Michelle Ockers:
Welcome to Learning Uncut. I'd like to acknowledge traditional custodians of country throughout Australia, and in particular the people of the Brinja-Yuin Nation on whose lands I sit. I live in a beautiful area of coastal region, beautiful mountains and country that the Brinja-Yuin people have been looking after for many thousands of years, and I thank them for their stewardship of this area. So I've got the pleasure of being joined today by two people that I've worked very closely with on an important industry project over the past year. We've been working on the Australian Institute of Training and Development's first ever L&D framework for the Australian L&D community. And I'll kick off with an introduction to Ben Campbell. Ben, would you like to introduce yourself and the role you had on the project?

Ben Campbell:
Hi, Michelle. Great to be here. Yeah, Ben, CEO of AITD. Been on board for about three and a bit years now. And there was definitely a need for some form of blueprint and infrastructure so we could look at updating our current courses and introduce new courses. And as this project kicked off, and we're so thankful to have you join us, Michelle, and catch that spirit, we started to realise about the full impact of this framework, the sort of language we started hearing with things like getting a common language, finding things that people could easily identify as the types of capabilities that an L&D practitioner would want to utilize. And the project kicked off with all those wonderful working groups and Lisa, who is about to introduce herself, so that's how it all started, and I'm sure we'll unpack that a bit further.

Michelle Ockers:
We absolutely will. It was a massive effort involving lots more people than just the three of us. But I think we hold the space to be able to talk from a range of roles about the project. You, of course, were the project sponsor, Ben, and had the initial vision and kicked off the project. I joined the project in a project lead role, and we'll talk a little bit about what that involved as we get through the conversation. And I knew we needed someone else with significant experience in the organisational capability area to help hold the space for the whole project and to fill some important roles and we knew that Lisa, you had relevant experience here. So do you want to talk a little bit about the background you brought to the project and the role you played on the project?

Lisa Elias:
Sure. Thanks, Michelle. And it's just so nice to be talking to you and Ben about this work. I'm so excited to actually see it implemented and launched and to now be talking about the process of how we came to be where we are now. I've had a lot of experience in designing and updating and implementing capability frameworks in my work as an independent consultant over the years and in some of the executive roles that I've held. And I've been involved with the AITD in so many different capacities, probably for just as long as I've been working in learning and development, which is

sort of 20 plus years. So I consulted to the national office, it would have been about 10 years ago now. And at that time, it was identified that there was potentially a need for a framework of this type. At that stage, we didn't necessarily have the, not necessarily the funding behind us, but I guess there were a number of other key priorities that needed to be addressed in the short term. And it sort of came full circle and roughly 10 years later, there was a call for volunteers that went out and Michelle, you and I spoke and Ben, you and I spoke about the role I could possibly play in this. And I guess what I've brought is my lens as an independent consultant, as I said, but also just fulfilling some specific roles in this, which was working as a lead editor with you, Michelle and also leading one of the capability area working groups and then being a member of the core working group.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah, you had lots of hats, Lisa, so you can talk about lots of different perspectives on the project. It's interesting, Ben, the AITD has gone through a lot of change in the past three years and what I'm seeing as a long-term member, I've seen peaks and drops, waxing and waning in terms of the positioning of the AITD with the profession and the engagement of people across the profession with the AITD. But it's definitely been on the up and up over the past few years under your leadership and with the current board. So, you know, without sort of having to go through a big long journey, the time just felt right, I think, in a lot of ways to actually tackle, again, something the AITD had wanted to do for a long time, which was to create an Australian framework for the L&D profession. Do you want to talk a little bit about, you know, sort of the gap from the perspective of the profession that this framework helps address and what the framework offers to the profession, you know, the why behind the framework development?

Ben Campbell:
Yeah, thanks, Michelle. I mean, firstly, I just wanted to say thanks for your acknowledgement of the board and the team in bringing us to where we are today. Look, there's a lot of vision and thought from 10 years ago, and Lisa was definitely across that too. Lots of great ideas, just there wasn't the scalability and perhaps some of the capacity to do that. So some of that just faded, unfortunately. So it wasn't until I was faced with really our growth journey that I recognised the need for just something more robust in developing our overall course strategy and providing the types of information that our community really needs. So that's the gap. A lot of the courses were designed probably seven to eight years ago. They're certainly front and center of good L&D practice and a lot of great work there by the team in putting them together. And a lot of people, including yourself, were involved in helping to redesign those courses as well during COVID, bring them online and introduce new elements to it. And then, you know, I felt that since that time, there was definitely a lot of updates that were required, but what were they? What is it that's really needed? What's the heart and the essence and the outcomes and the takeaways? from those courses? Essentially, what are the proficiencies? It's new language we're using now with the capability, with the introduction of the framework itself. What are those outcomes? So I really found that in those early days when I understood AITD to be the peak industry organisation, but I don't feel that we've fully stepped into those shoes at that stage. And we really needed to move into that. And a large part of that was to develop this type of blueprint for the sector and to take an advocacy

