These multiple assets cannot be effective if they’re created ad hoc, without consideration of one another and how they work together to achieve the goal.

Focus on Learner Needs. Our context as training designers and deliverers is no longer as important as the context of the learner. Whereas in the past, L&D had limited tools to deliver learning, today we can deliver learning when, where, and how the learner needs it. L&D must reflect a deeper understanding of the learner and the capability gap first.

Change On-the-Job Behavior. L&D can and should be held accountable for improving performance on the job, not just at the end of a training class, course, or program. Improved performance means that there will be a change in behavior through application on the job, rather than simply acquiring the knowledge and skill during the program.

2.3 The Five Actions that Comprise the Model

The LCD model (see Fig. 1) is composed of five Actions. These Actions honor L&D’s traditional expertise, while building new strategic and design capabilities to meet modern learning needs. These five Actions tell L&D how to create a learning cluster, and they measure its effectiveness on several levels.

Here is a description of the five Actions, from *Designing for Modern Learning* [1]. The names of the Actions create the mnemonic CLUSTER.

C: Change On-the-Job Behavior. In the Change Action, set the goal for the overall learning cluster (called a strategic performance objective). This goal articulates the connection between learners’ on-the-job performance and the desired business results. This is one of three early Actions leading to the Surround Action.

L: Learn Learner-to-Learner Differences. In the Learn Action, identify learner personas within the target learner group whose behavior change will have the greatest effect on the desired business impact. Persona definitions go beyond demographics and job type to explore contexts of when, where, and how each persona will most likely need to learn. This Action guides strategic choices for learning assets in the Surround Action and content for each learning asset during detailed learning asset design.

U: Upgrade Existing Assets. In the Upgrade Action, apply the nine elements of modern learning to quickly improve current programs. As a bonus, the ideas for new learning assets identified here will jump-start the work in the Surround Action.

S: Surround Learners with Meaningful Assets. In the Surround Action, combine the work and insights from the other Actions to intentionally select learning assets across all three learning touchpoints (social, formal, immediate) to build a learning cluster. The latest neuroscience and general observation show us that learners learn not just through formal means like the classroom, but through 24/7 in-the-moment (immediate) means and through other people (social). Rather than focusing on only the formal and “learning for the first time” moment of learning need, in this Action, the model guides L&D to thoughtfully consider possible learning asset ideas across all three touchpoints. Then, select, design, and deliver those learning asset ideas that clearly connect to learner persona needs, while assuring that each distinct learner persona has learning assets across all three touchpoints that serve their moments of need. By using this strategic approach, we build confidence that the chosen set of learning assets should deliver both the desired behavior change on the job and the related business results.

TER: Track Transformation of Everyone’s Results. In the Track Action, identify those measures — qualitative and quantitative — that will indicate the impact of the overall learning cluster back on the job. Then, track these measures and turn the results into a story about the impact of learning. Use the results for further improvements.

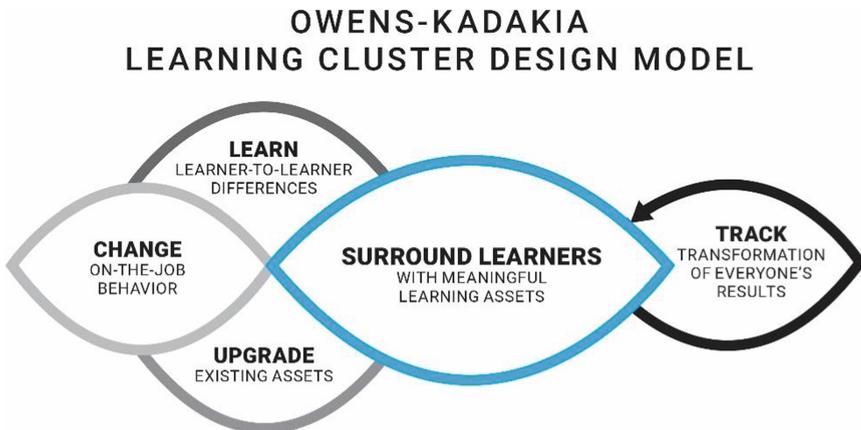


Fig. 1. The learning cluster design model is composed of five actions [1].

The model is not linear. Instead, users choose a starting point based on their business climate and initiative needs. For example, some initiatives and climate may suggest a need for quick “modern” wins and start with the Upgrade Action. Other initiatives may have recently had poor feedback from users and the Learn Action may be used to investigate deeper. Each Action references the others in a way that can later influence or even change the content within other Actions as the project progresses. In this way, the model reflects and role-models the heutagogy philosophy, by allowing the L&D practitioner to choose how to apply the model and to serve as the central strategist, rather than being directed by the model.

