

5app.

# 10 steps

to the best learning  
experience ever

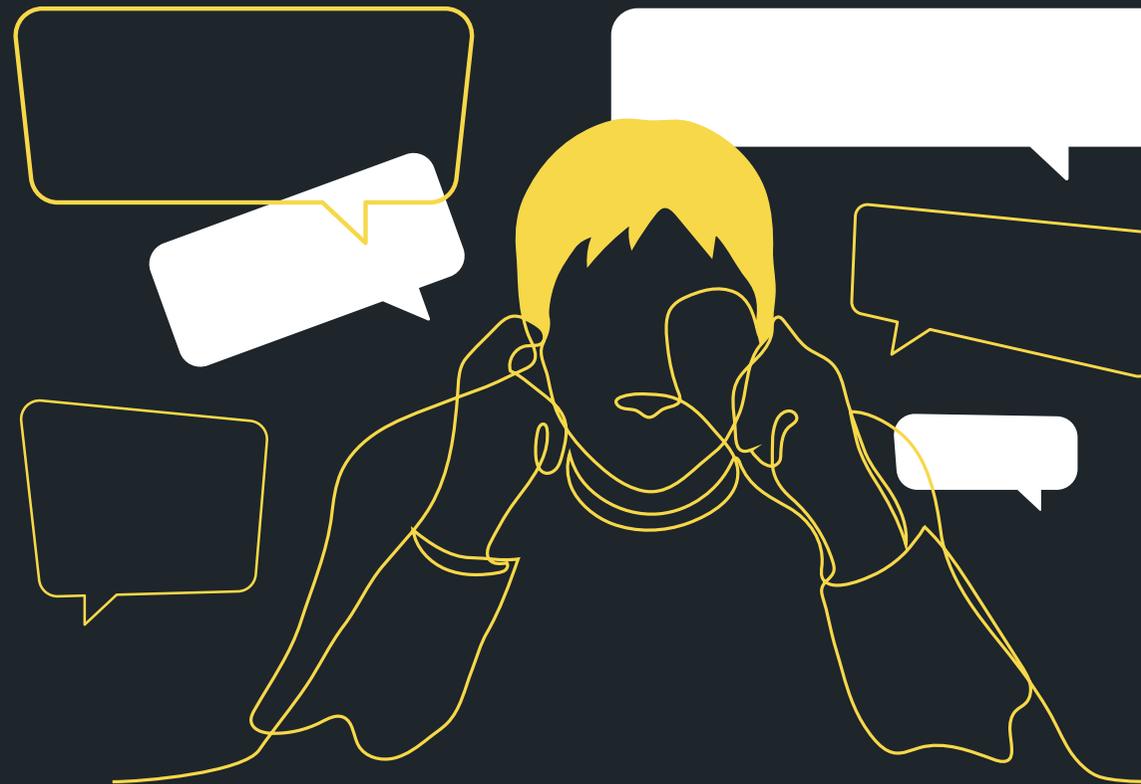


# Let's cut to the chase: modern business is noisy.

Employees are constantly being bombarded with instant messages, calls, meeting requests, emails and more - but there's no consistency, so confusion arises, frustration takes hold and, if you're not careful, people will quickly become disengaged.

If you're struggling to break down silos, to align everyone around your company goals and to get your message across, this playbook is for you. We're going to walk you through the 10 tried-and-tested steps to follow to successfully build, launch and leverage your learning (and comms!) platform.

**Spoiler alert: it's probably not as difficult as you think.**



Step 1:

# Create a brand for your platform

Good news - we're starting with a fun one! Get those creative juices flowing, because we're coming up with a brand for your learning platform!

A great brand gives you something to rally around, and it will help your people build an emotional connection with what is, if we're honest, a seemingly utilitarian piece of software. A learning platform serves a purpose, right? It's somewhere to go to tick off your compliance training, and revisit in a year when it's time to do it again.

That's where visual branding comes in. If you can create an identity that resonates with your audience, it's a foot in the door with your people. A snappy name, a clear visual identity (which ties to your wider brand identity) and a consistent voice will help tell your people what the platform is all about without having to actually tell them.

## Think about things like:

- ✓ The name
- ✓ The logo
- ✓ The colour palette
- ✓ The tone of voice
- ✓ The art style
- ✓ The resource style
- ✓ The use of avatars/characters