role and a research role and look at best practice. And so really that's where the gap was. And that's what we were looking to address through this framework. It not only helps us individual practitioners or corporate practitioners, but it helps us strategically in developing the types of courses and support, magazine articles, journals, conference information, even excellence awards categories, through the types of capabilities that we know that practitioners need to be successful in their particular roles.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah, I think there's also an element of enhancing the overall professional development and the professionalisation of learning and development and providing support with career progression pathways for people at all stages of their L&D careers. It's a very porous profession, and I'm sometimes a little hesitant to even use the word profession because there are absolutely no barriers to entry. People can come into L&D from all over the place. So, you know, Lisa, in terms of your motivation for contributing to the project and what you felt that this was going to offer the L&D professional and the L&D community, you know, what were some of the key aspects that were motivating you about the value of this for the community?

Lisa Elias:
So, Michelle, I like the fact that you mentioned that we, that you hesitate to use the word profession, but I'd like to see us viewed as a profession. And I don't know that that's necessarily the case at the moment. For me, it was the opportunity to help shape that narrative. At the moment, we're seen as a bit of a subset, I think, of the broader HR field. but we are very specialised in what we do. And by specialised, I mean that in terms of depth, but also in breadth, which probably sounds like a bit of an anomaly, but it actually is. And we certainly found that in the challenges that we came up against as we were developing this framework. There are a number of professional associations out there that look at what capabilities are required of people working in their fields, but none of them specifically relate to the work that we do as a broad cohort of members. And for me, it was really important to be able to define what that looked like, what the behavioural indicators were, what that looked like at different levels of proficiency, and to be able to clearly articulate no matter what your role or what your sector or what your level of experience is, what we'd expect to see at those levels of proficiency across a number of key areas of capability. So there was a real benefit to that. And as Ben alluded to before, it's a great opportunity for the AITD to be able to pin our offerings against that framework to make it very clear what those pathways might be for people who have come into our profession from so many different areas.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah, so it's about elevating the profession as a whole. And of course, there was a huge emphasis on community input and shaping the framework through community involvement, because we wanted to make sure this was very grounded in the practicality of the day-to-day work of L&D professionals and also, you know, the business needs. So I'm just going to walk through at a very high level the key project phases before I hand over to you, Ben, to talk a little bit more about the importance of community engagement on the project. So it's actually just over 12 months now

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since we kicked off the project, and I think two months ago since we launched it. When did we launch, Ben, the official launch?

Ben Campbell:
We launched it in a conference in May and we were probably two or three weeks off introducing the framework for the actual self-assessment program at that time.

Michelle Ockers:
So that's like 10 months from when we launched the project. I've gone back and had a look at the original project plan. So we started in late August. The first phase was some desktop research and project planning. And that stage initially it was you, Ben, doing some initial research, some environmental scanning, looking at what other frameworks were out there for the profession and compiling this massive bucket list of potential capabilities that could be put onto the list. It was an enormous bucket list. And then I got involved to help with the project planning and shaping up how might we tackle taking this massive bucket list and turning it into something usable, we engaged a core working group. So we went out for volunteers to support us with the project, and we had about 30 people sign up as volunteers. From that, we initially set up a core working group, which included the two of us, plus a leader for each of the capability categories that we'd identified. Initially, there were six sort of buckets that we put these capabilities into. It turned out to be seven along the way, but we'll talk a little bit about how it came to be seven. So we had a core working group. Then we did some high-level design work on the competency framework, which included things like, you know, how many proficiency levels are we going to have? What are the generic names and descriptions of those? What are design principles are going to guide how we go about setting this up? What personas are we going to use? And big shout out to Millie Law, who did some work on putting those personas together for us, so we knew who the framework was for. Once we'd, you know, got some basics in place, to start the design work from. We then engaged a working group for each of those six capability categories, and we kicked off with them. We gave them some guidelines to use to get together and some milestones, and they started independently drafting descriptions, a list of the capabilities they wanted to include in their area, descriptions of those and behavioural indicators at each of three proficiency levels. There's a lot of jargon there, but there will be a link in the show notes to a page on the AITD website, which explains some of this jargon where you can access some more detail about this. A lot of L&D professionals who've worked with either capability or competency frameworks will kind of have a picture of this in their head already.

