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WORKS

Back to the Future

Why tomorrow's workforce needs a learning culture

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Innovation in culture trumps innovation in digital

Content

Acknowledgements

Introduction

As the future of work and the workforce changes, so must corporate learning. Exciting and innovative disruptions continue to evolve, claiming to support people to perform better and faster. But are they adding any value?

This research sets out to find out how corporate learning is holding up as we enter a new decade of work. Since 2010, the workplace has been changing rapidly.

There's so much to unravel and evaluate, so we're looking to uncover the most significant insight to support learning leaders. Once and for all, we can set out a new mandate for the decade ahead.

To leave no stone unturned, we've looked at three perspectives. Against each of these perspectives, we've been asking open questions, uncovering insights and evidence from our vast data lake. That way, as an industry, we can make more informed evidence-based decisions.

Three research perspectives

1

The last decade
Hindsight

What happened?
Why did it happen?

2

Today
Insight

What's happening
now? What's working
and why?

3

The next decade
Foresight

Where shall we
invest? How do we
transform impact?

We've designed this report so that each of the three research perspectives can be used together or independently. Because our research is used by a wide and diverse group of people, we wanted to create something of value for all of our supporters.

Taking an evidence-based approach to exploring the three key perspectives has shown a number of key observations:

– The effect of the last 10 years has left us at a pivotal point. It's a place where we can grow from, but it's dangerous because we have a negative balance.

Investment in technology has gone up by 3% in 2020, but only 15% of learning leaders report successes in driving innovation for business growth – 3% lower than in 2019.

– Today, only organizations that show signs of a learning culture are bucking the trend.

Innovation in culture trumps innovation in digital. In 2020, 71% of learning leaders with high-impact learning cultures report actively involving learning consumers in design, compared with just 21% on average.

– As we look to the next 10 years and the fierce forces of change continuing to come our way, only high-impact learning cultures look set to beat the odds.

Learning leaders with high-impact learning cultures are 10 times more likely to have sustainable impact on the four critical levers of business: growth, transformation, productivity and profitability.

The aim of this annual report is to understand and explore organizational learning that delivers real impact. And has a positive effect on the four critical levers of organizations.

In the quest to research the impact of learning across three perspectives and multiple sources, it's evident that the approach, conditions and principles taken to date need a revolution. As an L&D community, we simply need to do less, better. And stick to our expertise, without getting distracted by shiny new things, unless we're set up and ready to change.

Our methodology

Our methodology reflects the aim of the report. We use a mixed-method approach to tackle organizational learning from multiple perspectives. We focus on learning strategy, business impact, practice, and employee and managerial perception. This is discussed in more detail in Appendix A.

To date, over 8,500 organizations worldwide have contributed to the Emerald Works Health Check. The 2019 – 2020 season marked the highest intake in our history, with 1,123 organizations taking part. Figure 1. shows a breakdown of participants based on industry, size and seniority.

Figure 1. Breakdown of 2019 – 2020 Health Check participants

% Intake of senior learning/people change leaders*

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
74%	75%	77%	76%	76%	79%

% Intake based on organization size

Under 499	500-4999	5000-20000+
30%	37%	33%
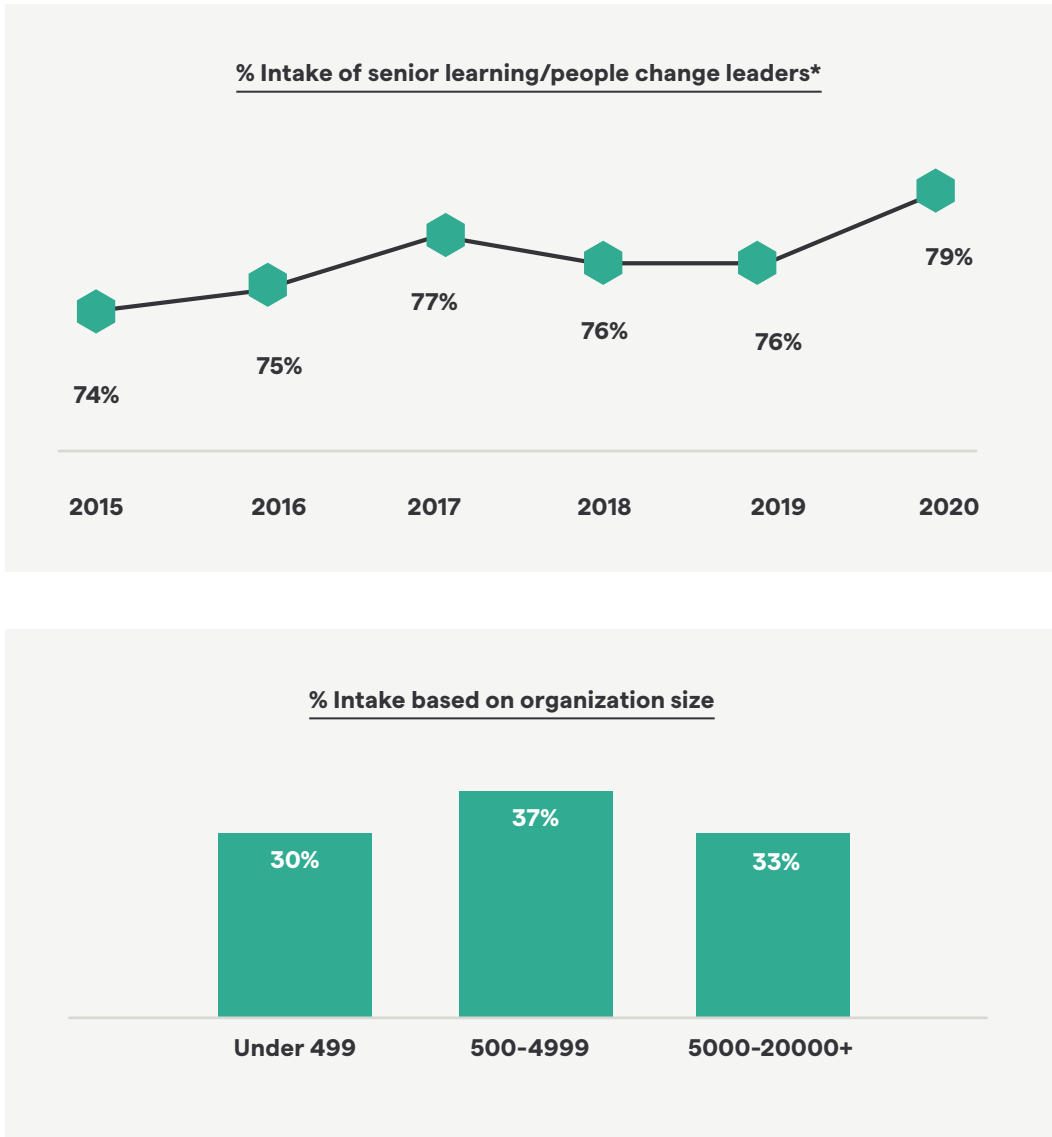
% Intake based on industry

Industry	%
Central government	4%
Local government	5%
IT and telecoms	8%
Professional services, law and accountancy	10%
Finance, banking and insurance	12%
Health	5%
Social care/housing association	6%
Other charity/voluntary sector	5%
Retail	7%
Engineering	5%
Manufacturing	11%
Pharmaceutical	2%
Transport	2%
Utilities	3%
Hospitality	3%
Education (HE, FE)	5%
Commercial training/e-learning supply	3%
Consulting	3%
Art, media and design	2%
Other	1%

Definition

Senior learning leaders:

We define 'senior learning leaders' as leaders in learning and organizational development with responsibility for setting or advising on learning strategy. That includes setting and allocating budgets, and managing the implementation of learning initiatives and associated digital solutions. We include those with specific business-wide, human resources (HR) or organizational development (OD) responsibility.

1. Hindsight

Negative balance – Investments in corporate learning continue to rise, impact continues to fall

Investment in technology has gone up by 3% in 2020. But only 15% of learning leaders report success in driving innovation for business growth – 3% lower than in 2019.

