

Boehringer Ingelheim: Personal Development with LinkedIn Learning



Head office: Ingelheim am Rhein | Industry: Pharmaceuticals | Employees: >50.000



Boehringer Ingelheim is a global, research-driven pharmaceutical company headquartered in Ingelheim am Rhein, Germany. In total, it employs more than 50,000 people in over 140 countries. The company focuses on three main areas: human pharmaceuticals, animal health, and biopharmaceutical contract manufacturing.

The Challenge

- To offer the workforce of a global pharmaceutical company a digital learning resource that covers as many topics and languages as possible.
- To inspire employees who are required to complete numerous mandatory training courses in order to satisfy pharmaceutical industry regulations to undertake independent and self-directed learning.

The Solution

- Provide unrestricted access to LinkedIn Learning for all company employees.
- Develop local learning paths and global learning campaigns to focus staff training on specific topics.
- Combine classroom-based training and digital learning in order to create the optimal environment for personal development.

The Results

- More than 19,000 employees have already used LinkedIn Learning in the first year.
- 87 percent of all videos have been watched from start to finish.
- Users have spent an average of one hour and 45 minutes on LinkedIn Learning.

20,000 learning hours completed 400,000 videos watched

When it comes to staff, the independent family-owned business applies the guiding principle “Your growth. Our growth.”, a motto that was coined as part of internal restructuring in 2016. This is based on the conviction that the company can only achieve its ambitious economic growth goals if its employees are given the opportunity to grow and develop as well. Employee development is consequently a top priority in all HR processes, and staff are expected to actively take responsibility for their own learning.

Study Whenever, Wherever

Boehringer Ingelheim therefore wants not only to offer well established development pathways, but also to encourage its staff to take responsibility for their own development. “Our job is to provide all employees with an environment where they can continue to develop and grow personally,” says Dr. Karsten Gottke, Global Senior Manager People Growth at Boehringer Ingelheim. “We believe that a digital learning resource that facilitates self-directed learning—anytime, anywhere, and on any device—is an important part of such an environment.”

Boehringer Ingelheim carefully scrutinized a range of providers in its search for a learning resource like this — before then choosing LinkedIn Learning for the pilot phase. This comprised a six-month period during which access was offered to all employees around the world. Employees responded very positively to the new offering and used it extensively, which is why the project team, led by Karsten Gottke, ultimately decided to work with LinkedIn Learning on a permanent basis.

One of the main reasons for the decision was that LinkedIn Learning offers relevant content in a range of languages and covering numerous specialist areas,

which allowed Boehringer Ingelheim to use a single platform worldwide.

“We were impressed not just by the international nature of the platform and the breadth of topics available, but by the quality of the content too,” says Karsten Gottke. “During our research, we also discovered that some of our employees were already using LinkedIn Learning outside work, so they had already engaged with the platform and found it useful. That further reinforced our decision to go with LinkedIn Learning.”

Seamless Integration into the Overall Learning Concept

An internal campaign helped to raise awareness about the rollout of the solution, with the intranet and the company’s in-house social network being the most important digital channels. The HR departments in each country also helped to implement “offline” measures such as posters in offices and table cards in the break rooms.

The local managers responsible for employee development are also helping to develop learning paths that employees can use to guide them throughout the use of LinkedIn Learning. These are often adapted to the circumstances in the individual countries. Alongside this, Boehringer Ingelheim is running company-wide learning campaigns from its headquarters. Each one has its own pathway: The last two campaigns, for example, focused on agile working methods and data-driven decisions.

The initiative as a whole is supported by a cross functional team that includes employees from the IT department as well as people responsible for HR and personnel development. The team is handling things like integration with SAP SuccessFactors, the learning management system that Boehringer Ingelheim uses.

“Overall, we are trying to offer the right combination of digital learning and classroom-based training. We combine individual formats depending on the learning objective — sometimes for preparation, other times to link modules together or to promote long-term learning,” says Vera Lehmann, Global Head of People Growth. “The intention is to create an effective learning environment where employees can drive their own development.”

Scrum Master Thanks to LinkedIn Learning

LinkedIn Learning is designed to be as easy as possible for employees to use. Learners can log on from any device via single sign-on and have unlimited access to all of the content.

“Whenever I go online to find out about a topic or for further training, I often end up on LinkedIn Learning now,” says Tarek Zimbelmann, who works in the Market Access department at Boehringer Ingelheim. “For example, I systematically used LinkedIn Learning to prepare for my test to become a Scrum Master — and I passed. It was a positive experience for me, and it also confirmed that LinkedIn Learning definitely helps users to progress. It would have been difficult to prepare for this test so flexibly and efficiently without it. I see the platform as a treasure trove of knowledge that helps me focus my learning on professional topics.”

“Rather than replacing the existing learning and further training program, LinkedIn Learning supplements it in an intelligent way,” says Karsten Gottke.

“The high level of demand indicates that we need a digital learning program in our company — and we can now meet this need with LinkedIn Learning.”

Dr. Karsten Gottke
Global Senior Manager People Growth
Boehringer Ingelheim

