

Influencing learning culture: how staff at Citi are learning to #BeMore

Citi is over 200 years old, an established global financial landmark with a great history. To be able to survive, let alone thrive for over 200 years, companies need to be adaptable and innovative.



In exploring how the organisation could continue to adapt and to grow, the team at Citi have focused on creating a culture of continuous workplace learning built on 3 critical global objectives:

- ▶ Build leadership and manager capability
- ▶ Drive ethical and cultural change
- ▶ Empower employee-led development

In May 2015, the EMEA L&D team at Citi launched an internal behavioural change campaign titled *#BeMore*. This internal programme was designed to empower employees to take control of their own development, facilitating behavioural change across Citi's diverse organisation.

Whilst the ability to access tools and resources was important for success, *#BeMore* also looked to change behaviour in 3 ways:

- ▶ Encouraging employees to have **honest conversations** with their line managers whilst better equipping line managers to do this
- ▶ Introducing a greater focus on **continuous workplace learning** based on the principals of 70:20:10 and known at Citi as the 3E's Experience, Exposure, Education.
- ▶ Encouraging more completion of Individual Development Plans (IDP) to a high standard.

After a year or so from its inception, more staff have completed their IDP's, the voice of employee scores have been positively impacted and *#BeMore* activity has been embedded into the everyday actions of the business. So, what are their secrets of success?

2-way engagement at the heart of success

Two-way engagement with staff was essential to the behavioural change the team sought to facilitate. Social learning was considered a key focus to develop a learning culture within the organisation, and an enabler for employees to learn from exposure to others. Social platforms would also act as an important engagement channel and providing an environment where employees themselves would be able to reinforce the authentic and informal tone of #BeMore.

Go to where your people are

Two options were available to deliver against this vision – to build a new social and collaborative environment or to leverage Citi’s internal social platform Citi Collaborate (Jive), already supported by a mobile application, which has 100,000 users globally returning monthly. The second option allowed #BeMore to not only benefit from engaging with the existing user base but also ensured that social and collaborative learning could be embedded within a technology that is organisationally future proof.

Create clear brand characteristics: then stick to them

Citi’s employees receive a high volume of internal messages and considerable thought was given to the creating an overall brand of the #BeMore campaign to make it stand out and deliver. #BeMore needed to encourage employee ownership and engagement so it was designed specifically is a **non-HR** branded campaign with a central defining experience of social collaboration. To capture attention #BeMore’s creative is original, authentic, humorous and targeted against the behaviours they wanted to change. Their campaign consistently executed this creative and tone of voice across all channels of communication.

Establish a central point of execution: make it easy to connect

One of the aims of the programme was to empower staff to take control of their own development, whilst expanding their learning network and learning from exposure to others. That meant that #BeMore had to be easy to find and easy to engage with.

A #BeMore landing page was established on Citi Collaborate to act as the central point of execution and engagement between #BeMore and Citi’s employees. This site is the central location for ‘all things learning’ across EMEA, so users can easily self-serve in support of their learning requirements as well as be encouraged to actively participate in learning discussions and reflection with their colleagues.

The site is designed with discussion boards and blogs placed firmly at the centre of all content (visually and strategically) and optimised for mobile. Sticky content, updated regularly, is used to entice staff to explore and comment.

A familiar intranet address was used to redirect staff seamlessly to the #BeMore landing page and all #BeMore marketing collateral use this URL as the call to action.

Be proactive in developing new learning habits

Central to #BeMore's annual activity is the 30-Day Development Challenge. The challenges have both comprised thirty micro actions (one a day, for thirty days) that are designed to challenge individuals to do everyday activities differently, thus building muscle memory and beginning to form new habits that will influence their day to day work. Each micro action takes less than ten minutes to accomplish and is something that can be actioned at home or in the workplace.

Examples of micro actions include:

- ▶ Going for a walk and talking to someone today
- ▶ Becoming more curious about how a different space enables a different quality of conversation
- ▶ Thinking about how a valuable piece of advice you've been given or that you have learned over the years has changed something important in your life and passing that lesson on to another person today.