I think it was the end of November by the time we had the inputs, the drafts from each of these different working groups, when Lisa got the unenviable task of then trying to edit that and create something that was a little bit comprehensive. We'll come back to that experience in a moment, something that hung together coherently. From there, we had the Christmas break. So that chewed up a month of our time, right, if not a little bit longer. So let's say it was a nine-month project instead of a 10-month project. And we went through a validation and testing phase where we, again, went out for volunteers. Absolutely overwhelming response. The level of interest to support the project from the community was fantastic. So, we ran focus groups initially with leaders from different sectors. We ran five focus groups. We had 30 L&D

leaders who gave us feedback on the high-level framework, the list of capabilities we'd included, the way we'd described the design principles and so on. And then we did another minor edit. And it went out to test. And we had over 100 individuals, L&D professionals, who did a self-assessment using the framework and gave us feedback on the framework itself, which gave us some really rich material for Lisa to pull out her pencil again and do some further editing before we had the final version. And from there, we went into implementation planning, which of course included communication, marketing, finding a platform to support people with a development journey using the framework and setting that up. The AITD, of course, Ben was going through a website relaunch at the same time. So, it was all sorts of tech stuff going on there. So, to be fair, with the launch, we probably had the framework ready by, I would say, mid-March, end of March, and then it took another couple of months to get everything set up for people to start using it. So, that's kind of the broad sweep. So lots of community engagement and community involvement, and we talk about the framework, Ben, as being for the community, built by the community. Why was that level of community engagement so important?

Ben Campbell:
Oh yeah, that was an amazing, rich history there, Michelle. And don't forget the charters as well.

Michelle Ockers:
Project charters, yes. I put my professional project management hat on and you tried to make sure I didn't squeeze the life out of the project in the process, I think.

Ben Campbell:
We've got this incredible Google Drive with historic documents there in various versions. What we found in engaging the community, going back into that first validation phase of the focus groups, for example, where we looked at chatting with government representatives and corporate and suppliers. There was a range of them, wasn't there, Michelle? Higher education was another one, vocational education. So there were like probably those five areas. Everyone had a different lens that they approached the framework in. And so that's where we found it was very important to interpret and ensure that the language within the framework was both inclusive and universal in the sense that it could be applied across sectors and you can interpret it in your own setting. And it's not exclusive to any particular area. And I think that's what the beauty of the feedback was in that process. It was just wonderful. And I guess the things that stood out to me was that especially the charitable and not-for-profit sector was another group that we looked at, that this whole exercise was seen to be empowering, that this is something that will lift you as opposed to overwhelm you. And that was just some of the feedback, particularly from the not-for-profit sector, and something that I'm very, very conscious of even now, and particularly as we start to get wider teams involved, I really want to see this as a liberating, empowering, enjoyable experience for everybody involved. So that was one element. The other was, you know, just how it might apply in a team setting or an individual setting, which was something we had to have a look at in terms of the language and the way it was pitched. So that community perspective really helped us to shape it to become more embracing than the initial pitch.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah, so that rich range of diverse perspectives to make sure it was relevant to everybody it was meant to serve was important. Lisa, you've worked with a lot of internal L&D teams or OD teams on workforce capability frameworks. How does the overall approach we took on this project differ to that that you've seen that works well when you're working within one organisation? What's similar? What might be different if someone's looking at doing this inside their organisation?

