

Ebook

# Building a business case for eLearning in your company

A complete guide to preparing, planning and building a business case for your company's new elearning project for a guaranteed sign-off.



# Contents

## 01. Introduction: What leaders don't know will hurt them

## 02. Step 1: Define your goals

- 03. Legal goals
- 03. Financial goals
- 04. People goals
- 04. Customer goals

## 06. Step 2: Do your research

- 07. Building your team
- 09. Choosing the right solution
- 10. Forecasting your ROI
- 12. Understanding the timescales

## 14. Step 3: Time to pitch!

- 15. Get the right people in the right place at the right time
- 15. Prime your targets
- 15. Start with the pain points
- 16. Write your numbers down
- 16. Talk about benefits, not features
- 16. Don't just present - discuss



## Introduction

# What leaders don't know will hurt them

Let's cut to the chase:

You already know that eLearning is a smart move for your business.

Between increasing compliance, the growing trend of remote workers, and a younger workforce that puts a high value on career development, a full-service learning solution isn't a luxury – it's a necessity.

But unfortunately, your senior leaders might not realise the true value of everything a Learning Management System can do.

They might need a little convincing.

If you've arrived here, that means you're determined to be the person who brings this new way of working into your company.

And that means you're in luck. Because we've created this eBook to help you do just that.

We'll help you work through every stage of building a business case to help you convince your senior teams – from understanding your goals, to covering every aspect of your research and preparation. And we'll even throw in a few presentation tips at the end to help you with your pitch.

Ready to start? Let's dig in.



## Step 1

# Define your goals

Moving to a Learning Management System (LMS) is a big step. It means big changes for both your company and its people, and it can take months before your new system gets up and running and starts to see success.

And because of these big changes, you might spend your time thinking about how it's all going to work.

But at the earliest stages, this is a mistake. Before you can understand how you're going to bring an LMS to your business, **you need to understand why you're doing it.**

Because without clear goals and results, you'll never be able to convince your senior leaders that it's a good idea.

You need to understand the specific gains and improvements your chosen LMS needs to generate, and the ways in which you'll measure that success.

This is a crucial first step. You're not just setting targets that you can hit. Defining your goals now will feed into every step of your eLearning journey.

By understanding the goals of starting to include eLearning, you'll be in a better position to:

- Choose a learning system with **the features your business needs**
- Prove that the benefits of your new system **match up to the overall goals of your company**
- And target the specific **wants and needs of the senior executives** you'll be pitching to.



# So what kind of goals should you be thinking about?

We can break things down into four broad areas:

### Legal goals

Every type of business has to think about some form of compliance – universal things like Health and Safety, or Equality and Discrimination.

But if your company works in a heavily regulated industry (such as insurance or financial services), your **legal goals suddenly become intertwined with your performance as a business.**

Your senior executives need every person in your company to be brought up to speed and made fully competent in the shortest time possible. And **any learning system you choose needs to be flexible enough to stay updated as new legislation comes into place.**

When new government legislation rolls around (and it continually will), your company will need a way to keep up with these fast changes – such as the **automated recurring certifications that a digital learning system can offer** to your teams.

### Financial goals

It's not just about cutting costs on your training programmes (although that is a huge factor!).

An eLearning system can help your company hit its financial goals through:

- Improved **customer satisfaction** and repeat business
- Higher **productivity and revenue** from your fully competent staff
- A shorter **incubation period** for new starters as they learn
- And **lower financial risk** in areas of compliance.



**Quote me  
in your  
pitch!**



According to The Research Institute of America, **eLearning boosts information retention rates by 25-60%** (compared to just 8 to 10% for traditional learning) – which is hugely important when dealing with critical legislation and compliance training.



## Step 1: Define your goals

### People goals

Legal and financial goals are important. But you should never lose sight of the most important part of your business: the people.

If your senior teams want to **improve competence and engagement (and reduce staff turnover)**, you'll need to show them a learning system that can help every employee to feel fulfilled in their own professional development.

### Customer goals

If your company sells complicated products or software, you might need **eLearning courses to help your customers (or franchisees) to get the most out of your products.**

With courses that help your end-users become more competent and see faster results, you can improve customer satisfaction and secure repeat business and loyalty to your brand.

 Quote me  
in your  
pitch!



When companies use eLearning technology to train and develop their staff, they see **an 18% boost in employee engagement.**



## Action plan

# Defining your goals

It's one thing to understand the general goals that any company might have.

But if you want to get your senior leaders on your side, you need to dig deep into **the specific situations and problems your own company is facing.**

So before you start anything else, ask yourself:

- Does your company struggle with compliance?
- Is your business worried about cutting costs and improving revenue?
- Does your company have a problem with staff retention and competency?
- Does your customers' satisfaction rely on their own competency and results?

By understanding the most important needs and problems of your business, you'll be able to match up the benefits of an eLearning system to the specific goals of your company – and you'll be in a much stronger position to make a convincing case to your leadership team.

