



Fueled by globalization and growth in new markets such as China, India, Brazil and Russia, Deloitte has grown from less than 30,000 to more than 155,000 employees since early 2000.

“Economies like those in post-recession Latin America and Central Europe have really heated up, so global companies want to invest there,” said Tony Gleeson, Global Director of Learning Programs and Solutions with Deloitte. “In order to help give clients a competitive advantage in high-growth markets, Deloitte must be there first and therefore we have had to grow our business quickly in those countries.”

In order to encourage clear and efficient communication around the world, the company declared English to be its official language in 2000.

“English is critical for our success. There’s no way you can avoid it, particularly in a business where you are working with massive companies. Our global clients such as Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft and General Motors rightfully expect Deloitte to operate seamlessly around the world. In order to function as a truly global organization and efficiently serve these clients, we needed to improve our English skills quickly.”

–Tony Gleeson,
Global Director of Learning Programs and Solutions, Deloitte

The business need for English was clear for Deloitte, however, getting up to speed was a huge challenge. “After we made English our official language, we learned fast that our growing global team did not have consistently high levels of English skills,” said Gleeson.



Industry


Accounting Services

Summary

As globalization wrote the next chapter in Deloitte’s history, efficient global communication became critical to success, and Deloitte declared English to be its official language in 2000.

After experiencing the inadequacies of classroom training, the organization implemented the GlobalEnglish Corporate Learning Service™ (currently known as GlobalEnglish Edge™) in 30 countries with more than 2,500 employees.

Since deploying the program, Deloitte has realized substantial cost savings and significant productivity gains because of the significant improvement in employees’ English communication skills.



“ It always gets down to the money and our return on investment has been excellent when measured in productivity gains. According to users, they are saving on average, 3.5 hours each week due to their improved English skills. ”

– Tony Gleeson

Global Director of Learning
Programs and Solutions, Deloitte

“We needed a training solution that we could deploy around the world, would help learners at any level, and would include tools that could provide instant help on the job. The only service that could handle this huge challenge was GlobalEnglish,” said Gleeson.

A Strategic Partnership

Prior to implementing an online solution, Deloitte had several thousand employees in classroom-based English training courses. According to Gleeson, they were poorly attended because they weren’t flexible to employees’ needs. More, the company could not track the results from this training, which varied in quality. The company required a more flexible solution for teaching business communication skills, not just general English. They also needed a partner that could support worldwide deployment, and scale as they grew.

Deloitte implemented the GlobalEnglish Corporate Learning Service in June of 2000 in eight countries. The company was impressed with the quick improvement they saw in communication skills and the subsequent increase in productivity.

The program grew quickly and today GlobalEnglish is offered in more than 30 countries to more than 2500 employees. “GlobalEnglish is perfect for a global company like Deloitte,” said Gleeson. “It’s delivered 100% online and all instruction is offered in 13 languages. And because they have account managers on the ground on five continents, we get great service at the local level. With GlobalEnglish, we only needed one provider for the entire global program.”

Deloitte has made its name with great customer service and therefore expects the same from its training partners, but was often disappointed. “Most of our vendors supply a mailbox to our users and call it ‘support;” said Gleeson. “But I really do feel that the GlobalEnglish team is trying to help us; not only solve users’ problems, but also identify what we can do better in our business. They make the effort to understand the unique needs of our different geographies and that has made all the difference in our success.”

Results

High Satisfaction

86% of Deloitte users rate their experience with the GlobalEnglish service highly. “Survey feedback has shown us that GlobalEnglish has been popular because it is flexible to our employees’ professional and personal lifestyles,” said Gleeson. “Our employees know that they can’t learn English in the classroom because it doesn’t fit into their schedule. They like the flexibility of the GlobalEnglish service: it works for people at all levels and they don’t have to start at lesson one and go all the way through. They can skip around and get just what they need when they need it.”



Improved Retention

According to young professionals in non-English speaking markets, English training is among the most desirable development opportunities, so Deloitte leveraged its GlobalEnglish program to improve retention. “Because Deloitte offered such a comprehensive and effective English training program, we have been more successful than many companies in Asia in retaining the best talent,” said Gleeson.

Cost Savings

GlobalEnglish has contributed significant cost savings to Deloitte. “Of course it is less expensive to conduct training online versus classroom, but Deloitte has also saved money in other ways. We are able to more easily attract good candidates so our recruiting costs are going down. We are keeping employees longer so we are not losing time and money with ramp-up. Lastly, we are less dependent on expensive ex-pats in our new markets. This program has proven to be very valuable to Deloitte,” said Gleeson.

Better Teamwork & Improved Customer Service

“What has been most striking to me is that our communication around the world is now better, deeper, and our teams are working together more effectively,” said Gleeson. “Meetings are real discussions, not just someone giving orders to another. When an employee can communicate well with another employee, they can build a relationship. And with that, they tend to look after each other and share more business opportunities.”

Improved Productivity

Specifically, Deloitte employees are now more efficient with the following tasks: reading and writing emails, producing documents, and responding to requests and questions in English. “This improved productivity is a direct benefit to our clients. Said simply, we are getting more done in less time and our clients are happy,” concluded Gleeson.