

# Channels best practices

Channels are an intuitive way to align skill development to your business objectives. Create channels by curating and organizing content from Pluralsight and outside resources to help your team build the right skills to hit business objectives faster.

Below, you'll learn how to make channels work for your organization—including best practices for alignment, implementation and accountability.

## ALIGNMENT

### Align to your strategy

Channels are best deployed as a tool to organize and implement your skill development strategy. Set your channel objective by identifying what outcomes you want to achieve or skills you want to build in alignment to your company priorities.

### Empower your learners

Thoughtfully consider your company's approach to top-down prescribed learning vs. bottom-up curated learning via channels. If a learner is new to a content area, it can be helpful to prescribe foundational learning. However, as experience increases, empowering individuals to curate their own learning journey using channels is an effective way to maintain high engagement.

### Define channel owners

Defining clear roles for channel owners and contributors will improve the ease of implementation. Who are the creators; the subject matter experts/contributors; who is responsible for holding teams accountable? We recommend adding one additional editor. During this process, don't forget to create clear expectations for your learners. Consider things like giving time for them to skill up at work and defining how you'll communicate new channels and initiatives for them to dive into.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Balance channel types

Keep a balanced mix of team and company channels. A small number of company channels are effective for providing unified context and shared language, but you should also create collaborative team channels with active contributors where teams can curate the most helpful content for each objective.

Also consider various types of channels such as role-based channels, project- or initiative-specific channels, and classroom-based channels (such as pre/post or bootcamp-like channels).

### Make it easy

Make it easier to get the right people in the right channels by utilizing direct add, company channels and SSO (available on the Enterprise plan). You might also consider a standard naming convention to improve discoverability. That might look something like: [Org] - [Major Topic Area] [Specific Topic] - [Optional Modifier]. For example: DevStar - Experience | UX - Dev UX.

Think about logically sequencing the content in your channels from beginner to advanced, and by content type such as course, project, Skill IQ, etc.

### Add variety

The duration, scope, and number of channels should be dependent upon your specific strategy. When the goal is channel completion, aim for 3–5 courses—any more can overwhelm learners. Also, mix it up and consider including Skill IQs, projects, paths, interactive courses, and/or external content. If you want to share suggested starting points to branch outside the core, create channel sections and provide content areas with a non-mandatory “Reference or Optional” section—and trust your learners to choose what they need.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

### Refresh and promote

Make sure **to keep content fresh and relevant** by auditing the usage. Don't be afraid to replace poorly performing content (or promote completion when necessary). We recommend surveying your learners for feedback on the channel content regularly. Many customers add external links to Slack/Yammer for feedback channels.

### Measure individual progress

Individuals can hold themselves accountable to personal and team goals by viewing their progress, completion, and view time in channels analytics. In addition, 1:1 meetings with managers are a great time to discuss how progress in a channel is helping them in their role, as well as solicit feedback to improve the channels experience.

### Measure team progress

Advanced channels analytics allows leaders and team managers to measure skill development against strategic business objectives, including high-level average completion across teams, as well as a more granular view of specific individuals or modules within a channel.

For help creating a skills strategy, making sure your channels are aligned to your strategy and speeding up the creation of company channels, leverage your subject matter experts, or let Pluralsight Professional Services help you by engaging in a [ProServ Skills Strategy](#).

# Tips for managing channels

## How to keep your content fresh

- Revisit channel content at least once per quarter.
- Keep a spreadsheet of the assets in your channel(s) to easily compare with the Pluralsight catalog, collaborate with subject matter experts (SMEs), and make updates.
- Verify external links for expiration and staleness.
- Use the monthly catalog shared by your CSM to flag new content in the areas of your channels.
- [Follow Pluralsight on Twitter](#) for newly released content (you can encourage your channel SMEs to do that as well).
- Check for newly released paths and assessments that align to your channels.
- Include a survey or link for feedback directly in your channel, or push a survey to the active channel subscribers quarterly.
- Regularly add new content on topics related to your channels to keep them current.
- Keep a list of where you're sharing channels on intranet sites so you can easily maintain external references.
- Consider the capability to duplicate existing channels and create variations of content for a different audience.
- Don't forget to communicate channel updates to learners and SMEs as needed. Some channels are updated frequently, so it may be difficult to communicate every change to learners—but major changes should be shared. Use social collaboration tools, newsletters, and internal sites where possible instead of email.
- Encourage learners to revisit channels that include Skill IQs and paths as they are frequently updated automatically.
- Identify an administrator responsible for maintaining the channels and collaborating with the SMEs. A centralized administrator often works best and could be someone who may be a platform administrator or an LMS or other learning platform administrator.
- Add admins or SMEs as contributors/editors to the channels they're aligned to

## Engaging your SMEs

- Keep your SMEs informed of new content aligned to their area. Share Pluralsight's monthly course list
- Connect with SMEs quarterly at a minimum to review and verify existing content
- Share feedback from learners for consideration
- Consider new topics that may align to existing channels
- Consider new topics that deserve a dedicated channel
- If aligning to a skills taxonomy/competency framework, revisit frequently to ensure relevance
- If aligning to future roles/skills, meet with a SME council monthly to discuss market trends and alignment to your organizational imperatives
- Review the [Pluralsight Tech Index](#) for market alignment and trends
- Keep SMEs engaged. Share metrics and trends from your channels with your SMEs to show them the value they are providing through the adoption by learners
- Use (social) collaboration tools to gather continuous feedback from SMEs for micro-updates
- Consider crowdsourcing when challenged with getting SME time. Gather feedback from active learners
- If you need to source new/additional SMEs, consider channel power users