Lisa Elias:
Look, I think similarities in terms of the way that it's structured. I mean, there's a fairly standard way you structure these frameworks. And I don't think we've strayed too far from that, which is important because you want it to resonate and to be familiar with people. In a lot of organisations, you do see frameworks being developed for particular areas of the business. Quite often they'll be replicating something that's being done elsewhere. So something I think it's really important to be able to do and to continue to do is to leverage what else is out there. You're not reinventing the wheel, you're not starting from scratch. So it's important to be aware of what else has already been developed, what else you can tap into, what else you can use and leverage. But also to be really aware of what it is and what it isn't. We were very careful to not stray too far from the essence of what the work is involved in L&D and we're aware that there are other frameworks that we could point to that could address other areas of expertise, for example, video editing and photography or, you know, there are a number of different aspects that came up that we thought, well, we're not necessarily going into leadership and management because we know that we can point people elsewhere to those capabilities. It's basically keeping it very, very tight and structured and thinking about what the strategy is, what the business plan is, and making sure that what you're looking at developing for people to be able to work within is aligned to that. So we're obviously looking at the AITD's business plan and the AITD's strategy and ensuring that what we're developing is, you know, that alignment is there. So I think there's some similarities between what you see in organisations and what you see in professional associations like ours.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah. And at the end of the day, we ended up with seven capability categories, 31 different capabilities at three proficiency levels. So it's potentially overwhelming was one of the pieces of feedback we got from people when they did the self-assessment. But it does reflect the reality of the breadth of the L&D profession today and the expectations of the profession. You know, we had to make some trade-offs along the way as well. Lisa, what were some of the, you know, from a design consideration perspective, some of the trade-offs and some of the debates that you thought were critical to shaping the framework?

Lisa Elias:
I think the key was for each of the working groups to be able to challenge themselves as far as does this really need to be here? How critical is it? You know, if we needed to prioritise what would be the top six capabilities that we would include within this area. So there is definitely how often does something come up? How relevant is it? What do we need to ensure that we leave in versus what we can leave out? We also had to ensure that we avoided crossover. So we're looking at that

concept that Ben alluded to before about being mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive, or MECE as a lot of management consultants like to refer to it as. So we wanted to make sure that within each of those areas, we weren't cross-referencing what was replicated elsewhere. it needed to be clear and it needed to be concise and it needed to be comprehensive, but easily understood. So there was that aspect to it. We also needed to do a really, really hard edit a number of times and ensure that we just didn't run into tens of thousands of words, because it's very tempting to be able to do that, but obviously you know, the idea of complexity and being able to cut through and be really clear about what was expected. There was that. We also needed to think about the taxonomy of verbs that we use at each of the proficiency levels. We looked initially at the AQF and what we might be able to look at there in terms of verbs, which I think might have confused some people because that was really just an underpinning idea. But we did want to make sure that the level of complexity was very, very clear as we moved from foundational through to advanced levels.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah. So the AQF, Lisa, just for anyone who's not aware of it, the Australian Qualifications Framework and the way they described, you know, if people are familiar with Bloom's taxonomy, think of something similar, but within the Australian Qualifications Framework context.

Lisa Elias:
Yes. Where you go from understanding, you know, all the way through to driving, creating, it really just depends on the area that you're looking at, but it's the work becomes more complex as you become more proficient.

Michelle Ockers:
And some of this was really important because we'd split the drafting across different working groups. So we had to provide some guidelines to try to drive some consistency so that it hung together.

Lisa Elias:
That's right. And plain English was another one. There was a lot of work to do. Plain English came into it as well. So, people use different forms of language. Some people were more formal than others. Some people used much more complicated verbs or additional adjectives. It was getting that consistency across each of the areas so that it actually read sensibly as an overall framework. It hung together and it was consistent. So there was definitely quite a bit of work to be done there. And one thing that I did want to mention, and Ben, when you were talking about the importance of the community being engaged, I think it's really important to note as well that the more invested I think the people who volunteered for this project are and became, the more likely they are to use the framework and advocate for the framework. It's very important that we acknowledge that as well. I think that was really key and another reason for having everybody involved in the framework, the number of people that we did. I also found across the different working groups that there was a real range of experience of the volunteers within those groups which was very important because quite often a lot of these projects are run by people who are highly experienced, who don't necessarily consider the views, the perspectives,

the ideas of people who are less experienced coming to it maybe fresh or from a different area or a different profession and have so much to offer. And it was great to be able to see that reflected in the work that came out as well.

Michelle Ockers:
Yes. Ben, let's have a talk about one of the things that was most hotly debated in the core working group when we were shaping the framework. You know, we started out with six capability categories, but we ended up with seven. So just for listeners, you can see the full list of the capabilities in the framework at the link to the AITD website from the show notes. But the capabilities are the core practitioner capability, strategy and partnering, operations, learning solution design, learning facilitation, evaluation and impact, and learning culture. And the big debate we had, of course, was around partnering. What do you recall of that debate, Ben?

