

# A learning organisation that delivers for parents



HQ: London | Industry: Internet | About: The UK's largest network for parents, founded in 2000  
Web: 12 million unique visitors and 128 million page views per month | Employees: 120

Continuous learning has always been a key element in Mumsnet's culture. By helping to turn the principle into an organisation-wide habit, LinkedIn Learning is empowering employee development, and opening up new possibilities for making parents' lives easier.

## The Challenge

- Deliver training resources to support Mumsnet's growth
- Support the organisation's core principle of flexible working
- Enable continuous development for all employees
- Build the skills to enable more data-led, personalised experiences for parents

## The Solution

- Trial of online learning platforms, with LinkedIn Learning selected on the basis of employee engagement
- Licenses for all employees
- Dedicated hour every fortnight for entire company to consume learning content
- LinkedIn Learning recommendations embedded within appraisals process
- Monthly CEO email sharing learning stories and recommendations

## The Results

- Over three quarters of Mumsnet employees log in to LinkedIn Learning every month
- The 120 employees have started over 1,000 courses in the last 12 months
- The organisation as a whole has consumed more than 831 hours of learning content during the last year

## An evidence-based approach to online learning

A fast-growing digital business depends on an evolving skill set among its employees. That's why the principle of learning has always been an important part of the culture at Mumsnet. As the organisation's rate of growth increased, it became clear that online learning had a vital role to play in translating a cultural commitment to learning into an active learning habit.

"We recognised that we were asking our people to do a lot of different things and that more access to training would be really valuable," explains Sue Macmillan, Chief Operating Officer at Mumsnet. "We practice and preach flexible working at Mumsnet, and we liked the look of online learning platforms for that reason."

Sue decided to run an initial pilot, trialling several different online learning platforms across a sample of 10 employees in different roles. "We looked closely at the data that showed whether people were actually engaging with the different courses on the platforms," she says. "LinkedIn Learning was by far the most popular. It stood out for the quality of the courses but also the breadth and the flexibility. We loved the idea of our people being able to learn when it suited them – both in work and out of work. We needed our learning to cover everything from finance to technology, to content, to sales, so the breadth of content was really important as well."

## The power of a learning hour

From the start, Mumsnet saw LinkedIn Learning as an organisation-wide resource. The company invested in licenses for every employee – and prioritised embedding online learning within the fabric of the organisation.

It started with a company-wide launch at a meeting that explained how the platform worked – and why it mattered. "We go out of our way to employ people who are engaged with learning," says Sue. "It's part of our values and also part of our interview process. We always thought that LinkedIn Learning would go down well when we launched it – and so it proved."

Mumsnet wasn't complacent about the task of embedding LinkedIn Learning as an organisational habit, though. The business sent a powerful signal of its commitment by instituting a fortnightly learning hour, when every employee would set aside their work to consume LinkedIn Learning content of their choice. Its impact in unambiguously establishing permission to learn was immense.

"Even as a learning enthusiast, I sometimes feel indulgent setting time aside to watch an online course," admits Sue. "Having a dedicated hour when the entire business drops everything is critical to helping people overcome that. It's been a hugely important part of our success."

The learning hour acts as a centrepiece for Mumsnet's learning culture – leading naturally into a follow-up social event where employees discuss what they've learned. It also helps to provide a stream of content for a monthly email from CEO Justine Roberts, which shares employees' LinkedIn Learning recommendations.

"LinkedIn Learning has such a great mix of the general and specific and I try to mix up how I use my hour between the two," says Laura Westerman, Assistant Reviews Editor at Mumsnet. "I'm really drawn to soft skills like Leadership in Working Life and Time Management, but there are specifics in there like building an SEO strategy that are really useful as well."

"I recently watched a course on being more positive at work that I found really valuable," says Brand Licensing Manager, Charlotte Babbs. "I've recommended it to everyone I know since."

## Development for employees and user experiences

Besides the learning hour and the employee recommendations that it leads to, Sue and her team are working on embedding LinkedIn Learning within Mumsnet's processes for appraisals, feedback and employee development. "It's one of the most important elements in our discussions about development and where people want to be," she says. "We have a skills matrix for each employee, where line managers define the skills they need and employees rank themselves on those skills. We're working on integrating LinkedIn Learning recommendations into that process."

Mumsnet's multi-dimensional approach has taken LinkedIn Learning from a new platform to an established part of company life at impressive speed. The company's 120 employees have sampled more than 1,000 new courses and consumed over 830 hours of learning content in the last 12 months alone. Activating a learning culture is delivering both in terms of employee development – and increasing the scope of what Mumsnet can do for parents.



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"I've been stepping into my brand licensing role this year, and I've found LinkedIn Learning really useful," says Charlotte. "The courses on key account management helped to upskill me in an area where I didn't have much experience before."

"We're very interested in using data to create more personalised experiences for our users," says Sue. "As part of that, we're encouraging all employees to use data to inform what they do. LinkedIn Learning helps to make that possible. It enables us to take data out of the hands of just a few people in a data team and make it more integral to the organisation as a whole."

"Our employees love LinkedIn Learning. We can see it in the amount of content they consume and how often they log in, but also from talking to them generally and the feedback that they give. We're constantly thinking now of other ways that we can use the platform – and integrate it into what we're doing as a business."

**Sue Macmillan**  
Chief Operating Officer  
Mumsnet