Step 1 continued >>

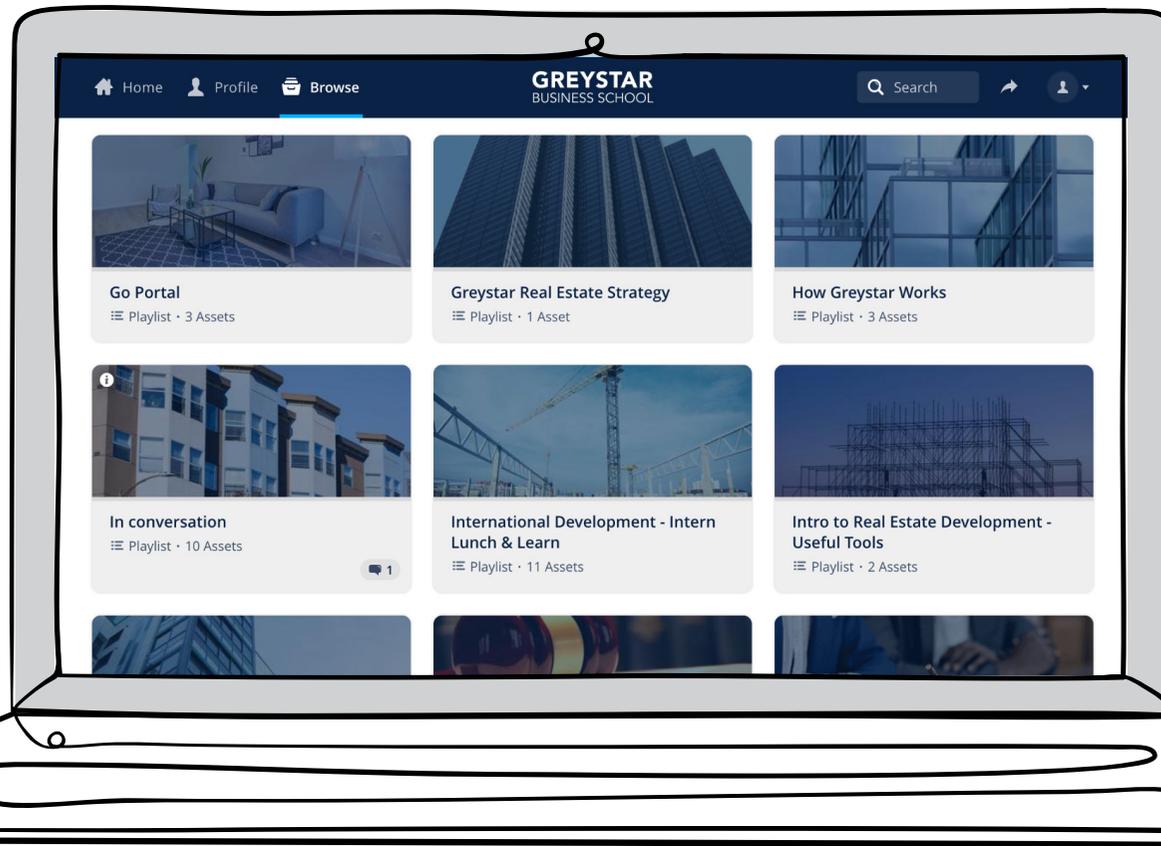
Step 1 continued >>

## Create a brand for your platform

For instance, 5app customer Greystar created a strong visual identity to maintain the quality of the entire platform. Something as simple as adding a blue tint to all playlist thumbnails keeps them consistent, strengthening the brand and helping build trust with employees.



**TIP:** Set up a workshop with your marketing team to help you align with your overarching company brand, or to take inspiration from the people who do this day in, day out!



## Step 2: Get the C-suite on board

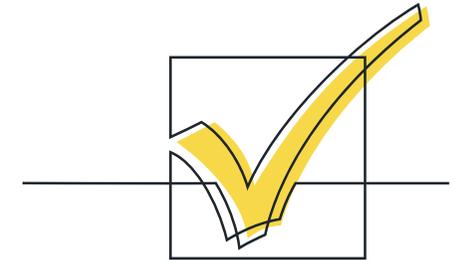
To get your learning platform off the ground, you need buy-in from the very top. That means encouraging your leadership team to model the behaviours you want to see in your employees - in this case, prioritising learning and engaging with the platform.

The good news is that if you've already created a brand, you're halfway there. Even the most creative leaders will struggle to connect with an abstract idea, so when you're presenting your plans to your senior stakeholders, display everything in your new brand to make it feel like a more concrete proposition.

“It's not always easy to make the senior leadership team care about L&D. But what they do care about is the impact we can have on the bottom line. Show them how L&D can make them look good when they next present their results to the board, and they'll sit up and take notice.”

- Steve Thompson, Chief Learning Officer, 5app

It's absolutely crucial for the learning team to understand how its efforts tie into the wider organisational goals. Whether your senior leaders are looking to boost profits, reduce churn or attract the best talent in the industry, how will your learning platform help them get there? The ability to explicitly identify the journey from your learning



solution to real business results will capture the attention of your stakeholders and secure the buy-in you need to go forth and prosper.

### Nail the numbers

You should also create a detailed ROI analysis to illustrate the platform's financial impact. Include factors like increased revenue, cost savings and improved employee engagement, and what's possible with different budgets. Of course, your big-budget solution needs to bring big results, so you may want to draw from success stories from similar implementations to get your leaders excited about what's possible.



**TIP:** Build a network of advocates throughout the business. Support from other departments can go a long way, so collect any positive feedback from elsewhere in the organisation to include in your C-suite presentation.