Ben Campbell:
It's such a huge investment of time and energy from all the working groups in crafting what they did and a huge involvement with that. And I guess as we started to synthesise it all and bring it all together and look at the initial focus group validation process, that it came through that part. I think it mostly came through that focus group from memory and then having to feed that back into the focus group territory.

Michelle Ockers:
Don't you remember the posse, Ben? There were a few of us involved in the posse.

Ben Campbell:
I think so. That's right.

Michelle Ockers:
We had some rumblings, right? When we had the sort of, the core working group together and we went through that the first round after we'd put the capability area working groups together and we'd said, start shaping up the list of what you think the capabilities need to be in your category. We had combined strategy and operations, I think it was called. And there was some, ideas isn't quite the right word, but some aspects that we talked about, is this a separate capability, or is this something that needs to be woven right through multiple capabilities? So, you know, human-centered design, human-centered approaches, for instance, was one that's woven throughout several capabilities. And originally, we said, look, partnering is kind of fundamental and needs to be woven through lots of different capabilities. Now, I can't remember, Lisa, if it was you or Katrina Malcolm who first sort of stuck their hand up and said, this partnering thing, we think it's more important and belongs in, you know, has to have some emphasis as a capability.

Lisa Elias:
I think it was actually Kate Fraser.

Michelle Ockers:
Kate Fraser. So there's the core three in the posse. And we kind of went backwards and forwards on this.

Lisa Elias:
We did.

Michelle Ockers:
And between, and I think it was predominantly yourself, Kate and Kat, and if any posse members have been left out of the shout out, I apologise that you've been left out because you did a great job advocating for the significance of partnering and presenting the view that it warranted being pulled out alongside strategy into a separate category and having some specific capabilities around partnering. Do you want to talk to that, Lisa? Why does that matter?

Lisa Elias:
It's just, it's an expectation of stakeholders that we work with. No matter where you are or what your role is, there is an element of partnering, whether it's with the business, whether it's with external vendors, whether it's with colleagues in your own team, there's absolutely critical to the work that we do and an opportunity to be able to build relationships, to be able to influence to be able to have the kinds of conversations around impact and value that are broader than just evaluating and learning. So for me, it was a no-brainer. We really just needed to call that out. It was also a point of difference in that we hadn't seen something like that in other capability frameworks. And we felt that the question around value as an impact. I mean, they're just so incredibly important at the moment when you're looking at shrinking spends, at people really thinking about whether or not they want to invest, whether they really want to understand the work that we're able to do. It just warranted its own area and we all felt incredibly strongly about it. And in fact, initially we were talking about, as you said, it was perhaps one capability rather than its whole area, or woven through, but there was just so much there that we were really glad that we were able to kind of pull that out. And I ended up working with a number of people from other working groups, including you, Michelle, to pull it together.
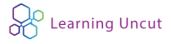
Michelle Ockers:
Yeah, absolutely. And of course, Ben, when we did get to focus groups, one of the things we heard back from the L&D leaders who are involved in the focus groups was that the partnering element was critical and they were really positive and supportive that it was included. One thing we did add after the focus groups, which we had not called out as a specific capability was as part of the core practitioner capability area, which is capabilities we think are essential for all L&D professionals, regardless of role, is AI literacy. Do you want to talk about the feedback we had about that and why we decided to include that as a separate capability, Ben?

Ben Campbell:
Yeah. Firstly, thanks for the clarification, too, because I just remembered on the partnering side, you know, that was so strong coming through the focus group. So it was like, which came first?

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah. It was really well supported.

Ben Campbell:
It was very well supported, but it came through independently, I think, as well. But then coming through to AI, this is, it's so interesting how this is just crafted and just moves together and you and I, Michelle, when we were talking and just even getting our own terminology right, what do we call those things that kind of like a comment to all the different categories, you know, we we're calling it red threads and just trying to work out how that all just comes together. And AI was initially one of those areas that we thought, well, maybe it's just woven throughout. But then it clearly sort of ended up finding its own path in the core capability. And I'm so glad that it has found its way into that side of things.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah, and it sits alongside, for example, digital literacy as a core skill, which is both in the core practitioner capability as well as being reflected in a number of the other capability areas. And of course, Ben, the AI essentials for L&D course that the AITD has introduced this year has been really well received and lots of take up there. It is a pretty critical contemporary skill. So it was nice to see that being explicitly added in because we weren't sure whether to explicitly add it in or not, but obviously it's here to stay. In terms of how people can use the framework, Ben, to be able to give people the ability to engage with the framework and use it for their professional development, we needed a platform to be able to support them to do that. Can you talk a little bit about what you were looking for in that platform and what we've ended up being able to provide people from a systems perspective to support their professional development with the framework?

