



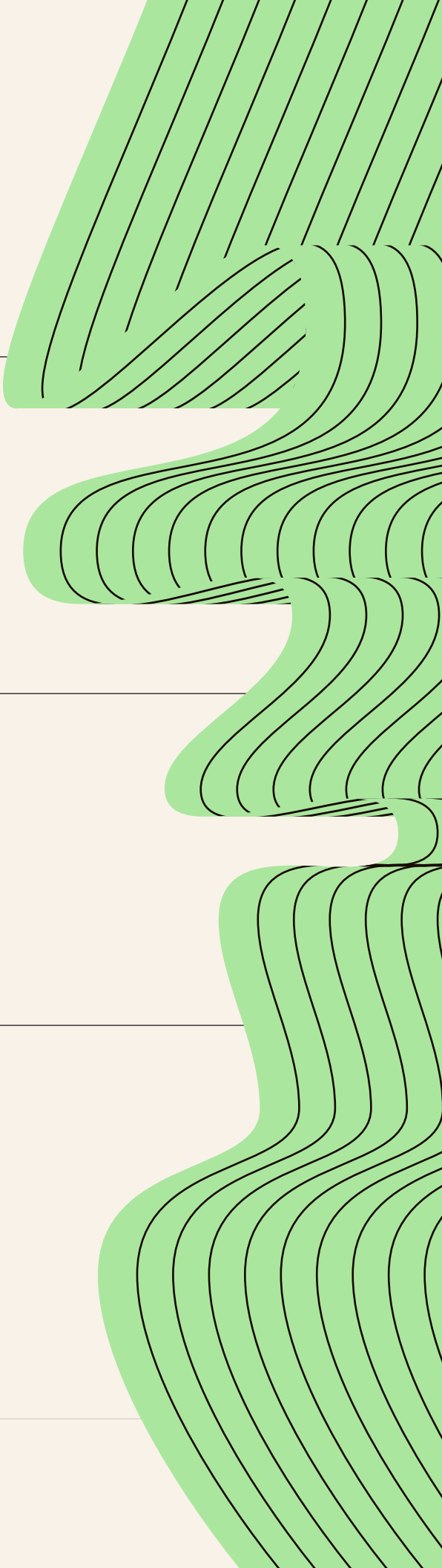
# Close partnership enables precise skilling for in-demand roles

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**Custom-built courses create pathways for frontline  
leaders in retail and beyond**

**Guild**

# Executive summary



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## The challenge

Despite an abundance of frontline talent, Guild's retail partners were struggling to staff team leads and store managers. These roles needed a unique mix of tech know-how, HR expertise, and critical soft skills like leadership.

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## The solution

Guild leveraged partnerships first with Bellevue University to identify the People & Business Leadership Certificate, and then with the University of Denver to advise on the creation and design of the Frontline Manager Leadership Program. By blending integration capabilities and adult-learning expertise, Guild enabled precise skilling pathways featuring progress tracking, real-time support, and targeted interventions for learners.

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## The impact

Since launching these programs, thousands of frontline workers have completed the certificates. Guild's integration with learning partners made it possible to optimize completion rates, and added supports like webinars and orientations helped lead to a 20% increase in successful program completion.

With a sizable workforce distributed across the United States, a large retail organization knew it had limitless potential with its internal talent. Yet, the company was struggling to fill open roles for team leads — so they turned to innovative learning institutions through their partnership with Guild.

A national retailer saw immense potential in its frontline workforce, but it was struggling to fill key team lead roles.

A robust education benefit through Guild was already in place to help employees access learning programs and gain skills, but a more specific pathway was needed to prepare workers for the complex demands of store management.

In response, Guild stepped in with its network of innovative learning providers to deliver a solution that was responsive to the exact pain points HR leaders were feeling. Together, Guild and the retailer co-created a roadmap to unlock internal talent, building a bridge from the frontline to the management ranks with custom-made skilling.

