



# Grow with Vodafone Creates User-Friendly, Personalized Growth Journey

Vodafone and TalenTeam

Best Advance in Learning Management Technology

April 2024



## Company Background



Company-at-a-Glance	
Headquarters	UK
Year Founded	1984
Revenue	45.71 billion EUR (2023)
Employees	104,000 (2022)
Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)	Vodafone predominantly operates services in Asia, Africa, Europe and Oceania.
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	A mobile telecommunications company.
Industry	Mobile telecommunications
Stock Symbol	VOD (LON)
Website	<a href="https://www.vodafone.com">Vodafone.com</a>



## Value Proposition

### The business need

When no single supplier can deliver on a client's ambitious learning management vision, there's an opportunity to innovate in a uniquely collaborative way. This is the story of how a number of big names in learning and talent management came together to deliver a unique global solution.

Like other telecommunications companies (telcos) urgently reinventing themselves, Vodafone revamped its operations, aspiring to become the best-in-class telco for Europe and Africa. To achieve this, the business needed talent – critically, with digital and tech skills. Specifically, the business needed to:

- Attract and recruit talent with new skills in unprecedented volumes, with ambitious plans (e.g., 50% of tech workforce being software engineers by 2025).
- Build critical digital and technology skills, including upskilling existing employees, or preparing them for new roles internally.
- Increase employee career mobility within the organization, whether lateral moves or promotions.
- Drive business growth and performance through building organizational capability, equipping leaders and enhancing performance management.
- Create a culture of high performance and learning.
- Accelerate the company's digital transformation, enabling speed, efficiency and agility in the company's processes, leveraging the company's global footprint to optimize cost.



A suite of KPIs were agreed to measure progress here, and baselines were captured:

Theme	Desired impact	Indicators	Measure	Base	Y1 Target	Y1 Actual	Y2	Y3
<b>Enable a high-performance learning culture</b>	A culture of continuous learning	Learning hours per person/per year	Average hours per person/per year	15	20	20	30	40
	Enhanced employee learning experience	TNPS from Learning activities	TNPS score	64	65	63	70	75
<b>Build future capability</b>	Diverse talent pipeline for SLT appointments	Internal SLT appointment ratio	Internal SLT appointments as a percentage of all SLT appointments	76%	78%	80%	79%	80%
	Scaled approach to reskilling/upskilling	Internal appointment ratio	Internal appointments as a percentage of all appointments	37%	45%	27%	50%	60%
<b>Attract and engage top talent through active succession and talent development</b>	Strengthened employee value proposition	Admired as a place to grow your career	Internal - Vodafone is a place to grow my career	74%	76%	73%	78%	80%
			Internal - Spirit Beat: Growth and advancement opportunities are equally accessible to everyone at Vodafone	64%	66%	68%	68%	70%
			External - Linked in ("Opportunities to learn new, highly desired skills")	20%	22%	23%	24%	26%
<b>Build the engine to deliver on our growth ambitions</b>	Investment focused on delivering our growth ambition	Cost savings delivered	€ million	-	€2.03m	€6.7m	TBC	TBC
	Revenue generated via commercialization of content (Aspirational)	Revenue generated via commercialisation of content (Aspirational)	€ K (Incremental growth yr on yr)	-	€0	€0	€50k	€75k

*Indicators were agreed, and baselines were captured*

### How the solution emerged

As explained, Vodafone needed to create a higher-performing approach to Learning, Talent, Leadership, Skills, and People Performance. Not separately, but in a truly joined-up way.

The approach demonstrated extensive stakeholder engagement and thorough business alignment.

In September-2021, the journey began, engaging with the company's Group Executive Committee (ExCo), seeking approval to invest in this quantum shift in learning and talent. ExCo granted a formal written approval in November-2021.

### Introducing the team behind this innovation

A new organization – the Vodafone Learning Organization (VLO) – was launched in April-2022. This is a single internal organization, accountable for Learning, Talent, Leadership, Skills, and People Performance across Vodafone.

The VLO spanned all functions and entities, unifying 16 teams and multiple local systems to create a single globally consistent experience, scalable products, operating model, and system landscape. This team led the advance in learning management technology being entered here.

