

**CAREER SWITCH TOOLKIT · L&D PROFESSIONAL**

# The 90-Day L&D Career Switch Roadmap

A practical, week-by-week playbook to move from HR, teaching, training, or any adjacent function into a full-time Learning & Development role — in 90 days.

<b>20 pages</b>	<b>Week-by-week 90-day plan</b>
<b>Resume template</b>	<b>LinkedIn About-section template</b>
<b>50 ATS keywords</b>	<b>12-week study schedule</b>

**Inside this toolkit:** a week-by-week plan, resume template, LinkedIn About-section template, 50 ATS keywords, and a 12-week study schedule.

Published by **Global Skill Development Council (GSDC)**

An independent certification body for skill validation across the globe.

## What's inside

This roadmap is built to be skimmed in 20 minutes and used over 12 weeks. Each section ends with a clear action you can take the same day.

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*Tip: read pages 4, 6, and 11 first if you're short on time.*

## Why L&D — and why now

Learning & Development is one of the fastest growing functions inside modern organisations. As AI reshapes roles, every team needs someone who can design, deliver, and measure learning at speed. That person is you.

### Three forces driving demand

- **The skills half-life is collapsing.** Technical skills now go stale in 2–3 years; companies need continuous learning programs, not one-off training events.
- **Hybrid work broke classroom training.** L&D leaders who can design asynchronous, mobile-first learning are in high demand.
- **L&D is becoming strategic.** CHROs report directly to CEOs on workforce capability — and L&D owns the answer.

### Who this roadmap is for

- HR generalists who want to specialise in learning, capability, or talent development.
- School and college teachers exploring corporate training roles.
- Subject-matter experts (engineers, finance, sales) who love coaching others.
- Career switchers from operations, customer success, or content who want a people-first role.
- Recent graduates who studied education, psychology, or communications.

### What you will walk away with

- A 90-day plan you can start this week.
- A resume and LinkedIn About section you can paste, edit, and ship today.
- 50 ATS keywords that get you past the first filter.
- A clear answer to the question: *“Are you really ready for an L&D role?”*

## What an L&D role really looks like

Most career switchers underestimate the breadth of L&D. It is not just “running training.” Here is a realistic week in the life of an L&D Specialist at a 500–5,000-person company.

### A typical week

- **Monday:** Meet a department head to scope a new training need. Take notes on the actual problem behind it.
- **Tuesday:** Draft a learning outline using a model like ADDIE or SAM. Pick the right format — workshop, e-learning, or coaching.
- **Wednesday:** Build slides, a facilitator guide, and a knowledge check in your LMS.
- **Thursday:** Deliver a live session or pilot the module with a small group. Collect feedback.
- **Friday:** Analyse completion data, write a one-page impact note for the sponsor, plan the next iteration.

### Core responsibilities you will own

- Training needs analysis and capability mapping.
- Instructional design across blended formats.
- Facilitation and train-the-trainer.
- LMS administration and learning analytics.
- Programme management for onboarding, leadership, and compliance learning.
- Vendor management for external content and platforms.

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#### Become a Certified L&D Professional

Build the credibility employers shortlist for. Globally recognised L&D certification from GSDC.

[Explore the Certification →](#)

## Skills audit: what you already have

Career switchers often have **more** relevant skills than they think. Use this self-audit before you write a single line of your new resume.

### Translate what you already do

If you have done...	Reframe it on your resume as...
Onboarded new hires at your team	Designed and delivered structured onboarding learning journeys
Trained one teammate on a tool	Created job-aids and 1:1 capability uplift sessions
Built an SOP or playbook	Authored learning content and performance support assets
Ran a school or college class	Facilitated learner-centred sessions with formative assessment
Owned a knowledge base / wiki	Curated and governed self-serve learning content
Coached a junior colleague	Provided structured coaching against defined competencies
Designed a slide deck for leadership	Built executive learning communications with clear narrative arc

### The 3 gaps most switchers need to close

- **Instructional design vocabulary** — ADDIE, SAM, Kirkpatrick, Bloom's taxonomy.
- **LMS / authoring tool fluency** — at least one tool: Articulate Rise, Adobe Captivate, Moodle, or similar.
- **Learning measurement** — being able to report on completion, behaviour change, and business impact.