## The power of partnership: Building pathways for the frontline workforce

To start, Guild tapped Bellevue University to add the People & Business Leadership Certificate to the retailer's skilling catalog. Designed for frontline employees aiming for team lead roles, the two-course certificate combines synchronous and asynchronous learning with case studies and weekly discussions to develop essential management and leadership skills.

A key feature of the program is its “stackable” structure: employees can complete the certificate as a standalone credential or use it as academic credit toward a degree. This flexibility helps frontline workers gain valuable skills quickly, with the option to work toward the greater economic impact of a college degree over time.

Since launch, nearly 2,000 employees have completed the program, with about 500 choosing to continue on to a full degree.

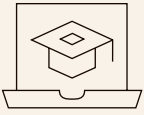


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~2,000 employees have completed the program since 2020

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~500 have continued their studies to become degree-seeking students



## Expanding leadership pathways for frontline workers

Building on the success of the People & Business Leadership Certificate, Guild recognized a strong demand among employer partners for deeper frontline management training.

In response, Guild partnered with the University of Denver (DU) to create a custom management training program tailored for first-time and aspiring frontline managers. Built with insights from Guild’s employer partners, the program focused on operational and people skills essential for managing a store — addressing needs across retail, food service, and hospitality.

To start, Guild led an advisory engagement with DU to synthesize employer needs and inform program design. This collaborative approach enabled DU to develop a learner experience tailored specifically to frontline employees, particularly those without college experience.

The result was the Frontline Management Leadership Program — an online course blending real-time learning with flexible, on-demand content to fit the schedules of working adults.

## Deep integrations enable intervention and boost completion by 20%

Guild’s direct integration with learning partners like DU provides real-time data on learner engagement to optimize program outcomes. Midway through the first cohort of the Frontline Management Leadership Program, DU flagged the disengagement rate among learners, many of whom were new to college or fully online learning.

Deep integrations lead to early intervention and a

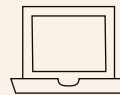
# 20%

increase in completion

### Guild collaborated with DU to pinpoint key factors and implemented targeted interventions, including:



**Live orientation sessions** to foster connection and build trust with DU’s support staff



**Pre-class webinars** to help learners improve digital literacy skills



**Success strategies and assignment templates** to guide learners through the course

These changes led to a **20% increase in successful course completion**. For employees, it meant stronger support on their path to advancement. For Guild’s employer partners, it meant more team leads and managers ready to step up. And for DU, it meant delivering even greater student success.



## Completion rates continue to improve, more workers gain skills to advance their careers

The program’s success has only grown. In 2024, it reached a 70% completion rate — a considerable achievement for a program built for busy working adults. What’s more, 100% of students surveyed at the end of the term said they would recommend the program to colleagues or friends, and 100% reported learning skills that would advance their careers.

100%

said they learned skills that would advance their careers

100%

Of students surveyed at the end of the term would recommend the program to a colleague or friend

70%

completion rate in spring 2024



## Skilling paths for retail, restaurants, hospitality, and beyond — at scale

Today, the Frontline Management Leadership Program and the People & Business Leadership Certificate are empowering frontline workers across Guild’s employer network — including Target, Chipotle, Charter Communications, Kohl’s, Lowe’s, Macy’s, and more. Through these scalable and responsive learning solutions, Guild’s employer partners in retail, restaurant, hospitality, and beyond are building talent from within.

With Guild’s integrated partnerships and the expertise of leading learning institutions, thousands of frontline employees are unlocking new career opportunities and advancing into critical roles.

“I’m learning how to be a good leader. You’re learning how to be relevant. You’re learning how to be, how to accept differences and how to act accordingly because we’re going to be faced with things that we might not even know that we’d be faced with...I do want to help myself in my current role. Of course we can always get better. I’ve been applying for coaching positions, which is the next step up.”

Carrie P, Major U.S. Retailer

# Guild



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