## Get started!

The first steps in any new project are crucial. So get yourself prepared as quickly as possible with our Get Started Guide, which covers all of the key areas and important questions you need.

[VIEW GUIDE](#)



## Step 2

# Do your research

Once you've got the goals of your company down, the goals of your eLearning project should follow naturally. And once you understand those, you're ready to get into the real meat of building a business case: the research.

You're not just building an impressive collection of data on paper. **You're arming yourself with the statistics and numbers that will help you convince and convert** your senior teams over to your side.

(And you'll also be fully prepared to overcome their objections and respond to their questions.)

So where should you start?

That one's easy. You're building a business case for your own company – and that means you have a specific audience in mind.





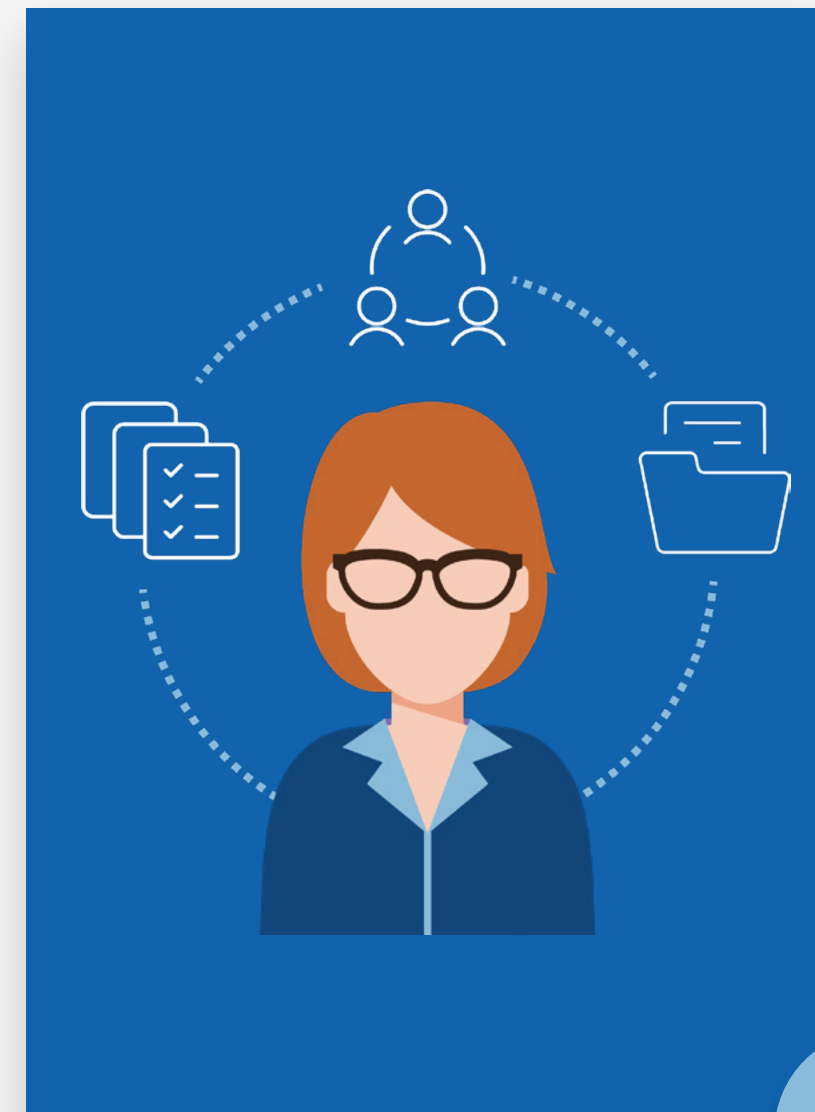
## Step 2: Do your research

### Building your team

**If your eLearning project is going to go anywhere, you need to get the right people on your side.**

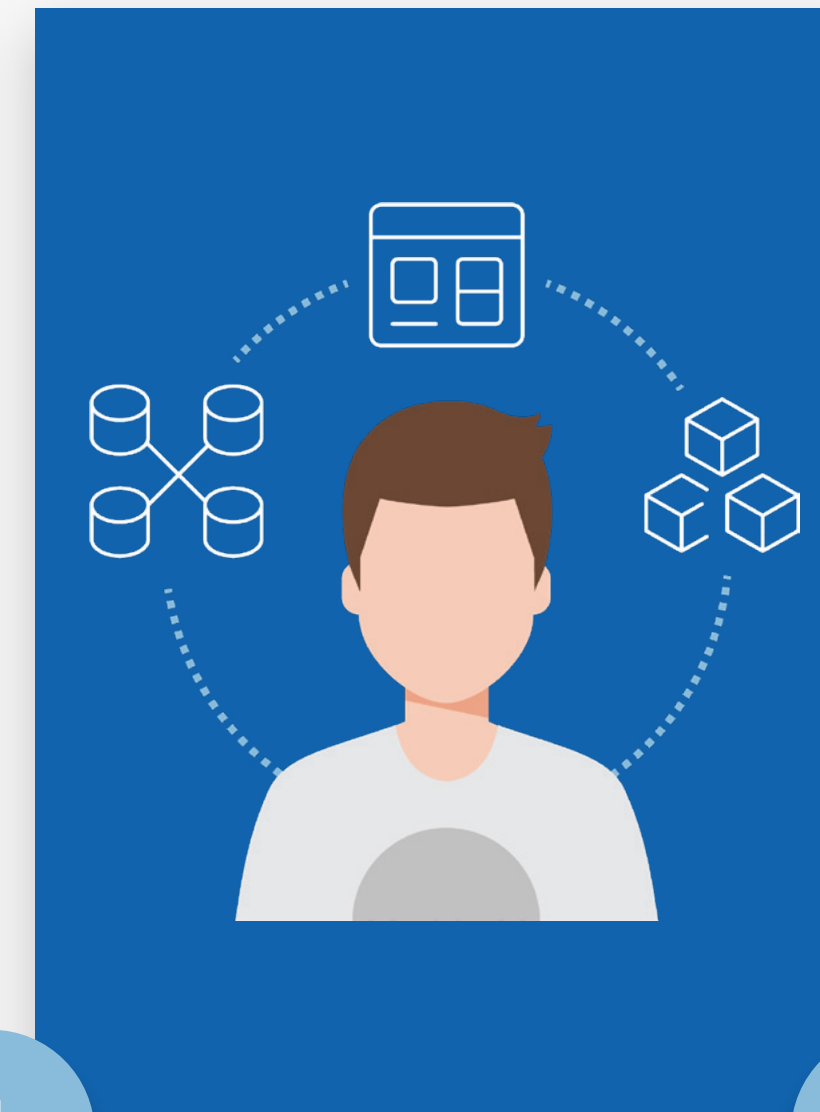
Both the people who are going to help you make it happen, and the people who are going to give you the green light need to be considered.

And that means you need to start talking to people. It means figuring out who's going to be involved and affected, understanding their problems, and finding out what they'll need from you to get things going. So at the very least, you should be talking to:



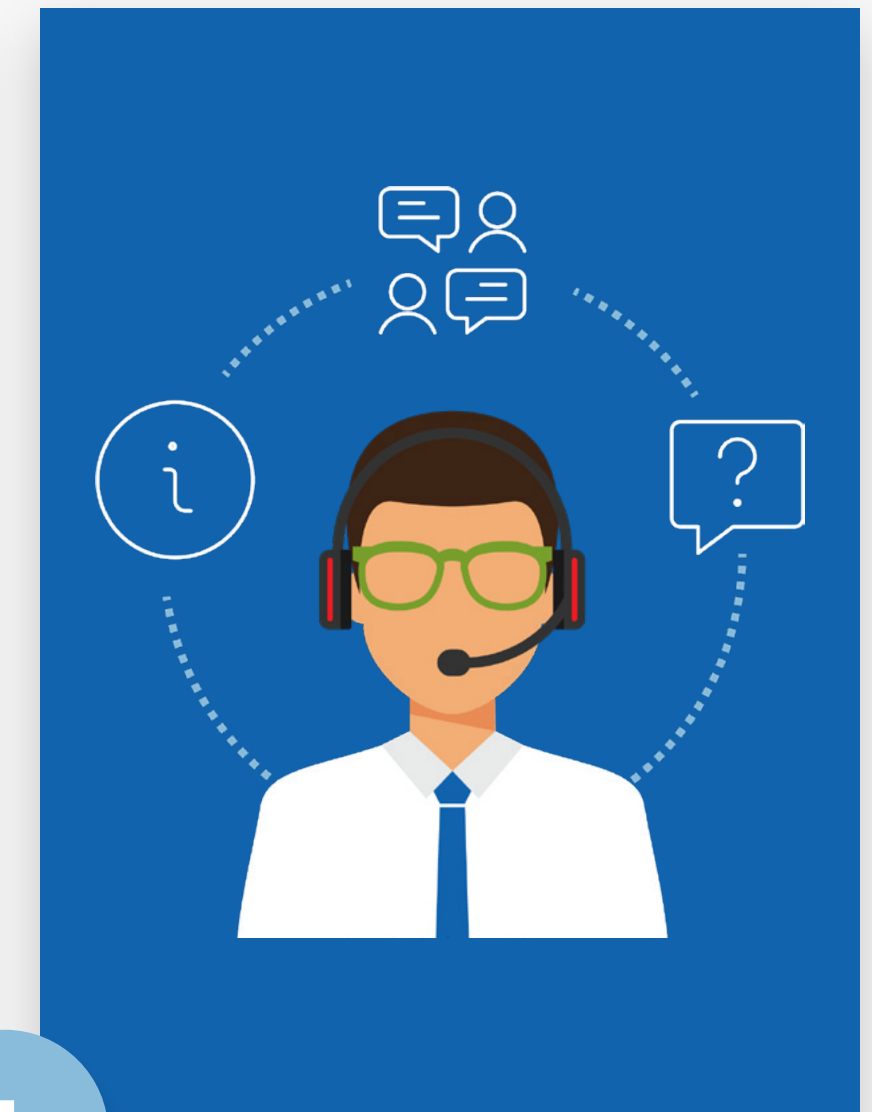
#### Your HR team

to fully understand the development and learning needs of your workforce.



