

## Reimagining apprenticeships for the 21st Century

Apprenticeships first emerged in the later Middle Ages as a way to teach people the skills needed for a career. Today, you may need a COBOL programmer to learn how to be a cloud architect or a help desk service delivery specialist to become a cybersecurity analyst. These are career changes, not just reskilling efforts. Apprenticeships are key to these career transitions; they just look a little different in today's business world.



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### Apprenticeships are key to these career transitions

Gartner defines apprenticeships as a system of training and development across the enterprise on the skills and competencies of critical roles with on-the-job training, accompanying study and work that further agency objectives. They are a valuable tool for organisations looking to move individuals to a new career, even if it is within the same business unit or group.

“The role change possibilities are endless,” says Christie Struckman, VP analyst at Gartner. “What makes them possible, though, is a systematic method to make the transition as seamless as possible. Your employees will be motivated to stay with you when you make this type of an investment in them.”

### 9 steps to kick off a reimagined apprenticeship

Follow these nine steps to kick-start your apprenticeship programme.

- **Step 1: Choose an appealing programme name**

Ensure the programme name is attractive and encompassing for the goals, as the word “apprenticeship” might have undesirable connotations. For example, it could be called a learning adoption programme, practicum, learnership or fellowship.

- **Step 2: Appoint a highly-motivated programme lead**

Find an energetic and motivated person to act as programme lead, either full-time or as part of a large role. This person will need good business acumen and networking and project management skills.

- **Step 3: Determine the apprenticeship skills**

Using your strategic plan as the guide, determine the skills the apprenticeship should develop. Validate them with the business units and ensure senior sponsorship. Senior sponsorship is required, as you need their willingness to let the apprentices learn on their projects.

- **Step 4: Find the apprentices**

Select a manageable number of apprentices who demonstrate a desire to learn and a willingness to try a new approach. Many apprentices might be highly tenured employees in your organisation. Encourage their participation.

- **Step 5: Select the best course of study**

Figure out what study makes sense based on desired skills and competencies. Many resources exist for in-person or online skills-based training.

- **Step 6: Recruit the “masters”**

Look across the business units, within IT and across the ecosystem to find the “masters” based on desired skills and competencies.

- **Step 7: Pick the right projects**

Find the right projects and commit to deliverables.

- **Step 8: Develop the program plan**

Create a programme plan that matches the project deliverables, learning opportunities and apprenticeships that can be completed in a reasonable amount of time.

- **Step 9: Create milestones and measures for success**

Build in milestones and mechanisms to validate the programme as it moves along. Ensure success by keeping the programme on track. Evaluate the effectiveness of the programme and adapt for the next cohort of apprentices.