

How Emory University Incorporated a Board Game into Their New Leader Orientation Program



BUSINESS SITUATION

Emory University, a top-ranked private institution recognized internationally for its outstanding liberal arts colleges, graduate and professional schools, and one of the world's leading healthcare systems, is located on a beautiful campus in Atlanta, Georgia's historic Druid Hills neighborhood.

Emory's Learning and Organizational Development team was tasked with designing a new leader orientation program for individuals who were recently hired or promoted into a "people manager" position. The goal was to design an orientation that provides these individuals with the skills and tools needed to be successful in their roles within the first 90 days.

The team of learning and development professionals was challenged to design something that looked and felt totally different from a general onboarding program. They wanted a solution that was interactive and that would also help the participants to retain their newfound knowledge.

ACTION

Wanting to avoid the rotation of presenters sharing information, the team at Emory began discussing the possibility of incorporating a board game in the training session. They wanted to leverage discussion-based, experiential learning to cover these areas:

1. Emory Culture, History, and Business of Higher Education
2. Performance Management
3. Development Planning
4. Employees Relations

To achieve their learning outcomes, Emory partnered with Paradigm Learning to meet their goals and learning objectives through an interactive board game - Embark™.

A brainstorming session helped produce content which covered the breadth and depth of Emory's educational needs. From there, Paradigm Learning produced the materials for the training and, through a series of meetings, validated the efficacy with Emory's training team and the legitimacy with their subject matter experts.

The design of the game allowed Emory to cover its four key areas while allowing for breakout sessions between each round to allow for additional discussions and to ensure that learners gained the appropriate knowledge and skills.

CLIENT STORY

IMPACT

In the program's first six months, Emory University has offered the New Leader Orientation Program to over 175 participants. Most participants are staff employees with roles ranging from Supervisors to Senior Leaders. All the sessions are offered in Atlanta, GA.

"Our overall experience with Paradigm Learning was extremely pleasant and the representatives were very accommodating to our needs." - Anisthasia B. Carter
Director, Learning & Development

RESULTS

There has been a lot of positive feedback regarding Emory's use of Embark for their Orientation program. Participants have said:

- "The game to inform you of Emory's History was impactful."
- "I really liked the board game."
- "I was lucky to have an engaging table, it was hard to stop the game when the time was up."
- "The board game was a fun way for us to interact and learn from each other."

WHAT'S NEXT

Emory University plans to continue using Embark as a part of the New Leader Orientation Program. As more individuals experience the New Leader Orientation Program, participants will have the opportunity to better understand what leadership should look like at Emory.

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