By shifting L&D’s goal of learning design from one-and-done training to Learning Clusters, and by empowering a comprehensive consideration of learning technologies and assets, the LCD model allows L&D to work across the spectrum of learning tools available not just today, but tomorrow. From artificial intelligence to a tried-and-true job aid, from peer buddy designs to sophisticated social learning networks, from books to immersive in-person or virtual reality experiences, the LCD model guides L&D professionals to gather the appropriate data, focus on the goal that makes a difference, and ultimately, make crucial design decisions across the spectrum of choices to include the optimal mix of assets learners want and need to close a capability gap.

Once assets are chosen for a given learning cluster, the model doesn’t seek to overtake L&D with delivery. The model promotes crowdsourcing, repurposing, chunking, and reusing to provide efficient ways to create, manage, and deliver. In some cases, L&D is simply facilitating access to the resources (and with advances such as chatbots, AI, advanced social or crowd-based LMS technologies, this is becoming more and more the reality). In others, L&D is leveraging their full design and delivery skill set.

In the case studies and data shared next, the authors found that LCD users are indeed leveraging the model and finding it valuable for modern learning design.

3 The Research Study

A questionnaire was developed to gain insights from current users of the LCD model within a few weeks’ time. To encourage participation from busy people, there were only seven multiple choice questions plus three demographic questions. To garner additional insights, each quantitative question was followed by an optional qualitative question, which essentially said, “and what else would you like us to know?”

The survey was anonymous, but users were welcome to leave their email or email the authors directly to get a copy of this report. Sixteen of the 22 respondents left a valid email address. Nineteen of the 22 respondents completed at least one open-ended question, and on average, these 19 provided 3.2 comments each, thereby providing deeper insights into what is working and what might need to be modified to encourage more global adoption of the model over time.

3.1 Qualitative Data

In this section, we will share some case studies and additional insights based on the open-ended question responses. Then, we paint a picture of what respondents say are

the struggles or challenges they face as they move forward on implementation of the LCD approach.

Case Studies. Open-ended question responses provide insights into the use of the LCD model in respondents' work, with seven of the 22 answering four or more. Here are case studies from three particular respondents, sharing their stories based on a combination of their qualitative and quantitative responses.

Case Study 1: Doing L&D Solo at a Mid-size Corporation. As an experienced Jill-Of-All-Trades type of training manager at a mid-size corporation, she tends to work independently. She learned about the LCD model through a webinar and, subsequently, grew her capability through attending the workshop. She highly recommends the LCD model to others and has shared her thoughts on the model with others. She has applied the model itself and the principles behind it in her workplace. She views the model as helping her better meet the needs of her learners as she strives for a culture of continuous learning in a digital landscape.

She likes the LCD language but uses only terms that will help her during dialogs with other non-training colleagues, which means she avoids phrases like "learner persona" and "the 9 Elements of Modern Learning," but embraces language like Learning Cluster, "Five Moments of Learning Need," and Modern Learners. She says, "I'm still learning how to use the LCD model approach, so I anticipate using all the terms more frequently." She fully expects to use the model more throughout the year and even to use it for some company-wide initiatives, which she says will help her get more leadership, stakeholders, and sponsors onboard with the LCD approach.

Her LCD work project was to create "a Microsoft Teams learning cluster for people to learn how to use Teams." She says of the LCD approach, "It helps me 'sell' training because it fits into the flow of work and life, rather than a person having to take 60 min or 90 min at a time to learn something."

She values the Surround Action within the model, coupled with the Learn Action and its learner persona approach, as well as the Track Action. As a whole, the LCD model, its philosophy, and the Social-Formal-Immediate Learning Touchpoints concept are all consistent with her own design approach. "I always have more interaction (in my training design) and try to include a social aspect, among other ways of interacting and learning," she says.

This L&D professional has embraced the entire LCD approach and has plans to continue expanding this approach throughout her work and within her company.

Case Study 2: The Unofficial L&D Professional. This person is excited to apply the LCD model and is in a unique position to apply it in a low-key way. He is an experienced L&D professional currently in a non-L&D role at work, and he teaches high school students after hours. As he applies the model, he is finding it is beneficial in his L&D endeavors both at work and after work.

This L&D professional read the book and a related blog or two. Even though he isn't in an L&D role, he has created a learning cluster at work and shared the approach with others. He is applying LCD principles at work and with high school students. He views the approach as helping him across all aspects of L&D work, with the biggest value coming from

the LCD model itself, and the Surround Action and principles in particular. He says, “It helped me think of other avenues of learning that I could craft, to help me in my work and with my personal after-work students. Both of these groups will benefit from me applying the LCD model more, I feel. In particular, I think it can help me personalize the learning to my students in better ways, to help them get the results they are looking for in their studies.”

