The Learning Credits System

From Compliance to Competency | Executive Brief

Purpose. An adaptable internal employee development framework that recognizes learning, application, and knowledge transfer—not simply training hours.

Why change the model?

Traditional learning targets often reward course completion rather than demonstrated capability. The proposed Learning Credits System (LCS) creates a consistent internal language for development across roles while allowing functions to curate relevant pathways.

Four ways to earn learning credits

Dimension	What counts	Suggested baseline
Consume	Verified self-paced learning or relevant reading with a short reflection	1 credit per verified learning hour
Attend	Participating in facilitated workshops, seminars or conferences	1 credit per verified hour; event caps apply
Apply	Using a new skill in a work product, improvement or supervised demonstration	2–4 credits after evidence review
Give	Teaching, mentoring, presenting or publishing reusable learning content	2–8 credits based on reach and effort

Annual targets (starting hypotheses)

Role group	Illustrative annual target
Individual contributors	12 credits
Managers / senior managers	24 credits
Directors / executives	40 credits

Targets are illustrative, not validated industry benchmarks. Pilot them against access, workload and role relevance before adopting them as policy.

Design principles

Relevant: role-based pathways curated by cross-functional Learning Architects. Fair: accessible options and protected development time. Verifiable: lightweight evidence and manager/SME review. Useful: application and sharing are valued. Responsible: internal credits are not SHRM, HRCI, PMI or other externally accredited credits.

Putting the model into practice

Six-month deployment path

Period	Key activity	Decision / output
Months 1–2	Appoint Learning Architects; define taxonomy, rules, evidence, access and baseline	Approved pilot charter
Months 3–5	Curate role pathways; test with selected functions; calibrate scoring	Pilot findings and revised rules
Month 6	Launch in phases with reporting, support and quarterly review	Launch decision and dashboard

Suggested governance

Executive sponsor: owns capability priorities and investment. Learning Architects: curate pathways across leadership, operations, technical and commercial roles. People/L&D: administers records, guidance and accessibility. Managers/SMEs: validate applied work and contributions. Employees: select relevant pathways and submit evidence.

Measure capability, not just participation

Track participation and credit completion alongside role-skill proficiency, verified applications, reuse of shared knowledge, employee access by role, and selected operational outcomes. Do not infer business impact solely from credits earned.

Important implementation safeguards

Avoid automatic linkage to pay or performance ratings during the pilot. Do not confer an SME designation merely for accumulating twice the target; use demonstrated expertise and peer validation. Apply proportionate evidence standards and protect personal learning records.

Use and attribution

This is a proposed internal workforce-learning model, shared for discussion and adaptation. Credit values and annual targets are design hypotheses, not accreditation rules or verified external standards. Organizations should adapt the framework to their workforce, legal requirements, existing systems and learning culture.

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