1.1 Emerald Works (EW) Index, formerly known as Towards Maturity Index, for 2020
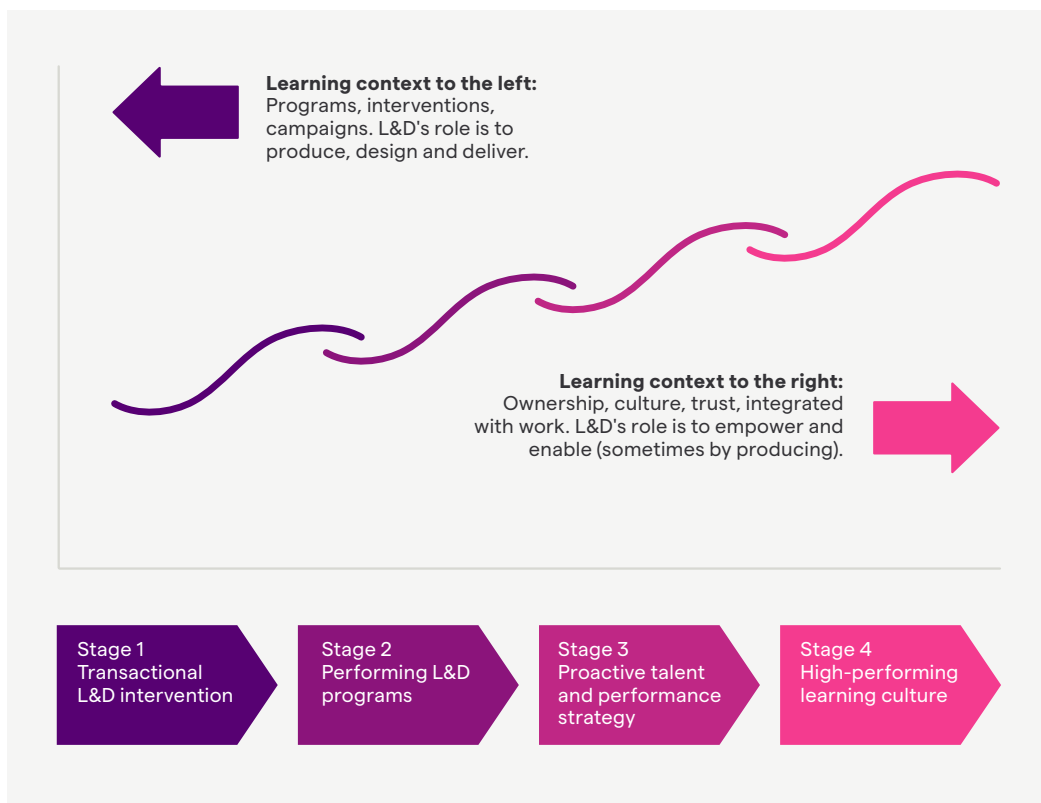
The EW Index, formerly known as Towards Maturity Index (TMI), tracks the overall health and impact of organizational learning. It does this by codifying how organizations apply learning strategies, digital innovation and behavioral change. It's a single measure that strongly correlates to the four strategic levers of business: growth, transformation, productivity and profitability.

Building on this, our 2018 and 2019 annual reports[1] highlighted four key stages of an organization's learning approach

(see Figure 2 below). We summarized these stages in our Transformation Curve report. At the time, L&D thought leader Donald H Taylor called this "the most significant report since the research began in 2003."[2]

A major finding was that moving from one stage to another often involves a pivotal point of change. One whereby learning leaders need to make counterintuitive decisions, let go of the past, and embrace the next stage of development.

Figure 2. The Transformation Curve

Learning context to the left: Programs, interventions, campaigns. L&D's role is to produce, design and deliver.

Learning context to the right: Ownership, culture, trust, integrated with work. L&D's role is to empower and enable (sometimes by producing).

Stage 1
Transactional
L&D intervention

Stage 2
Performing L&D
programs

Stage 3
Proactive talent
and performance
strategy

Stage 4
High-performing
learning culture

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1. The Transformation Curve (2018), The Transformation Journey (2019)
2. The Transformation Curve (2018), pp. 4

In this report, we'll revisit and reimagine the Transformation Curve. This will ensure it guides and helps organizations to future-proof their learning and development strategies and digitalization efforts.

Despite strong investment in digital solutions and increased global spending, this year marks the third consecutive decline in the EW Index. Since 2017, the Index has fallen by 3.12 points, from 50.36 to 47.24. (See Figure 3 below.) Yet in the same period, high-impact learning cultures (HILCs) have managed to increase their EW Index by 3.93 points.

These two divergent paths are the focus of this annual report.

Definition

Emerald Works Index (EWI), formerly known as Towards Maturity Index (TMI):

The EWI is an aggregate score of 96 strategic behaviors that directly correlate to organizational profitability, productivity, transformation and growth. The EWI is measured on a scale of 0 to 100 and is revisited on an annual basis to ensure statistical validity and reliability.

High-Impact Learning Cultures (HILCs):

HILCs, also known as the Top Deck, are the top-performing 10% of our data sample. These organizations' learning strategies consistently achieve excellent results in terms of organizational growth, transformation, profitability and productivity. We therefore use them as a benchmark or gold standard.

Figure 3. Declining impact of organizational learning

	2015	2018	2019	2020
HILCs	75.92	78.69	78.72	79.85
Average EW Index	50.36	49.46	48.57	47.24
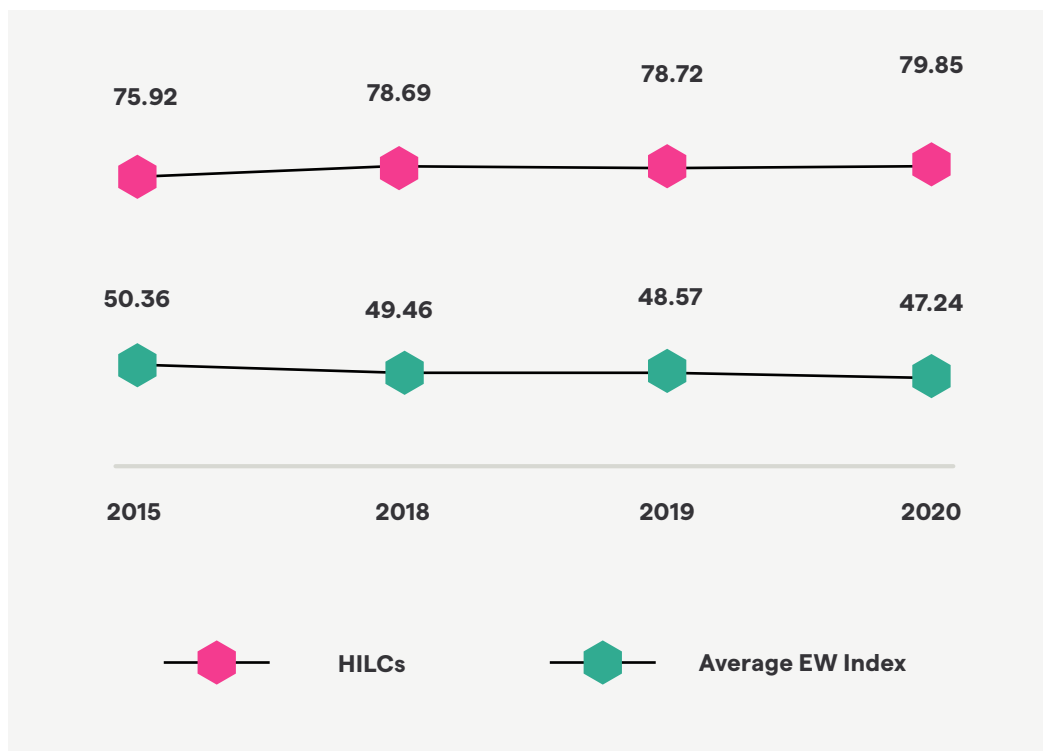
Note: The sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018), *n*=727 (2017).

This decline highlights the waning impact organizational learning strategies are having on growth, transformation, productivity, and profitability. (See Figure 4 below.)

Figure 4. Waning impact of current learning strategies

In growth	In profitability	In transformation	In productivity
● -1.43%	● -1.37%	● -1.29%	● -1.61%
● +1.80%	● +1.73%	● +1.63%	● +2.03%

● **The average overall (2020)**

● **HILCs (the top 10% performing companies)**
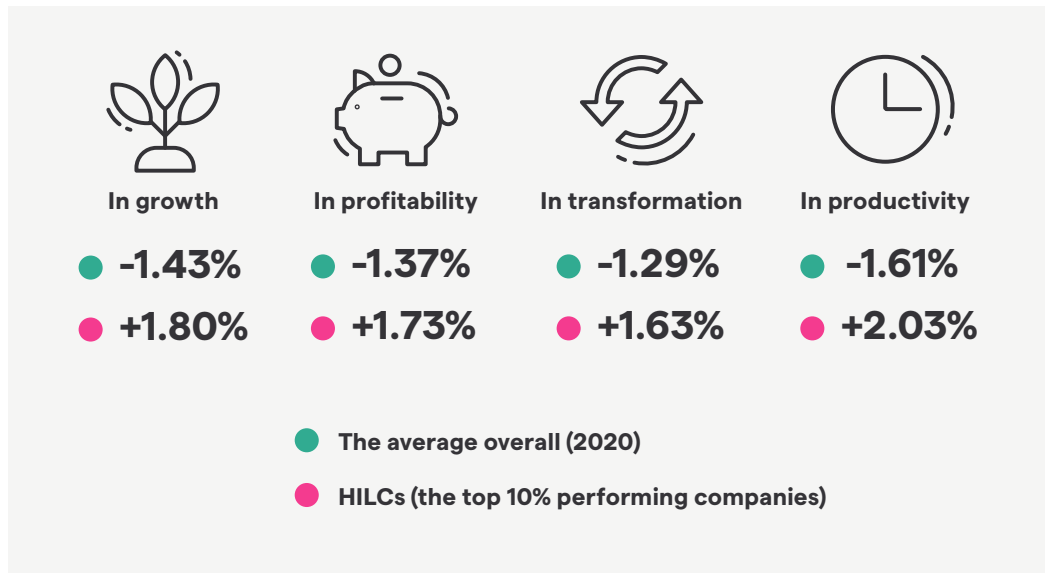
Note: The sample size is n=3236 (2017 – 2020). These are estimated losses based on a multiple regression model. We controlled for organizational size, region, learning budget and industry.