At work, he says that he “incorporated the ideas into the project mid-way through. It worked well as a learning experience for the participants.” Of his work with high school students, he says, “based on the LCD model, which does make a lot of sense to me, I am revamping the way I am teaching my students, providing more learning touchpoints for them in different ways to meet their moments of learning need when I’m not around to help them. ... they are all different and need different things”

He is sharing his LCD approach with others. “I am coaching my manager on these ideas and showing examples of how we can use them. So far, I feel it’s going well,” he says. Of the LCD language, he says, “Because some of this is new vocabulary, it’s a work in progress to help others know what I mean if I use the terms — but repetition and persistence will pay off.”

This L&D professional in a non-L&D role can see how the model applies to a wide variety of situations, and is appreciative of the model and how it helps him continue to improve in his L&D vocation. LCD appears to bring a sense of professional fulfillment and growth.

Case Study 3: Layering LCD into L&D Work. This experienced L&D professional is currently a consultant, who delivers training and designs it, with some work in digital design. To understand the model, he read the book and enhanced his understanding with other LCD learning assets, including webinars and blogs. He is at the early stages of creating a learning cluster and is layering on the LCD principles in his work, as well as sharing the LCD concepts with others in his network. He sees LCD as benefiting a wide range of L&D work and values each of the five Actions and the set of LCD principles. He uses all of the LCD language with at least half of the terms being a regular part of his L&D conversations.

He tells us that “In designing network training programs during 2020 and now 2021, I have consciously thought about the model and how I can use it to design and deliver the most impactful training possible.” He goes on to describe his most recent project. “I just launched a semester-long program with the Business Law Scholars at my University. As part of the first webinar, I provided a short survey to understand more about their learning personas.” This is a good step forward to assure that a helpful mix of learning assets are provided for these Law students.

This L&D Professional describes experience with senior leaders and the challenge to make change happen. He notes, “Given the opportunity to work with senior management prior to designing and delivering training, I would emphasize the Strategic Performance Objective.” He sees the SPO as being consistent with his past work with the Kirkpatrick levels of evaluation and his viewpoint on the purpose and value of training. “I have long approached training with the end game in mind. If the time and effort and money to design and deliver training doesn’t result in actual behavior change on the job, what is the point?” he says.

This consultant sees the model as valuable, describing it like this: “So the LCD model creates a very effective way to communicate how and why training should be designed and delivered in a way that will ensure results. For me, it is the path to creating effective L&D programs in the 21st century.”

Additional Insights. Despite the small base size for this study, a few common threads stood out.

Professional Fulfillment. As we saw in Case Study 2, the LCD approach may create personal fulfillment or professional satisfaction. This is reinforced by this respondent’s comment: “It has sparked new creativity and excitement in my work.”

Favorable Attitude. In general, respondents are favorable toward the LCD approach, as is further demonstrated by these quotes from other respondents:

- “I appreciate the model, have begun using it in our team’s work, and see us continuing to grow and develop with this being one of the fundamental models we use going forward.”
- This is “the best tool to communicate MODERN learning, especially in the age of COVID.”
- “I absolutely love the tie to business objectives and having a data-driven approach to modern learning.”

LCD Model Drives Change. Some professionals are making dramatic changes based on their understanding of the LCD model. One says, “The model is excellent and certainly challenges L&D professionals to think differently and act differently. Rather than focusing on creating programs that simply check a box, focus on changing the job.” Another relates, “Adopting the LCD model has encouraged me to think differently about how we deliver learning opportunities and the type of team members I will be focused on hiring.” Still another comments, “The model has changed the way we develop content for our stakeholders.”

Insights on What’s Challenging for LCD Users. Twenty of the 22 respondents completed the question “What are the top 2–3 struggles you are navigating this year?” Their responses tell us what is top of mind. For some, it’s the daily work, others the pandemic, and for some, it’s related to implementing the LCD model. The following threads focus on the LCD-related comments.

Management Challenges. These showed up most commonly along the theme of buy-in: “Getting support for people to take time to learn”; “Leadership buy-in”; “The struggle to get buy in from senior leaders always looking to get results without committing to everything that is required to get those results. Can we do it quicker, spend less money, etc.”

Learning Management Systems (LMS). The relationship between LMS and the LCD model will require additional investigation, given the ambiguity of the comments. For example “LMS evaluation” as a challenge may mean the respondent is implementing a

new LMS, or that integrating the Track Action measures into the existing LMS is the challenge. Likewise, “changing LMS mindset” could reference the traditional thought process that LMS are used to house and track formal programs. If the learning asset isn’t fully linked to and measured on the LMS, it’s not worth L&D’s time to work on.