## The 90-day plan, at a glance

Three 30-day blocks. Each block has one goal. Do not skip ahead — the order matters.

Phase	Days	Goal	Key outcome
Phase 1 — Foundation	1–30	Understand the field; rebuild your story	Resume + LinkedIn live
Phase 2 — Build & Learn	31–60	Acquire L&D-specific skills + portfolio	2 portfolio artefacts
Phase 3 — Apply & Land	61–90	Apply, network, interview.	Job offer or final-round pipeline

### How to use this plan

- Block 6 focused hours per week — preferably 2 x 1.5h on weekdays and 3h on the weekend.
- Treat each weekly deliverable as **non-negotiable**. Done is better than perfect.
- Track progress in a single sheet: Week | Hours | Output | Reflection.
- Tell three people you trust what you are doing. Public commitment doubles completion.

[LIMITED-TIME OFFER]

#### Lock in your L&D credential before you start applying

Certified candidates get shortlisted faster. Enrol while the seasonal cohort window is open.

[Reserve Your Seat →](#)

## Days 1–30 - Foundation & Discovery

This month is about **understanding the field deeply enough to write about it credibly**. You are not applying yet.

Day / Week	Focus	Deliverable
Week 1	Map the L&D landscape: roles, titles, employers.	1-page market map
Week 2	Read 3 foundational books / 10 articles. Build vocabulary.	Glossary of 30 L&D terms
Week 3	Audit your past work; translate to L&D language.	Skills-translation table
Week 4	Rewrite resume + LinkedIn. Publish a first post.	Resume v1 + LinkedIn live

### Deliverables to finish before Day 30

- An L&D-aligned resume (template on page 11).
- A rewritten LinkedIn About section (template on page 12).
- A list of 25 target companies with active L&D teams.
- A short LinkedIn post explaining your switch — to plant the flag publicly.

### Common Phase 1 mistakes

- **Going silent.** If your LinkedIn does not say “learning,” recruiters can’t find you.
- **Studying without writing.** Reading is comfortable. Writing forces clarity.
- **Applying too early.** A rushed application burns a target company for 6 months.

## Days 31–60 - Build & Learn

This month you go from *knowing about* L&D to *having proof* you can do the work.

Day / Week	Focus	Deliverable
Week 5	Pick a model: ADDIE or SAM. Learn it deeply.	1-page model summary
Week 6	Learn one authoring tool (Articulate Rise free trial).	Mini e-learning module
Week 7	Design a real training intervention for a real problem.	Facilitator guide + slides
Week 8	Add measurement: write Kirkpatrick L1–L4 plan.	Evaluation framework

### Where to find “real problems” to design for

- Your current job — every team has an onboarding gap.
- A friend's startup that has just hit 20–50 employees.
- A non-profit, school, or community group.
- Reddit (r/instructionaldesign) and LinkedIn — many practitioners post open briefs.

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#### Validate your new skills with a recognised credential

Pair your portfolio with a certified L&D qualification. Time-bound promotional access available now.

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## Days 61–90 - Apply & Land

Now you apply, with proof in hand. Volume matters less than fit and follow-up.

Day / Week	Focus	Deliverable
Week 9	Soft-apply to 5 stretch companies via warm intros.	5 conversations booked
Week 10	Apply to 15 well-matched roles with tailored docs.	Tracker filled, 15 sent
Week 11	Run mock interviews. Prep stories using STAR.	10 written STAR stories
Week 12	Final interviews, references, negotiation.	Offer in hand

### The 80/20 of getting interviews

- **Tailor 3 lines, not the whole resume.** Match the headline, summary, and top bullet to the job.
- **Always send a follow-up.** A short message 48 hours later doubles response rates.
- **Ask for the “informational chat,” not the job.** Most L&D hires happen via referrals.
- **Show your portfolio early.** A link to one polished sample beats a long cover letter.

### If you don't have an offer by Day 90

Do not panic — and do not start over. Most switchers land between Day 90 and Day 150. Re-run Phase 3 with a sharper niche (e.g., onboarding, leadership, compliance, sales enablement) and one new portfolio piece.

## 12-week study schedule

A focused weekly cadence. Aim for ~6 hours per week — split into 4 short sessions.