1.2 Learning leaders' vision and pain points

The ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus once said, "no man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man." Longitudinal evidence from the Health Check suggests that learning leaders, strategists and general practitioners are the exception to this rule.

Over a decade of data collection on the aims, objectives and priorities of learning leaders in organizations points to the fact that while the river has changed, the man or woman is reluctant to do the same.

This year, there's a larger than expected discrepancy between vision and practice. Learning leaders are more ambitious in 2020 than they were in 2019. Yet they're less likely to report having an impact on what matters to the organization. Figure 5 highlights this widening gap in several critical areas.

Figure 5. A clash between ambition and reality

Growth

Drive innovation for business growth

Year	Achieved	Priority
2018	14%	94%
2019	18%	86%
2020	15%	93%

Improve employee motivation

Year	Achieved	Priority
2018	26%	95%
2019	27%	93%
2020	22%	99%
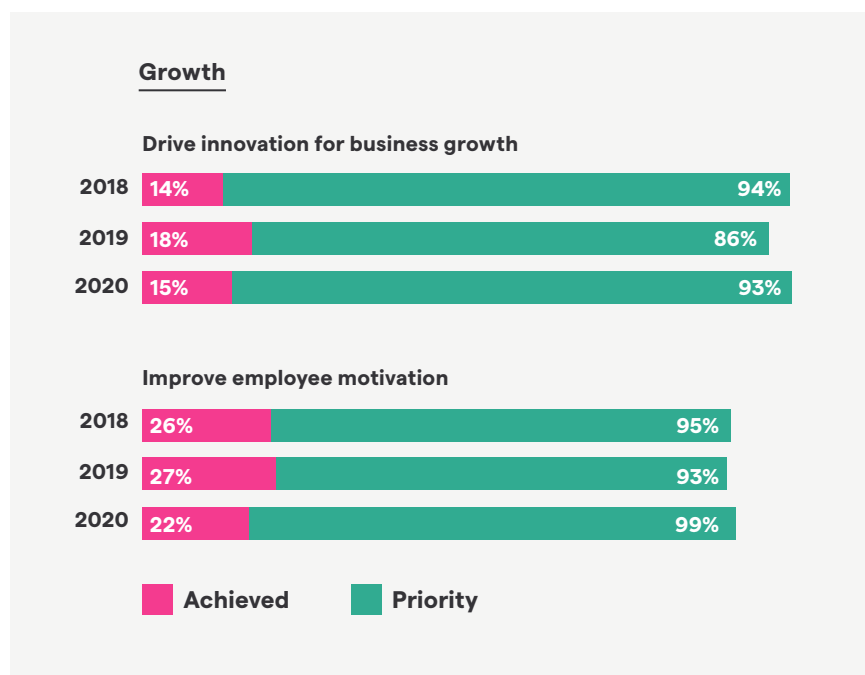
■ Achieved ■ Priority

Transformation

Build capacity of organization to solve problems

Year	Achieved	Priority
2018	19%	95%
2019	20%	91%
2020	17%	97%

Provide a faster response to changing business conditions

Year	Achieved	Priority
2018	18%	94%
2019	22%	90%
2020	18%	95%

■ Achieved ■ Priority

Productivity

Increase on the job productivity

Year	Achieved	Priority
2018	30%	97%
2019	33%	94%
2020	25%	97%

Improve talent management

Year	Achieved	Priority
2018	17%	93%
2019	20%	92%
2020	18%	95%

■ Achieved ■ Priority

Profitability

Improve external customer satisfaction

Year	Achieved	Priority
2018	37%	87%
2019	32%	74%
2020	31%	70%

Improve organizational performance

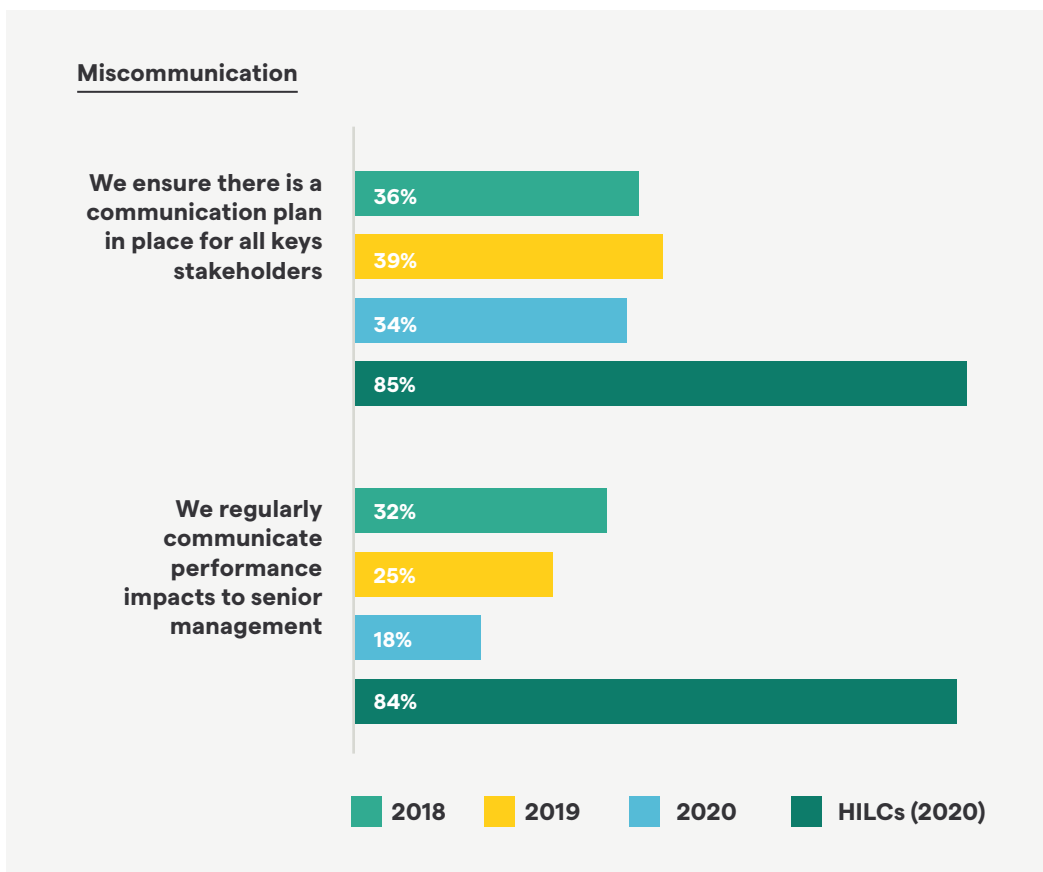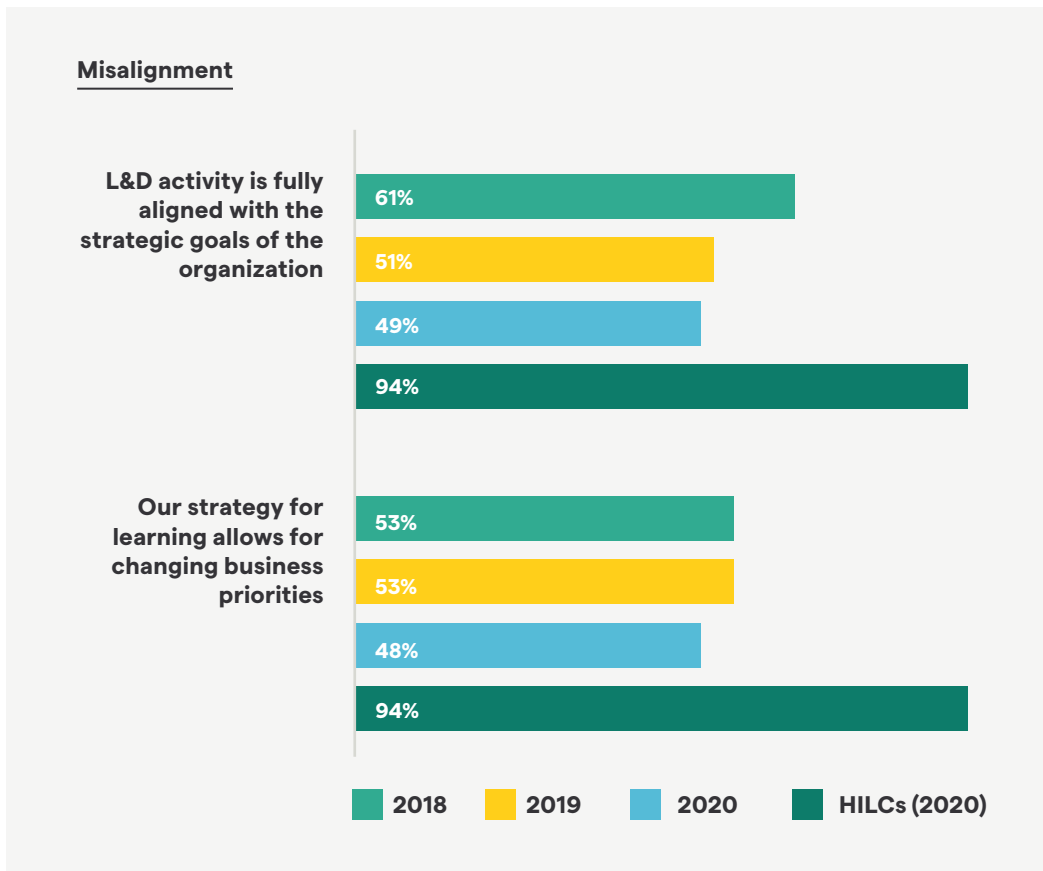| Year	Achieved	Priority
2018	25%	98%
2019	25%	96%
2020	21%	99%
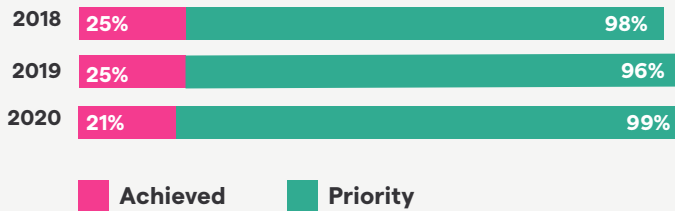
Achieved **Priority**