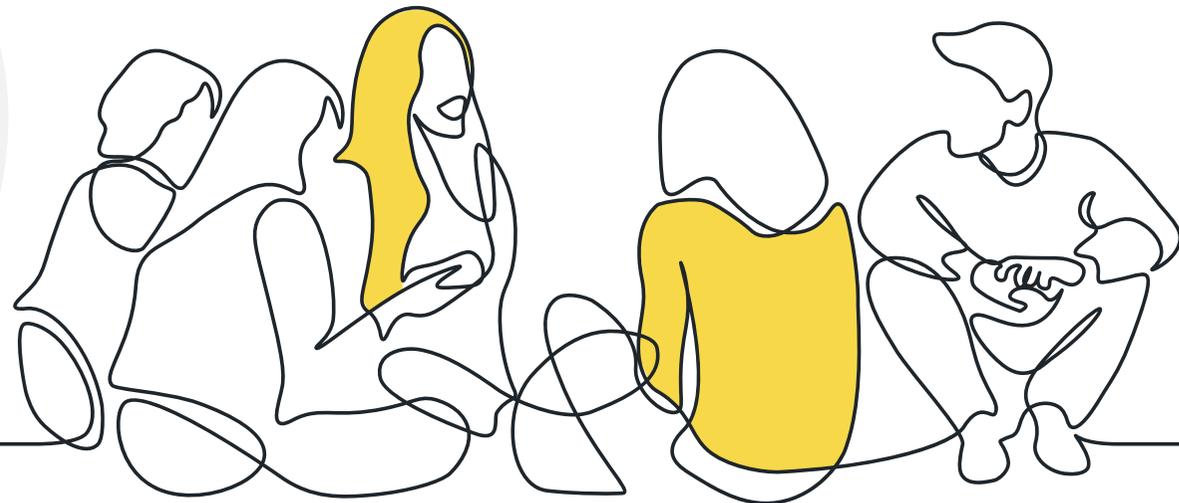
## Step 3:

# Build the best team for the job

Sounds obvious, but you'd be surprised how often learning teams try to forge ahead with learning platform projects without having the right people or skills in place.

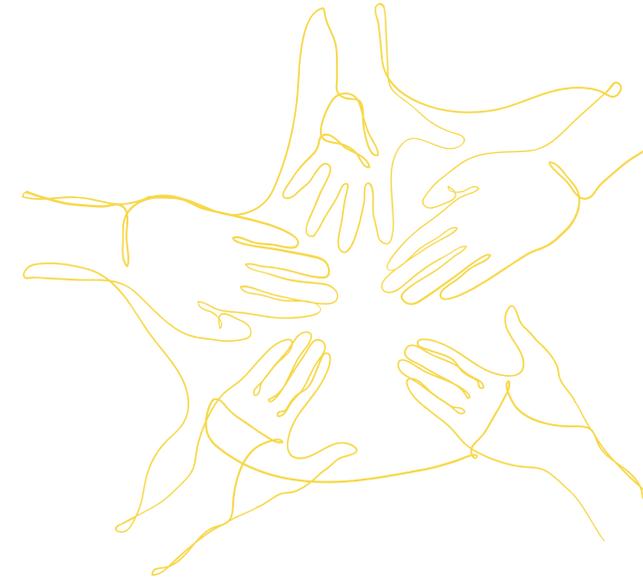
In particular, you need someone who can lead on the overall vision of the platform, and who has a good understanding of the technical setup. This person will head up the design of the platform infrastructure and content curation, and should be able to keep track of all the moving parts that go into a successful learning platform.

Of course, every learning team is different, and unless you're very lucky, you won't be able to get everything (or everyone) you want. But broadly speaking, the more people (specialists or generalists) available to you, the more you can accomplish. Think of it like flight tickets - an economy ticket (or team) will get you from A to B, but a first-class ticket will get you there with all the little extras that improve the experience for everyone.



## Step 3:

# Build the best team for the job



Economy team	Business class team	First class team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior-level (ideally C-suite) sponsor and ambassador</li> <li>• Head of learning (to set the vision and business case)</li> <li>• Learning technology specialist (to work with vendor, set up users and content)</li> <li>• Internal marketing resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior-level (ideally C-suite) sponsor and ambassador</li> <li>• Head of learning</li> <li>• Learning technology specialist</li> <li>• Internal marketing resource</li> <li>• Graphic designer (to create a consistent look and feel and drive the brand)</li> <li>• L&amp;D partner (to understand performance gaps and the content needed to fill them)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior-level (ideally C-suite) sponsor and ambassador</li> <li>• Head of learning</li> <li>• Learning technology specialist</li> <li>• Internal marketing resource</li> <li>• Graphic designer</li> <li>• Multiple L&amp;D partners (to work more broadly across the organisation)</li> <li>• Data analyst (to analyse platform performance and identify improvements)</li> <li>• Content designer and creator (focused solely on creating high-quality learning content)</li> </ul>

You may not necessarily need a different person in each role. For small teams in particular, upskilling and cross-skilling is your friend, and developing broad skill sets within your team will help you realise your vision.

You can also leverage skills from elsewhere in the business, such as borrowing graphic design expertise from another team, or empowering internal subject matter experts to create their own learning content, whether that means training them up to use an authoring tool or, more likely, supporting them to record quick videos to capture their knowledge for easy sharing.

