Storytelling in Video-based Leadership Training and Development

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INTRODUCTION

Stories shape our lives, and by extension, our personal and professional development. From the moment humans developed language capability, narratives have been our primary means of learning, socializing, and transmitting knowledge to one another. In fact, our brains are better wired to understand, remember, and tell stories than data, facts, and abstractions. Stories are the very building blocks of knowledge and the foundation of memory and meaning. In every culture across the globe, human beings tell stories to understand, share, and recall information. Even before the advent of the written word, the main functions of storytelling were to educate, transfer collective intelligence from one generation to the next, and encourage creative problem solving.

This white paper discusses the use of storytelling and scenario-based approaches in video-based corporate learning content. It covers the science supporting the use of this modality and best practices in design and development of scenario-based approaches.
THE BRAIN SCIENCE BEHIND STORIES FOR LEARNING AND THE CONNECTION TO HUMAN EMOTION

Stories and scenarios are impactful on learning and retention because they generate emotional engagement in the learner. Researchers in Spain found that being told a story drastically changes the way the brain works. When simply told a term, the language-processing parts of the brain are activated. However, when people are told a narrative story, additional sensory areas in the brain are activated to “experience” the story. Some studies have actually shown that the human brain does not easily distinguish between hearing a story and experiencing it in real life. In both cases, the same brain regions are activated.

Recent discoveries in neuroscience are proving that even when people think they are making decisions based on logic, they are often unconsciously being driven by their emotions. While facts and figures engage a smaller area of the brain, stories engage multiple brain regions that work together to build elaborate three-dimensional images and emotional responses. Each sensory image, emotion, sensation, texture, sound and color provides a hook for the brain as the story draws an individual in and effortlessly holds their attention.

Surprisingly, stories have the capacity to teach the brain how to work. Gerald Edelman, a neuroscience researcher, argues that the mind uses overlapping systems or “maps” of neurons to pull together scattered bits of sensation and thought. Stories trigger these neurons to fire and connect, and the resulting connections become the scaffolding of human intelligence.

The neo-cortex is the part of the brain that deals with our intellectual processes, such as thinking and talking, and its primary function is to search out meaning, context, and patterns in the world. Stories themselves contain patterns and templates that help us to put things into context. Research carried out by Kimberly Boller and Carolyn Rovee-Collier shows that when students learn about a subject as part of an authentic context—a story relevant to the topic—learning and memory are dramatically improved.¹

Through repeated studies into the workings of the brain, researchers such as Robert Ornstein, Roger Sperry, and George Lakoff, have proven that learning and memory are enhanced by association with emotional activity.

Because the emotional center of the brain, the limbic system, is positioned in close proximity to the part of the brain responsible for long-term memory storage, Sperry's work provided the explanation for why we remember more easily when our emotions are aroused. A well-told story can trigger positive feelings of curiosity, surprise, or excitement, or negative feelings of sadness, depression, or anger, far more than a sequence of numbers or an ordered list of data.

Furthermore, the brain releases chemicals in response to emotions generated through stories that reinforce learning. If the information conveyed in the story is perceived as a negative threat, cortisol is released. If it's perceived as positive, adrenaline is released. Behavioral biologist J.L. McGaugh discovered that both of these chemicals work like chemical memory “fixatives” and experiments have demonstrated that learners can remember information far longer when these chemicals are present versus when they are absent.²

Another interesting observation about how stories impact learning relates to the best state of the brain for optimum learning. Although we might think that our conscious, alert brains would present the optimal state for learning, research has actually shown that we consume information more rapidly and cogently when our brains are at Alpha level, or in a relaxed awareness state. And, of course, listening to a story is an effective way to achieve this state. The power of the story lies in the fact that while our conscious minds are absorbed, the unconscious mind is free to take in the messages that the story contains. This makes intuitive sense—listening to, and becoming captivated by an enthralling story can help reduce stress and stimulate feelings of well-being and relaxation. When people are relaxed, they are naturally more amenable to receiving information, which in turn helps them to learn and retain that information.

ADULT LEARNING THEORY AND STORYTELLING

ELEARNING APPROACHES

It turns out that storytelling and scenario-based approaches are also well-supported in adult learning theory. It’s natural then to ask the question: why would we not leverage this power in the development of learning content?

