

A photograph of several businessmen in suits walking on a set of stone stairs in a city. One man in the foreground is blurred, while others are in focus, talking and walking. The background shows tall city buildings.

5-STEP GUIDE

to Successful Language Training



Business

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"As companies look for a competitive edge in an increasingly globalized environment, it's clear that multilingual employees offer their employers incredible value in multiple facets of their business."

Bruce Rogers
Chief Insights Officer at Forbes Media



Speaking the Customer's Language

With global opportunities on the rise, having a multilingual workforce has become a critical market success factor. Language proficiency and awareness of a market's culture, local customs, and business traditions conveys respect for customers and colleagues, which leads to greater trust and improved business results.

Businesses are providing language-learning resources that prepare employees to engage in these markets. Forbes Insights and Rosetta Stone surveyed 200+ executives globally to understand the impact of language training on companies and employees. This Guide summarizes key themes and data presented in the survey's full report, [Best in Class: How Enterprises Succeed with Language Learning Programs](#).

Results show that businesses with multilingual teams realize several positive gains, including improved reputation within specific geographic markets and on a global scale. Employees showcase the benefits of language proficiency with improved performance, confidence, and increased engagement at work.

Key Report Findings

Successful learning aligns with organizational goals. Companies that build language training into employee development plans and track key performance indicators (KPIs) are twice as likely to successfully link language learning goals to the organization's strategic priorities.

Opportunity awaits. The proliferation of online learning is prompting organizations to rethink traditional learning approaches and adopt technology-based models for training and development.

Language training must become part of the corporate culture. While companies understand the necessity of language learning, incorporating it into the corporate culture remains a challenge.

WHEN IT COMES TO LANGUAGE TRAINING, BEST-IN-CLASS COMPANIES:



INVEST IN TRAINING
THEIR EMPLOYEES



ALIGN LEARNING
WITH THEIR
CORPORATE MISSION



MEASURE TRAINING'S IMPACT
ON EMPLOYEES
AND THE COMPANY



EVOLVE TRAINING PROGRAMS
WHEN TECHNOLOGY CHANGES
THE LANDSCAPE

5 Steps to Successful Language Training

Enterprise language-learning programs continue to evolve as companies' needs and learning technologies change. When companies make the most of improvements in employee training, the success that follows benefits the company and its workforce. One path to language-training success is to **follow these five steps:**



1 Determine the Value of Language Learning

Communication is clearly a major key to business success, but when operating internationally it becomes even more important due to language barriers. Miscommunication could have a direct impact on expansion and profitability. An unsuccessful interaction with a customer could end a relationship. A failed conversation with a supplier or key partner could have serious financial or strategic implications.

These action items can help a company assess the value of its own language-learning plan.

- Identify the business goal
- Align language training to the strategy
- Identify the "performance gaps"
 - Current vs. future capabilities that employees need
- Determine the most effective type of workforce training
 - Are employees more comfortable with computer-based training or instructor-led training?
 - Do they prefer self-guided or self-paced learning?
 - Are there related cultural issues to factor into training?



INDICATE THAT THE ENTIRE COMPANY
REALIZES THE BENEFITS OF
LANGUAGE TRAINING



FEEL REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT
THEY ARE ABLE TO ALIGN
LANGUAGE-LEARNING PROGRAMS TO
THE COMPANY'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION



HAVE REPORTEDLY USED LANGUAGE
TRAINING AT THEIR COMPANY

2 Conduct a Language Audit

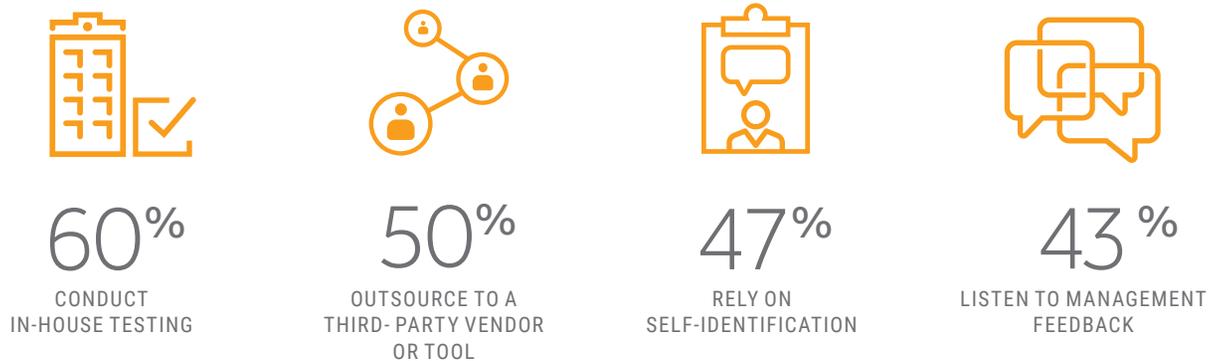
Only a small number of companies expect all employees to have second language skills as a core competency. Meanwhile, two-thirds of the companies surveyed report that all their employees are eligible for language training.

Conducting an initial language audit identifies an employee's current level of language proficiency before training begins. Audits using technology-based resources not only establish a starting point for learning, but allow later progress to be measured against that benchmark during and at the end of training.

A language audit is a means for companies to:

- Evaluate employees' current level of language proficiency
- Set the proficiency levels necessary for effective job performance
- Determine which employees are eligible for language training
- Gather data needed to set short- and long-term language goals

HOW DO THE COMPANIES SURVEYED ASSESS EMPLOYEE BASELINES AND STARTING LEVELS?



"Make sure employees understand what you want them to learn. Learning a language, going from beginner to fluency, requires a lot of work. Fundamentally, there is one thing that is essential—motivation to learn. If students are forced to learn or are forcing themselves, really quickly they hit a wall. You can't learn a language like you learn facts."

Dr. Ben Voyer

L'Oréal Professor of Creativity Marketing,
ESCP Europe Business School in London



3 Set Realistic Goals

Language training programs are more likely to succeed when companies quantify success, making both company goals and employee learning goals clear from the start.

Is the goal complete proficiency and passing exams? Or perhaps the ability to understand basic conversations or written communication? Is it to build trust with suppliers and partners? Will employees have time to learn at work or also on their own time?

Alignment with company goals is critical to language training success, as is support from the top ranks of executives. Management must understand how language training fits with the company's goals and exactly why they want employees to learn a language.

Motivation is an important factor in achieving long-term success, but learning a new language presents challenges. One is keeping motivation at a high level all the time.

The learner must understand:

- Why they need to make an effort
- How long they must sustain an activity
- How hard they should pursue it

They must devise an action plan on how to achieve those goals. Effective engagement strategies must be implemented to achieve success in any employee development program.



WHY EMPLOYEES ARE MOTIVATED TO LEARN A LANGUAGE

- Improve their communications confidence
- Earn a promotion or advance their careers
- Increase internal communication



WHY COMPANIES PROVIDE LANGUAGE TRAINING

- Better customer service outcomes
- Improved employee engagement
- Increased business productivity

"The focus now is really on being able to get the message and the context as early as possible, to lower customer effort and to have a meaningful conversation."

George Ramos

AVP for Learning
and Development at TeleDevelopment



4 Achieve a Successful Implementation

Language-learning programs often fall under the umbrella of workforce development, yet not all companies include language-learning progress in formal employee development plans.

There are two results to measure when determining the success of language training in a business: the impact on the individual employee and the effect on the business as a whole.

When asked to discuss the primary measurement they use to understand the impact of a formal language-learning program on the company overall, survey respondents reported customer satisfaction and productivity.