### Defining the strategy

Working with Deloitte and using extremely thorough research, consultation and analysis, the VLO team agreed a strategy with global leaders and other stakeholders.

Following feedback from the Operating Model Steering Committee, engagement sessions were run with HR colleagues from Spain, the UK, the Czech Republic, Technology and Group HR teams (Diversity & Inclusion, Leadership, Learning, Talent & Skills) in December-



2022. These sessions stress-tested the model, and co-created case studies outlining how the model would work in practice.

With the global agenda’s pace and speed, continued engagement with Group ExCo and senior stakeholders has occurred almost monthly.

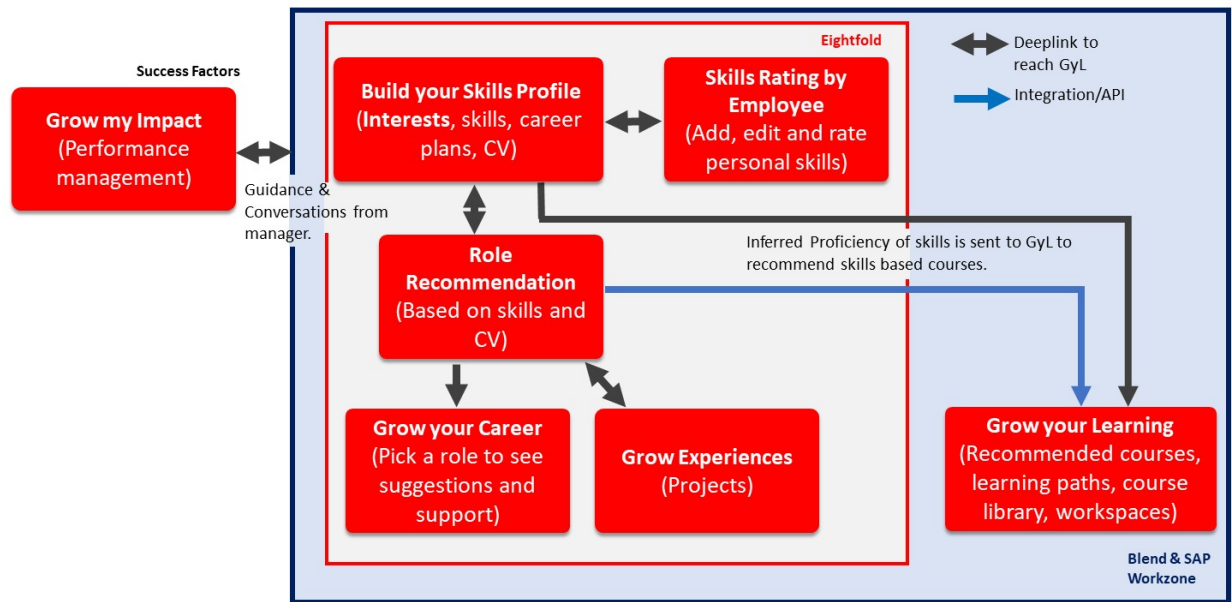
**Proof of concept**

In 2019, Vodafone ran a global pilot with an off-the-shelf system, SAP Jam (SAP SuccessFactors Work Zone’s precursor), across multiple entities to deliver a leadership program, Ready2LEAD. This provided early proof points for driving learning engagement, increasing the average number of learning actions p/person, and employee engagement.

The pilot was a success, but it relied on separate systems to assess people’s skills and deliver the learning, each with a cost, and no consistent aggregation of data. It was enough to inspire a desire to strive for a consistent approach, delivering more insight to the global skills profile, and benefiting employees with personalized career and learning recommendations.

**The innovation in technology being entered**

This submission focuses on the culmination of this grand plan – a new and unprecedented digital talent, skills, and learning experience platform called Grow with Vodafone, launched by the VLO team. It has three core elements: Grow my Skills, Grow my Career, and Grow my Impact (performance development).



**How the solution addresses this need**

Grow with Vodafone is meeting the business’ need by:



- Creating a culture of continuous learning to develop a new type of digital talent, upskilling and reskilling existing employees.
- Empowering the company's people to maximize their potential by:
  - Exploring flexible career paths that align employee aspirations with Vodafone's vision.
  - Giving colleagues clarity on their skills, where to develop, and suitable career paths.
  - Enabling new ways of working for leaders and teams through process simplification and digitization.
  - Linking all these needs together to provide a joined-up, personalized Talent Experience for the company's people.