L&D Growth and Development Challenges. These were articulated like this: “L&D team growth”; “team’s organizational structure and the need to build new capabilities to support a holistic learner journey”; “Growing team and offerings”. Growing L&D capability to meet modern learning design needs is a challenge. Though there are many avenues to upskilling in the LCD model, many might find investment as a barrier, though further investigation is needed.

Change Management. Some describe it like this: “Shifting organizational mindset to a new way of designing”; “constant change and transition.”

Learners themselves are viewed as potential barriers to change. “Learner buy-in”; “Packaging the training in ways that ‘sell’ and meet these (learner) needs”; “Learner engagement”; “Acceptance of social learning”; “Learner/manager compliance.”

Time is a barrier for most of us and was expressed by respondents like this: “Time to put into L&D work”; “Ability to produce fast”; “Competing priorities preventing timely development of complementary learning assets.”

In summary, challenges to LCD Model are typical of most change management projects and span needs of leadership stakeholders, learners, L&D professionals themselves, and technology, specifically LMS.

3.2 Quantitative Data

Given that the survey contained just seven quantitative items, each was written to answer a specific question, as shown below.

Net Promoter Score. The first item is a Net Promoter Score (NPS) question, “How likely are you to recommend the LCD model to a friend or colleague?” Results (Table 1) indicate a 77% NPS, a high score. For reference, any NPS score above 0 is “good.” It means that your audience is more loyal than not. Anything above 20 is considered “favourable.” Bain & Co, the source of the NPS system, suggests that above 50 is excellent, and above 80 is world class.

Table 1. “How likely are you to recommend the LCD model to a friend or a colleague?”

| Rating (1–10) | # (Total sample size: 22) |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| 10 | 14 |
| 9 | 3 |

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

| Rating (1–10) | # (Total sample size: 22) |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| 8 | 4 |
| 7 | 1 |
| 1–6 | 0 |

$$NPS = ((14 + 3)/22) - 0 = .77$$

Exposure to Model. The second question was used to determine the level of exposure respondents had to the LCD Model, with the possibility of eliminating anyone without significant exposure. All but one of the respondents had either attended a live or virtual multi-day workshop or read the book. One respondent was taught the model by another user and, based on open-ended responses, is a valid user of the model. Seventeen, or 77%, of respondents used multiple learning assets, including reading related blogs and getting personal consultations. There are five (23%) respondents who not only took the workshop, but also read the book.

This is a testament to the LCD model itself in that it demonstrated that by providing multiple learning assets, people will use the ones that meet their needs to help them learn how and when they want to learn (Table 2).

Table 2. “What learning assets have you used to learn about the LCD model?”

| Learning asset | # (Total sample size: 22) | % |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Book | 17 | 77.3% |
| Blog(s) | 14 | 63.6% |
| Webinars | 12 | 54.5% |
| Workshop | 8 | 36.4% |
| Personal consultation | 1 | 4.5% |
| None used | 1 | 4.5% |

Experience with the Model. The third question seeks to understand the depth of experience with the model in the workplace. Nineteen (86%) reported applying the LCD model in more than one of the ways listed in Table 3.

Table 3. “How have you applied the LCD model?”

| How LCD was applied | # (Total sample size: 22) | % |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Apply the principles | 18 | 81.8% |
| Shared the model with others | 16 | 72.7% |
| Establishing LCD as the norm | 12 | 54.5% |
| Created a cluster at work | 8 | 36.4% |
| Not applied yet | 2 | 9.1% |

Benefit of Model to L&D. The fourth question asks what the LCD model helps the respondent do in an effort to understand why the LCD model is a benefit to these L&D professionals (Table 4). Of the 22 respondents, more than half (54%) selected four or more of the five items from the list provided. Three selected just one item, with two of them saying the benefit was to help them better meet learner needs and one saying it provided an approach for continuous learning for the company.

Table 4. “What does the LCD model help you do?”

| Benefit | # (Total sample size: 22) | % |
|--|---------------------------|-------|
| Better meet the needs of learners or clients | 18 | 81.8% |
| Provides approach for continuous learning | 18 | 81.8% |
| Streamlines work/thought-process for designing training | 15 | 68.2% |
| Better meet the needs of the business | 13 | 59.1% |
| Language improves communication and/or increases support for L&D | 13 | 59.1% |

What Users Value. The fifth question seeks to understand what aspects of the model are most valued by the users, with a request to select no more than three items (Table 5). While most respondents selected multiple items, one respondent was unsure what they valued, and two valued only the model itself. In addition, two respondents valued only one of the Actions – the Change Action for one respondent and the Upgrade Action for the other.