#### Your IT team

to find out how a new eLearning system can fit into the current systems and technology your company already has in place.



#### Your Customer Service team

to discover the strengths and weaknesses of how well your company solves your customers' problems.



## Step 2: Do your research

### Getting insight from your team

These groups each have their own challenges, hopes and goals. And all of these things will inform and guide your decisions as you build your business case. So give every team your full attention – you never know what kind of original insight they'll be able to offer.

But beyond these departments, you'll also need to think carefully about how your pitch can **secure the buy-in of your senior executives.**

These are the decision-makers and influencers who ultimately carry most of the weight in any big company changes – and that means you need to understand their concerns and goals, and **address them directly in your pitch.**

You might not always be able to sit down with your senior team and have a personal meeting. But you should be able to find out what motivates them by talking to your own teams and your managers.

**Is your CEO particularly worried about employee engagement?** Then that's definitely something you should focus on in your pitch.

**Does your CFO worry about spiraling costs?** Then you'll need to dig deep into your ROI forecasts during your pitch.

There's nothing devious about this personalised approach. It's just good business sense. By understanding your audience and addressing their concerns directly, you're also addressing the most important concerns of the company as a whole.

And as a result, you'll end up presenting the strongest possible case for your company to make the move to a new Learning Management System.



## Step 2: Do your research

### Choosing the right solution This could be the biggest step as you build a business case for a new learning system.

There are lots of solid options for a new LMS for your business, but we like to focus on two of the absolute best ones – Totara Learn and Moodle.

So how do you go about choosing the right system for your business?



It's a huge decision, and there are lots of different factors to think about. But there's one big choice you'll need to make early on:

#### Hosted support or in-house?

Bringing a new Learning Management System to any company is a big change. And the reality is that lots of businesses have enough on their plate without worrying about the technical stuff.

If you choose to host your new system yourself, you'll have to think about things like:

- Web servers
- Installation and Configuration
- Customisation and Branding
- Updates and Upgrades
- And ongoing Troubleshooting, Data Backups, and Performance Monitoring.

If you've got an IT team with the expertise and infrastructure to handle everything, hosting your own Learning Management System could be a good choice.

But for many companies, these tricky implementations aren't worth the hassle. **They need to free up their teams to focus on the most important parts of their eLearning initiative:** creating the right content, promoting their courses to their staff, and guiding their workforce through their learning programmes.

Instead, these **companies choose to outsource the technical stuff to a trusted LMS partner like us.** We use private **cloud hosting platforms built specifically for Learning Management Systems**, with fully compliant, secure and up-to-date technology – and we can provide the online support your company needs to keep everything ticking over.



### Forecasting your ROI

**There's no getting around it: your senior executives will expect a financial analysis.**

You're going to have to demonstrate the value of the move to an eLearning system – and that means digging into some numbers with a projected ROI (return on investment).

Luckily, you won't need a degree in maths to get a few numbers down and make a few quick calculations.

But you will need to be thorough in assessing every different way that a new eLearning system will affect your business.

Depending on your company and its industry, this could involve a huge number of different factors. So to make things simple, we can break everything down into the following categories:

#### Time Saved

When your employees are spending time training, they're not generating revenue for your company. So any time saved by switching to eLearning can be equated with an increase in productivity.

You might want to look at:

- **The duration of the courses** – Traditional courses that take a full day can often be completed in half a day or less with an equivalent eLearning course.
- **The capacity of the courses** – Classroom-based courses have a physical limit, which means that training hundreds of employees can take days or weeks. But with an eLearning course, everyone can learn simultaneously.
- **Travel time (and overnight stays)** – Face-to-face training might not always happen in-house. But an eLearning course can be completed remotely at any time, without any logistical costs.



**Quote me  
in your  
pitch!**



According to a Brandon-Hall Study, learning through eLearning takes **40-60% less of your employees' time** than learning the same material in a classroom setting.



## Step 2: Do your research

### Money Saved

This is where the numbers should be easy to find – and probably where you’ll be able to show off the most dramatic differences.

When you compare eLearning to traditional training, there’s just no comparison in terms of costs and savings. Your ROI forecast should include savings such as:

- **The costs of hiring a trainer for each course**
- **The costs of hiring a venue and equipment**
- **Travel, hotel, and food expenses**
- **The cost of extra days needed for large groups of trainees**
- **The loss of revenue from taking employees away from their work**

All of these things can be avoided when you switch to eLearning. And once you start to crunch the numbers, the resulting money saved should impress even the most cautious senior executive.