Note: The sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018) learning leaders. Respondents had a total of 54 options to select from and highlight whether these were a priority but haven't been achieved, a priority and have been achieved, or not a priority at all.

Based on our findings, the broadened focus on multiple priorities, compared to 2019 and 2018, will have had a negative impact on the ability of learning leaders and their teams to report successes. Specifically, this is due to the lack of clarity, focus, and vision. This has eroded, to an extent, the ability of learning leaders and their teams to implement successful and coherent learning strategies.

Only 52% of learning leaders report that their team understands the strategic goals of the business, compared with 53% in 2019 and 58% in 2018. In terms of team activity, only 49% report that this is fully aligned to the strategic goals of the business, 12% lower than what it was in 2018 (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. The impact of misalignment, miscommunication and lack of clarity

Misalignment

L&D activity is fully aligned with the strategic goals of the organization
- 2018: 61%
- 2019: 51%
- 2020: 49%
- HILCs (2020): 94%

Our strategy for learning allows for changing business priorities
- 2018: 53%
- 2019: 53%
- 2020: 48%
- HILCs (2020): 94%

Legend: 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | HILCs (2020)

Miscommunication

We ensure there is a communication plan in place for all keys stakeholders
- 2018: 36%
- 2019: 39%
- 2020: 34%
- HILCs (2020): 85%

We regularly communicate performance impacts to senior management
- 2018: 32%
- 2019: 25%
- 2020: 18%
- HILCs (2020): 84%

Legend: 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | HILCs (2020)

Everyone on the L&D team understands the strategic goals of the business
- 58%
- 53%
- 52%
- 97%

We have a plan for how we will meet the agreed business metrics/KPIs
- 37%
- 31%
- 30%
- 91%

Legend: 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | HILCs (2020)

Note: the sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018) learning leaders. Percentages are respondents that answered 7, 8 and 9, on a scale of 1 – 9, 1 being "strongly disagree" and 9 being "strongly agree".

In parallel to this decline on impact, and behaviors associated with impact, there has been an increase in reported pain points. 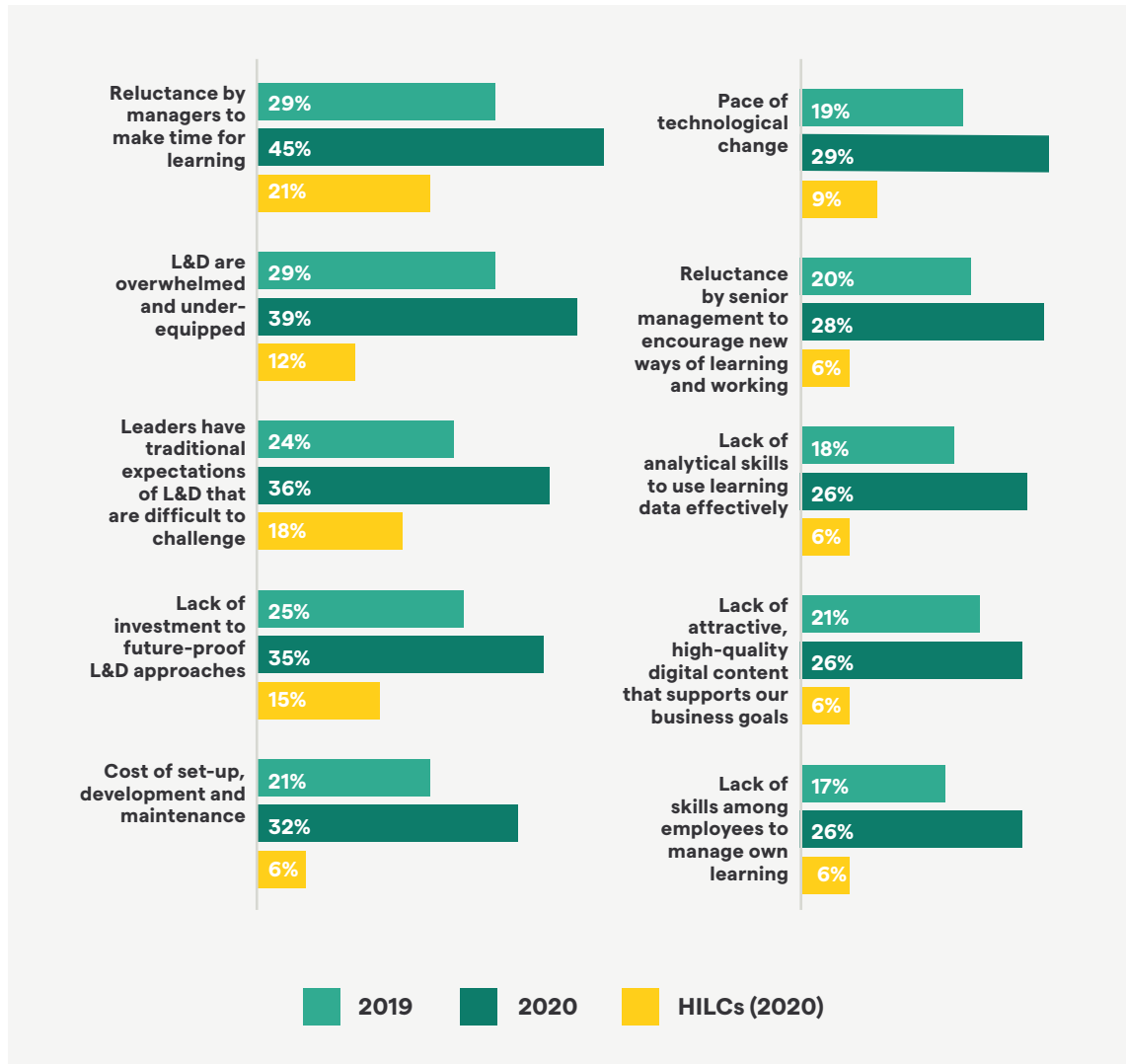A qualitative analysis of comments left by 645 respondents on these reveals learning leaders and their teams face similar problems to the past. But on a larger scale. Based on the qualitative analysis, we've identified 10 overriding areas of concern:

- Learning responsibility not shared across the organization
- Shifting mindsets from classroom to beyond
- Lack of data-driven decision-making
- Value of learning not recognized by organization
- Lack of investment, time and tools
- Traditional expectations
- Inconsistent learning approach
- Immature culture and approach to learning
- Lack of mandate and learning or people change capability
- Lack of alignment, buy-in and engagement from business

These are also well represented from a quantitative perspective. Figure 7 highlights the top 10 extreme concerns of 1,123 learning leaders:

Figure 7. Reluctant employees, overwhelmed learning/people change and lack of investment


	2019	2020	HILCs (2020)
Reluctance by managers to make time for learning	29%	45%	21%
L&D are overwhelmed and under-equipped	29%	39%	12%
Leaders have traditional expectations of L&D that are difficult to challenge	24%	36%	18%
Lack of investment to future-proof L&D approaches	25%	35%	15%
Cost of set-up, development and maintenance	21%	32%	6%
Pace of technological change	19%	29%	9%
Reluctance by senior management to encourage new ways of learning and working	20%	28%	6%
Lack of analytical skills to use learning data effectively	18%	26%	6%
Lack of attractive, high-quality digital content that supports our business goals	21%	26%	6%
Lack of skills among employees to manage own learning	17%	26%	6%

Note: the sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018) learning/people change practitioners. Respondents were asked to answer based on a list of 28 pain points. Percentages are respondents that answered "extremely concerned."

1.3 Budgets and forecasts

The global market size for workplace training or learning has been increasing steadily since 2010. In 2018, it was worth an estimated 366 billion dollars.[3] Figure 8 shows this incremental increase for the past eight years in detail.

Figure 8. Global spending on learning and development
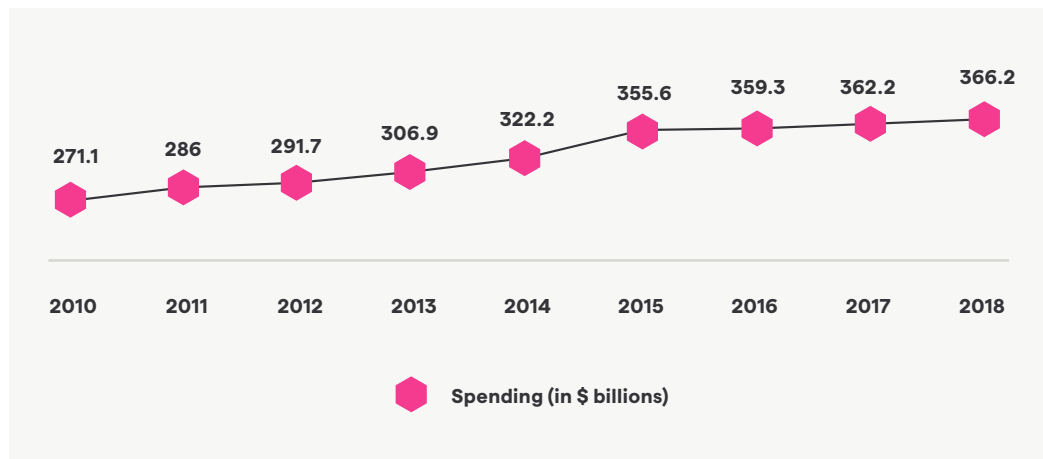
Based on our findings, in 2020, organizations spent an average of $863 per employee on learning and development. This is a decrease of 6.1%, or $53 less, from 2019.

However, the proportion of this budget spent on digital learning has increased from 18%, or $165, in 2019 to 21%, or £$185, in 2020. Figure 9 highlights learning budgets, percentage and actual spend on digital learning, percentage of learning developed in-house and average number of L&D team size per organization, for the past three years.

Figure 9. Budgets, digital learning spend, learning leaders staffing and in-house learning

Budgets	2018	2019	2020	2020 (Top Deck)
Organization's budget per employee for learning and development.	$919	$915	$863	$851
What % of your budget is spent on learning technologies?	22%	18%	21%	28%
Budget spent on learning technologies per employee.	$202.26	$164.75	$184.91	$236.33
What % of learning content is developed in house?	50%	45%	49%	61%
Median: How many people are in your learning/people change team?	21	17	13	14

Note: The sample size is n=887 (2020), n=503 (2019), n=462 (2018) learning leaders. Only respondents that had budget responsibilities and were senior management were prompted to answer budget and forecasting questions.

Note: Organizational learning budget does not refer to only formal learning but also includes expenditure on social and collaboration tools, maintaining communities of practice, etc. There will also be internal workforce costs that would increase these figures if we were calculating inclusive costs, e.g. self-determined and social learning, time, learning in the workflow, attachments, secondments, coaching etc.

3. Statista, 2019

Organizational size has a considerable impact on the budget. Larger organizations are able to scale more efficiently and reduce costs per person compared to smaller organizations. Multinational organizations are also much more likely to spend a third of their budget on digital learning compared with small or medium organizations. Figure 10 shows a breakdown of budgets by organizational size.

Figure 10. Budgets and organizational size

Size of organization	Organization's budget per employee for learning and development.	What % of your budget is spent on learning technologies?	Budget spent on learning technologies per employee.	What % of learning content is developed in house?	Median: How many people are in your learning/ people change team?
1 – 249	**$985.96**	**22%**	$221.54	51%	5
250 – 499	**$852.03**	**19%**	$158.06	44%	3
500 – 999	**$763.74**	**20%**	$152.02	44%	5
1000 – 4999	**$884.64**	**21%**	$189.18	52%	11
5000 - 19999	**$784.16**	**19%**	$148.04	55%	27
20000+	**$739.04**	**30%**	$222.62	49%	39

Region of organization	Organization's budget per employee for learning and development.	What % of your budget is spent on learning technologies?	Budget spent on learning technologies per employee.	What % of learning content is developed in house?	Median: How many people are in your learning/ people change team?
UK	**£623.86**	**20%**	£124.77	50%	11
US/Canada	**$784.51**	**24%**	$188.28	49%	23
Mainland Europe	**€739.27**	**24%**	€177.42	47%	15
Australia/New Zealand	**$974.03**	**27%**	$262.98	58%	9
Middle East/ Africa/India	**$720.01**	**23%**	$165.60	43%	14
Other Asia Pacific	**$917.54**	**20%**	$183.50	39%	17

Industry	Organization's budget per employee for learning and development.	What % of your budget is spent on learning technologies?	Budget spent on learning technologies per employee.	What % of learning content is developed in house?	Median: How many people are in your learning/ people change team?
IT and Telecoms	**$815.16**	**26%**	$167.79	44%	12
Professional Services	**$829.44**	**25%**	$208.21	57%	22
Finance and Banking	**$871.25**	**25%**	$217.66	49%	22
Health	**$739.68**	**27%**	$202.18	44%	5
Manufacturing	**$906.54**	**16%**	$146.69	41%	10
Retail	**$1005.25**	**16%**	$156.72	63%	14

Note: The sample size is *n*=887 (2020), *n*=503 (2019), *n*=462 (2018) learning/people change practitioners. Only respondents that had budget responsibilities and were senior management were prompted to answer budget and forecasting questions.

1.4 Digitalization and learning approach

Technology continues to transform the world of work. Indeed, it's considered one of the driving forces, changing the working landscape across all regions, industries and professions. The pace of change, however, has left some organizations struggling to keep up.

OECD,[4] ILO,[5] World Bank,[6] and other similar institutions have highlighted the urgent need for organizations to develop new capabilities and up-skill the current workforce if they're to remain relevant and survive. In particular, the OECD report says that automation alone could radically transform 32% of all jobs in the next 15 – 20 years.[7] Many organizations and their learning leaders have turned to digital tools to help re-skill and up-skill their employees at scale.

Since 2010, the use of digital tools has more than doubled; from 10 digital tools in 2010 (e.g. MOOCs, webinar tools, learning management systems) to 25 in 2020. Figure 11 gives an overview of some digital tools and learning resources used by organizations in the past three years (see Appendix B for more.)