LEVERAGES SOCIAL COGNITIVE ADULT LEARNING THEORY

Social Learning Theory is associated with the work of Albert Bandura, renowned Stanford University Emeritus Professor of Psychology. There is much support for scenario-based approaches in Albert Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory since scenario-based instruction represents a form of observational learning. The theory emphasizes the importance of learning through observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. Social Learning Theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous, reciprocal interactions between cognitive, behavioral and environmental influences. Learning occurs by forming ideas about how new behaviors are performed after observing others, and then later using that information as a guide for action. Bandura suggests that, “since observational learning does not require performance, it provides a medium for rapid acquisition of new competencies. The abbreviation of the acquisition process through observational learning is vital for both development and survival.”

He further discusses two elements of observational learning that have implications for storytelling as a learning tool. These are symbolic processing and modeling.

Through symbolic processing, Bandura argues a learner does not need to see every action undertaken by a model in order to process it, or reflect on its implications, relative to his or her own context. Rather, a learner can operate in a representational mode through verbal and imagined symbols that serve as guides for future behavior. The capability for action is actually rooted in symbolic activity.

With respect to modeling, Bandura notes that learners can use modeling to make sensible connections and see the possibility of positive outcomes if they enact the behaviors. He further notes that, “social learning theory distinguishes between acquisition and performance because people do not enact everything they learn. They are more likely to adopt modeled behavior if it results in outcomes they value.” The four components to the modeling process, per his theory, are attention, retention, replication, and motivation—all accepted parts of the learning process.

Bandura’s work has significant implications for the application of storytelling to corporate learning and the design of training solutions. Bandura’s work demonstrates modeling as an effective shortcut to tedious and hazardous trial and error learning attempts. Simple mimicry augmented by extracting the rules underlying the modeled behaviors successfully generates new behavior patterns. With engaging scenarios, attention is initiated and sustained when
stories are contextualized and therefore relevant to learners. Retention is enabled through best practice design of eLearning content including the use of interpolative testing, assessment, the use of image reinforcement, micro-learning, and so on. Replication is triggered through post-course reinforcement. Motivation is enhanced through pre-course reflection and, as with replication, post-course reinforcement.

It’s interesting to relate here that the discovery of “mirror neurons” has recently lent biological support to the theory of social learning. Although research is in its infancy, the discovery of mirror neurons in primates may constitute a neurological basis for imitation. These are neurons which fire either when the animal does something itself, or when it observes the action being done by another.4 Taken as a whole, this research bolsters the effectiveness of scenario-based learning because of its ability to provide contextualized “modeling” for the learner.

NON-THREATENING INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES FOSTER RETENTION AND ENABLE INFLUENCING

While storytelling exemplifies a potent vehicle for communication, it is also important to highlight that it offers a less invasive approach. People respond more readily to the “benign” power of a story, rather than more didactic types of instruction or probing questioning, which very often can breed resistance in a learner. Learning from stories can also be helpful in bypassing our natural resistance to change. If a student perceives that he or she is being told what to do, given advice, or talked down to, there is always a risk that protective, internal barriers will surface. Being offered possible solutions through the medium of a story, however, is more acceptable and less threatening. There is less “perceived pressure” to accept the advice being offered. Stories can therefore help to convey what might be a potentially complex subject in a way that is non-threatening, but at the same time thought-provoking.

EFFECTIVENESS OF VISUAL LEARNING

Processing a new idea requires the activation of the working memory—and working memory is easily overwhelmed. In contrast to the popular concept of “learning styles,” which has recently been the subject of significant debate in learning theory circles, working memory has two processing modes and those are the audio and visual modes. The audio mode is where we hear an idea, akin to recalling a few notes of a favorite song, which activates the auditory cortex in the brain. The visual mode is when we see something, either actually in front of us, or in our mind’s eye,

which activates the visual cortex. The visual cortex occupies significantly more territory in the brain, and has the capacity to process much more information than the auditory cortex. In the brain, a picture is genuinely worth at least a thousand words. In this sense, when you can literally “see” what someone is saying, you have unlocked a more powerful gyration for the idea in the brain than simply “hearing” the identical idea.

If you are struggling with how to get others to “see” what you are saying? Storytelling can get you out of the bind. According to neuroscientist Dr. Matthew Lieberman, who leads the Social Cognitive Neuroscience Lab at UCLA, when the brain is not doing anything particularly active, the neurons that fire are those involved in thinking about ourselves and other people and how we connect with one another.5 When at rest, we like to tell ourselves stories and these stories tend to be primarily visual. We “see” people interacting in working memory. This potent circuitry, because it is deeply embedded in the brain, is highly economical, requiring limited effort to activate. It's not surprising then that people who can memorize a randomized pack of cards are able to do so most effectively by creating stories of characters interacting, not via rote repetition.