### The Increase in Revenue

This can be a tough one to put a firm number on. How can you predict how much new revenue will come from eLearning? (Especially when this revenue often comes from non-concrete qualities like employee competency or customer satisfaction.)

The best place to start is by looking at your company’s historic training data. You can find the increases in revenue that were gained from older training projects, and then **create new forecasts based on the improvements in speed and accessibility that eLearning creates.**

On top of that, you could also look at the potential revenue from selling your eLearning courses to other organisations.

Depending on the industry you’re in (and the type of courses you create), you’ll have the option of selling your training modules to other businesses who need them.

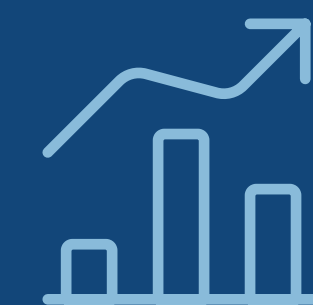
And because you’ve already created the content, any revenue you generate from selling your courses is almost pure profit – which should definitely go down well with your senior team!



**Quote me in your pitch!**



According to Accenture, **the average corporation saves between 50% and 70% of their training costs** just by switching over to digital learning.



According to an Ambient Insight report, **42% of companies** say that eLearning has led to an increase in revenue.

And a study from IBM found that every **\$1 invested in online training results in \$30 in productivity.**



## Step 2: Do your research

### Understanding the timescales

**Just like any other move into a new way of working, a Learning Management System takes time to implement if you want it to be successful.**

And if you want your leadership teams to have realistic expectations (and avoid disappointment!) **you need to be realistic about how long things will take.**

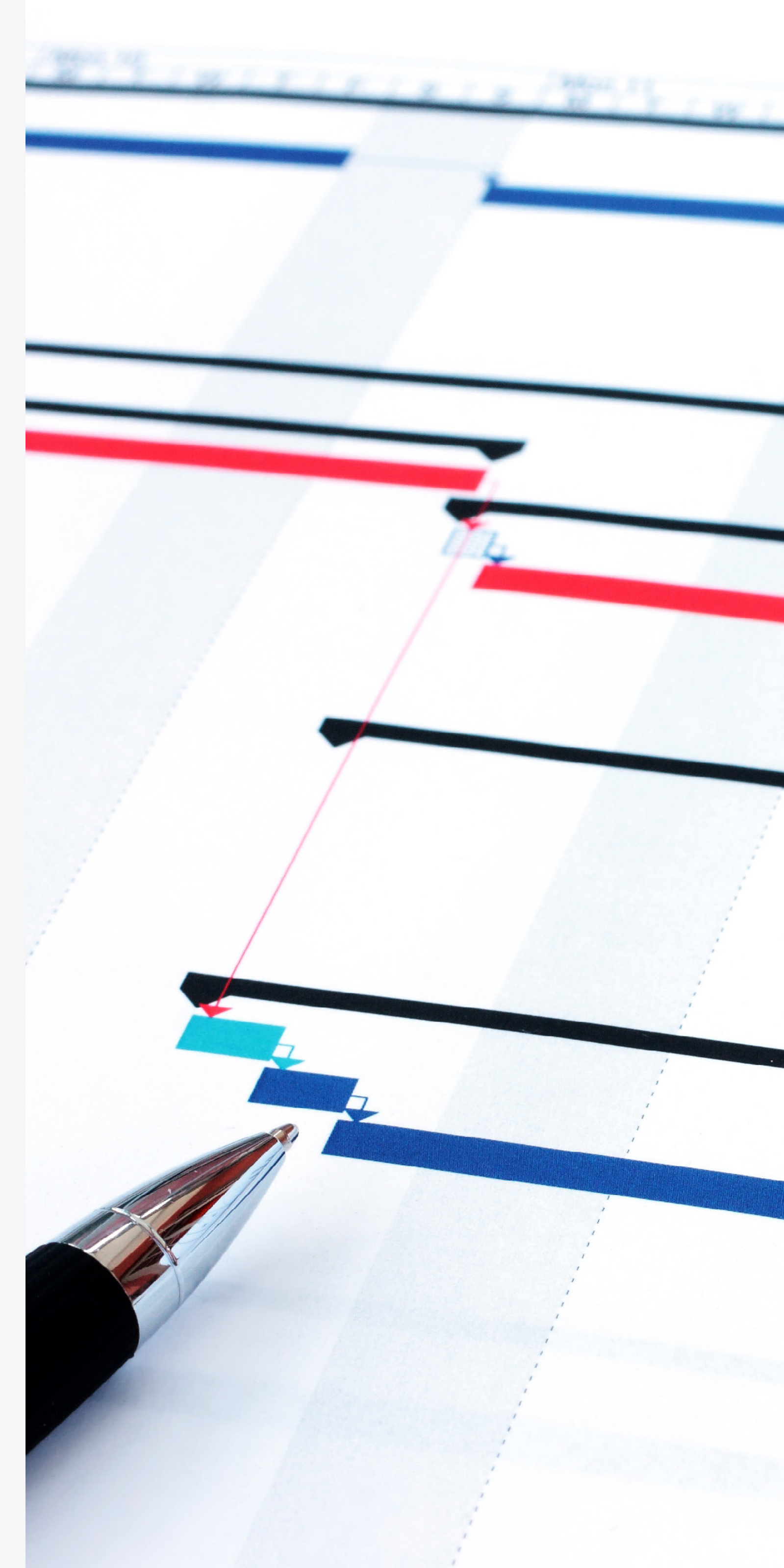
Unfortunately, there's no simple answer to this. Companies come in all shapes and sizes, and they each have their own complications and obstacles – in terms of their structure, their technology, their eLearning content, and their employee culture.

