



IT DOESN'T HURT TO ASK...

An MIT xPRO Guide to Discussing Professional Development with Your Employer

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1. Take a look at the *System Thinking website*. Note which topics and learning outcomes align with your company and personal career goals.
2. Review the “Get Your Technical Experts Ready” section on page two of this guide and “Common Objections” on page three to help augment your letter or support a follow up conversation.
3. Customize the yellow areas highlighted in the template on page four of this guide and send it to your manager or HR professional.
4. Read or share the “Leaders for the Future” white paper for more information on why it’s so important to train technical professionals to become tomorrow’s leaders.
5. Have any other questions about the course that might help your case? Or interested in group pricing for your team? Email us at xpro@mit.edu.



GET YOUR TECHNICAL EXPERTS READY

Bring these facts and figures into the conversation.

1

TALKING POINT :

"With technology accelerating at an unprecedented pace, organizations like ours need employees with both the technical know-how and leadership acumen to move their industry forward."

STAT :

According to a **multi-year study from MIT Sloan Management Review and Deloitte**, today's leaders must blend traditional and new skills to effectively guide their organizations into the future.

TESTIMONIAL :

"Thriving in this digital era of promise and uncertainty means increasing the velocity of innovation, experimentation and collaboration. The main engine for this is not some magical technology – it's talented people."
- From Cognizant's Center for the Future of Work.

2

TALKING POINT :

"Technical professionals like me have many of the skills we need to lead. We bring deep technical expertise, analytical skills, and systems thinking. Yet few have the leadership competencies necessary to drive change and build high-performing teams."

STAT :

The same study from **MIT Sloan Management Review and Deloitte** reports that 68% of respondents agree that their organization needs new leadership to compete. And the **Global Leadership Forecast** reports that companies who have the most digitally-capable leaders financially outperform the average by 50%.

TESTIMONIAL :

"The MIT Systems Thinking course provided me with valuable insights, new language and concepts to apply to my job, and different ways of approaching engineering problems and managing projects."
- Max Osborne, Engineering Managerin, Boeing Aerostructures Australia



COMMON OBJECTIONS

Your employer will have questions. Let's help you answer them.

OBJECTION	RESPONSE
"It costs too much."	<p>It might cost more to neglect workforce training. Companies that prioritize employee development make median revenue of \$169,100 per employee while companies that don't make less than half of that: \$82,800 (Source)</p>
"It will take you too much time and distract you from your work."	<p>This course is designed for professionals, with an estimated time commitment of 3-5 hours per week. Learning new skills online does take time, but the format is flexible, offering learners the ability to watch lectures, read case studies, and practice new techniques on their own schedule.</p> <p>Plus, the time a company invests in training will save them time in the long run. A study by the National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce (EQW) supports this, finding that a 10% increase in educational development produced an 8.6% gain in productivity. (Source)</p>
"How is this different from those other online programs?"	<p>MIT xPRO offerings are created and taught by MIT faculty with insights from industry experts and are optimized for learners who are full-time working professionals.</p> <p>This <i>System Thinking</i> online course leverages the latest thinking from MIT to explore the newest practices in problem-based leadership. And it's designed specifically for technical professionals with case studies and interviews from real-world engineers, scientists, and researchers.</p> <p>When you complete this course, you will be prepared to innovate within your field, motivate collaboration, and work systematically so you can reach your highest potential and take on leadership roles in your organization.</p>

EMAIL TEMPLATE

Copy and paste the following text into an email to your manager or HR professional.

Hi [MANAGER'S NAME]

I would like to submit a request for professional development through MIT xPRO's *System Thinking* online course. This five-week online course offers training that I believe is directly relevant and beneficial to what we're trying to accomplish within [OUR COMPANY NAME].

Built on MIT's world-class curriculum, this course teaches problem-solving skills through systems thinking to improve performance of projects and processes, specifically in technical environments. By the end of 5 weeks, I'll be able to examine complexity and simplify it; recognize patterns, and create effective solutions to challenges. Understanding and approaching problems from a systems perspective in technical environments is an essential skill for my career.

The cost of the course is \$1,500 (USD). It runs 5 weeks per course. This course is designed for full-time working professionals so the schedule will work with my current position. Group discounts are also available.

For more information, visit: <https://learn-xpro.mit.edu/system-thinking>

Thank you for considering my training request,

[YOUR NAME]