



How to Select a Training and Development Vendor

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Almost every company will at some time, need external performance development support. Developing organizations as well as well-established companies often have time-strapped internal HR or learning and development people that need a pair of hands or expert resource provider.

As companies look for ways to optimize the time, cost and impact that training can make, external vendors become a viable option. But the question becomes how to find the right vendor in the maze of marketplace offerings.

We surveyed a dozen of our clients for the criteria they use in making a vendor selection. Their responses include a need for;

1. A flexible and generative approach; a vendor willing to go the extra mile;
2. The ability of the vendor to deeply customize content and branding, and
3. A full-service solution allowing for training content development and facilitation, applied coaching and LMS content development.

Several of our clients added that the vendor's ability to make an immediate business impact was critical. To this end, several mentioned that their off-the-shelf solutions did not often fit their criteria and that high engagement through customized content was needed for a good culture fit.

To this end, many cited a vendor's ability to really understand their business and create accurate case studies that match the culture with content that felt internally created.

We created a list of questions to ask potential vendors and reduce the confusing pool of candidates:

1. How do you work with clients when they have additional needs? Do you include support and planning within the training or coaching budget?

2. Are your courses off-the-shelf or can you customize them for our company? How deeply can you customize content? Can you provide me with three recent references to contact about this?
3. Do you offer full-service solutions (Instructor-led training, coaching and web-based content, content, job aids, train-the trainer and follow-up material)?
4. How successful have you been at delivering on your training promises? Can you provide me with three recent references to contact about this?

At CLI, we know what it means to exceed the expectations of our clients. We work closely with you to determine your exact need, then work to execute on our promise. As a full-service vendor, we develop an on-going relationship with you, collaborating closely to be there exactly when you need help—as an expert and willing pair of hands. Contact me to talk about your needs.

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