Week	Theme	Practice output
<b>Week 1</b>	L&D landscape & glossary	Read 5 articles, write 30-term glossary
<b>Week 2</b>	Adult learning principles	Summarise Knowles' principles in 1 page
<b>Week 3</b>	ADDIE model deep-dive	Walk through a real example end-to-end
<b>Week 4</b>	SAM & agile learning design	Compare ADDIE vs SAM, when to use each
<b>Week 5</b>	Needs analysis & stakeholder interviewing	Run 1 mock TNA interview
<b>Week 6</b>	Authoring tool fundamentals	Build 1 module in Articulate Rise
<b>Week 7</b>	Facilitation & delivery	Record a 10-minute training video
<b>Week 8</b>	LMS basics & learning data	Tour 2 LMS demos, list 10 metrics
<b>Week 9</b>	Kirkpatrick & learning measurement	Write L1–L4 plan for your portfolio piece
<b>Week 10</b>	Leadership & coaching frameworks	Map GROW model to a real coaching case
<b>Week 11</b>	Modern topics: AI in L&D, microlearning	1-page point of view document
<b>Week 12</b>	Mock certification + revision	Take 1 full practice test

# Resume template (L&D-ready)

Copy this structure. Replace bracketed text. Keep the resume to one page if you have under 8 years of experience.

## [YOUR NAME]

[City] · [Email] · [Phone] · linkedin.com/in/[handle]

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Learning & Development professional with [X] years of experience designing and delivering training that improves [behaviour / business metric]. Skilled in instructional design (ADDIE, SAM), facilitation, and learning measurement. Transitioning into L&D from [HR / teaching / SME role] with a focus on [onboarding / leadership / compliance / sales enablement].

## CORE SKILLS

Instructional Design · Training Needs Analysis · Facilitation · LMS Administration · Articulate Rise · Kirkpatrick Evaluation · Stakeholder Management · Adult Learning · Microlearning · Coaching

## EXPERIENCE

**[Most Recent Title]** — [Company] · [Dates]

- Designed and delivered [program] for [audience], achieving [measurable result].
- Built [number] modules in [tool], reducing onboarding ramp time by [%].
- Partnered with [department] leaders to translate [need] into a learning plan.
- Reported on L1–L4 outcomes; presented findings to [audience].

**[Previous Title]** — [Company] · [Dates]

- [Quantified outcome 1]
- [Quantified outcome 2]
- [Quantified outcome 3]

## EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

[Degree], [University], [Year]

Certified Learning & Development Professional — Global Skill Development Council (GSDC), [Year]

## PORTFOLIO

[Link to your portfolio site / Notion page / Drive folder]

## LinkedIn About-section template

Paste this into your About section. Edit the bracketed pieces. Keep your first two lines punchy — they are all most viewers read.

**Line 1 (hook):**

I help [audience] learn the skills they need to [outcome] — without the bloat of traditional training.

**Lines 2–4 (context):**

After [X] years in [previous field], I am moving full-time into Learning & Development. What pulled me in: every company is now a learning company, and I love the craft of turning complex topics into clear, useful, on-the-job behaviour change.

**What I do:**

- Design learning journeys using ADDIE and SAM.
- Facilitate workshops (virtual and in-person) for [audience type].
- Build micro-modules in [tool] and measure outcomes with the Kirkpatrick model.
- Partner with business leaders to translate problems into capability solutions.

**Recently:**

- [One concrete win — e.g., “Designed onboarding that cut ramp time 30%”].
- [Recent project, study, or certification].
- Completing the Certified L&D Professional credential through GSDC.

**Currently open to:**

L&D Specialist / Instructional Designer / Training & Development roles in [location / remote]. If your team needs a learner-obsessed builder, let's talk.

**Drop me a note:** [email] · [calendar link if any]

[OFFER VALID 48 HOURS]

### Add a GSDC credential to your LinkedIn this week

A certified L&D credential changes how recruiters read your profile. Window closes in 48 hours.

[Enrol in the Next 48h →](#)

## 50 ATS keywords for L&D

Most resumes are screened by an Applicant Tracking System before a human ever reads them. Weave these terms naturally into your summary, skills, and experience bullets.