However, our research has consistently highlighted that digital learning tools alone aren't enough to have real impact. Real impact requires behavioral and cultural change in parallel to digitalisation. Insights from Top Deck organizations in our previous reports in 2018 and 2019 show that innovation in culture trumps innovation in digital.[8]

4. OECD (2019), OECD Employment Outlook 2019: The Future of Work, accessed online: www.oecd.org/employment Employment-Outlook-2019-Highlight-EN.pdf

5. International Labor Organization (ILO), (2019), World Employment Social Outlook: Trends 2019, accessed online: www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_670542.pdf

6. World Bank (2019), World Development Report: The Changing Nature of Work, accessed online: documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/816281518818814423/2019-WDR-Report.pdf

7. Page 7, OECD (2019), OECD Employment Outlook 2019: The Future of Work, accessed online: www.oecd.org/employment/Employment-Outlook-2019-Highlight-EN.pdf

8. Transformation Curve (2018), Transformation Journey (2019)

Figure 11. Learning leaders' use of digital learning tools for the past three years

Digital tools	2018	2019	2020
Knowledge Access			
Learning Management System	89%	82%	80%
Job aids (e.g. pdf checklists, infographics)	70%	74%	79%
Open education resources/digital materials offered free at the point of use (e.g. Wikipedia, YouTube, OU, TED)	65%	64%	68%
Collaborative			
Communities of practice (communities to support working practices/subject interest groups)	55%	54%	55%
Webinars (e.g. Webex, LiveMeeting, Adobe Connect, GoToMeeting)	79%	69%	68%
Interactive video	28%	31%	40%
Cognitive and Advanced			
Artificial intelligence tools (e.g. Intelligent Tutoring Systems, virtual assistants, chat bots, Alexa, Siri)	9%	14%	16%
Continuous Learning Platforms (e.g. Degreed, Axonify, Fuse, LXPs)	15%	19%	22%
Augmented reality (e.g. live situations augmented by computer-generated sensory input such as sound, video)	14%	15%	18%

Note: The sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018) learning leaders. Percentages represent those respondents that reported having the digital tool in-house.

A continued increase in the use of digital tools for learning has led to incremental shifts in how learning is approached and delivered in organizations. From 2018 to 2020, classroom and face-to-face learning as a proportion of all learning decreased by 6%, from 55% in 2018 to 49% in 2020.

Online learning, on the other hand, increased during the same period by 5% as a proportion of all learning, from 22% in 2018 to 27% in 2020. Figure 12 presents this trend visually, while Figure 13 highlights differences by organizational size.

Figure 12. The shifting landscape of learning delivery and approach
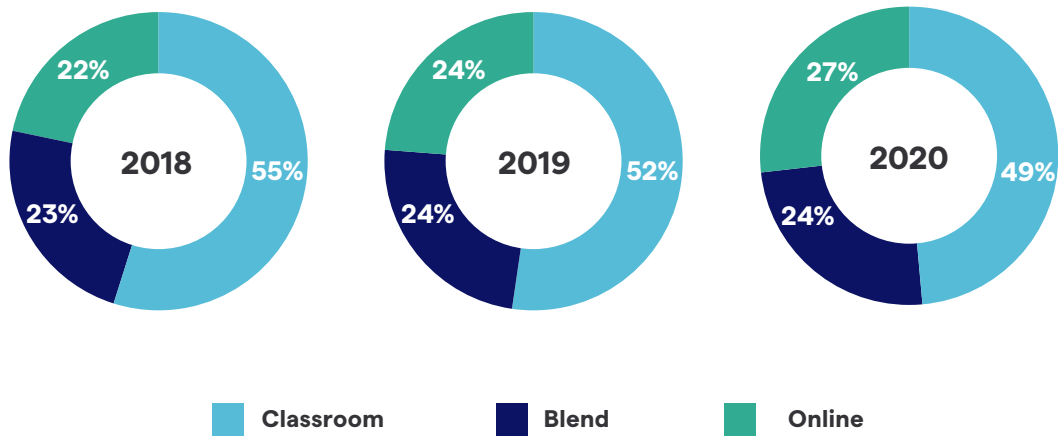
Note: The sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018) learning leaders. Percentages are normalized to 100%.

Figure 13. The shifting landscape of learning delivery and approach by size of organization
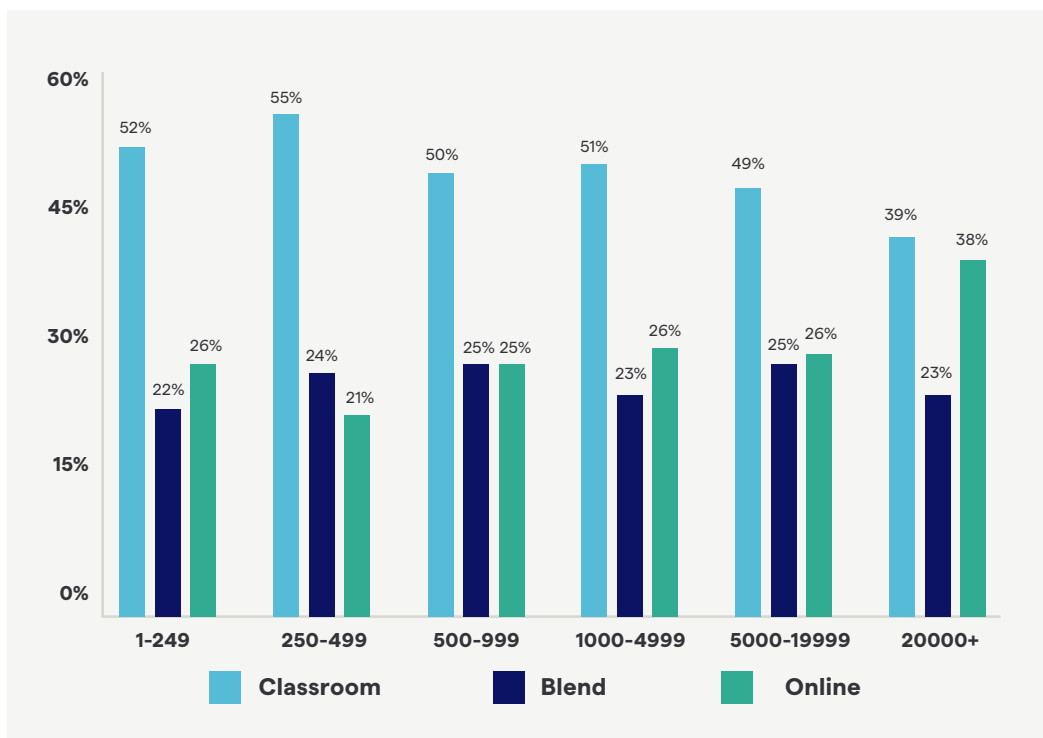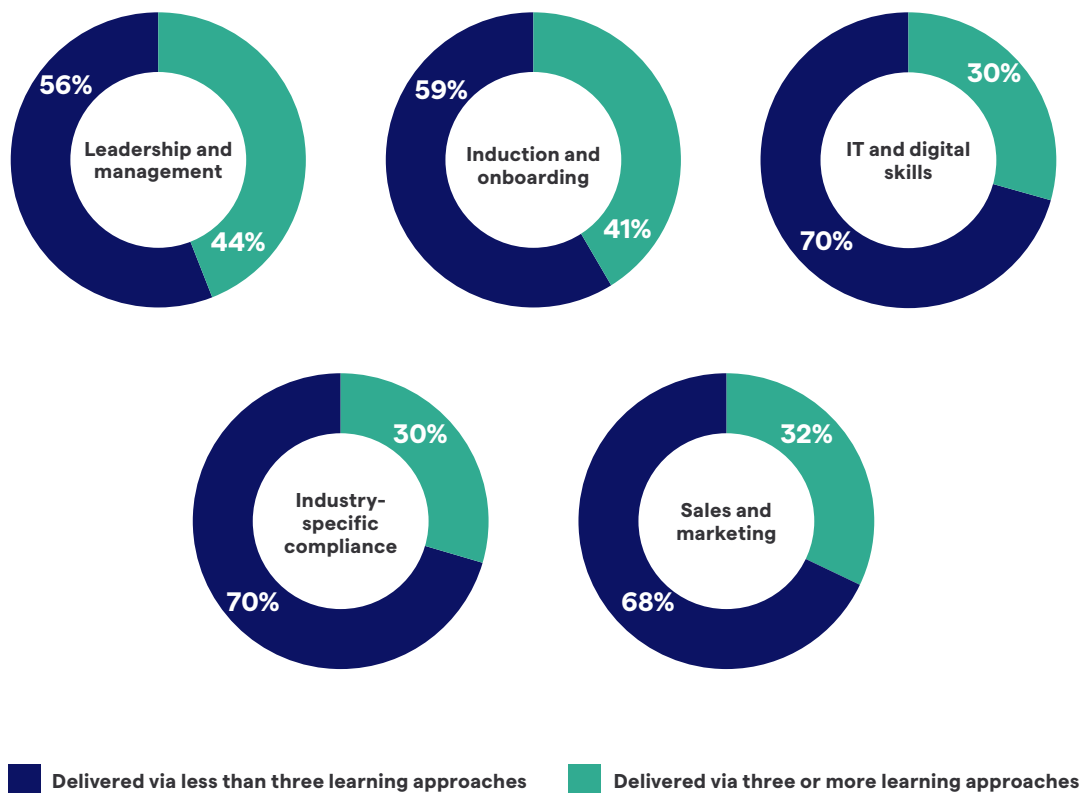

Note: the sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018) learning/people change practitioners. Percentages are normalized to 100%.