But no matter what kind of business you're in, there are some things that are inescapable. When you're planning out your timescales for your move to eLearning, you'll need to allow time for:

- Researching and choosing the right eLearning solution
- Finding the right service partner
- Implementing your new solution and testing it
- Developing your course content
- Promoting your new learning system to your staff
- **And giving your employees time to work through the courses and learn.**

And that's just to get your new learning system up and running! You'll need even more time after that before you can see success: measuring the results of your customers' satisfaction and your employees' competence, and comparing those results to your company's goals.

So don't make the mistake of thinking everything will come together in a few weeks. If you want your eLearning project to generate real success, you need to start thinking in terms of months. And you need to give your project time to evolve towards the results you and your senior team want to see.



## 🎯 Action plan

# Doing your research

Gathering data and preparing your business case is such a massive step. And when you're excited to start making positive changes for your company, it's tempting to rush through it.

But you really shouldn't. By taking the time to understand and assess every aspect of your eLearning project, you'll be able to present a watertight business case to your senior leaders (and you'll make a great personal impression when it comes time to pitch).

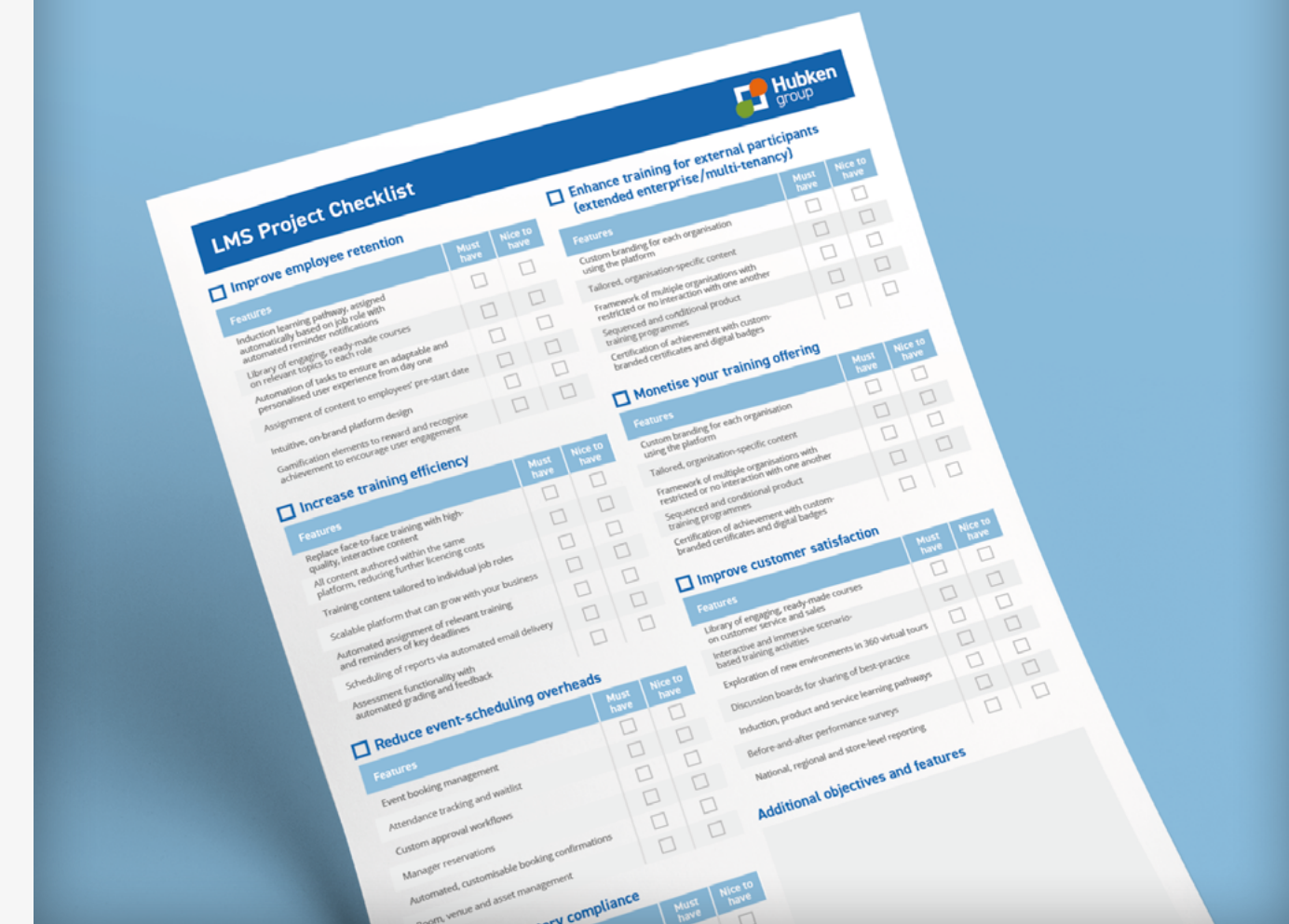
So make sure you've got all the bases covered:

- ✔ **Research your team** – both the people directly involved, and the people who need to approve the project
- ✔ **Dig deep into the options** – find the best solution to fit your company's goals and needs
- ✔ **Get some numbers down** – understand the costs and savings, and draw up a realistic ROI forecast
- ✔ **And give your project time** – the move to eLearning won't happen overnight.

## 📄 Learn more!

Before you move on, have a quick run through our handy Learning Management System Project Checklist – and find out everything you need to look for when you're shopping for an LMS.

[VIEW CHECKLIST](#)



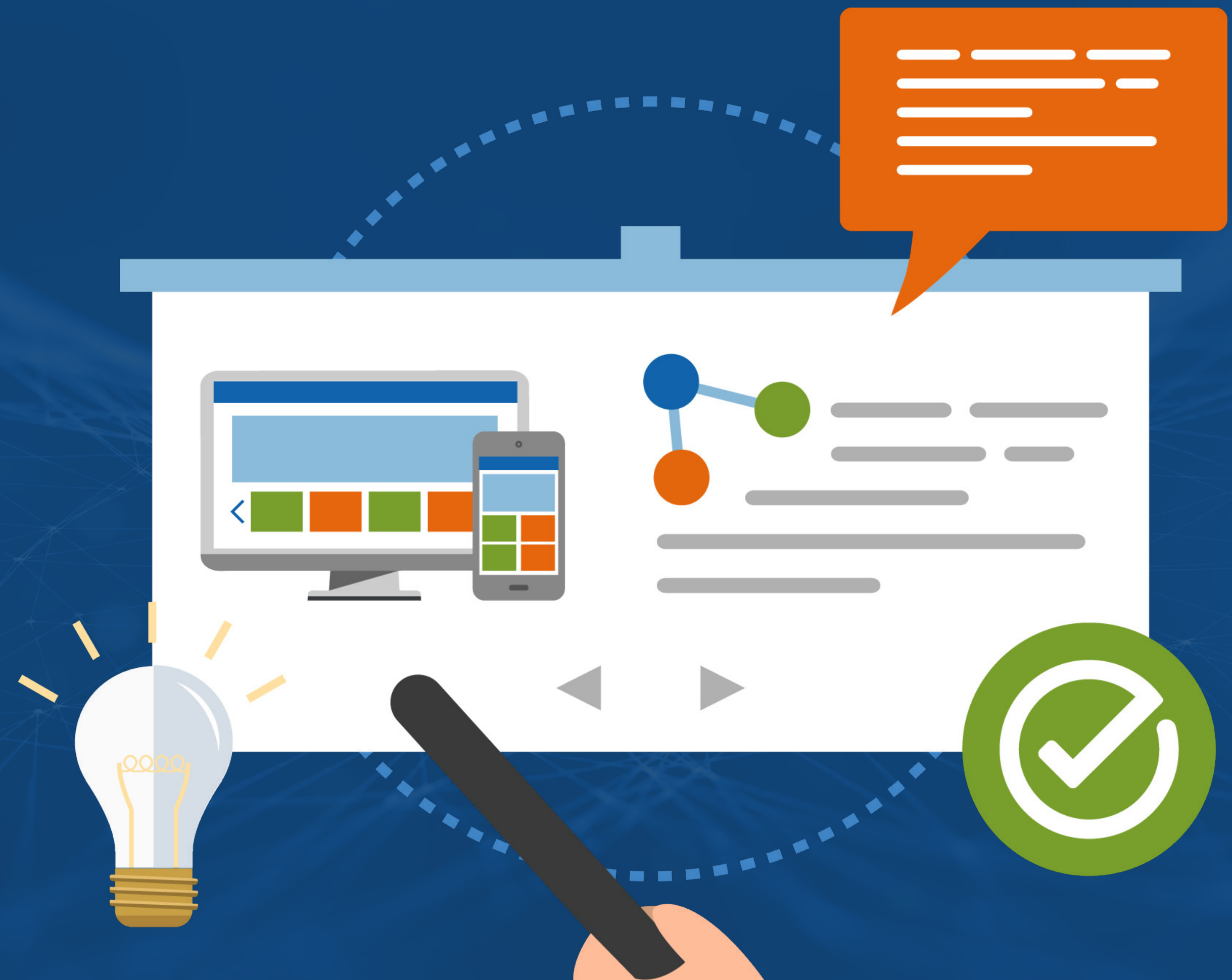
### Step 3

# Time to pitch!

At this point, you've defined your goals, understood your stakeholders, compared a few solutions, and armed yourself with some impressive numbers.