Learning & Development	Instructional Design	Training Needs Analysis
ADDIE Model	SAM Model	Adult Learning
Bloom's Taxonomy	Kirkpatrick Model	70-20-10 Framework
E-learning	Microlearning	Blended Learning
Facilitation	Workshop Design	Train the Trainer
Onboarding	Leadership Development	Capability Building
Competency Framework	Skills Matrix	Learning Pathways
LMS Administration	Articulate Rise	Adobe Captivate
Storyline 360	Moodle	SCORM
xAPI	Learning Analytics	Knowledge Management
Performance Support	Job Aids	Coaching
Mentoring	Stakeholder Management	Change Management
Behavioural Change	Curriculum Design	Assessment Design
Learner Engagement	Learner Experience	Gamification
Sales Enablement	Compliance Training	Diversity & Inclusion
OKRs	Talent Development	Workforce Planning
AI in Learning	Certified L&D Professional	

*Rule of thumb: 8–12 of these should appear in your resume; 4–6 in your LinkedIn About.*

## Portfolio & sample projects

A small, focused portfolio beats a large messy one. Two artefacts done well will get you into shortlists. Here is what each should look like.

### Artefact 1 — A learning design brief (PDF, 2–3 pages)

- **The problem:** what was wrong before the training.
- **The audience:** who needs to change, and what's holding them back.
- **The solution:** learning objectives, format, modality mix.
- **The measurement:** Kirkpatrick L1–L4 in one table.
- **The reflection:** what you'd do differently.

### Artefact 2 — A working learning asset

- A 5–10 minute e-learning module (Articulate Rise — free trial works).
- Or a 20-slide facilitator deck + 1-page leader's guide.
- Or a recorded 7-minute Loom of you delivering one section.

### Where to host it

- A simple Notion page (free, fast, looks professional).
- Google Drive folder with view-only access.
- A free portfolio site (Carrd, Behance, or a one-page personal domain).

[RELATED OFFER]

#### Pair your portfolio with proof of competency

The GSDC L&D certification gives your portfolio independent third-party validation.

[See the Certification →](#)

## Interview prep: 20 questions

Prepare a short STAR (Situation · Task · Action · Result) story for each. Reuse the same 5–7 examples across questions — that’s how strong candidates sound consistent.

Behavioural & craft	Strategic & situational
1. Walk me through your switch into L&D.;	11. Tell me about a difficult learner — and how you helped them.
2. How do you run a training needs analysis?	12. How do you prioritise across competing requests?
3. Tell me about a learning programme you designed end-to-end.	13. What does great onboarding look like?
4. ADDIE vs SAM — when do you use each?	14. How do you keep up with the L&D; field?
5. How do you handle a stakeholder who says “just give us training”?	15. What does AI change in our function?
6. Describe a time training did not work. What did you learn?	16. Describe a time you used data to change a programme.
7. How do you measure learning impact?	17. How do you partner with HRBPs and managers?
8. What’s your facilitation style?	18. What would your first 30 days here look like?
9. How do you design for hybrid audiences?	19. Why this company — and why this role?
10. What learning tools do you know well?	20. What are you working on improving right now?

## Salary expectations & negotiation

Salary varies dramatically by country, sector, and company size. Instead of fixating on a number, build the **information advantage** below before any negotiation.

### Research the right way

- **Three data sources, not one.** Cross-reference Glassdoor, Levels.fyi-style sites, and 2–3 conversations with current L&D folks.
- **Always ask for a range.** “What does your team typically pay for this level?” is a totally fair question.
- **Anchor on total comp.** Base + bonus + learning budget + certifications + flexible work all have value.

### How to handle the “current salary” question

If you are switching fields, your previous salary may not reflect your new market value. A safe response: *“I’d rather anchor on the market range for this role and my profile — could you share the band you’re working with?”*

### Three negotiation levers most switchers forget

- **Signing bonus** — easier to give than base increase.
- **Title** — moving from “Specialist” to “Senior Specialist” often costs the company nothing and pays you for years.
- **Learning & certification budget** — many L&D teams have a per-head budget; ask for double.

[50% OFF]

#### Walk into your salary conversation with a credential employers recognise

Certified candidates negotiate from a stronger position. Promotional pricing live now.