LCD Language Usage. The language for the LCD model was strategically selected with the intent to help L&D professionals signal a true change in what they were doing, and to elicit support during the change effort. Question 5 seeks to understand which terms are being used (Regularly, sometimes, not used).

The term “learning asset” is the most used term. A learning asset is defined as a general term describing a wide range of things that help people learn. It might be

Table 5. “What aspect of the LCD model is most valuable to you?”

| Most valued parts of LCD (up to 3) | # (Total sample size: 22) | % |
|--|---------------------------|-------|
| The model as a whole | 15 | 68.2% |
| The LCD principles | 15 | 68.2% |
| The surround action/learning cluster tool | 12 | 54.5% |
| The upgrade action/9 elements tool | 10 | 45.4% |
| How LCD integrates with other ID models | 7 | 31.8% |
| The change action/strategic performance objective tool | 6 | 27.3% |
| The learn action/learner personas tool | 6 | 27.3% |
| The track action/measures tool | 6 | 27.3% |
| Not sure | 1 | 4.5% |

content to read, an online search, a class (face-to-face or online), a discussion, a video, or even a motivational poster. It can be as small as a 30-s audio recording or as large as a three-month class. In traditional training, a learning asset most often takes the form of a class, an e-learning course, or a blended learning program.

Other terms that get high levels of usage include learning cluster, modern learner, and learning touchpoints.

Leadership Support. The last quantitative question was focused on understanding the level of leadership involvement for the new model (Table 6). Encouragingly, in all but one instance, respondents report that their leaders were, at a minimum, aware of the LCD model or supported the L&D professions in their efforts to try it. In 12 cases, leaders were more involved, either supporting the cost of a workshop, actively learning about the LCD model themselves, or having been the person to identify the model and bring it to the L&D professional.

Table 6. “At what level have your organizational leaders or L&D stakeholders/sponsors engaged with the LCD model?”

| Level of support | # (Total sample size: 22) | % |
|--|---------------------------|-----|
| Supports trying out the model | 17 | 77% |
| Aware of the LCD model | 9 | 41% |
| Invested in L&D attending workshop | 6 | 27% |
| Engaged personally in learning about the model | 5 | 23% |
| Encouraged L&D to find modern ways of learning | 3 | 14% |
| Brought the LCD model to L&D | 2 | 9% |
| None of the above | 1 | 5% |

Demographics. The demographic questions showed that the respondents represented the full range of L&D professions (manager, digital designer, trainer, consultant, designer/developer). Years of experience in L&D also covered the gamut with five having three or fewer years in L&D, six having four to eight years, and eleven having nine or more years' experience. Industries in which respondents work include healthcare (3), technology (9), energy (1), media (1), foods (1), and consulting (4), with three respondents not specifying their industry. With this base size, there is no correlation between responses and demographic differences.

4 Conclusions

The LCD model and LCD principles have been strongly accepted (77% NPS score) by L&D professionals who represent a broad spectrum of industries, experience levels, and types of L&D jobs. People are using the model in their workplace and are planning on continue to implement this program for the foreseeable future. The LCD approach is helping them meet learner and business needs and helping them create a continuous digital learning culture. The LCD approach has provided the guidance needed to help them implement the LCD model, streamline L&D work, and showcase a new language to better communicate with other and garner support for their work. Surprisingly and encouragingly, leadership level sponsors of L&D seem aware and engaged with the LCD model as a new way of working.

The issues and barriers to LCD implementation at this point appear to be those things common to all change management projects. Ways we can help adopters more through these is to continue communicating the impact and benefits of the LCD model more broadly and, perhaps, starting to push the message to non-L&D organizational leaders and managers so that requesting a Learning Cluster instead of a training program is seen as the modern way to do business. Continuing to encourage practice, pilots, and enrolling internal champions for the LCD model are all important ways to drive successful change.

The authors intend to continue tracking implementation across the industry with the intent of growing the pool of users and searching out barriers in a larger group with the intent of bringing users together to help resolve any emerging issues as a social community. "Modern" changes every day, and it is our intent to evolve.

References

1. Kadakia, C., Owens, L.M.D.: *Designing for Modern Learning: Beyond ADDIE and SAM*, 1st edn. Association for Talent Development, Alexandria, USA (2020)
2. Degreed "How the Workforce Learns Report". <https://get.degreed.com/en/how-the-workforce-learns-report-2019>. Accessed 11 Mar 2021