A series of branded emails are used to drive individuals to the #BeMore landing page to collect their daily challenge. Here, staff are asked to reflect on their challenge and share ideas via Citi Collaborate. They also have options to dig deeper with additional resources. Engagement was driven by using branded 'spot prizes' distributed with a fun note asking individuals to upload a 'Selfie' to the site, thus encouraging more user-generated Content. Engagement in year 2 was further encouraged by awarding badges to share on their Citi Collaborate profile.

Leading the way: the role of influencers

Ownership and support at the top of the business played a key part in this programme. Citi leaders lead by example by participating in the social conversation as well as generating their own video content through the campaign. Managers from key locations used video to introduce the daily challenge or to reflect on their own learning as a means of encouraging others to engage. One learning Advisor took their Site Head for a drive and asked he about her own journey. The resulting 'Car Pool leadership chat' captured her talking about the importance of learning more powerfully than any script.

Managers are also directly supported via #BeMore with 30 day challenges built directly around leadership enablers, manager videos, helpful merchandising (e.g. Manager cards) and toolkits, monthly communications supporting Moments that Matter and a targeted resource centre.

The #BeMore campaign also benefits from the power of non-hierarchy based influencers. External influencers and thought leaders created video to connect and engage with staff. Internal influencers, who are most active on Citi Collaborate, are also approached for their support in communicating out key messages and activity.

Curating, clear, insightful and useful content

Quality content and storytelling was critical to the success. Relevant content is not just about helping staff progress their career but also play an important part in tapping into people's hearts and minds. User generated content occurs naturally through discussions but is also encouraged by the #BeMore team via giveaways and Learning Advisors engaging with their businesses to record video soundbites.

Monthly development planning emails use the quirky and engaging #BeMore brand to challenge thinking about topics such as goal setting, developing tiny habits and more. They provide quick tips, create links to extra resources and encourage staff to visit their own development plan to apply what they have learned.

A Community Managers helps facilitate discussions on the site whilst getting the balance right between ensuring essential compliance and governance needed within a large and heavily regulated organisation, like Citi, and social collaboration and learning. In year 2 an extended Community Management Team was established by working with highly engaged #BeMore Users.

Influencing global culture requires global reach

Two-way engagement with Citi people was essential to the behavioural change they sought to facilitate. To achieve this, internal collaboration between key stakeholders of Public Affairs, HR and business leaders across the whole region was critical. Five of the largest hubs in EMEA were initially selected as priority audiences but it was important that this campaign impact the wider EMEA region (54 countries). In the second year of the creative execution of the campaign was extended to support all of EMEA's countries. An online marketing toolkit was created so that all individuals could access all marketing materials, to print and adapt locally.

Creating a learning culture

#BeMore has been live for almost 2 years and is ranked the 3rd largest global community on Citi Collaborate. Whilst influencing culture is a long-term goal, a large number of EMEA employees have already been reached across 54 countries. 10,000 staff have been inspired by #BeMore Talks and staff engagement scores of participants are double the average.

Specifically, the 30-day challenge organisation is experiencing unprecedented levels of engagement and more importantly there are already clear examples of how new habits formed in the challenge are now shaping the behaviour of the organisation.

The L&D team at Citi should be congratulated on building a true learning community that is representative of the size and geographical spread of Citi's employees and is influencing cultural change.

5 Tips for influencing culture

- 1. Bring learning into the heart of business conversation** by establishing your core base where staff are rather than pulling them into a new world of learning.
- 2. Create a non-HR brand that will build engagement** consider, experience, tone, and emotion of the brand.
- 3. Be proactive** by setting a challenge that models new ways of learning rather than telling staff about new ways of learning.
- 4. Actively encourage leadership participation** capturing their ideas in new and novel ways and providing them with guidelines to work new ways of learning into their day to day dealings.
- 5. Help staff Work out loud** by providing them with permission and examples of how to reflect, share and learn from each other in a safe space.

Case study independently developed by Towards Maturity.

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