## Step 4:

# Create an enticing shop window

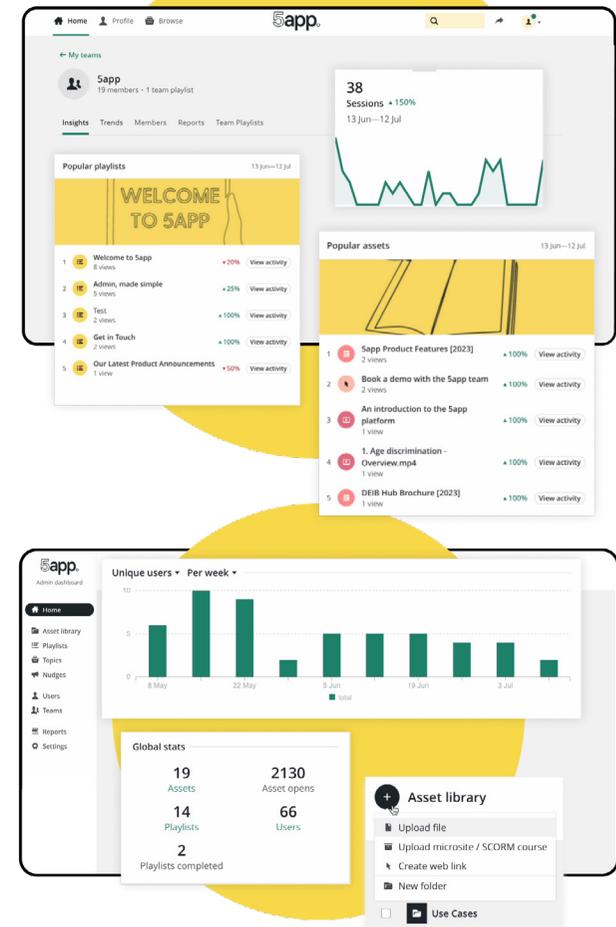
When it comes to digital experiences. If your learning platform looks like it's straight out of 1998, nobody is going to stick around. First impressions are everything, so it's essential that you get the look and feel of your platform right (which is where that all-important branding comes in).

This applies whether you're using off-the-shelf content or your own in-house resources. Even if you're linking out to 20 other sites from your learning platform, you still want an attractive, consistent shopfront to tie everything together, whether that's an in-house video by an internal SME, an elearning course from an external catalogue or a comms update from your CEO.

## No designer? No problem.

If you don't have access to an in-house graphic designer, free design tools like Canva will allow you to create your own imagery, with easy templates to keep your visual identity as consistent as possible. If you have multiple people creating imagery, make sure they follow your visual brand guidelines.

Creating clear guidelines for your visual direction (including examples of what you do and don't want) will significantly improve the appearance of your learning platform. Trust us.



## Step 5:

# Enable a superuser in every function

The learning team can't do everything themselves - especially in smaller businesses. In fact, if you can empower others in the company to get involved, everyone will be much better off for it.

Superusers are those people within your organisation with some degree of expertise. Ideally, you'll have a superuser for each function (or department) within the business to act as an SME for their team, create and curate useful content and direct people to these materials, boosting operational efficiency and enabling the faster creation of user-generated content.

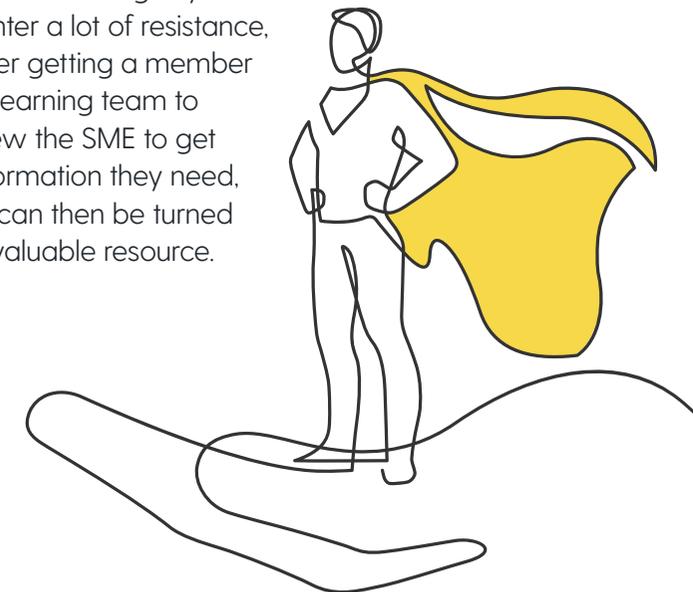
Harnessing the knowledge of your superusers will help you ensure that every department has access to the most up-to-date, relevant, genuinely valuable information.

### Different superusers, different approaches

Not all superusers are made equal. That's why it's important to allow superusers to create content in the ways they feel comfortable to ensure you can build knowledge capital in a consistent, scalable way and avoid the dreaded corporate brain drain.

At Greystar, Steve worked with several superusers who preferred to share their knowledge differently. For instance, some of them wrote scripts for videos, which were then run through an AI voice generator tool such as Murf to create a voiceover.