## Product or Program Innovation

### The breakthrough innovation here

It's not uncommon for a learning strategy to be joined up, nor is it unusual for it to be international. Grow with Vodafone was developed and deployed to take 'joined up' to a whole new level. This involved major suppliers coming together to create an advance in learning management technology that raised the bar for the learning industry.

Evidence of just how innovative this was came from the fact that while certain elements existed, and 27 leading vendors pitched, no single vendor was able to meet all Vodafone's needs. Therefore, the VLO team and some major vendors had to come together to create something truly unique, unifying:

- SAP SuccessFactors Learning (Learning Management System).
- SAP SuccessFactors Work Zone (HR) (personalized digital workspace).
- BLEND LXP by TalenTeam (Learning Experience Platform on top of SAP SuccessFactors Work Zone).
- Eightfold (external-facing talent acquisition/recruitment, and talent management and intelligence supporting the company's employees and skills strategy).

### The learner experience this innovation delivers

Despite the complexity behind the scenes, each employee experiences a user-friendly, truly personalized growth journey in what appears to be a single platform:

Initially, market intelligence and business input are used to map skills to every role, so that each employee starts with a skills profile. Eightfold technology also infers the skills people have, based on their experience, previous roles and companies worked for, identifying opportunities to develop missing skills, and recommending careers. For example, if an employee has an 82% match to X role, but with Y skills needed, the platform identifies where the gaps are between the employee's current skills and those the role requires. It also records other skills the employee has marked as 'of interest'.



The 'of interest' data is passed to BLEND LXP, which is where TalenTeam and Eightfold partnered to create something they'd never done before – the first talent-management platform, talking to a learning experience platform, between different vendors with an automated, real-time data passthrough.

The result is the employee being presented with personalized learning recommendations, aligned to skills and careers of interest, with skill and capability gaps highlighted for both the role they have now and future roles.

Grow with Vodafone surfaces content from the internal library, aggregated by Anders Pink, and licensed from partners (Skillsoft and Harvard) to recommend the right learning, at the proficiency level required, delivering a truly personalized experience.

In summary, using innovative passthroughs, integrations and branding, the VLO team created a seamless user experience. Joining up talent-, career- and skills-related processes is the future – and the VLO team believes this was a real breakthrough in employee experience and value.

### **The effectiveness of this solution**

#### **A description of the effectiveness... For individuals**

For each employee, Grow with Vodafone delivered:

- A joined-up experience, appearing to be a single platform (although, behind the scenes, it's multiple platforms integrated together).
- A highly personalized career development experience from selecting career paths of interest, to applying for roles and workplace experiences.
- A highly personalized learning experience, where interests and career aspirations, as well as the learning they require for their current and future role, generate a list of appropriate content recommendations aligned to career interest and aspirations.
- A time-efficient way to learn the right skills – right for their current and future roles.

The evidence of success here (detailed later) encompasses:

- A massive increase in adoption.
- A substantial uplift in learner satisfaction (with the offering as a whole).
- Increased employee engagement in relation to their learning experiences while working at Vodafone.

#### **A description of the effectiveness... For the business**

Grow with Vodafone provided:



- A consistent approach across a global workforce.
- The unification of talent management, succession-planning, leadership development, skills development, and performance management.

Evidence of success here included:

- External research correlating the degree of engagement with Grow with Vodafone, with key impact indicators such as loyalty and promotions/role moves.
- An operational saving triple that stated in the business case.