Ben Campbell:
Yeah, absolutely. First, I just want to acknowledge you too, Michelle, in that initial process, because me, I was thinking framework, framework, let's get this out there and the rest, but all along you were saying, hey, we need a delivery mechanism. So it's sort of just infiltrated and, you know, it just became quite apparent, like, let's do this. It's got to be more than just a PDF document.

So, yeah, I think, Michelle, you definitely led me by the hand on that one. And I guess all your experience with the work in the UK and the rest of it was just incredibly helpful here. So, yeah, we looked at, there were probably several key suppliers and you and I, looked through them and there was one we thought it's going to be way too expensive but they ended up coming on board with us and they're called Lexonis and they've been fabulous to work with. What was just terrific was that it just seemed to be almost custom made for what we'd already created. We created it and just dovetailed exactly into that system so that was just such a great experience. And they're such a pleasure to work with, so accommodating. And even their IT professionals helped us to code it into the current website. So there's a seamless delivery as a member just to jump into my account area and click on capability assessment, click on the I agree area, and there it is. So it's something that we've seen a couple of hundred people having a really good play with it at this stage.

It's in several modules, one of which just introduces the capability and the explanations behind it. But then you work into your own self-assessment against the

capabilities. Where do you see yourself? And then the next step is role mapping. If there's particular roles, areas of interest, you map your competence, your capabilities, your proficiencies against those particular roles. And then all this great work you've been doing, Michelle, in mapping particular resources that you can go and say you can work on your performance development plan and download it as a PDF and you can link to things like the AITD Magazine, the webinars, the Learning Uncut podcasts. And we've got a big project group that I'm looking to get off the ground as well to help us to refine more of those resources available within each 31 of those capabilities. And the core working group have already started in some respects and developing a little bit of a, you know, they've indicated what type of theories and models and understanding they had that led them to give rise to those proficiencies and the capabilities and stuff. So there's a little bit in there. So that's what the resources is in your own personal development plan. So it's all there. That's very easy to use and it has a team functionality as well that both you and me, Michelle, we're actually itching to get the teams using that. It's not very far away and we've all just been very busy. But that's it. It's a Lexonis product and as you mentioned, the details of Lexonis and the framework and the capabilities and the rest are found on the AITD website below your screen, I guess.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah. I'll put a link through to that. And of course, AITD members can access the platform directly with a single sign-on. So, you described that three-step development journey that the platform supports, which is self-assessment against all 31 capabilities or as many of them as you want to assess against, you don't have to assess against all of them. And I think it's really important to emphasise that this is a large set of capabilities that a team as a whole would be expected to be able to bring to bear to their work in L&D rather than any one individual having to be fully proficient in all of them. So we've got the self-assessment, then you go on to set career objectives, and you talked about the role profiles. We'll come back to those in a moment, because that was an important piece of work, and then creating a development plan. And the platform supports you to do all three of those things quite elegantly, I think. It's very intuitive. But I did create a little bit of a guide that I'll put a link to in the show notes as well that helps people and gives them just some tips along the way for how to think about their self-assessment, how to approach it, how to set career objectives and so on. The career objectives, Lisa, we needed to seed some information about what the capability profile for different roles might look like. So particularly for people who were new to L&D and thinking about what kind of role do I want to shape? What do I need to be able to do for people who are looking to grow their career, maybe take it in a different direction? Do you want to talk a little bit about the challenge of creating those role profiles and how we went about that?

Lisa Elias:
Sure. It was incredibly challenging because we wanted to come up with a set of profiles that was not too extensive, but that would certainly cover the majority of people working in typical roles in L&D. And also being very, very aware of the fact, like you said, Michelle, that the entire framework is not applicable to every single type of role or every single level of experience. So we wanted to be really sure that we looked at the profile. The profiles included roles from L&D, advisor, officer, you know, through to consultant to business partner. We looked at OD roles, we looked

at team and manager roles, and tried as much as we could to pinpoint what the key responsibilities, behavioural indicators, skills might be for each of those roles that we would expect to see across a wide range of organisations, whether they're small, large, whether they're not-for-profit, regardless of sector, whether somebody's working within an organisation or partnering with one as an external vendor or a consultant. So there were some challenges as far as what we settled on, but not just on the roles that we settled on, but the way we mapped those roles to the framework. And you and I to and froed on that for several weeks, Michelle, didn't we?