Otherwise, a written step-by-step guide is better than nothing! If you encounter a lot of resistance, consider getting a member of the learning team to interview the SME to get the information they need, which can then be turned into a valuable resource.



# Different superusers, different approaches

When 5app's Chief Learning Officer, Steve Thompson, headed up the learning function at real estate developer Greystar, he relied heavily on superusers throughout the business to create vital user-generated learning content, branded as Greystar Originals.

For instance, one superuser was identified as a go-to expert in Microsoft Excel. The learning team equipped this employee with the skills and tools needed to create short, sharp learning assets, such as quick screen recordings where he shared his solutions to commonly asked questions in the business.

As a result, Greystar significantly improved operational efficiency, as these experts were empowered to share their knowledge themselves and to help colleagues develop their own skills. Within weeks, the Greystar Originals series became the most-viewed and most-pinned resources in the 5app-based Greystar Business School, demonstrating the value of high-quality peer-to-peer learning content.

**GREYSTAR™**



## Step 6: Keep it tidy

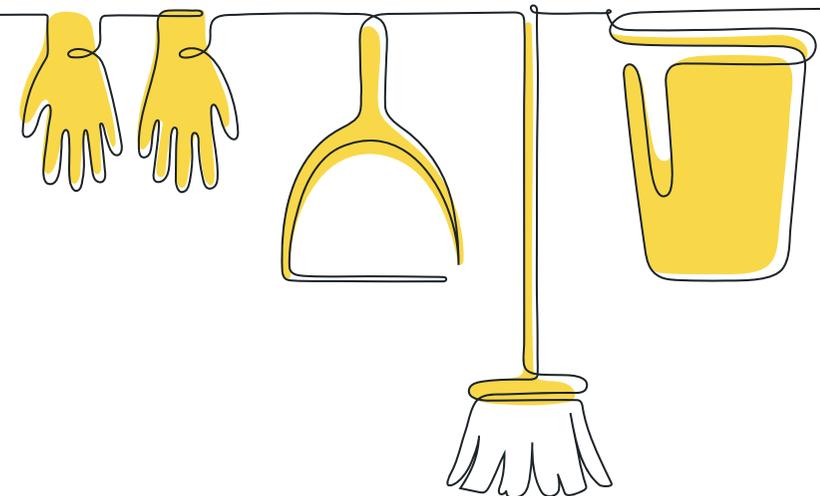
Your learning platform won't look after itself, which is why it's crucial to schedule in 'cleaning time' for your learning platform. But what does that look like?

Activities to build into your cleaning ritual include:

- Tagging resources correctly
- Archiving or deleting old content
- Removing duplicate content
- Reviewing and updating key information
- Adding new resources
- Reviewing platform data and analytics

Your learning team (from point 3) should have the skills to perform these cleaning activities, as should team leaders across your business. If each team has someone responsible for maintaining the quality and content of the platform, you can divide and conquer the task to keep it manageable.

**Little and often cleaning is ideal**, as it means you can stay on top of those little issues before they build up. A monthly sweep of your content tags may mean you only need to fix one or two, whereas leaving it all to the end of the year could result in a day or two wasted on working through a long list of fixes.



## Step 7:

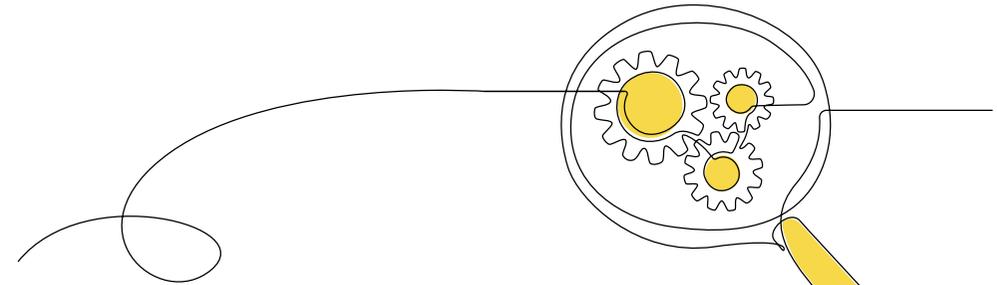
# Make sure it works

Related to the above point, make sure your content, and the platform itself, is performing as expected. That means checking for broken links, site errors, videos that don't play, SCORM files that don't save progress, content that doesn't adhere to accessibility guidelines or overly complex navigation.

This is where numbers are your friend, whether that's platform analytics or overall site data, such as Google Analytics. Look at things like:

- **Bounce rate (which pages people leave quickly)**
- **Page visitors**
- **Page views**
- **Completion rates**
- **Error analytics**
- **Learner satisfaction ratings**

If you see anything unusual, start digging into why that might be. If most course completion rates sit around 80%, but one course has a 15% completion rate, why might that be? Is there a broken link? Is the final assessment not submitting properly? Has a key asset accidentally been deleted from your playlist? If your sleuthing doesn't produce any clear results, why not try asking one of the learners who didn't complete the course if they ran into any issues?