OTHER BENEFITS OF NARRATIVE LEARNING ARE THAT IT:

1. **Builds critical-thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills so that employees can face real-life situations in the future.** Scenario-based narratives allow learners to relate to a situation from a non-threatening, non-personal perspective. They can decide what a character should do, or how they should behave, without a sense of direct, personal responsibility. This detachment lets learners view problems and their solutions in a more objective, non-biased mindset. They are able to apply their prior experience, subject knowledge, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills in a risk-free environment that still evokes their “real-world” context to help them hone the necessary skills and apply them to their own situations in the workplace.

2. **Allows employees to fail and helps them overcome mistakes in a safe environment.** Scenario-based eLearning allows learners to vicariously experience non-routine situations. Another important advantage of eLearning scenarios is their ability to allow learners to explore situations that might be too risky, difficult, sensitive, or expensive to explore in real life, or are at the extreme ends of what mainstream training might cover. Further, learners have the luxury of being able to repeatedly “experience” these scenarios over and over again, without risk,

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until they are comfortable with the concepts. They can practice decision making, hold imaginary conversations, and experience the ramifications of poor decisions and ill-considered comments. Learners can learn from their own mistakes, but without suffering real-life consequences.

3. **Allows complex concepts to be more easily understood.** As a result, scenario-based learning is especially applicable when teaching the learner skills that involve decision making in challenging situations. Soft skills are particularly well-suited to narratives, in which characters interact in personal and professional ways, while facing difficult issues and interpersonal dynamics. Being able to practice responses based upon what is observed in the scenario allows learners to try out different approaches to tricky situations involving negotiation, diplomacy, training, and coaching. With characters displaying their own differing personalities, learners can see that one size rarely fits all.

4. **Enables learning to occur faster and makes it “stickier.”** Virtual scenarios let learners assemble expertise and experience in a much shorter duration than they would from other forms of instruction. What is more, scenario-based learning lets them learn through a trial-and-error process that is as effective as getting on-the-job training but without having to face the consequences or bearing the costs of a wrong decision.

Cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner stated that we are twenty-two times more likely to remember a fact when it has been wrapped in a story.6 What is retained is then more likely to be applied in the workplace.

Further, the types of skills required of today’s leaders—from leading change to coaching, to managing diversity, to giving feedback—lend themselves exceptionally well to dialogue-based demonstration. The human interaction component—leading, working, and relating to others—is critical in teaching those skills, and setting them within the context of a story or scenario is the best way to do so. Narrative learning provides those types of opportunities in a safe environment, where errors can be examined and corrected before they have lasting, real-world consequences.

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THE APPLICATION OF SCENARIO TO TRAINING
AND DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Modern organizations need to rapidly build their leadership pipelines, and the expensive and non-scalable approaches of the past are not the answer. ELearning is a great answer to some of the existing barriers around cost, scalability, mobility, and flexibility. However, most leadership eLearning today is too long, too linear, and neither engaging nor contextualized for the learner. Digital natives in particular, reject linear, structured learning experiences and much prefer a “show me” versus “tell me” pedagogical approach. For leadership development to be effective, how the content is designed, developed, and delivered is as important as the content itself. The solution needs to be efficient, effective, and engaging.

Both behavior demonstration and scenario-based approaches to leadership training are highly engaging and effective. Training content leveraging these approaches allows for effective modelling of leadership behaviors for learners. For example, in a video-based training course, actors representing realistic characters in a workplace scenario can accurately demonstrate management behaviors with occasional input from a leader, mentor, or coach. The characters in a story can be shown struggling with specific leadership challenges. Frustrated or discouraged, and in need of advice and coaching, a leader mentor can help them better understand what they're doing wrong and show them how to course-correct their leadership practices. The characters can then subsequently apply the learning, and in some cases “replay” the scenario, demonstrating improved leadership practices and techniques.

And this acting can also play out within a team context. Today, leadership is less about hero-leadership and rising up through structured ranks and more about effective team-based leadership where collaboration, distributed decision making, and optimizing the team dynamic are critical. Setting the training in a team context enables an even stronger association with realistic interaction in the workplace. Leaders operate within the context of their teams and interact throughout their days with direct reports, peers, and others senior to them. They also lead teams that form and disband on a continual basis.

