



Brandon Hall Group  
**EXCELLENCE  
AT WORK**

# Executive Interview

with **Ron Zamir**,  
CEO,  
AllenComm

and **Lauren Prisco**,  
Director of Smart L&D Staffing Solution,  
AllenComm

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Smart L&D Staffing: The Future of Workforce Flexibility  
— Why the Market Needs More L&D Staffing



## About AllenComm

In partnership with HR and L&D teams, AllenComm designs innovation and scale into the critical training activities we develop to meet critical priorities and objectives. For 40+ years, AllenComm has partnered with Fortune 100 companies to develop custom content for transformative learning experiences. Extensive instructional design experience, agency-level creative teams and innovative learning technologies enable AllenComm to stand out in the learning landscape.

Considered one of the top 10 firms of its kind for change management, AllenComm has won more than 40 awards year after year for custom learning programs in employee onboarding, reskilling, leadership development, brand, compliance, and sales enablement. AllenComm has more than 130 in-house experts and subject matter professionals across multiple industries.

With a scalable internal workforce and well-honed processes, AllenComm is uniquely equipped to create the right mix of eLearning, ILT, vILT, gamification, microlearning, staffing, coaching tools and resources to build learning experiences that match organizational needs.

Additionally, AllenComm offers a Smart L&D Staffing support service to augment and scale the in-house training development programs of our clients. AllenComm offers a full range of experts on a short or long-term basis, as well as managed services to take projects from start to finish. For more information, visit [allencomm.com](https://allencomm.com).



## Recognition

A Brandon Hall Group™ Silver Smartchoice® Preferred Provider, AllenComm won six awards in the 2023 HCM Excellence Awards®.

### EXCELLENCE IN HCM AWARDS



Learning and Development	3 Gold Awards	1 Bronze Award
Leadership Development		1 Silver Award
Talent Acquisition		1 Gold Award

The Brandon Hall Group Preferred Provider Program is specifically designed as a single source of truth that can validate your technology selection decisions.

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## About Ron Zamir



**Ron Zamir** is the CEO of AllenComm. His mission is to help clients navigate the choices that lead to effective learning and training experiences. During Ron's 24 years at AllenComm, the company has focused on helping customers identify and change critical employee behaviors, raise engagement and focus on training that creates real change. A 33-year industry veteran, Ron has worked globally in the U.S., Israel and South Africa, leading training organizations both as a vendor and an executive. He now brings that experience to clients across the world, as he presents insights about key trends and innovations in the learning and development industry.

## About Lauren Prisco



**Lauren Prisco** is the acting director of AllenComm's Smart L&D Staffing solution. She brings a unique perspective to staffing strategies, having been engaged as both a purchaser and a provider of L&D talent. During her more than two decades in L&D, Lauren has gained invaluable experience as a developer, facilitator, consultant, strategist, project manager and executive. She has led large-scale, impactful L&D projects for respected industry leaders and organizations, including Biogen, Marsh McLellan and Dunkin' Brands — among others. Lauren has made it her mission to enhance business impact and create lasting value for her clients.

## About Rachel Cooke



**Rachel Cooke** is Brandon Hall Group's Chief Operating Officer and Principal HCM Analyst. She is responsible for business operations, including client and member advisory services, marketing design, annual awards programs, conferences and the company's project management functions. She also leads Advancing Women in the Workplace and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives, research and events. Rachel worked in the HCM research industry for 20+ years and held several key management and executive positions within the Talent and Learning Research, and Performance Improvement industries.

Q

**RACHEL**

Why is AllenComm investing and expanding its services in the Staffing industry?

A

**RON**

We've frankly always done staffing, but we have made a strategic decision to expand it in a way that would be unique to our clients and would fill up a gap in the market. AI is coming in, and the industry is changing again. We had to find a way to be more flexible and serve customer needs that were changing faster than a project would start and even end. This year, Lauren joined us with a deep expertise in Staffing and our industry, and we decided to expand a service that would bring value in three critical areas that were not being addressed.