## Unique Differentiators

### How the solution is unique

In addition to the unique employee experience outlined earlier, the solution as a whole incorporates some other exceptional aspects, each contributing to the wider success:

### Exceptional skills alignment

Core learning and development activities are organized around ‘skills’, not ‘functions’. This focused investment and resource allocation on critical, scalable, global skills, and was informed by a skills deep-dive with **Gartner**, which identified ten critical skills that needed to be scaled to deliver the business strategy, with a further 27 supporting future skills:



*The Gartner skills analysis report*

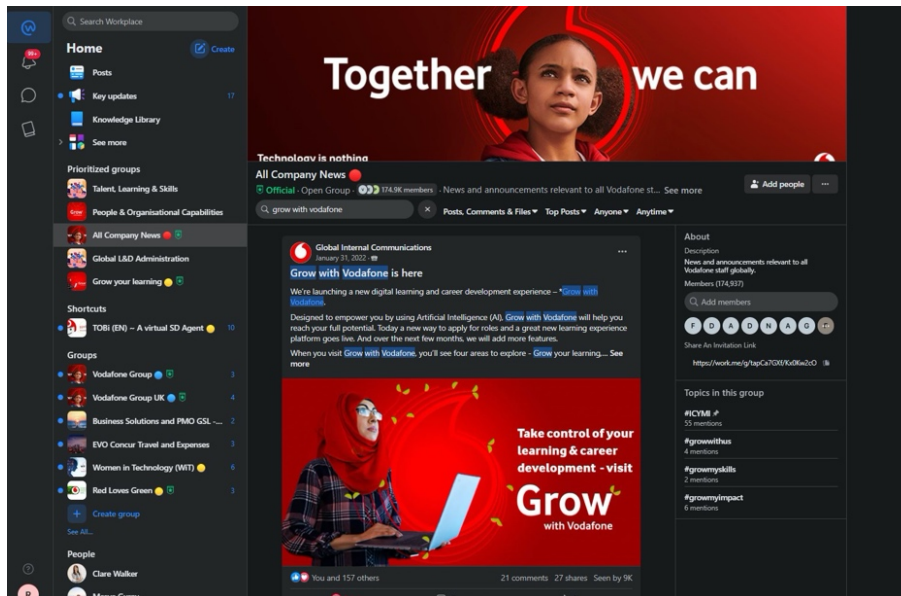
Following on from this, a newly formulated, end-to-end succession and talent development lifecycle focused on accelerating talent development and internal succession moves.



### Exceptionally effective launch tactics

Clearly new technology alone would not deliver impact without substantial adoption and employee support. To achieve this, Grow with Vodafone was communicated using multiple channels, including:

- Townhalls.
- Webinars.
- On the Workplace intranet (see below).



*Example of internal communication – the intranet feature*

The messaging explained how the VLO team was trying to improve employee experience and support career development, ensuring employees had the right skills for now and their future.

The VLO team also activated leaders as a vital communications channel. For example, one of the company's four top leadership behaviors evolved over the year – 'a leader's role is to develop talent'. Through the launch of the Vodafone's Spirit Accelerator, the VLO team anchored the top 300 leaders around this key shift, and explored how they could bring it to life.

### Exceptional business partnering

On a practical level, to support the day-to-day delivery, the VLO established:

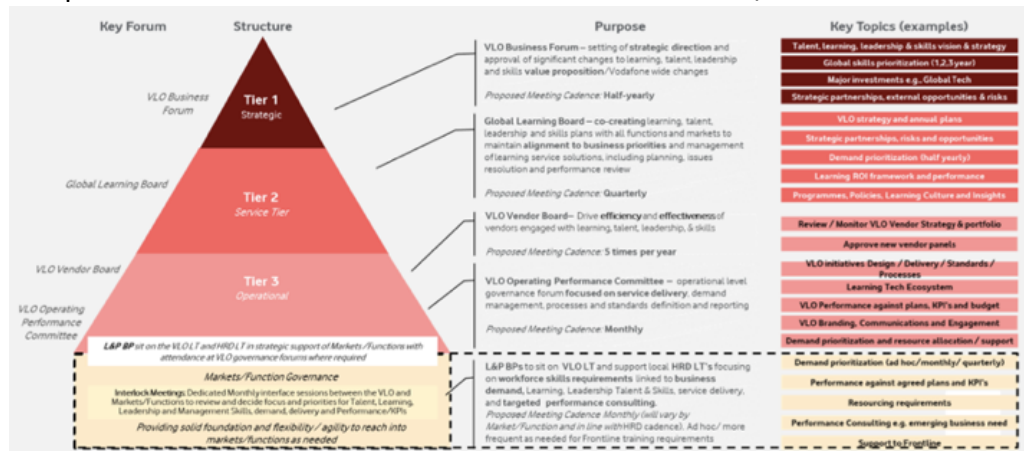
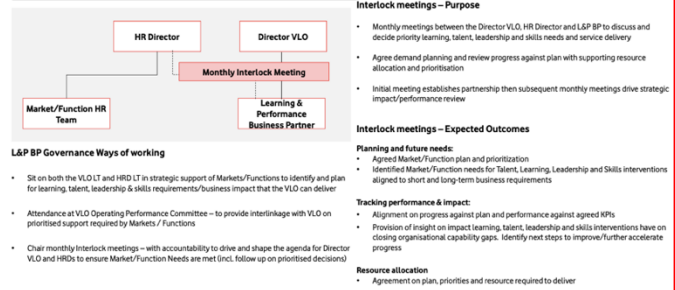