As technology enables the very globalization that requires language training, online solutions are making inroads in language training. Companies themselves are seeing the value in technological solutions and are moving in that direction. Digital learning platforms are the way of the future.

That makes sense as companies need to serve a larger population of language learners. They require a method that can scale based on changing needs and is cost-effective for any number of learners.

Tips for Successful Implementation:

- Develop language learning objectives
- Formally encourage and measure your language training program
- Choose a scalable solution to meet changing business needs
- Build language learning into employee development plans
- Track key performance indicators (KPI)
- Give employees the ability to learn anywhere

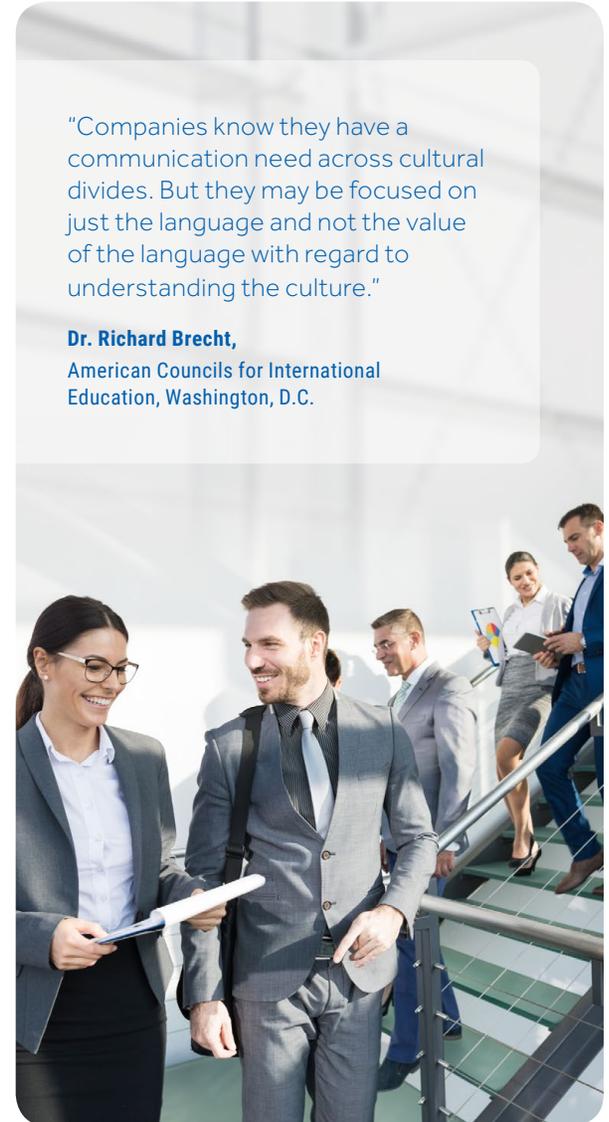


WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Energy provider E.ON sought an online learning solution to provide all employees with standardized and high-quality language training. **Learn about their successes and challenges, and how they were able to reduce cost through a new learning approach.** [▶](#)

"Companies know they have a communication need across cultural divides. But they may be focused on just the language and not the value of the language with regard to understanding the culture."

Dr. Richard Brecht,
American Councils for International
Education, Washington, D.C.