Historically, the Staffing agencies in our industry come from an IT background. They see staffers as commodities, they're stop gaps to help an organization fill or do something that they're not ready to do. I think that story is gone. What we're seeing now is a need for experts in a specific industry. We believe that a Staffing agency focused on domain expertise, finding the right people for the right job in the right industry, is crucial for our customers. Secondly, it's been very clear that as companies hire individuals, it's not enough.

They also need a backbone. At AllenComm, because we come from the project world and the change management world, we provide all of our staffers, whomever they may be, with a background of our people and our know-how. It has been so hard to see how our L&D teams are so understaffed, but we know that is a reality and we believe that having smart L&D staffing, a Staffing function fully focused on the needs of L&D and a function that brings experts in specific areas, is something that the market needs.

A

**LAUREN**

Since COVID-19, there have been many studies that suggest that there are shortages within the labor force, specifically around L&D as well as just trying to find the right talent. And since COVID, it's presented lots of opportunities as well as risks with hiring folks, hiring folks with deep domain expertise and the talent that you need.

The majority of folks are working remotely or at least open to having remote folks come join the team. That expands the type of talent you can get. However, it does also pose a lot of risk. As we're going out and trying to recruit and retain talent, everybody considers themselves a contractor. Everybody kind of hangs their own shingle, and oftentimes that's just them using that as a stop-gap until they find their next permanent position.

*(continued)*

There's also a risk with a lot of side hustles now. I've never seen this before, but there are so many folks out there who have full-time jobs and they're looking for contract work. We recognize it because we're so entrenched in the L&D Staffing world, so we can uncover that.

The last thing that we would ever do is to place an L&D contractor at one of our client sites who has a full-time job. We know where that priority would be. Given our deep domain expertise in L&D in general, and we know how to uncover some of these kinds of risks with talent, that's part of what we bring to the table.

A

RON

It's been amazing when you look at the type of jobs we are providing now from experts in AI, but also people who understand SharePoint because that's being integrated into the learning experience. We're not dealing anymore with projects around, "Okay, I need an instructional designer, I need a project manager. I need an LMS administrator."

Companies are designing integrated learning experiences. The types of people they need vary not around four job titles, but now around eight or nine different job titles. Because getting people who are experts without understanding

your industry or the ramp-up time for you internally as a company, is so high, you are being totally inefficient in the staffers you're getting. We found a way to shorten those time cycles, shorten the internal investment and the total cost of ownership of a staffer, and provide that person with the whole background of our own performance consultants.

Again, AllenComm is not a Staffing agency trying to do projects. We're a company that's been focused on large-scale projects, change management and now, trying to help companies get ready for those projects and provide them with the teams they need after we leave the scene with our teams.

But in a sense, when we bring our staffers to our clients, we're not actually leaving the scene because those staffers have access to our expertise. We call it Smart L&D Staffing and "smart" is a very critical part. There is a smarter way to do staffing and we're up to the challenge of expanding our Staffing services to meet that challenge.

Q

RACHEL

Can you share some of the examples or client work that specifically covers how you are able to execute on this?

### LAUREN

**A** We know how contractors think, we understand what our clients need and we have access to exceptional talent. In terms of a couple of different examples, we have so many. We had a bank, for example, that had an audit, so there are some regulatory trainings that needed to take place before the end of the year.

Instead of hiring somebody and teaching them on their systems, we were able to quickly identify L&D folks who had experience with banking, so they understood terminology and the flow of what they were looking to do, but we also identified folks with the skillsets, which happened to be a very obscure authoring tool. We were able to turn that around and give them candidates for consideration within a week.

### RON

**A** I mentioned the SharePoint example. I never thought that we would be looking for L&D people with SharePoint experience. AI is sexy, but there's a lot of heavy lifting as companies need expertise in specific areas.