- **New roles:** Within the VLO, new Learning & Performance Business Partner roles (see right) were introduced to provide a clear, single point of contact between local HR functions and the VLO – critical in ensuring consistent, clear communications, and understanding/meeting market/functional requirements (see below).
- **New teams:** Global teams were established to lead end-to-end diagnosis, design, development and delivery of learning, talent, leadership and skills products and services. This ensured products were scalable, designed once, and deployed many times, removing complexity and improving the employee experience.
- **Robust governance:** The VLO is underpinned by robust governance through a three-tiered model (see below). These tiers (i) aid planning and prioritization of learning investment, ensuring markets and functions can input on the strategic direction and have the final decision on skills prioritization, and (ii) tighten vendor management to streamline and scale vendors, increase cost transparency, and build deeper and more strategic partnerships. There’s also a monthly feedback loop between the VLO and HR directors across functions/entities.

**Learning & Performance Business Partner**

The Learning & Performance Business Partner forms a key element within the governance framework as a strategic partner to the HR Director/business leader, owning and driving the overall capability plan



*The three-tiered Governance approach*

The adoption figures shared demonstrate just how effective all these launch, partnering and governance approaches were.

**Exceptional evaluation**

The technology has also been on the receiving end of a particularly thorough impact evaluation. Conventional metrics include:



1. An analysis of the operational data from the platforms integrated together (adoption and engagement in particular).
2. An analysis of the existing annual employee survey.
3. A cost-benefit analysis to quantify the financial impacts of the change.

What’s more unusual was the use of an additional, externally conducted survey of a sample of learners (June-2023) to measure the impact of the solution as a whole (not just specific courses), with the goal of quantifying correlations between engagement with Grow with Vodafone and desire business outcomes. The findings are included in the results sections later.

### An exceptionally joined-up user experience

The innovation here lies in how joined up career-planning, learning, mentoring, performance improvement and career experiences are. All this in what appears to be a single platform.

The tour demo will explain this in more detail, but here’s a list of the steps, along with some key screenshots:

- The profile page allows employees to upload their CV, rate their skills, and provide a description about themselves. Each of these elements supports the recommended learning journey, the career-planning and job recommendation tool.
- The employee then adds and edits ratings of their skills.

#### Skills Profile

Complete your skills ratings to personalise your experience. Core Skills have been identified for you to support tailored career recommendations. Use the Other Skills tab to add and rate more skills. Your line manager has the option to provide a manager rating.

On the skill proficiency sliders:

1. Learner - is defined as require instructions or guidance with very limited practical experience.
2. Practitioner - executes with limited support but benefits from coaching in some situations.
3. Professional - works independently in fairly complex situations.
4. Expert - has significant depth and breadth; coaches others.
5. World class - is defined as sets strategy & direction, key influencer in industry, shapes future trends.

The screenshot shows the 'Skills Profile' interface with two tabs: 'Core Skills (13)' and 'Other Skills (39)'. A search bar is present with the text 'Search skill'. A legend indicates 'Self' (blue dot) and 'Manager (Not applicable for employees Band F and below in Germany)' (green square). Below are several skill categories with proficiency sliders ranging from 'Learner' to 'Worldclass':

Skill	Rating (Self)
Business Partnering	Practitioner
Customer Centricity	Learner
Data Analytics and Insights	Professional
Diversity and Inclusion	Professional
Requirements Analysis	Practitioner
Communication	Professional



- They then can pick a role they're interested in to see the career planner's suggestions and support.