Scenario-based leadership training offers a touchstone and short-cut to group understanding. Stories invite comment, establish connection, and promote discussion. Leaders and future leaders, once their peers or teams have gone through the courses, can meet and discuss what they have learned. By teaching critical leadership competencies
within the fabric of dynamic interaction with others, one can ensure both attention and retention—key components associated with social cognitive adult learning theory.

Finally, a recent pilot study conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Integrated Learning Initiative found that the more interesting learners found a video-based training course, the better they performed on content recall tests. Additional research conducted by Skillsoft with Accenture and MIT's Learning Initiative demonstrated that a Skillsoft scenario-based video course trended towards significance in generating greater interest among learners compared to other instructional approaches. This, taken together with the previous finding, provide research-based support for the assertion that Skillsoft's scenario-based courses improve learner recall when compared to other content treatment approaches, including instructor-led training approaches.

**BEST PRACTICES FOR DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING SCENARIO-BASED CONTENT**

Video-based training courses, where participants are thrust into life-like scenarios, if optimally designed and developed, provide a great way to cost-effectively enable leader learners to gain the benefits of scenario-based training.

**WELL-ESTABLISHED LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Before you can begin crafting a scenario, you must be clear about what you want learners to learn. This means creating key learning objectives that address and encapsulate the skills or knowledge the story is intended to deliver. These objectives must be clear and compelling, directly stating what the learner should know or be able to do at the conclusion of the course and after each individual sub-topic. Objectives should be limited to avoid over-taxing both the storyline and the learner. Simple, well-crafted objectives let the learner absorb the key content the learning is intended to impart without becoming overwhelmed, and they allow the narrative to remain focused and to unfold naturally.

**AUTHENTICITY**

Content must have the ring of authenticity for storytelling to be effective. The learner cannot perceive the story to be contrived or artificial. It needs to be substantive and grounded in reality to be believable. In other words, we have to incorporate enough detail into the setting and storyline to simulate actual experiences. The more relatable the story, the more the learner will respond to it, and the more learners will associate it with pre-existing schema in their brains. If we make that association, the learner will recall the information and make use of it on the job. The right amount of
detail creates authenticity without making the story too ponderous or overly specific. The story should have enough
detail to be intelligible and credible, but not so much that the audience loses focus on the larger critical learning points
or that learners are forced out of the story to create an analogous scenario for themselves. They must be able to
generalize the scenario to their own work lives. Too much detail can get in the way of that goal.

Scenarios are effective for triggering retrieval because they place learners in the context similar to their own. Scenarios
enable context-based triggers—thoughtful use of the background environment scenario—which greatly facilitate
memory. For example, if the targeted issue relates to managing a team meeting, the scenario might take place in a
room similar to where the learner runs meetings with his or her real-life team, with the team size similar to what he or
she is managing, and anything else that may serve as a recognizable element. This enables the participant to link the
scenario to real-life workplace context.

**INTRIGUING AND INFORMATIVE STORYLINE**

A narrative needs to be intriguing in order to grab attention. There needs to be a reason for the learner to become
engaged. That requires the narrative to be provocative, interesting, entertaining, and informative. The story must also
be “involving.” The learner needs to be drawn into the story so that a cognitive, emotional, and behavioral response
can be generated. Emotionally, a story can precipitate feelings about the characters or events contained in the story.
Behaviorally, the story will trigger the learner to reevaluate and alter their own behavior and pass along their new
knowledge to others. Empathetic characters, a meaningful challenge or obstacle, conflict, and tension are all
important to incorporate. It can also be very effective to include an element of surprise, reengaging the learner’s
interest and attention.

**INCORPORATING THE ALCHEMY OF A GOOD STORY**

The best practice for story structure is to begin by establishing a setting and then moving into introducing a plot
with a beginning, some development, a complex reaction to that development, outcome, and an ending. In general
effective learning stories have primary focus on a single protagonist, an identified predicament, and a resolution of
that predicament that embodies the change, ideas, and explication of the implications you want the learner to take
from them. Good stories are often also imbued with vision, integrity, and values such as compassion, resourcefulness,
kindliness, courage, and other qualities you want to instill.
No key ingredient can be left out of the equation. It’s critical to set the scene, pull the audience in, provide all key contextual facts, lay out the crux of the dilemma, deliver the insights and implications, reiterate the implications, and leverage the learners emotional responses, such as anticipation, concern, and thoughtfulness. Each story has a “from-to journey” and follows Freytag’s Pyramid Exposition—complication, climax, reversal, denouement. A choice is revealed, change occurs, the situation shifts and is seen in a new light.