5 Measure Success, Evaluate Effectiveness

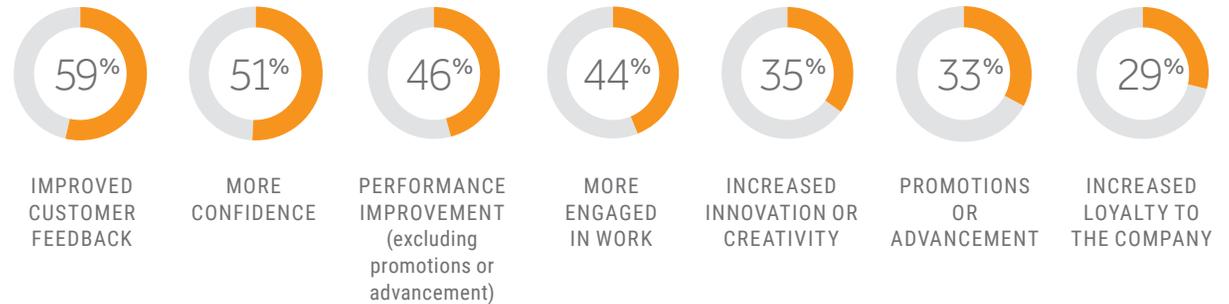
What is working for the companies that are able to align strategic direction with language learning? Simple, the business requires it. These companies cite strong global vision and significant presence in markets or geographies that require employees with multilingual competencies as success factors.

How companies measure success varies. Here are some effective approaches.

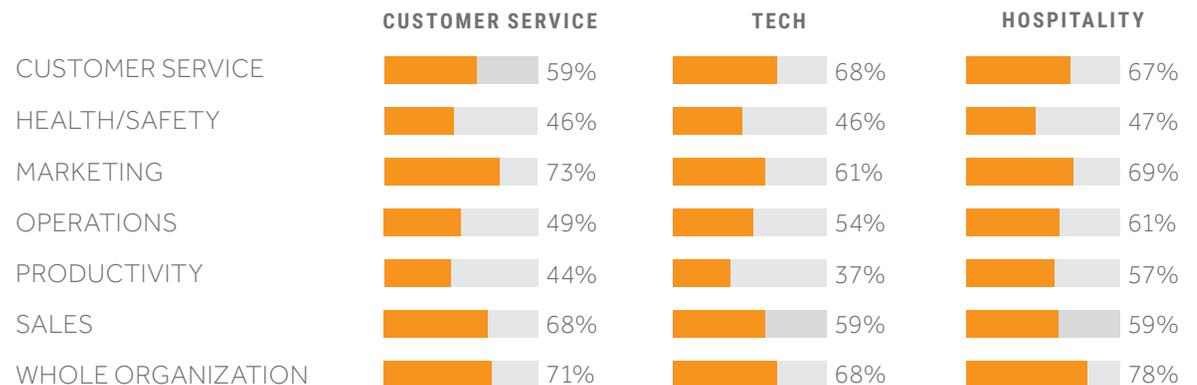
- Ask employees about their language training pros and cons
- Monitor and measure actual learning with real-time reporting tools
- Have managers observe employees using new languages on the job
- Take into account quantifiable business results, such as:
 - Increase in revenue
 - Higher productivity
 - Better results in a target market
 - Decrease in workplace incidents

WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE AREAS

where you see changes in employees who have participated in language learning programs?



To what extent have these areas of the business experienced tangible benefits by employees' increased ability to communicate in different languages?



HOW COMPANIES TRACK EMPLOYEE SUCCESS:



RELY ON MANAGEMENT FEEDBACK



DO NOT MEASURE LANGUAGE-LEARNING
IMPACT ON THE INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEE
OR ON THE COMPANY AS A WHOLE



USE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK



About Rosetta Stone

Rosetta Stone is a global leader in technology-driven language and learning solutions for individuals, classrooms, and entire organizations.

Our scalable, interactive solutions have been used by over 12,000 businesses, 9,000 public sector organizations, and 22,000 education institutions worldwide, and by millions of learners in over 150 countries.

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Conclusion

Companies know that expanding their operations and influence globally requires a workforce that can communicate effectively in multiple languages. Language training has the added benefit of also providing improved career prospects for current employees while attracting future talent.

According to John Hass, CEO of Rosetta Stone, "We're seeing more and more global businesses recognize how imperative a multilingual workforce is and the clear need to provide employees with training that not only benefits the company, but improves employees as well."



Contact us to learn how greater language proficiency improves workforce communication, productivity, and collaboration. ▶

Rosetta Stone  Business