To better deconstruct what **blended** really means, the Health Check included a range of questions regarding the learning programs that learning leaders and their teams are delivering in their organizations.

For each learning program listed, there were five delivery options to choose from, with multiple choices allowed. These were: face-to-face, e-learning content, mobile apps, social networks or collaborative, and on-the-job.

For example, 54% of learning leaders report using less than three learning approaches simultaneously when delivering or facilitating leadership and management learning. Only 17% report using four or more learning approaches simultaneously for leadership and management learning.

Figure 14 shows the top five blended learning programs. Blended in this case is defined as three or more learning approaches combined for any given learning program.

Figure 14. The top five blended learning programs

56% Leadership and management 44%

59% Induction and onboarding 41%

30% IT and digital skills 70%

30% Industry-specific compliance 70%

32% Sales and marketing 68%

■ Delivered via less than three learning approaches   ■ Delivered via three or more learning approaches

Note: the sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018) learning leaders. Percentages represent respondents that have reported using three or more learning approaches combined for any given learning program.

1.5 Learning capability and future needs

The ability of organizations and individuals to learn, unlearn and relearn underpins whether they're likely to innovate, dominate, or be left behind.[9] An organization must purposely adapt and efficiently respond to internal and external changes to stay competitive.[10] In this story, learning leaders need to help individuals and the organization to be responsive, flexible and adaptable to change. And make sure the organization's human capital is healthy and competitive. So, learning leaders must make sure that

their teams are future-proofing their own capabilities to begin with.

In 2020, learning leaders reported a slight decline from the previous year in their teams' in-house capabilities. The strongest decline was in their teams' ability to facilitate social and collaborative learning, from 25% in 2018 to 15% in 2020. Figure 15 highlights the 22 critical capabilities learning leaders need to ensure their learning strategies are fit for the future.

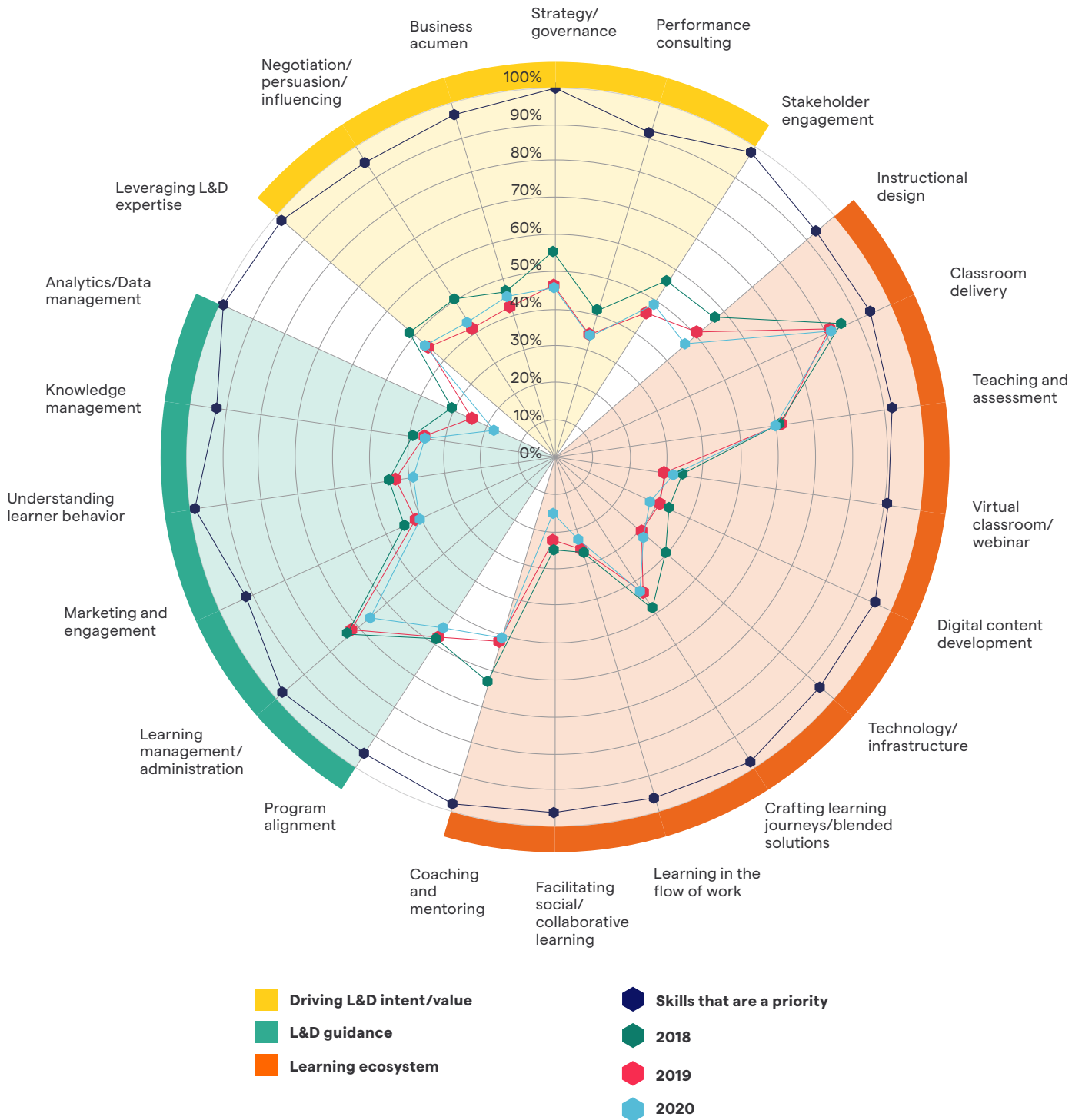**Figure 15. Critical learning leader capabilities are in slow decline since 2018**

Learning/people change capabilities in-house	Priority (2020)	2018	2019	2020
Classroom/F2F learning/training delivery	94%	85%	82%	82%
Learning strategy	99%	55%	46%	46%
Stakeholder engagement	98%	56%	46%	49%
Instructional design	93%	57%	51%	47%
Implementing blended learning	98%	49%	44%	43%
Supporting ongoing workplace performance	**96%**	**27%**	**26%**	**23%**
Facilitating social and collaborative learning	96%	25%	23%	15%
Program evaluation	98%	45%	43%	38%
Virtual classroom/webinar delivery	91%	35%	30%	32%
Digital content development	95%	34%	31%	29%
Performance consulting	**91%**	**41%**	**34%**	**34%**
Business acumen (e.g. organizational awareness, finance, IT, governance)	96%	46%	42%	45%
Marketing and communications	91%	44%	41%	40%
Coaching and mentoring	98%	63%	52%	51%
Learning management/administration	97%	73%	72%	66%
Data analytics	**98%**	**30%**	**24%**	**18%**
Teaching and assessment	92%	62%	62%	60%
Technology/infrastructure	95%	40%	31%	32%
Project management	95%	58%	58%	55%
Personal (e.g. creative thinking, critical analysis, decision- making, problem-solving)	97%	51%	45%	46%
Information management	92%	38%	35%	35%
Negotiation/persuasion/influencing	94%	50%	41%	43%

9. March, J. G. (1991), 'Exploration and Exploitation in Organizational Learning', Organization Science, Vol. 2, No 1, pp. 71-87; Crossan, M. M., Lane, W. H. and White, E. R. (1999), 'An Organizational Learning Framework: From Intuition to Institution', Academy of Management Review, Vol. 24, No.3, pp. 522-537

10. Milia, D. L. and Birdi, K. (2010), 'The relationship between multiple levels of learning practices and objective and subjective organizational performance', Journal of Organizational Behavior, Vol. 31, pp. 481-498; Mathias, D. B. (2014), 'Exploration, exploitation, ambidexterity, and firm performance: A meta-analysis', Technology, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Competitive Strategy, Vol. 14, pp. 289-317

L&D Profession – Capability Map

Legend:
- Driving L&D intent/value
- L&D guidance
- Learning ecosystem
- Skills that are a priority
- 2018
- 2019
- 2020

Axis labels (clockwise from top): Strategy/governance, Performance consulting, Stakeholder engagement, Instructional design, Classroom delivery, Teaching and assessment, Virtual classroom/webinar, Digital content development, Technology/infrastructure, Crafting learning journeys/blended solutions, Learning in the flow of work, Facilitating social/collaborative learning, Coaching and mentoring, Program alignment, Learning management/administration, Marketing and engagement, Understanding learner behavior, Knowledge management, Analytics/Data management, Leveraging L&D expertise, Negotiation/persuasion/influencing, Business acumen

Note: The sample size is n=1123 (2020), n=702 (2019), n=684 (2018) learning leaders. Percentages represent respondents that have reported to have capabilities in-house.