It’s a highly successful formula that translates well into scenario-based eLearning courses because the brain is highly attracted to that traditional story arc: character struggles, identifies new competencies to manage challenges, and uses their abilities to triumph over adversity. Translating this into something more tangible with respect to leadership: the scenario’s protagonist struggles with a new assignment that requires leadership capabilities in excess of the individual’s current skills. The drama could center on the need to make tough choices related to a specific business challenge, with imperfect information, or without the complete alignment of required stakeholders. It could challenge learners to reflect on whether they would be able to make tough choices under similar circumstances—the same types of choices that are required of leaders of today’s complex organizations. It can deal with scarce resources, making difficult decisions, taking action despite risks, handling complex human interaction, or any number of other situations.

Finally, it’s important to end the scenario on a positive note. The goal is to inspire learners to act and grow. You want to create a sense of excitement about the possibilities that lie ahead. Put the learner in the frame of mind to think about a new future for themselves and their organization. A positive ending to the story triggers the limbic system to release dopamine which makes us more optimistic about our own ability to change. Good storytelling evokes a strong neurological response.

**USE OF COMPELLING CHARACTERS**

With the choice of characters, the goal is to have the audience identify with at least one of them as their surrogate. Ideally, a learner should always see some element of themselves in a scenario. It’s important to incorporate emotional “hooks” for the learner to identify with. The best way to do this is to tap into the overall human experience and invite introspection and reflection: “If I were this character facing this circumstance, what would I do?”

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It's important for the learner to feel that they can share the character’s thoughts and feelings. Inner emotions can be brought out through expressions, tone of voice, and body language. Personality can also be brought out through actions. Think about how the character behaves when alone vs. in a team context. Dialogue is one of the main ways to directly reveal character. How a character reacts, and how they express that reaction, reveals a lot about who they are. Their words matter.

**CAREFUL CHOICE OF LANGUAGE**

The language used in the scenario should be familiar to language that learners are accustomed to hearing in a similar context. Whatever can be done to establish links through context will help to engage learners and make them feel comfortable, thereby facilitating the process of moving learning from short to long-term memory. Speech should sound natural not stilted. A character's vocabulary and rhythm of speech often reflect their personality. It's important to think about the choice of words and the level of formality. Overly formal language can make learners less receptive to the content. And not everything needs to be directly stated. When characters are in each other's presence, body language and props can help let the learner know what they're feeling.

Dialogue always needs to have a sense of purpose or the learner can become bored and frustrated. It's especially critical to avoid dialogue which goes on for too long. It's best practice to keep dialogue short and make every line of dialogue count. On occasion it can be very useful to have a character talk about one thing while thinking about something else. In this way, exploiting video's ability to expose both internal and external language, a character's hidden depths and inner emotions can be uncovered and the learner’s evoked.

**STRATEGIC USE OF EMOTIONAL LEVERS**

Once you have engaged learners with the story you can facilitate retention by utilizing emotional levers such as humor, suspense, tension, camaraderie, shame, or any relevant reaction to what is taking place in the story. In the course of developing the scenario content, it is important to anticipate what emotional connections learners are likely to experience. That kind of “emotional analysis” helps us tap into what our learners are likely to care about and respond to in the content itself.
Humor deserves special mention. Although difficult to analyze, humor has been proven to be a powerful ally in the learning business. Educator and learning expert Eric Jensen documents work carried out at Indiana University showing that when learners were exposed to humor they were more receptive to information. Researchers at IU also found that when students were told key learning points, followed by a humorous story, they remembered the key points much better than when there was no story.

**SCENARIOS SHOULD LEND THEMSELVES TO A MICRO-LEARNING APPROACH**

Brain science research suggests that micro-learning is highly aligned to how the brain processes and recalls information. For instance, we can only hold seven objects in our working memory at any given time and less than 10 minutes of video-based learning. Well-designed micro-learning experiences respect these cognitive limits, giving learners small doses of know-how that are easy to understand right away and memorable enough to be retrieved later. Micro-learning content supports learning needs before distraction sets in. Retrieval practice actually increases knowledge five-fold. 80% of learners who use micro-learning report finding it to be a very effective way to learn.

