

UnitedHealth Group Provides Social Learning for its 114,000 Global Employees

River Enables Enterprise Learning Collaboration & Increases Employee Engagement

UnitedHealth Group

Industry: Healthcare

Headquarters: Minnetonka, MN

of Employees: 114,000

2014 Fortune 500 Rank: 14



THE CHALLENGE:

Connect an organization of 114,000 employees for increased collaboration and learning.

In an industry experiencing rapid regulatory changes and increased demand for products and services, UnitedHealth Group saw value in revamping its approach to learning and development to help meet the changing and complex talent needs of the company. One area of importance for them was to foster more overall employee collaboration and social learning, which falls in line with their corporate philosophy spearheaded by their CEO: “We are all better together – in how we work, share knowledge and serve our customers.” UnitedHealth Group also wanted to find new ways to ingrain their corporate values, such as relationships, innovation and performance, into their culture and employees. They thought social learning in the form of modern mentoring and coaching was a good way to accomplish these goals. But with more than 114,000 employees, finding a mechanism to help enable more teamwork, social learning and collaboration was not a small task.



THE SOLUTION:

Employ River, web-based social learning software, and align it to help solve business needs such as increased collaboration.

UnitedHealth Group implemented and launched River social learning software and internally branded it MentorSource. They aligned River with business priorities as they pushed to be a more values-based organization and culture. For example, UnitedHealth Group saw a way to integrate their corporate values into their social learning, coaching, modern mentoring and development efforts by using their values-based competencies as a basis for learning engagements in River. They also leveraged River as a mechanism to help them accomplish their CEO’s business goal of increased collaboration and employee social learning. One senior performance consultant noted that, “Given the complexity of our organization, it is a given when you come in that you should be asking for help. You can’t know everything. It (River) is truly a program that allows us to show we are better together, and it gives you a network to tap into.” With River, UnitedHealth Group was able to provide employees with a network of knowledge assets and resources, all while helping the organization become more collaborative.



THE RESULT:

Increased employee engagement scores with River, with all business groups and regions participating.

To evaluate the effectiveness of River and social learning, UnitedHealth Group implemented a measurement approach focused on outcomes and business impact. They found that employees who used River had, on average, a 2% increase in engagement scores compared to non-participating employees. UnitedHealth Group characterized this as “a significant differentiator for our organization.”

Their evaluation also found that River has been a key part of their learning and development strategy, and they have fit it alongside other formal learning technologies that they offer, such as their LMS. UnitedHealth Group found that connecting collaboration activity and development engagements from River with their LMS was useful for employees because learners could see how their social learning efforts in

River fit with their overall performance and developmental goals. These integrated activities led to participation in River from all of UnitedHealth Group’s business groups and regions. As one participant said: “I enjoyed that people can reach out to each other to leverage each other based on skills, job functions, or just to seek and share information.”

UnitedHealth Group encourages learners who have great experiences like the user above to become an advisor for others to keep the cycle of learning going and to continue to spread the knowledge. With significantly increased cross-geographical, cross-demographical and cross-functional collaboration, UnitedHealth Group’s future roadmap is focused on extending River’s use and obtaining further impact measures.

NOTABLE QUOTE



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*NOTE: Content for this success story derived from: Stacey Harris, *The Shifting Workforce: Driving Development with Dynamic Learning Networks*, Brandon Hall Group, June 2013.

River is an award-winning social learning platform.

A SaaS solution, we have helped hundreds of Fortune 1000 companies and SMBs enable enterprise social learning, peer learning, coaching and modern mentoring.

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