You're almost there! But there's one tricky stage left – and all of the research and preparation you've done has led up to this important next step.

You'll need to present your case. And that means you could do with a few helpful pitching and presentation tips to give you the best chance of succeeding.





### Let's start with the early preparation...



#### Get the right people in the right place at the right time

Your senior teams are busy people – and they might have people like you pitching new ideas to them every week.

So **make it easy for them**. Get every person who matters into the same room at a time that's good for all of them. Don't book a meeting for 4pm on a Friday, and don't arrange your meeting back-to-back with any other meetings or presentations.

If you can catch your senior team at a time when they're in the most receptive and agreeable of moods, **you'll give your pitch the best chance of success** with hardly any extra effort.



#### Prime your targets

You know that you need to be prepared. But it's easy to forget that **your audience needs to be prepared, too**. If they're coming in blind, they'll spend the first half of your pitch getting used to a new idea and trying to catch up – and all of your compelling arguments and hard-earned research might be lost on them.

So when you book a slot for your presentation, give them a little taster of what's to come. **A simple agenda of what you'll be discussing, or a few easily digestible links or product demos** to give them a flavour of eLearning and what it can do.



#### Start with the pain points

Remember: you're proposing a change. (And probably a big change!) That means you need to **make it clear from the beginning that there's a good reason for that change**.

That could be low sales, staff turnover, mediocre training engagement, or poor customer retention.

Whatever this initial context is, you can use it to pave the way for the solution you're proposing. **Once you've highlighted a challenge that the business is facing, your senior team will be more willing to listen to an idea that could fix it.**

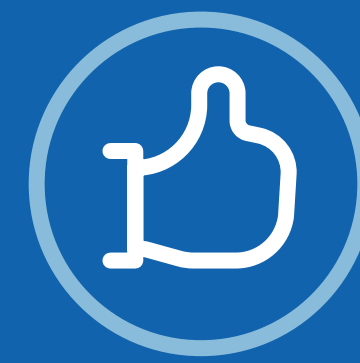




### Write your numbers down

Your statistics and your ROI forecasts are your ammunition. Without these hard numbers, you're just a person expressing opinions.

So **it's crucial that you have every important bit of data ready and available**, and that you're not trying to juggle facts and digits while under the pressure of giving a presentation.



### Talk about benefits, not just features

With all of your in-depth research behind you, it's easy to get bogged down with the particulars of how eLearning systems work.

But if you can't translate the technical features of a learning solution into benefits that are relevant to your company, those features won't mean much to the people you're pitching to.

Here's an example:

You could talk about a **secure, cloud-based solution with a mobile app**.

But that won't mean much unless you talk about how that **increases engagement** and **improves completion rates** by letting employees **access their learning from any place, and at any time**.



### Don't just present – discuss

You won't have much of a choice about this one. You can guarantee that you'll have to field a few questions by the end of your pitch.

But **by stopping your presentation at key points to ask for questions, you're encouraging discussion with the people who matter**. They'll be able to put forward their concerns, and you'll be able to address them directly – and your senior team will naturally feel more engaged and invested in your pitch as a result.



🎯 Action plan

## Delivering your pitch

With the right research and preparation behind you, you should be feeling confident in your final pitch to your senior team.

But if you're not someone who's used to making presentations, it might all feel a bit strange – and that's normal!

So just remember the golden rules of any presentation:

- ✔ Keep it short, deliberate, and focused – no rambling, and no tangents
- ✔ Keep a set of notes nearby – you never know when you'll lose your train of thought
- ✔ And always do a few practice runs in front of a mirror at home – no matter how silly it feels!



# Feeling a little overwhelmed? We're here to help!

Building a business case for eLearning is a solid first step.

But really, it's only the beginning of the journey.

Here at Hubken, we've been helping people bring eLearning systems to their companies for almost fifteen years. So we know exactly how daunting it can all seem – and we know exactly how to make the journey easier and help you see success faster.

We can't hold your hand while you pitch to your senior teams. But we can guide your company through the obstacles and challenges of turning your eLearning project into a reality.

So if you're thinking about a new learning system for your company (or you just need some no-strings advice), give us a call or send us a message – we'll be more than happy to show you how we can help.



[hubkengroup.com](https://www.hubkengroup.com)



0330 660 1111



 [hubkengroup.com](http://hubkengroup.com)

 0330 660 1111

 e-Innovation Centre  
Priorslee, Telford  
TF2 9FT



Crown  
Commercial  
Service  
*Supplier*

Registered office: e-Innovation Centre, Priorslee, Telford, TF2 9FT.  
Hubken Group Ltd Company No. 05029965 registered in England and Wales.