Michelle Ockers:
Yes, we did. And of course, we were able to take some data from Lexonis as well and use that and seed that into the conversation. But of course, this is going to be a process of continuous improvement, getting feedback from our users. There will soon be a little feedback mechanism introduced on the platform as well, but we'll go out, you know, I'm going to stick with the sustainment and embedding of the framework for the foreseeable future. So we'll be seeking feedback and continuing to evolve it. I think the team functionality is really interesting. If you have members of your team who are doing their self-assessment and development planning, there's the opportunity with them being invited to opt in and share their data with you as a team lead to aggregate that data and be able to use that to look at overall team collective strengths and development opportunities, create your overall team development plan and have this common language around capabilities for your team and development for your team. So you don't have to be an AITD corporate member for that, but you do need every individual who's doing it to be an AITD member to access the framework, of course. But I know, Lisa, you've worked on this kind of activity with whole teams before, as have I, and there's tremendous benefit to being able to look and align your capabilities with your business goals and the things that matter and the shifts you're trying to create with learning in your organisation. So excited that that's available to people as well.

Lisa Elias:
Yeah, definitely. And, you know, just being able to visualise it as a heat map as well is incredibly useful.

Michelle Ockers:
It is. Yeah, it's a great conversation starter to get buy-in for the team for development as well. So in terms of takeaways and things that you've learned along the way, whether it be an insight, something that surprised you, something that maybe you would tackle differently if you had your time over, any thoughts, anything spring to mind on any of those on kind of key lessons or takeaways from the process?

Ben Campbell:
For me, I found it very validating because we just, it was so warmly received at conference. It was just, you could have heard a pin drop. And then there was such engagement. And then once it was like unveiled, you know, on the slide and people were like, yeah, this gave it a good clap, really welcomed it into our community. And especially knowing that it just forms part of the member benefit. There's no additional charges, just costs that we're absorbing as part of member benefits. And we hope to

see more people becoming members and engaging with this and enjoying it because we're investing right back into our community. So for me, that was the big the big one. And I really hope that all the core working group members and the working group members of our community can just take a moment to really just enjoy the appreciation that the community has for everybody's work. I think that was my biggest takeaway. And now it's just like everything, it's just all right, well, how do we make sure this is woven into our courses? And so there's some really strong capability building goals that are within there that can relate to different roles or career pathways. You know, we're constantly getting queries for people who are new to the sector as well and want some guidance. And it's just so great to go, well, guess what we have for you.

Lisa Elias:
We have some structure. We have a roadmap.

Ben Campbell:
Yeah, that's right.

Lisa Elias:
We can help you find your way. It's great to be able to offer that.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah. How about you, Lisa? Any takeaways or insights, things you might do differently next time?

Lisa Elias:
Look, I just very much appreciated the involvement that so many people had in developing this along the way. For me, I never ceased to be amazed, I guess, by how much time and input people were prepared to give and offer. And, you know, when you think about the survey that we sent out, I don't know how many hundred people that went out to, but the response rate was something like 80%, which was very, very high. And then we had hundreds and hundreds of really detailed qualitative comments to sift through. The people weren't just ticking a box. They chose to participate. They chose to give us that detailed feedback. And it was all such valuable feedback because we could pick up some common themes. We were able to reflect some of those quotes back to the people who had participated, which I think made them feel validated and realised that they were really being listened to and their voices were being heard. And we've had people contributing to this, as I said before, from all levels of experience, from all different sectors, and everybody's contributions have been incorporated and valued and appreciated. So for me, that was probably the highlight of what we've done.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah, absolutely. I think there are a couple of things that struck me. One was the challenge, the challenge of language, the challenge of getting to clear, plain language when we are so wrapped up in our own expertise and our own world and our own jargon and inclusive language as well. That took a lot of work.