## Ensure accessibility

Accessibility standards, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the US and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), ensure that everyone has access to what they need to do their jobs. In the context of digital design, this often means considering things like colour contrast, adding alt text to media assets and selecting clear, easy-to-read fonts.



**TIP:** Add a feedback box on your platform where users can report technical issues. Allowing them to upload images means they can include screenshots of any errors they encounter.

## Step 8:

# Make your platform the go-to destination

You'd be surprised how many learning teams wonder why nobody is using the learning platform... before realising that they themselves are neglecting it.

If your employees don't think they'll find any new, relevant or genuinely useful content on your platform, what reason do they have to keep coming back?

## Combine learning and comms

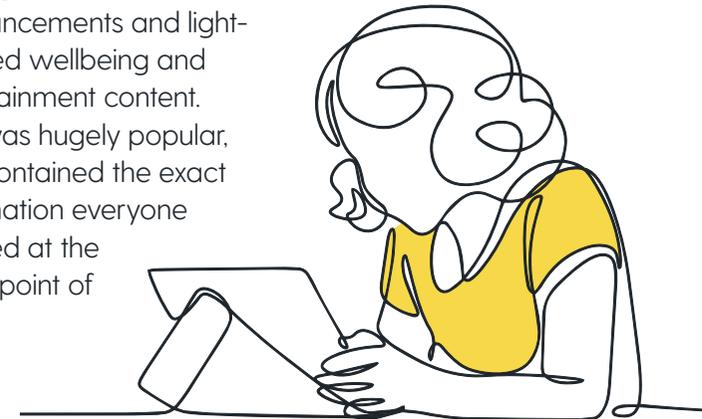
Learning and internal comms go hand in hand - especially if you reframe the way you think of learning and knowledge sharing.

Instead of being a purely formal, structured activity, a huge amount of workplace learning comes from day-to-day activities and communications. If the HR department shares a new process for submitting expenses, that's learning. If the CEO posts an update about the current business performance, that's learning. If a manager informs their team about interesting industry news, that's learning!

Set your people up for success by weaving together learning and comms on the same platform. While you may not have new learning content to share every day, it's likely you'll need to share comms or quick updates much more frequently. If you do this via your platform, you

will make it the go-to place for the most up-to-date information - and while people are there checking out the latest news and messages, they will be reminded of all the great learning content available to them.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Greystar set up a live feed within its 5app platform containing useful learning about remote working, the latest government advice and announcements and light-hearted wellbeing and entertainment content. This was hugely popular, as it contained the exact information everyone needed at the exact point of need.



## Step 9: Encourage interaction

If your employees know they can find useful, interesting conversations on your platform, they'll keep coming back for more.

The easiest way to enable conversation is to turn on comments for your updates and assets. There's no right or wrong way to do it, but avoid putting too many rules in place so people don't feel stifled.

Some of the benefits of encouraging conversation on your learning and comms platform are:

### Community building

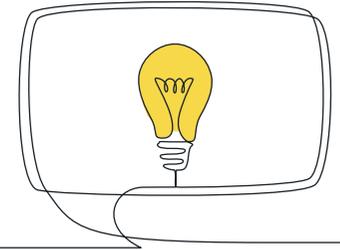
- on company updates announcing new joiners, other employees can comment to welcome them to the company. Equally, you can create a sense of community around occasions such as promotions, birthdays or team achievements, creating a more positive culture

### Clarification

- if something in an asset is unclear, employees can ask follow-up questions, which the original poster can then respond to. Asking questions on a public platform means that everyone benefits from seeing the answers, rather than everyone having to ask individually via email, leading to inconsistency in communications

### Gathering feedback

- requesting feedback on plans or ideas is much easier on your learning and comms platform,



as everyone can see what has already been suggested. Users can also 'like' comments to indicate agreement, so the original poster can understand the general consensus

### Real-time interaction

- the rise of remote and hybrid teams, along with multi-site organisations, means that not everyone will be in the same place at the same time. Facilitating discussions on your learning platform allows for synchronous discussions that won't disappear beneath reams of new conversation, as is often the case on instant messaging and chat platforms

### Inclusivity

- not everyone in your company will feel comfortable speaking up in a meeting or town hall, but that doesn't mean they don't have valuable input on company updates or learning content. Turning on comments invites ideas and feedback from quieter members of the team, who can share their thoughts in a lower-pressure environment

Step 9 continued >>

# Encourage interaction

You may find that willingness to share and comment is a little slow at first - this is perfectly normal! If this happens, encourage your management team to lead by example, and get your superusers to act as champions.

If your platform has the ability to allow user tagging, your superusers could add their thoughts to a post, then tag in their teammates for visibility or for further input to stimulate social learning and knowledge sharing.

## Stimulate learner engagement with academies

In 2019, Greystar launched its hugely successful Business School. This was Greystar's first learning platform, so they enjoyed being able to share learning content and comms with everyone across the organisation from a single place.

