

# BRANDON CARSON

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## SUMMARY

A strategic and highly accomplished **Global Talent Development Executive** with extensive experience in developing global learning strategies, leading small and large teams, and implementing learning technology at scale.

- Built and expanded learning and development (L&D) organizations, modernizing their approach with new design and delivery technologies and methodologies, while increasing their business impact and reducing total L&D expenditures overall.
- Developed new and integrated L&D operational processes to drive deeper business alignment, mitigate business risk, and maximize talent development.
- Led large-scale learning business transformation strategies resulting in more data-informed operations that more closely align to impact drivers.
- Led major program initiatives (including mobile, social, game-based and other technology-based learning programs) for global workforces, implemented L&D restructuring and optimization, and designed and integrated data-driven metrics to demonstrate L&D effectiveness as a business.

## EXPERIENCE

**Delta Air Lines, Atlanta**

**April 2018 – Present**

### **Director of Learning**

Lead the 56-employee learning organization for Delta's Airport Customer Service and Cargo business, supporting 30,000 global Delta employees. Primary responsibilities include all technical and safety training, leadership development, customer experience training, and qualification training and reporting for the business. I drive the strategic alignment between learning and the business, represent the learning organization with internal and external stakeholders including the FAA and Dept. of Homeland Security, and manage the >\$12M annual budget, including all vendor partnerships.

- Redesigned the learning organization to drive more efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity in operational performance.
- Partnered with corporate and field leaders to strategically re-align the learning operation to focus on driving more impact to the business, including direct connection with airport stations and learning representation, integration of a new learning management system, near real-time learning analytics and reporting capabilities, curriculum optimization via role-based job task analysis for all Delta airport agents, and coordination with the internal program management team for realistic resource prioritization and allocation.
- Led the design of a new Leader Development Academy targeted to all leader levels in the field operation. This initiative was the first program at Delta designed to provide leader development through work-based action learning activities, extended opportunities for coaching and peer discussion, in-class activities focused on leader behaviors, and comprehensive leader assessments including 180- and 360- instruments combined with employee and customer "Leader NPS" scoring.
- Led the development of new customer experience training for all airport agents and Sky Club ambassadors resulting in increased NPS scores.
- Piloted VR technology in safety training for aircraft loading agents.

**The Home Depot, Atlanta**

**May 2014 – April 2018**

### **Director of Learning**

Led Home Depot's learning transformation consisting of two major elements: building a mobile learning infrastructure for the enterprise, reducing the reliance on off-the-floor training by 30%, and working with the L&D leadership team to rebuild the centralized learning and development function to align directly to business imperatives. Accountable for Home Depot's learning and development activities in the area of design and development, including executive development, leadership development, first-line management skills, sales training, and compliance training for over 400,000 associates. Lead a team of over 35 staff and a budget in excess of \$5M.

**Learning Culture:**

- Worked with the L&D leadership team to reorganize the L&D function to a learner-centered model and restructured the organization into content strategy and shared service teams.
- Moved from traditional “order-taking” to direct business alignment and reformulated the learning strategy to support the critical skills that drive business value.
- Developed the team’s capability to design and deliver experiential learning to drive four key leadership behaviors: Respect, Inspire, Develop, and Celebrate.
- Expanded learning solutions to include the 70:20:10 methodology, leveraging skills and experience of learners and incorporating them into learning design and delivery process.
- Enhanced business performance by building critical skills in the areas of customer experience, product knowledge, and leadership.

**Learning and Development Function:**

- Partnered with the L&D leadership team to review current state of the function and identified inefficiencies, misalignment, and lack of effectiveness of the L&D organization, and prepared a reorganization strategy that drove deeper business alignment, increased efficiencies, and increased reporting capabilities.
- Led the enterprise-wide roll-out of mobile learning to all sales associates across all US stores, including the content design and development, technology infrastructure design, experience design, reporting and metrics, business justification, and ROI reporting.
- Added a Program Management Office to drive efficiencies in resource allocation, forecasting, financial reporting, and content governance for the L&D function.
- Benchmarked performance to other companies in the industry and defined high performing learning organization targets.
- Modernized the L&D function by exploring and incorporating adaptive learning technologies, spec’ing an AR platform, integrating AI for automated content, and developing a game mechanics strategy.
- Improved process efficiency and reduced training development time by introducing new design and development methodologies, including a dedicated media team, and streamlined course content procedures to reduce design and development time by more than 15%.
- Led the creation of standardized templates, tools, and services to increase productivity. Design and development team now operates at half the cost of external providers.
- Operate and control all vendor agreements, budgets, and performance metrics.