**Plan what's next for you.**

We analysed your profile & skills. Compare roles to see where you could be a great fit

Preferred roles you specified + Add a Preferred Role

<p>Digital Learning Developer</p> <p>10 employees in this role</p>	<p>Learning &amp; Performance BP Specialist</p> <p>9 employees in this role</p>	<p>Consumer Insights Manager</p> <p>4 employees in this role</p>
<p>UX Lead</p> <p>51 employees in this role</p>		

Future roles for you

- The system then uses profile information to extract skills they have and outline the skill gap.

**Explore skills required for Learning & Performance BP Specialist**

Compare the skills that you need, with the skills you already have

**Skills you have**

Sales X

Training X

Project Management X

Marketing X

Data Analysis X

Community Outreach X

Communication X

**Skills you need**

Click the skills below to add skills you already have so that we can focus on the skills you need in the next steps.

+ iWork	+ iLife
+ Team Building	+ iPod
+ Customer Satisfaction	+ iTunes
+ Program Management	+ iPhoto
+ Keynote	+ Troubleshooting

Back

Continue

- The employee then receives learning recommendations based on role selection and skill gap analysis. Learning paths, learning history and recommendations all appear in this user-friendly screen:



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- This is followed by role recommendations, based on skills and previous experience.
- And the most unusual thing here is the fact that a learning management experience includes actual jobs they can apply for (if ready) or learn their way to:

There are 2020 open jobs. To see relevant jobs based on your profile [click here](#)

The Job Recommendation engine is still learning and you are helping to improve it every time you use it. We continue to launch new features across the platform including the strong match functionality that will continue to enhance the platform in the coming weeks.



## Measurable Result

### High adoption

#### Adoption of Grow my Skills

The project achieved its objective of creating a culture of learning. 95,000+ employees completed learning this year, with 2,000,000+ learning hours – a whopping increase of 33% in learning per person in the first year, validated by Ernst & Young.

Growing from 15 hours per person to 20, the VLO team exceeded the company's challenging learning hours target.

Here are some more adoption figures the team is proud to share:

- 39,000+ employees with at least one development goal.
- 80+ internal facilitators and 95 internal coaches trained.
- 509 employees coached.
- 244 leaders received 360-degree feedback.
- 147 senior leaders supported by an executive coach.

#### Adoption of Grow my Career

- 58,400 personalized assessments to increase selection rigor and aid development.
- 109 employees enrolled in the Technical Career Path framework, 36 progressing to the next level.

#### Adoption of Grow my Impact

- 77,000+ employees have set performance goals, benefiting from clarity on ownership and impact.
- 14,000+ employees now have a skills profile, benefitting from personalized career and learning recommendations.

### The improved experience

The externally conducted survey of a representative sample of learners showed:

