

New Work Case Study

Cognician and PostFinance Collaboration

About Cognician

We believe that people are capable of great things when their behavior is driven by meaningful conversations, great programs, powerful ideas, and deeply felt emotions. What's our core capability? We enable large organizations to activate employee behavior change at scale. We achieve this by creating personalized, data-driven digital experiences that are grounded in action, follow-through, reflection, and social engagement. With our multi-day challenges, you can drive measurable change in 30 days or less.

About PostFinance

PostFinance is one of Switzerland's leading financial institutions. It offers products and services that appeal to everyone. Our 3 million or so customers frequently come into contact with PostFinance: when making payments in e-finance, with the app or at the checkout, when calling our Contact Center or when receiving advice in one of our branches. Our in-house innovation team, 'VNTR' (pronounced 'venture'), is always on the lookout for forward-looking business ideas by encouraging internal teams to collaborate with innovative start-ups. This drives innovation in the areas of new business models, new technology, and new ways of working. We carry out experiments and pilot projects to open our innovation process to the outside world.

Challenge

PostFinance designed an internal program for Lateral Leaders. These are leaders who don't manage direct reports but have a leadership function in the organization, for example, as a project manager or product owner.

This program employed a novel course design based on the eduScrum methodology – an agile approach to corporate learning and skills development. Consisting of three month-long sprints, the course tackled three specific leadership topics.

Training started with a moderated kick-off session where participants formed learning teams. The teams then took one month to complete their coursework (also called 'backlog items') for each sprint.

Each sprint ended with a review session in which the teams shared what they'd learned. These discussions represented the combination of a month's collaboration and learning. Participants discussed important concepts, shared their experiences, and connected with their peers. They also received new backlog items for their next sprint.

However, in comparison to traditional training, this course relied on the participants practicing self-paced and team learning. This is where a problem arose. Participants were not giving their coursework enough time and attention, resulting in less than optimal review discussions.

Approach

PostFinance strives to drive innovation not just on the customer front, but also with respect to internal processes and new ways of working. The PostFinance VNTR & HR teams identified and approached Cognician as a possible collaboration partner to accompany participants on their agile learning journey.

In collaboration with Cognician, PostFinance created a digital coaching program on the Cognician platform that ran concurrently with the Lateral Leadership course. This program encouraged participants to work through their coursework and thus have better conversations during their month-end reviews. The program had bite-sized digital challenges presented by a digital coaching guide, and participants were nudged by the program to complete the challenges and coursework.

Solution and Results

For the three sprints, 18 challenges were designed, with 6 challenges unlocking for each sprint. Behavior drivers were incorporated into the challenges to help participants better plan their collaboration and coursework completion. Each challenge covered a specific topic of the Lateral Leadership content. Participants were nudged via email to complete the challenges and to come back to the Cognician platform to reflect on what they had learned by sharing insights.

Results showed that participants were better able to plan their collaboration and coursework completion. With self-paced learning, participants took responsibility for collaborating with their team members and completing their coursework. This led to the completion of more coursework and more in-depth discussions at their month-end reviews.

Through a data-driven approach, we were able to understand learning behavior drivers better. Using an avatar and digital platform, behavioral drivers were successfully incorporated to improve participants' learning habits.

For the next roll out of the Lateral Leadership course, agile planning and iteration will take place to further enhance the digital coaching program flow for an even better user and learning experience. PostFinance and Cognician have shown that agile collaboration in both defining and achieving learning outcomes is key to successfully creating behavior change in blended learning programs.