Micro-learning enables spaced learning, in which learning occurs over time, and has been proven to help learners retain and retrieve greater amounts of information. Scenarios fit nicely into a spaced learning approach because they can be designed to achieve a specific learning objective, often within 10 minutes or less. Scenarios, ideally, should be broken down into these shorter components or episodes.

**EFFECTIVE USE OF IMAGERY**

The challenge for the original storytellers was that before the written word, there was no other way of reinforcing the verbal information that they gave to other people. Storytellers discovered through “hit or miss” that the consummate way to help people remember and make sense of information was to create rich, lively and dramatic images in their minds and entwine the information into them. In fact, the more implausible or outlandish the image, the easier it would be to remember. Hence the creation of flying dragons and talking pigs. What the original storytellers were doing instinctively has since been confirmed by contemporary brain research.

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USE OF DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

It's important to capitalize on opportunities for dramatic effect through the use of body language (e.g., poses and posture), facial expression, tone of voice, choice of words, and so on. Video scenarios allow actors to use these visual elements to imbue their characters with emotion and personality, and therefore bring the learning situations to dramatic life, just as they do on stage or in movies and television shows. Learners, just as television viewers, can then become emotionally and intellectually engaged in stories being told. The only difference is in the content of the story, the key lesson it's teaching. Whether it's how to resolve a team conflict or how to overcome a significant workplace challenge, the mode is essentially the same.

Ultimately, the best stories pull the learner forward, making them want to know what happens next. These stories set up expectations and pose questions to be answered by moving on to the next chapter or scene, pulling the learner along to the conclusion of the narrative, the completion of the course. The essence of the narrative structure is to compel the learner to keep going, to know more, to want to see what is just around the bend, and to want to understand how this activity fits into a larger scheme. It makes sense of a complex collection of information.

IF YOU WANT THEM TO REMEMBER IT, MAKE IT MEMORABLE

Organizations take on the time and expense of training their people because there are skills and knowledge they want them to learn and remember. Therefore, the training they provide must be memorable. Taking advantage of the proven value of storytelling and scenario-based learning ensures these organizations that their time and money is well spent, and their next generation of leaders are equipped to take the reins and flourish.

Learn more about how Skillsoft deploys state-of-the art scenario-based learning for business leaders.
REFERENCES


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Heide is Senior Vice President of Skillsoft’s training and development content and is also responsible for its Leadership & Business Skills content portfolios. She joined Skillsoft in 2016 and is responsible for driving innovation across all content areas.

Heide has extensive experience in the publishing, media, educational technology & corporate training sectors. Prior to joining Skillsoft, she spent almost a decade working at Harvard Business Publishing, where she developed award-winning eLearning products in the leadership and business skills content areas, including interactive simulations, video-based courses, case studies and experiential learning solutions. Prior to that, she held several roles at the global publishing and media giant, Bertelsmann.

Heide is passionate about leveraging technology to improve the practice of management. She is also a thought leader in the areas of training and development and management and leadership. She has been quoted in numerous publications including Forbes, The Economist, CLO Magazine, HR Drive, Business Insider, INC., Deal Crunch and Learning Solutions, to name a few. She is also a frequent participant in panel discussions and presenter at leading industry conferences. Because Heide has also held leadership roles in product development, innovation and product management at Fortune 100 companies, she truly has her finger on the pulse of what organizations need to train and develop today’s workforce, especially in a digital economy.

Heide holds an MBA with distinction from Harvard Business School and is on the faculty of the Management and Organization Department of Boston College’s Carroll School of Business.
ABOUT SKILLSOFT

Skillsoft is the global leader in corporate learning, delivering beautiful technology and engaging content that drives business impact for modern enterprises. Skillsoft comprises three award-winning solutions that support learning, performance and success: Skillsoft learning content, the Percipio intelligent learning platform and the SumTotal suite for Human Capital Management.

Skillsoft provides the most comprehensive selection of cloud-based corporate learning content, including courses, videos, books and other resources on Business and Management Skills, Leadership Development, Digital Transformation, IT Skills and Certification Training, Productivity and Collaboration Tools and Compliance. Percipio’s intuitive design engages modern learners and its consumer-led experience accelerates learning. The SumTotal suite features four key components built on a unified platform: Learning Management, Talent Management, Talent Acquisition and Workforce Management.

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