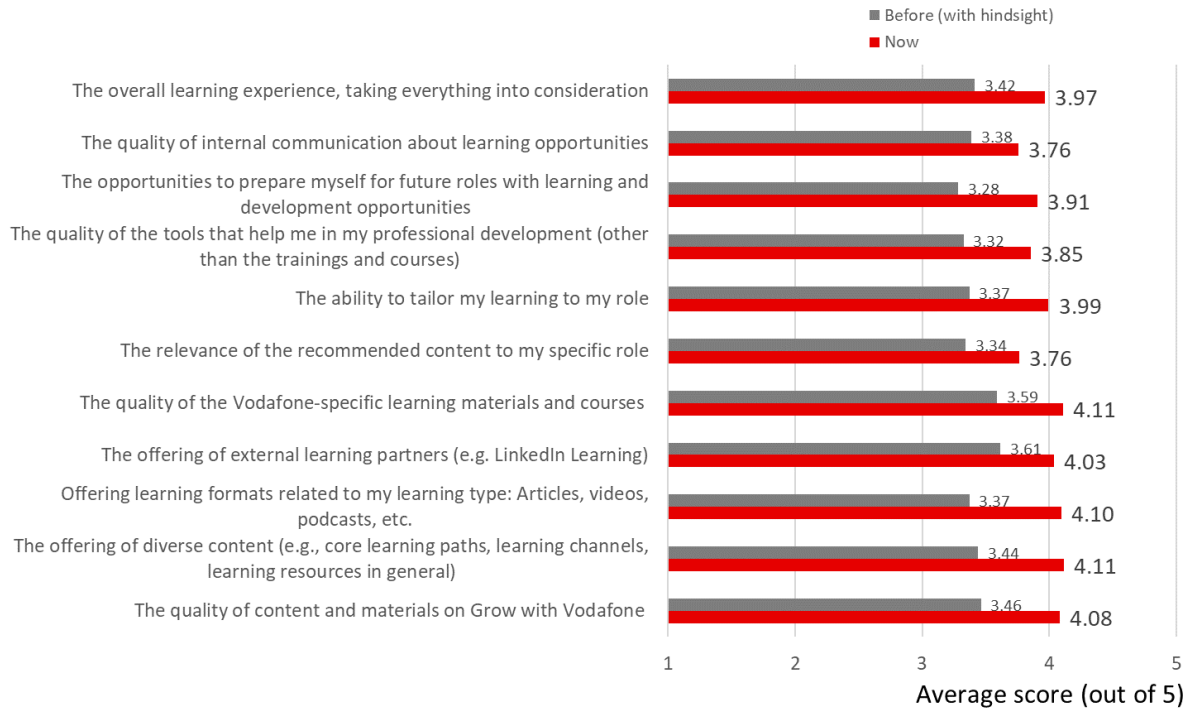
- 81% now enjoy self-managed learning.
- The majority (56%) have no problem selecting the most relevant/interesting content.

Spontaneous comments from learners that illustrate these scores include:

- "I'm updated with the latest training I need to perform at my best." - Vodacom Store Franchise, Vodacom Store
- "Contents are very interesting and keep us engaged." - Technology, \_VOIS
- "Great ecosystem to learn anything." - Technology, \_VOIS



When asked to rate aspects of the program, ranging from overall learning experience to ability to tailor learning, now vs. before (with hindsight), scores out of 5 increased across the board, increasing on average 0.63:



How a sample of employees rated the wider learning offering (now vs. before – with hindsight)

The measurable impacts on loyalty and career progression are included in the next section.

**Impact on employee engagement**

The Spirit Beat annual employee survey demonstrated that Vodafone interventions are making a difference across the whole workforce, with a score of 84/100 for ‘Through my work, I often learn new skills or develop new abilities’. Moreover, satisfaction with learning products increased eight points.

**The business benefits**

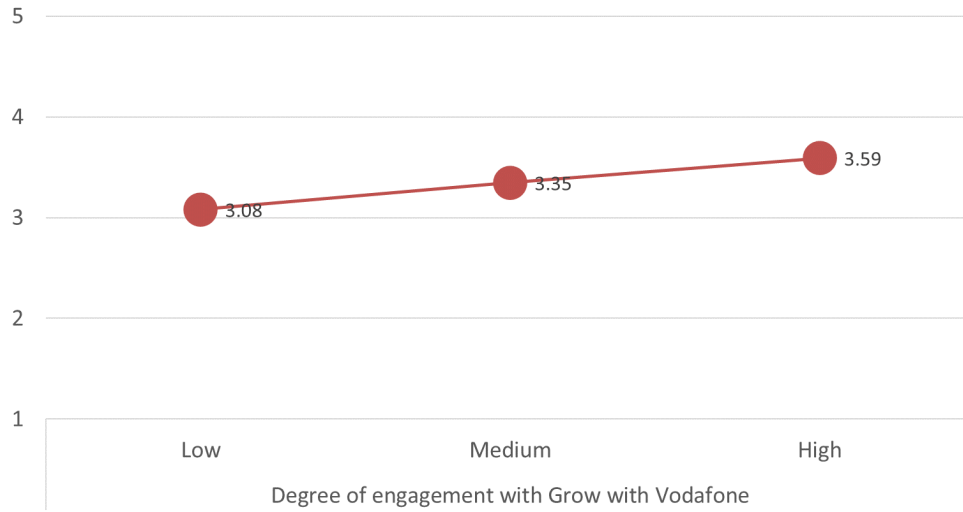
**Impact on employee loyalty and advocacy**

The externally conducted survey also demonstrated cause and effect – the more employees engage with Grow with Vodafone (low-medium-high), the more they agree (out of 5) that:

- They see themselves at Vodafone in a year’s time (3.08-3.35-3.59) – see below.
- They’d recommend working at Vodafone (3.19-3.49-3.64).