**Microsoft, San Francisco****August 2012 – May 2014****Chief Learning Architect**

Focused on dramatically improving the quality and sophistication of training design and delivery for the Xbox, Surface and Windows Phone lines of business.

- Designed the learning strategy for technical and sales training to ensure consistency in messaging and best-in-class customer support and service across 16,000 call agents.
- Helped optimize new hire training by reducing seat time by 50% through content optimization and implementing blended learning solutions.
- Drove the instructional design standards for both eLearning and ILT design and development, resulting in a 25% faster design and delivery process.
- Provided cross-functional consulting across Microsoft on learning innovation and creativity.

**Yahoo!, Sunnyvale, CA****November 2009 – July 2012****Senior Manager, Learning and Development**

Built a highly skilled, globally distributed learning and organizational development team, enhancing identification and development of company’s leadership and transforming organizational culture. Facilitated transformation through establishment of a foundational global competency framework for engineers and product managers, developed a strong business-focused engineering curriculum, and participated in transforming key talent management processes.

- Designed and developed the “Mobile Learning Academy,” a comprehensive curriculum designed for 3,000 engineers.
- Designed and developed the New Engineer Boot Camp for all new Yahoo! engineers, including a customized design thinking curriculum in association with Stanford University.

- Managed the implementation of a competency framework for Product Managers.
- Drove the implementation of training to support the company's move to Agile software development.
- Created and managed the delivery of targeted learning solutions for classroom, online, and mobile formats, including all aspects of product lifecycle training.
- Selected and managed vendor services and budgets for design and delivery operations, including selection criteria and budgets.

**Sun Microsystems, Menlo Park, CA**

**February 2007 – October 2009**

**Senior Manager, Learning and Development**

Directed the design, development, and execution of training initiatives across the organization, including internal and external audiences.

- Managed a media shared service group supporting the \$180 million global learning business with a group budget in excess of \$2 million per year.
- Managed the design and development of the customer eLearning business, driving over \$30 million a year in revenue.
- Designed Sun's award-winning New Hire onboarding program.
- Designed the curriculum for Sun's Cloud Computing line of business.
- Designed the Sun Sales Academy training program for Sun's global salesforce.
- Led the process to create and implement instructional design standards for learning development at Sun.

**EDUCATION**

M. Ed in eLearning Technology & Design *magna cum laude*

B.A. in Business Communication *magna cum laude*

Jones International University, Centennial, CO

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

ISPI Certified in Performance Assessment and Needs Analysis

Active member of ATD and ISPI

Published ATD Author

Member of the Conference Planning Committee for ATD TechKnowledge, 2014-2017

Board member of the Instructional Design Curriculum Management Committee, Georgia State University

**PUBLICATIONS**

Author of *L&D's Playbook for the Digital Age* (Forthcoming in 2021 ATD Press)

Author of *Learning in the Age of Immediacy: Five Factors for How We Connect, Communicate, and Get Work Done* (2017 ATD Press)

Author of *Alternate Reality Games: Leveraging Collective Intelligence for the Enterprise*

Author of *Collaborative Learning Environments: An Instructional Model*

Author of *Crafting the Total Learner Experience: How to Prevent Data Corruption in Instructional Messaging*

Author of *Creating Effective Learning Games*

**AWARDS**

Gold Award for Best Custom Content: eLearning, Brandon Hall (2009)

Gold Award for Best Use of Blogs/Wikis in Education, Brandon Hall (2008)

BEST Award for Best Learning Team: Sun Learning Services, ASTD (2008)

Nominated for Sun's Innovation in Learning Award (2008)

People's Choice Award for Best Synchronous Learning Event, eLearning Guild (2007)

Gold Award for Best Online Software (eGames Generator) eLearning Guild (2007)