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## Certifications that actually matter

Certifications don't replace experience, but the right one signals seriousness and moves you up the shortlist — especially when you are switching fields.

### What hiring managers actually look for

- Independent, third-party validation (not just a course completion certificate).
- A clear, named credential that fits on your resume in one line.
- Coverage of *both* instructional design and learning measurement.
- Recognition across regions, not just one country.

### Why the GSDC L&D credential fits

- Independent assessment — not tied to any single training vendor.
- Globally recognised, with candidates and employers across 100+ countries.
- Covers the full L&D lifecycle: TNA, design, delivery, measurement.
- Designed for working professionals and career switchers — flexible, self-paced.

### How to position your certification on your resume

List under **Certifications** on one line, with the issuing body and year. Example:

Certified L&D Professional – Global Skill Development Council (GSDC), 2026

### What strong candidates do differently

- They list the certification body's full name, not an acronym.
- They link to a verifiable credential URL or digital badge on LinkedIn.
- They mention the certification in the LinkedIn About section, not just the Education section.
- They reference one specific concept from the certification (e.g., Kirkpatrick L4) in interview answers.

## Avoiding the 5 most common mistakes

Across hundreds of L&D career switchers, the same five mistakes show up again and again. Each one delays your first offer by months.

### 1. Studying forever, applying never

There is no perfect amount of theory. After ~30 hours of focused study, more reading has rapidly diminishing returns. Ship the resume.

### 2. Treating L&D; as just “running training”

Modern L&D is consultative. Speak the language of *capability*, *performance*, and *business outcomes* — not just classes and content.

### 3. Generic resumes and copy-paste cover letters

If your resume could apply to any job, it applies to none. Change the top three lines for every role.

### 4. Hiding from LinkedIn

Most L&D hires happen through warm intros. One short post per week is enough to be visible.

### 5. Skipping certification because “experience matters more”

Both matter. When you are competing against someone who already has L&D experience, a credential is the cheap tie-breaker.

# Your first 30 days on the job

You signed the offer. Congratulations. Now make the first month count — it sets the tone for your entire L&D career.

## Week 1 — Listen

- Meet your manager, peers, and at least 5 internal stakeholders.
- Ask each: *“What’s one thing you wish L&D did differently?”*
- Read every existing programme document. Don’t suggest changes yet.

## Week 2 — Map

- Inventory current programmes: who they serve, what they cost, what they achieve.
- Map who owns each: you, your team, vendors, business units.
- Identify the top 3 “dusty” programmes nobody is checking.

## Week 3 — Land one quick win

- Pick one small, visible improvement (a better onboarding survey, a fixed broken link, a clearer course title).
- Ship it. Tell people you shipped it.

## Week 4 — Plan

- Write a one-page 90-day plan for your manager: 3 priorities, 3 metrics, 3 risks.
- Get explicit sign-off. This becomes the contract for your performance review.

[LIMITED-TIME OFFER]

### Keep growing — continue with the certified L&D path

The next cohort window is open. Build on your new role with a recognised credential.

[Continue Your L&D Path →](#)

## Next steps & resources

You now have the structure, the templates, and the action list. The only thing left to do is start — and the cheapest first step is the one in this checklist.

### Your starter checklist for the next 7 days

- Block 6 weekly hours on your calendar for the next 12 weeks.
- Rewrite your resume using the template on page 11.
- Update your LinkedIn About using the template on page 12.
- Pick 25 target companies and follow their L&D teams.
- Choose one authoring tool (Articulate Rise is the friendliest).
- Enrol in a recognised L&D certification to anchor your study schedule.
- Tell three people you trust what you're doing.

### Helpful further reading

- *Design for How People Learn* — Julie Dirksen.
- *Map It* — Cathy Moore.
- *The Adult Learner* — Malcolm Knowles.
- GSDC blogs and resources for L&D career switchers.

### Stay in touch

GSDC is an independent skill-development and certification body, headquartered in the US with global presence. Visit [www.gsdCouncil.org](http://www.gsdCouncil.org) to explore certifications, study material, and partner programmes.

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#### Start your certified L&D journey today

Promotional access is live. Step into your L&D career with the credential that opens doors.

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