But they realised that they could go even further. They discovered that some employees were struggling to find what they needed, when they needed it, made more challenging because there was **a 65% increase in assets uploaded to the platform from 2020 to 2023.**

[Enter Greystar's Learning Academies!](#) These academies consist exclusively of content relevant

to a specific role, function or location, ensuring everyone has access to what they need, without getting distracted by irrelevant content. This allowed them to get the right content to the right people at the right time, which **increased platform engagement by 328%.**

**TIP:** If people are really reluctant to share their own knowledge and thoughts on your learning platform, start by leaning into the fun, social side and consider creating fun daily prompts.



How about Mindfulness Monday with wellbeing tips, Thankful Thursdays for people to thank their colleagues or Foodie Fridays, so people can share their favourite recipes?

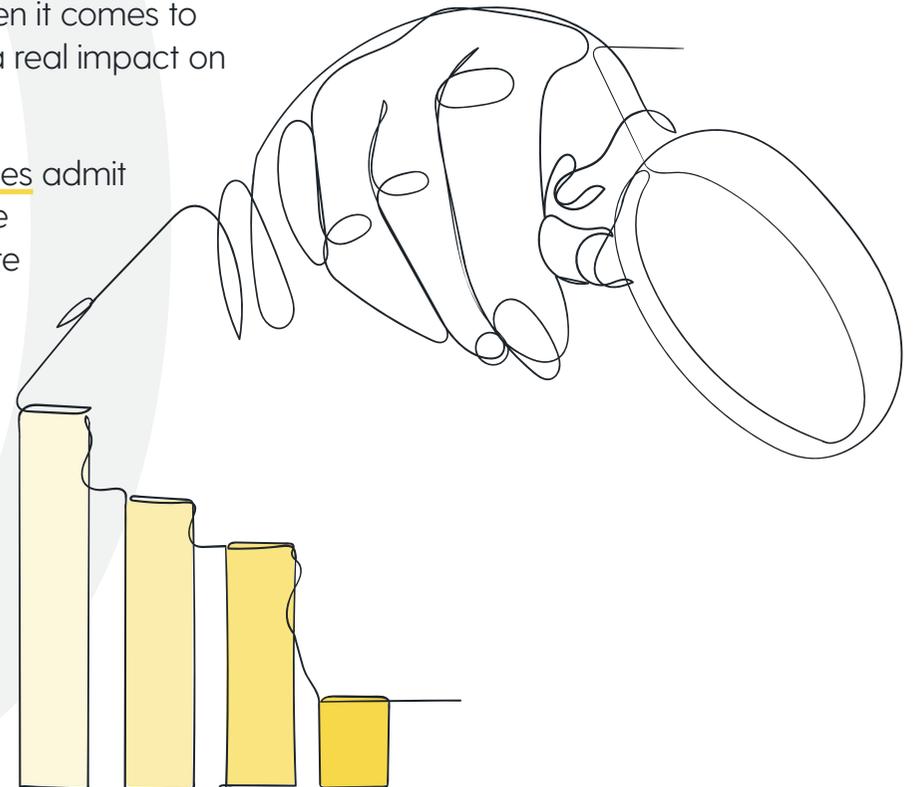
## Step 10:

# Embrace data

As a learning professional, data will always be one of the most useful tools in your toolkit.

While the metrics outlined in point 7 will help you ensure the smooth running of your platform and identify any area, that's just the starting point when it comes to making sure your learning is having a real impact on your organisation.

Alarmingly, almost a third of businesses admit they don't systematically evaluate the majority of their L&D initiatives, despite the fact that learning departments have never been under more pressure to prove their worth. Making sense of data is a key skill for any learning department, and if you can master it, you can secure stakeholder buy-in and demonstrate ROI.



## Step 10 continued >>

# Embrace data

### 3 areas to measure

5app's Head of Product, Duncan Barrett, recommends focusing on three key areas in your learning metrics:

#### 1. Business outcomes

Now, business outcomes clearly aren't learning metrics... or are they? Learning must be aligned with business goals if it's going to have the desired impact, and this is what will resonate most with your senior stakeholders.

While learning outcomes are important, what's even more important is performance outcomes. Course completion rates are meaningless if they don't result in performance improvements, but being able to show a correlation between learning activity and increased performance is compelling, and will only help you secure ongoing support.

#### 2. Employee engagement

Employee engagement metrics help you understand the way people are engaging with your content, whether that's elearning courses,

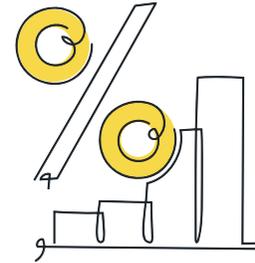
PDF checklists, third-party content or internal comms.

5app partner Hemsley Fraser says that employee engagement (enabled through its own internal instance of the 5app platform) helped the organisation transition to a new way of working.

#### 3. Skills

Skills gaps are becoming increasingly challenging for businesses worldwide - especially when it comes to digital skills. In the UK alone, 93% of businesses say that there is an IT skills gap, with 42% saying that this is down to the fast pace of technological development and 41% saying it's down to a lack of training opportunities.

Measuring skills improvement is vital if you're going to prove the effectiveness of your platform. For instance, when Greystar introduced its Learning Academies, it ran a pre- and post-launch analysis of skills across the business, enabling them to benchmark any improvements. These metrics showed that skills improved by 32%, while technical capabilities improved by 43% following the launch of the Academies, demonstrating the direct ROI of the initiative.