We have examples from the pharmaco-vigilance world. We have examples from insurance companies that have been using us and plenty of other vendors, creating new leadership and new onboarding, but now they need a project manager who understands performance consulting and job-task analysis. When you start

slicing and dicing what our market needs going into 2024 and 2025, it needs experts in really specific areas.

### RACHEL

**Q** How do we create those skills or how does someone become an expert as the direction is changing so frequently?

### LAUREN

**A** We have a client right now in the construction industry where they're growing and expanding tremendously, and they recognize the need to have a formal Learning and Development function within their organization.

The vice president who was put into that position admittedly did not have a lot of experience with L&D. They know they need a staff of about 18 people over the next 12 months or so. Instead, we started talking about what their needs are. They were originally coming for a project, but it came down to, you need to have the right people in place. He didn't know how to find the talent because it's very difficult if you don't understand what the competencies and roles are within L&D. We're placing a staff there for that vice president, but we're also helping him guide it along until it matures and he can take over that function with confidence.

*(continued)*

We also have a client that has made a commitment to AI. They put out a lot of off-the-shelf content, and they're trying to keep up with the trends and they see the advantage of AI with content development and maintenance. They were asking us for instructional designers who can work with AI to produce all this content, but we recognized more of an opportunity to make a business impact instead of just providing them with designers to use these tools that have known risks and opportunities.

Instead, what we're doing is providing them with a very senior-level AI consultant who focuses on L&D. How do you take this content? How do you make the tools learn your content so that they can be smarter? It's not just about creating content with AI, but it's how to make them work smarter. The innovation that we're bringing to the team is much more than just providing an instructional designer.

**A**

**RON**

We find people who are motivated to go beyond that one tool they were taught when they did their master's, but now they're using three or four different tools to gain acumen in business intelligence systems. These people are out there and sometimes you need a little help to find them. But we've had and will have situations where we bring in staffers and the organization hires those staffers. And that's fine.

**Q**

**RACHEL**

Are there any other predictions on where L&D and Staffing are headed?

**A**

**RON**

Looking at my 20 years at AllenComm, I can spot five-year waves. The first thing I'll say is we can't predict change. I know it sounds a little trite, but as L&D professionals, we have to adapt to change. If we as a company can help our customers adapt to change, it's a win-win for both of us.

As a typical L&D professional, I started in the industry as an instructional designer. We have to be a lot more open to adopting technology. Now it's AI with prompt engineering, tomorrow it's going to be using more virtual reality as a way to communicate internally and externally in a scalable way.

The next day, it could be having to train not just human employees, but train non-human employees and getting them smarter and better at what they do. That's just the next stage of AI. We can meet up again in five years.

*(continued)*

I know we'll meet beforehand and see if we made the right predictions, but I can't predict change. If you're going to be a vendor in this industry — if you're going to continue a 40-year positive track — you have to set yourself up to help your clients change.

I would also say to my fellow L&D professionals, tighten those seat belts. I think they've been tight for a long time, but keep tightening them.

Things will change, but the future is going to be really good for our profession. There's no lag time between a company's success and having an employee base that could drive that success. Technology is a mediator, but that mediation is getting smaller and smaller as people who are integrated with technology drive change rapidly, not just for themselves but for the company they serve. It's going to be a good five years in front of us.

**Here are some ways to  
listen to the interview  
on Brandon Hall Group's  
Excellence at Work Podcast:**



**Brandon Hall Group  
EXCELLENCE  
AT WORK**

# About Brandon Hall Group™

With more than 10,000 clients globally and 30 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group™ is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

## Professional Certifications

Self-paced certification programs. Virtual group sessions for companies. In-person conferences and summits.

## Membership

Individual and Enterprise Membership Options: Includes research assets, advisory support, a client success plan and more.

SOME WAYS WE CAN HELP

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### ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

recognizes world-class HCM programs that transform their organization and achieve breakthrough results. This designation is the next step beyond the HCM Excellence Awards, which focus on a single program, and looks at the department as a whole.



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