



welcome to brighter

# transforming workplace L&D

Mercer | Mettl's Writing Simulator and SpeechX helped a leading global IT service management company to upgrade its L&D processes and conduct over 15,000 assessments.



# About the client

The automation-led next-generation IT services provider has been delivering excellence in the IT, BPO and consulting services domains globally, generating revenues worth USD793 million. The company strives to power human-machine collaborations to help clients achieve operational excellence through cloud and automation. Moreover, the company is driven by robust strategies, passionate teams and a healthy culture rooted in technology.

The company is a leading IT-service provider with 42 global offices and has a digitally empowered workforce of 19,407 employees, collectively working toward solving everyday complexities through innovative technological interventions and human creativity and intellect. The company intends to accelerate its business growth. Therefore, its team also offers unique IPs, frameworks and methodologies with flexible delivery models, strategic partnerships, besides new-age automation platforms.



# Primary concerns and challenges

The over 30-year-old company believes in nurturing an environment of growth and learning across all levels. Therefore, it also has a university-style internal L&D program, which is open to evolving global strategies that help in building highly efficient teams holistically and effectively. The company is unparalleled in technology and innovation domains. Thus, its primary L&D focus was on its employees' communication skills.

**The company needed solutions to meet the following requirements:**



## Lack of proficiency in English communication

As a firm active in the BPO sector, the company continually sought a workforce with excellent proficiency in the English language. The company's employees needed to possess exceptional communications skills, considering global clients and external stakeholders. Hence, the company wanted to test its teams' ability to receive, process and share information in English, clearly and concisely.



## Lack of effective client communication

In tune with the concern mentioned above, the L&D managers also observed the lack of efficiency in their teams when handling client groups- both Indian and international. They wanted to address concerns related to intelligibility, grammar and culturally appropriate language. The BPO sector is largely dependent on building a good rapport with clients. Therefore, the company mandated a workforce that was adept at processing information and avoiding any miscommunication.



## Gaps in internal communication

A significant portion of the workforce did not pay close attention to the content of their emails. Apart from mistakes in spelling and the lack of an appropriate format, articulation and efficiency of internal business communication were equal concerns. The L&D managers sought a medium to identify groups within the workforce who required training in email etiquette.



## The absence of a tool to identify training needs

The most significant concern was adopting the right tool to identify communication-centric training needs in the organization. While it had clarity on the challenges it sought to overcome, the company did not have the ideal methodology to deal with them. The company wanted to focus on evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of its employees to nurture and strengthen the former holistically. The idea was to create training and development plans that could help empower every individual in the organization.



# Winning the client's trust

Mercer | Mettl reached out to the company's L&D head, offering demos and undertaking discussions, highlighting the USPs of SpeechX.

As established above, the company's had a strong and highly involved L&D team, which was focused on employee growth. Even the leadership was dedicated to boosting the company's L&D initiatives in the best possible manner. Hence, it was not easy to convince the organization to adopt a communication tool that it had never tried before.

The company had been using a different method to assess the communication skills of its employees. The company was not entirely satisfied with the tool. However, it was familiar with it and comfortable using it.

Mercer | Mettl put in additional efforts to understand its concerns and devised custom solutions that the client could add to the standard SpeechX evaluation. Multiple pilots and discussions ensued. Ultimately, features such as proctoring, CEFR rating and modifications tailored to its specific needs convinced it to partner with Mercer | Mettl.



# The solution

The client's collaboration with Mercer | Mettl was set in motion after a few trials, customizations and additions to SpeechX. Mercer | Mettl created a complete package of communication skills assessments to measure all attributes, such as speech, listening and comprehension, writing abilities and reading.



**Mercer | Mettl blended its Essay Writing Simulator with its Communication Test to create the ideal solution for the client's L&D team. Mercer | Mettl also replaced the original robotic voice with a freshly-recorded human voice to further enhance its comfort with the tool to test listening skills. The audio questions were now easier to interpret.**

## A holistic evaluation of oral communication skills using SpeechX

Mercer| Mettl used the AI-powered English speaking assessment technology of SpeechX to comprehensively assess the candidates' spoken English on parameters such as fluency, pronunciation, grammar and listening comprehension. SpeechX is powered by Carnegie Speech's world-class speech evaluation and recognition technology that ensures test results' high degree of accuracy. It also enables delving deeper into the sub-parameters of language proficiency, including intonation, rate of speech, fact and inference-based understanding, etc.

### Besides, SpeechX also offered:

- A holistic assessment of all major aspects of communication skills
- Remote proctoring augmented by a portfolio of anti-cheating features
- Unmatched accuracy ensured by AI
- CEFR validation
- Ease of use and administration

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## Assessment of grammar, spelling and punctuation using the Writing Simulator

Mercer | Mettl's Writing Simulator automatically grades and evaluates a candidate's written piece on grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and more. Mercer | Mettl used the tool to gauge whether the candidates could translate complex information into easy-to-understand written correspondence and understand and follow detailed instructions to create accurate content.

## Actionable reports for T&D

Mercer | Mettl's assessment tools helped the client identify critical errors in sentence correction, sentence reading and impromptu speech. More importantly, the assessment reports offered a detailed overview of the trainable errors vis-à-vis non-trainable mistakes. The L&D managers could also overcome the critical challenges of conducting mass assessments for customer-facing roles in the BPO industry.

The cut-off points for speaking and writing assessments were kept different to help an easy understanding of an employees' current proficiency levels in both areas. These arrangements cumulatively helped the client to devise an effective program to address communication problems and train or develop employees based on accurate, factual and analytical data.



# Impact

Mercer | Mettl's set of products enabled the IT service management company to improve its current people-centric processes by augmenting them with contemporary tools. Both platforms' insightful features helped nurture an environment of focused learning and growth. This could be possible because the tools provided the management with substantial data to work upon and offer structured growth plans.

These insights paved the way for highly advanced and holistic developmental strategies to improve the employees' written and oral communication skills.

- **Training and retests**

It was easier to identify people who needed the training to improve their communication skills. Once the target groups and their training needs were identified, based on the assessment results, the client initiated L&D programs and encouraged candidates to retake tests after completing their training.

- **A mandate for performance appraisals**

The company has now mandated clearing SpeechX and Writing Simulator tests for considering employees' performance appraisal cycles. They can seek training sessions for whichever test they are unable to clear at first and reattempt it every six months. The client has taken this initiative to advance employees' T&D initiatives.

The impact of these assessments and how they have transformed the company's L&D program promise a lasting improvement in the overall communication skills of its workforce.



Thus far, Mercer | Mettl has helped it conduct about **15,000 assessments successfully**, and the numbers are expected to grow.

## The way forward

Given the immense value added by Mercer | Mettl's platforms to the client's L&D programs, the management plans to continue with these evaluations periodically. The company has also incorporated SpeechX in its hiring assessments and made it compulsory for its existing employees to clear both the assessments- speech and writing. The focused nature of Mercer | Mettl's communication test reports and the consequent training initiatives have enabled the team to address all concerns related to email writing, client relations and general English proficiency incredibly well.



# About us

At Mercer I Mettl, our mission is to enable organizations to make better people decisions across two key areas: acquisition and development. Since our inception in 2010, we have partnered with more than 4,000 corporates, 31 sector skills councils/government departments and 15+ educational institutions across more than 90 countries.

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