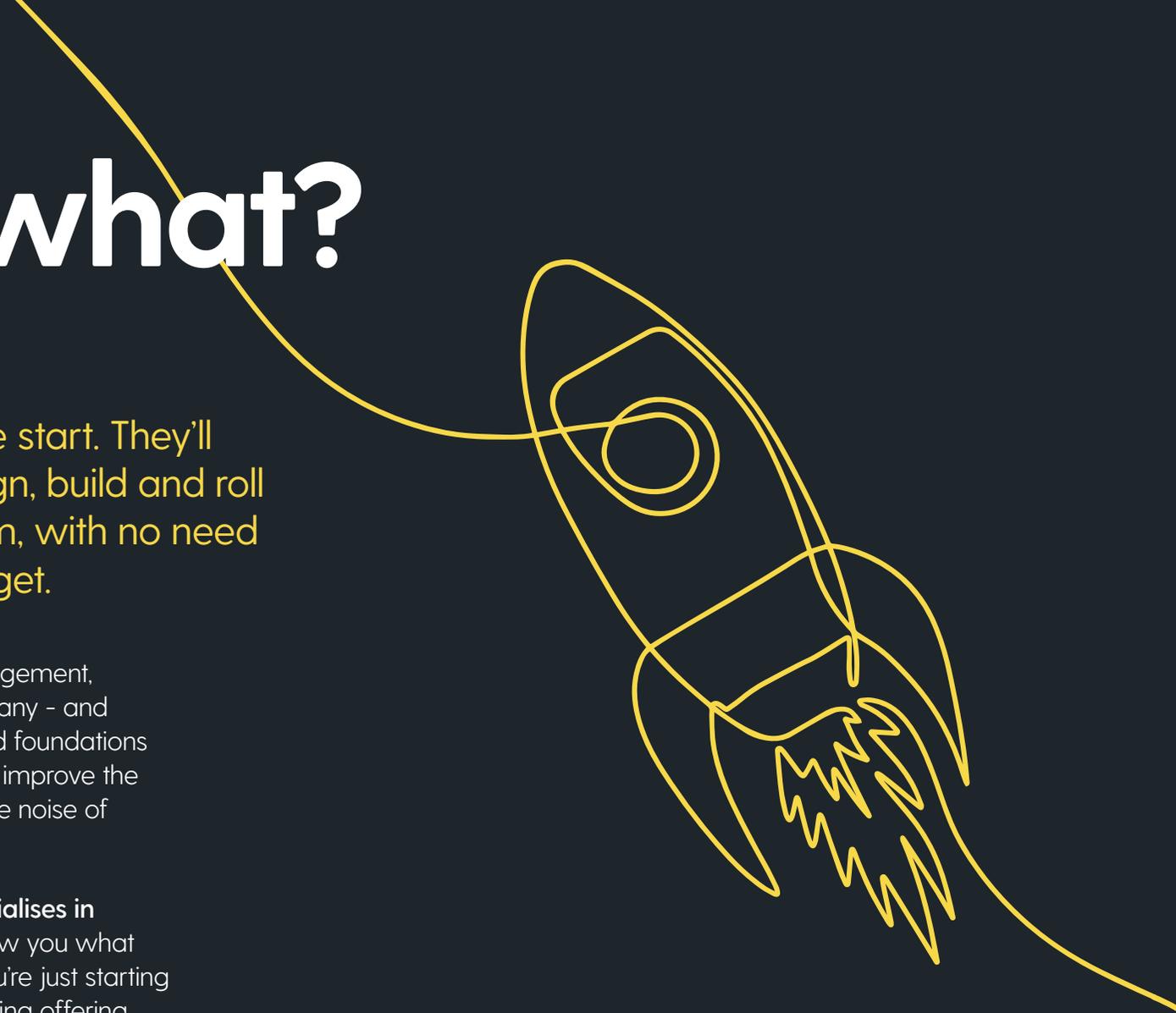


*5app has allowed us to become much more interconnected. We've used it to keep people aligned to core messages, feeling connected and as a way for leaders of the business to be able to lead in a highly visible way.*

*For the board, having that level of confidence from usage data is invaluable. We know that we're getting the message across to all of our staff, and as a result, nobody feels isolated, disconnected, confused or disorientated. It's good to know we're doing the right thing for our people.* ”

**- Lynsey Whitmarsh, CEO,**  
Hemsley Fraser

# So now what?



These 10 simple steps are just the start. They'll put you on the right path to design, build and roll out a successful learning platform, with no need for a giant learning team or budget.

Get the fundamentals right and you'll boost engagement, productivity and performance across your company - and that goes beyond learning alone. These rock-solid foundations will give you the right environment to consistently improve the learning experience, while also cutting through the noise of modern business.

If it all sounds a bit daunting, fear not! **5app specialises in simple learning done well**, and we'd love to show you what that could look like for your business, whether you're just starting out or want to simplify your overly complex learning offering.

**Schedule your demo today** to see how we can help.

**5app.**