

THE HOME DEPOT

Merchandising Learning & Development

Q1 / Q2 Business Review

Presented to: Director, Human Resources

Q2 2026 | Merchandising L&D Team

What We're Covering Today

01

Q1 Snapshot

Three high-impact initiatives — what we built and why it worked

02

Results at a Glance

Key metrics that show learning is moving the business

03

The Approach

How we designed each solution — the methodology behind the outcomes

04

Q2 Roadmap

Three priority initiatives and what we're building next

05

Strategic Alignment

How Q1 momentum connects to our Q2 and broader HD goals

Q1 Initiatives — Three Programs, Measurable Impact

Merchandising Onboarding Revamp

Merchants & Merchant Assistants

Business Challenge

New Merchants required too much time before confidently leading vendor line reviews.

Our Approach

- Replaced week-long classroom training.
- Introduced structured 30/60/90-day onboarding journey.
- Developed Coach Guides.
- Combined digital learning with live job shadowing.

Business Impact

- ✓ 15% faster time-to-productivity
- ✓ Managers reported stronger confidence and readiness among new hires

15% faster time-to-productivity

Prompt-a-thon

GenAI Integration for Merchandising

Business Challenge

Associates needed practical ways to integrate AI into everyday work.

Our Approach

- Interactive team-based workshop
- Real merchandising scenarios
- Prompt engineering competition
- Hands-on experimentation

Business Impact

- ✓ 92% satisfaction
- ✓ Average 3 hours saved weekly
- ✓ Immediate workplace application.

92% satisfaction · 3 hrs/week saved

Vendor Negotiation Masterclass

Senior Merchant Pilot

Business Challenge

Strengthen strategic vendor negotiations.

Our Approach

- External negotiation expert
- Custom role-play simulations
- Real supplier conversations

Business Impact

- ✓ 100% completion
- ✓ 80% applied new negotiation strategy
- ✓ Improved supplier payment terms

80% applied tactics · 3 supplier wins

Key Takeaway

Learning initiatives directly improved productivity, capability, and business outcomes.

Q1 Results at a Glance

Three programs. Consistent methodology. Business-level outcomes.

15%

Faster time-to-productivity for new Merchants after Onboarding Revamp

92%

Satisfaction rate from Prompt-a-thon participants (N=60)

3 hrs

Average weekly time saved per associate on vendor communications & reports

100%

Completion rate — Vendor Negotiation Masterclass (N=25 senior merchants)

80%

Applied the "Total Value" negotiation tactic within 4 weeks post-training

3

Key supplier relationships improved — better payment terms negotiated

The Approach: How We Designed for Impact

Great outcomes start with intentional design decisions. Here's the methodology behind each Q1 initiative.

Initiative	The Problem / Insight	The Design Decision	Why It Worked
Merchandising Onboarding	Problem: Lag in time-to-productivity → Moved away from passive week-long PowerPoint training	Solution: Structured 30/60/90 milestones + Manager Coach Guides + blended self-paced + live shadowing	Why It Worked: Multi-modal design matched real workflow; managers became active development partners
Prompt-a-thon (GenAI)	Problem: Associates needed practical AI skills, not theory → Couldn't afford passive lecture fatigue	Solution: Competitive team challenge — 10 teams, real merchandising scenarios, live prompt engineering	Why It Worked: Learning-by-doing with immediate application to actual job tasks drove 92% satisfaction
Vendor Negotiation Masterclass	Problem: Senior merchants needed live skill application, not passive content consumption	Solution: External expert + L&D-built custom role-plays from actual difficult vendor conversations	Why It Worked: Grounding in real data (not generic scenarios) made transfer to real negotiations immediate

"Every learning experience was intentionally designed to create measurable business impact—not simply knowledge transfer."

Q2 Roadmap — Building on Q1 Momentum

Initiative 1

Advanced AI

Level 2 — Builds on Prompt-a-thon

Goal

Help Space Planners analyze analyze large datasets using AI.

Expected Outcome

Better assortment planning before holiday season.

Increased AI adoption

Initiative 2

Coach Upskilling

Closes a Gap Identified in Q1

Goal

Equip Coaches to effectively support new hires using the Coach Guides.

Expected Outcome

More consistent onboarding experience across teams.

Stronger coaching consistency

Initiative 3

Seasonal Readiness

New Format — High Velocity Delivery

Goal

Deliver bite-sized learning through:

- 3-minute videos
- Infographics
- Quick reference guides

Expected Outcome

Faster access to critical information during seasonal transitions.

Faster seasonal readiness
Higher learner engagement

Strategic Alignment: Q1 → Q2 → Broader HD Goals

The Intentional Thread

Q1 Prompt-a-thon → Q2 Advanced AI (Level 2)

We don't train and walk away. Q2 deepens what Q1 started.

Q1 Onboarding Revamp → Q2 Coach Upskilling

We spotted the gap during rollout and are closing it intentionally.

Data-driven Q1 → Micro-learning for scale

Q1 showed long-form has limits. Q2 adapts the format to the audience.

How This Supports HD's Broader Goals

Associate Productivity

Faster onboarding + AI time savings = more capacity for strategic merchant work

AI Adoption at Scale

Q1 Prompt-a-thon was 60 associates. Q2 Level 2 goes deeper. Building internal AI fluency is a competitive advantage.

Manager Effectiveness

Coach Guides + upskilling transforms managers from observers to active development partners

Operational Agility

Micro-learning for seasonal readiness means the field never waits for a training day — knowledge lives on the intranet, always accessible

THE HOME DEPOT

Every initiative this quarter was intentional; designed to close a real gap, measure a real outcome, and move the business forward.

Q1 Highlights

- ☐ Faster onboarding and quicker time-to-productivity.
- ☐ Successful AI adoption across merchandising teams .
- ☐ Stronger vendor negotiation capabilities .

Looking Ahead to Q2

- ☐ Continue scaling AI capability .
- ☐ Strengthen coaching excellence .
- ☐ Deliver just-in-time learning for seasonal readiness.

Thank You

Questions & Discussion