

Cognizant[®]

Techno Masters Blended Learning Program

EIP 2020





Executive Summary

In today's digital world, every business is a technology-based business.

Cognizant's customers are realizing the critical role that technology is playing in transforming their businesses. They expect Cognizant's business leaders to be trusted consultants who are technology-savvy to understand and support their digital transformation.

As Cognizant's CEO puts it, "For our part, we need to understand how our clients think and what they're challenged with in their particular industries. They count on us to be deeply schooled in our portfolio of capabilities and in how best to apply them against their pain points to help them thrive in the digital economy."

Cognizant Delivery Heads (DH) — the customer-facing business leaders — needed to understand the emerging technologies and confidently apply them to solve business problems. More importantly, they needed to undergo a personal transformation in developing a learning habit so that they could keep pace with the rapidly changing technology landscape in a sustainable mode.

It is this necessity to equip Cognizant leaders with the necessary domain knowledge that inspired Cognizant executive leadership and Academy to co-design a learning program for the DHs — "Techno Masters." It was a blended learning program on digital technologies of Cloud, AI/ML and Internet of Things — combining self-directed learning, peer and mentor-driven learning and practical application through caselets.

The Techno Masters program was NOT a training program. It was one that enabled the DHs to acquire a learning habit and become self-directed learners. The goal of the program was to give them the confidence to talk about multiple technologies and present a point of view to customers.

The conventional classroom-based approach of training was not a sustainable one since new technologies emerge at a frenetic pace and the DHs need to keep learning them. The necessity to make the DHs self-reliant and enable them to 'learn to learn' was the motivation to design the Techno Masters program differently.

At the outset, the DHs in the program committed to developing a 'tiny habit' of learning — just 15 to 30 minutes a day. As 21st century professionals, they also chose their own preferred mode of learning – videos, podcasts, articles, even conversations with colleagues. They used the collaborative learning platform (Degreed) to learn from each other and from designated mentors, and engage in technical discussions. They also actively practiced in technology talks and presentations using the platform. The learning journey was encouraged through leaderboards to recognize and celebrate the most active learners.

The program received positive response from the participants. Based on participant feedback after the program, 69% agreed that Techno Masters helped them converse confidently on technology and 46% said that they had developed the habit of continuous learning. The statistics were rather encouraging, especially because the target were the leaders who are often hard-pressed for time.