Average score for loyalty (1-5)

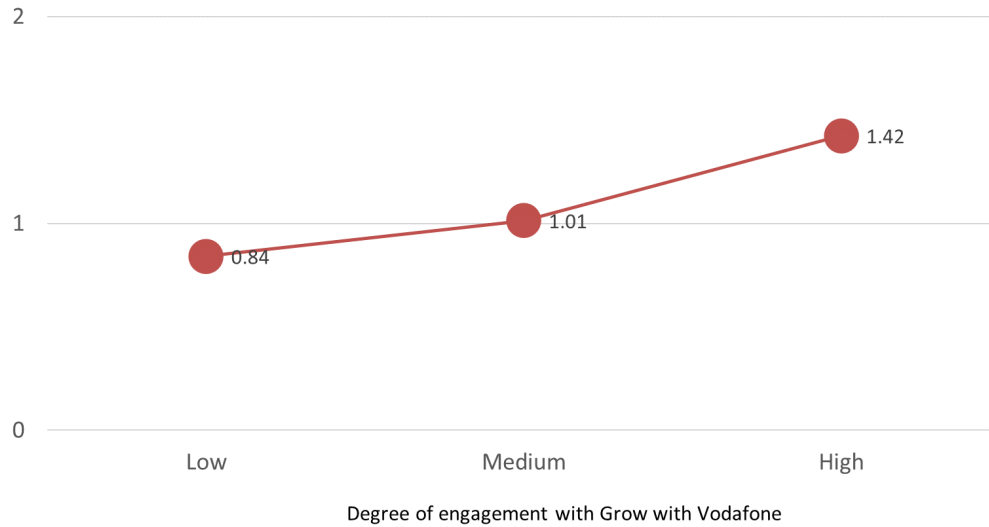


The more people engage with Grow with Vodafone, the more likely they are to see themselves within the business in a year's time

### Impact on talent progression

Furthermore, the more employees engage, the more they report lateral role changes and promotions, from 0.84 over two years for those with low engagement with Grow with Vodafone, to 1.42 average changes over two years for those who are highly engaged:

Average number of role changes over past 2 years



The more people engage with Grow with Vodafone, the more promotions and career moves they've experienced

These two survey responses illustrate how Grow with Vodafone helps not only drive career progression, but also supports people in new roles:



- “I started focusing more on learning by doing rather than formal learning, and this has boosted my career.” - HR, \_VOIS
- “People leaders’ training is high quality; it helped me adapt to my new role and make progress.” - Technology, EU Cluster

#### **Financial benefits – more for less**

All these impacts have been achieved despite a net reduction in the operational cost of delivering learning and career progression. The technology enabled:

- Simplification and cost efficiencies.
- A clearer vendor strategy, creating preferred suppliers for consistency and economies-of-scale.

The business case projected an operational saving of €420,000. In year-one, the savings achieved were three times this, at c.€1.2m.

#### **Summary**

This project was brave, and bravery paid off. Implementing a strategy and tech solution so all-encompassing is unprecedented. The evidence shows it’s been extremely effective.

Leanne Wood, Chief HR Officer, concludes:

“Shifts in our strategic priorities, combined with a significant demand for building future skills at pace, at scale, and in a cost-efficient way, required a new approach to learning, talent, leadership, skills, and people performance, specifically around how activities are built, organized and delivered. In April-2022, we launched the Vodafone Learning Organization, bringing together all colleagues globally who support these activities. In its first year, the VLO delivered significantly improved learning opportunities both through the Grow with Vodafone platform, and scaled global products for skills, leadership, and people performance – all while overachieving efficiency versus the business case. Our strategic plan is building the right skills for now and for the future, enabling us to become the best-in-class telco for Europe and Africa.”







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