Lisa Elias:
It really, really did. That was probably the longest piece of work towards the end of finalising the framework.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah. And we got lots of feedback from our users on that, our test users. We worked really hard on that towards the end. And the other thing was, you know, we had some design principles for the framework and there are two of them that for me constantly trying to balance off. One was about the whole thing being sustainable. So the capabilities being expressed in a way that it wasn't going to date quickly by referring to specific frameworks, models or tools, versus the feedback we got from the user testing was, this needs to be more concrete. How do I know if I know about this or not? What should I know? What framework should I know about? What tool should I know about? And I was just so delighted when the Lexonis platform gave us an opportunity to embed some additional detail about examples of underpinning theories, which the working groups have put together, or specific frameworks, models, or tools, which you would be familiar with if you were working effectively with this capability. So, that gave us a way to create that balance. But that was, I found that a very difficult tension to hold at times, along with trying to keep the framework really concise.

Lisa Elias:
Yeah, it's definitely, you know, I think we looked at a review cycle of perhaps annually and obviously incorporating feedback in the interim, but I think we've certainly future-proofed it in the way that it's been written and pointing people to the source of some of those theories and pointing people to resources rather than having them outlined specifically in the framework itself. It was a really effective way of doing that.

Michelle Ockers:
Yeah. I think, Ben, I'd like to leave with the comment that this is the start of a journey, not the end of one, because there's so much more that can be done with the framework to continue to refine it with the resources that are available to support people's development. And, you know, with research and industry insights and advocacy off the back of the framework, So I don't know if you'd like to comment on kind of the immediate plans there, Ben, but there's so much more potential that this framework unleashes both for individual L&D professionals, the team and teams and the community as a whole, I think.

Ben Campbell:
Yeah, I think you've captured it all there, Michelle. You know, it's a living document. We, you know, our aspiration is to do it even faster, Lisa, you know, if we can do it, you know, on a six monthly basis as well, and then look at now version control and all that sort of things. But yeah, we talked about at the very beginning of our discussion together around L&D as a profession, you know, and my role as part of AITD is to advocate for L&D as a profession, to be very distinct about it. If you see within the framework as well that as a group, we all landed on having the code of ethics right at the center and the values of leading, connecting and sharing. And all our members sign up to that and subscribe to that as being a member, because we

believe in helping people to be the best they can and bringing their best self into their role as an AITD member. So yeah, I think it's just a living, breathing, growing document and process and we'll be using it to advocate on behalf of the profession. It's so interesting to see where the government's going in skills uplift and upskilling and all the different focus areas that there's a role for our community of L&D practitioners to have a voice in that sector alongside our higher education friends and our vocational education friends and the human resource friends. L&D is a sector within and it has its own culture, its own capabilities, it has its own presence, its own skills. And so, yeah, we'll drive that. And having that framework for us is awesome. And I'm working with various universities at the moment, and they are starting to introduce bachelor degrees and other things in design, L&D design. And we're still working on some research projects there as well. And yeah, now that you say it, Michelle, I hope that it does feed into the framework itself and help us to update things there too.

Michelle Ockers:
I'm sure it will. It's up to us in conjunction with our communities to shape the future of the profession. And I think this is an important step along the way here in Australia. Thanks, Ben and Lisa, for joining me today to have this chat about development of the framework. And hopefully people have taken something away from that, both in terms of being aware of a resource they can use for their own professional development and for thinking about you know, what they can take away and apply in their own work with capability building in their organisations or other communities. So thank you both very much.

Ben Campbell:
Thanks, Michelle.

Lisa Elias:
Thanks for having us.

Learning Uncut   **About Learning Uncut**

Learning Uncut are learning and development consultants that help Learning and Development leaders and their teams become a strategic enabler so that their businesses can thrive. We work in evidence-informed ways to drive tangible outcomes and business impact and are strong believers in the power of collaboration and community. We specialise in helping to build or refresh organisational learning strategy, update their L&D Operating Model, enable skills development, and conduct learning evaluation. We also offer workshops to shift learning mindset and practices for both L&D teams and the broader workforce – as well as speaking at public and internal events.

Learn more about us at our website.

About your host, Michelle Ockers

Michelle is the co-founder and Chief Learning Strategy at Learning Uncut. She is an experience, pragmatic organisational learning strategist, L&D capability builder and modern workplace learning practitioner. She also delivers keynotes, workshops and webinars for learning and broader professional or workforce groups at both public and in-house events.

Michelle received the following prestigious industry awards in 2019:

- Australian Institute of Training and Development Dr Alastair Rylatt Award for L&D *Professional of the Year – for outstanding contribution to the practice of learning and development*
- *Internet Time Alliance Jay Cross Memorial Award – for outstanding contribution to the field of informal learning*

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