11. These have been developed through 15 years of collaboration with learning and development practitioners, academics, suppliers, professional membership bodies, etc. We ensure that the capabilities are kept up-to-date through a number of statistical tests and consultations with internal and external experts.

2. Insight

Bucking the trend –
Innovation in culture
trumps innovation in digital

In 2020, 71% of leaders with high-impact
learning cultures report actively involving
learning consumers in design. That's
compared with 21% on average.

2.1 Fierce forces of change

The fourth industrial revolution is driving a new pace of change. It will be driven largely by the convergence of digital, biological and physical innovations. These 'fierce forces' are increasingly adding extreme pressures on organizations to rapidly transform as they seek to remain competitive and survive in more global, complex and volatile markets.

We're already seeing signs of impact. Disruptive technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, virtual reality (VR), machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) are changing the way we live, work and interact.

These upheavals are bringing a series of social, political and economic disruptions. And like previous revolutions, these changes are predicted to significantly transform institutions, industries and individuals during the next decade.

These disruptions are also shaping the future of consumerism by shifting the power to customers. Today, consumers expect more from their path to purchase products and services. For example, proof of brand trust, proof of ethical provenance and an understanding of how organizations use their personal data.

Consumerism is a critical lever in the future of work. The free choice of consumers drives what's in demand, what's produced and how it's made.

As the balance of power increasingly shifts to customers, we're also seeing growing expectations from savvy workers who want to align their values and need for flexibility with those of their employer. This insight is from data analyzed in our Learner Intelligence Program, n=9809 (2019 – 2020).

These growing expectations from workers – coupled with significant and unstoppable challenges in workforce planning – is leading to new dichotomies. The way we work, for example, is predicted to be more automated for many professions. (See Figure 16.)

According to McKinsey, up to 375 million workers may need to change their occupation by 2030. And digital work could contribute $2.7 trillion to global GDP by 2025.[12]

12. McKinsey, Jobs lost, jobs gained. Workforce transitions in a time of Automation. Accessed Online: www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/future%20of%20organizations/what%20the%20 future%20of%20work%20will%20mean%20for%20jobs%20skills%20and%20wages/mgi-jobs-lost-jobs-gained-report-december-6-2017.ashx

Figure 16. The fierce forces of automation

Organization	Prediction
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD	**47%** of workers in America at high risk of jobs replaced by automation.
pwc	**38%** of jobs in America, **30%** of jobs in the UK, **21%** in Japan and **35%** in Germany at risk to automation.
International Labour Organization	ASEAN-5, **56%** of jobs at risk to automation in the next 20 years.
McKinsey & Company	**60%** of all occupations have at least **30%** technically automatable activities.
OECD	Average of **9%** of jobs at high risk. Low risk of complete automation but an important share (between 50 – 70%) of automatable tasks at risk.
Roland Berger	**8.3 million** jobs lost in industry in Western Europe against **10 million** new jobs created in services by 2035.
THE WORLD BANK IBRD • IDA	WORLD BANK GROUP	**2 out of 3** of all jobs in developing countries are susceptible to automation.
bruegel	in EU countries, **between 47% and 54%** of jobs are at risk of automation.

Source: World Bank, 2016; Balliester and Elsheikshi, 2018 ; Frey and Osborne, 2015; Roland Berger, 2016; McKinsey Global Institute, 2016 PwC, 2017; Chang and Phu, 2016

13. World Bank, (2016), 'World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends', Washington, DC
14. Balliester, T., and Elsheikhi, A., (2018), 'The Future of Work: A Literature Review', International Labor Office
15. Frey, C., and Osborne, M., (2015), 'Technology at Work: The Future of Innovation and Employment', Citi GPS Reports, Oxford, University of Oxford
16. Roland Berger, (2016), 'The Industry 4.0 Transition Quantified', Munich
17. McKinsey Global Institute, (2016), 'Technology, Jobs and the Future of Work', Briefing Note, New York
18. PwC, (2017), 'The Long-View: How Will the Global Economic Order Change by 2015', London
19. Chang, J., and Phu, H., (2016), 'The Future of Jobs at Risk of Automation in ASEAN', ILO Working Paper No. 9, Geneva, ILO

The learning leader's job is as difficult as it is important. To understand what's happening now, what's working and what's not, we've explored the most significant insights.
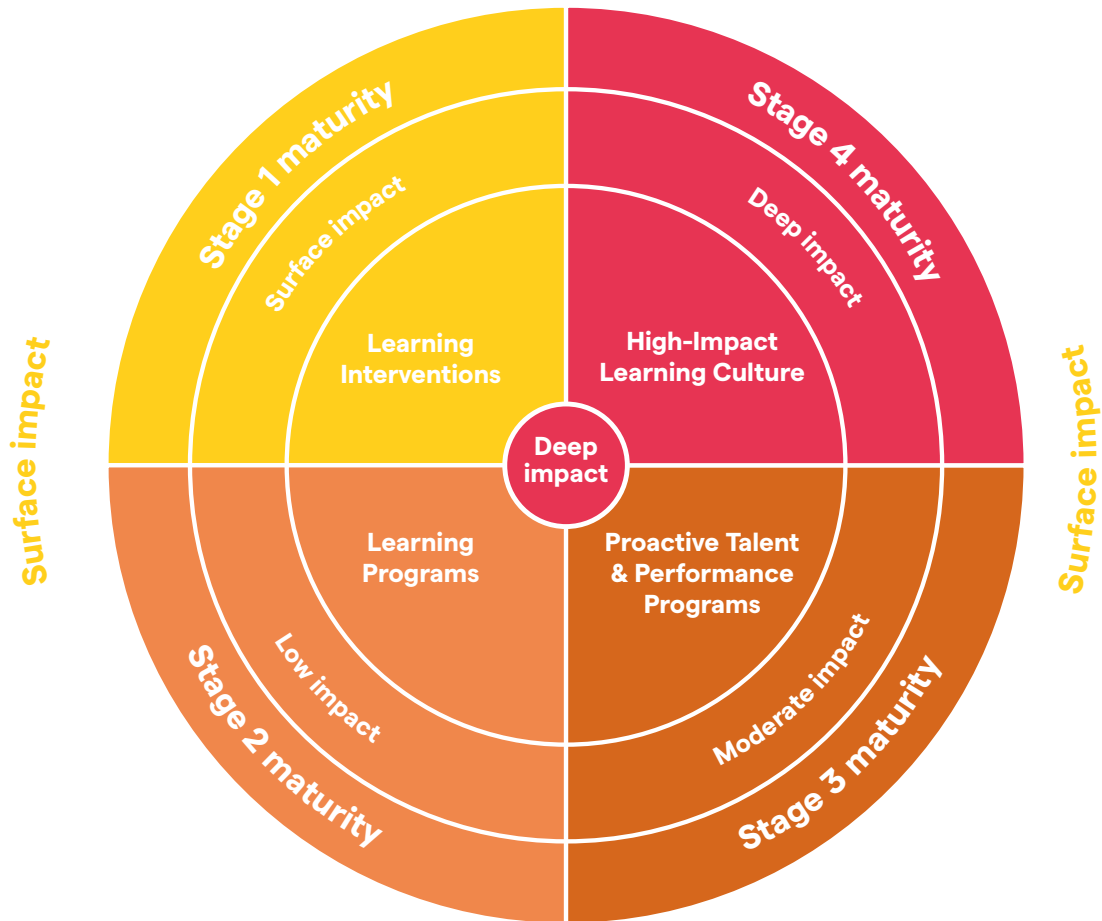
With so much investment in learning, we believe knowing if and how it's making a difference will support us to adapt our future investments. There are six areas to explore:

Content of chapter

Corporate Learning - Cycle of maturity & impact

J. Daly, 2020

Stage 1 maturity — Surface impact — Learning Interventions

Stage 4 maturity — Deep impact — High-Impact Learning Culture

Surface impact

Deep impact

Surface impact

Stage 2 maturity — Low impact — Learning Programs

Stage 3 maturity — Moderate impact — Proactive Talent & Performance Programs

---

Stages 1&2

Transactional Impact
(Non-behavioral)

- Learning non-business aligned
- Increased investment, but little impact
- Focus on access to knowledge not learning
- No time to learn

Stages 3&4

Transformational Impact
(Behavioral)

- Ability to identify Capability risks
- Impact on key behaviors
- Increased adaptability
- Sustainable impact on growth, transformation, productivity and profitability

Corporate Learning –
Model of guidance & impact

J. Daly, 2020

Surface impact

Learning
Interventions

Learning
Programmes

Proactive Talent
& Performance
Programs

High-Impact
Learning Culture
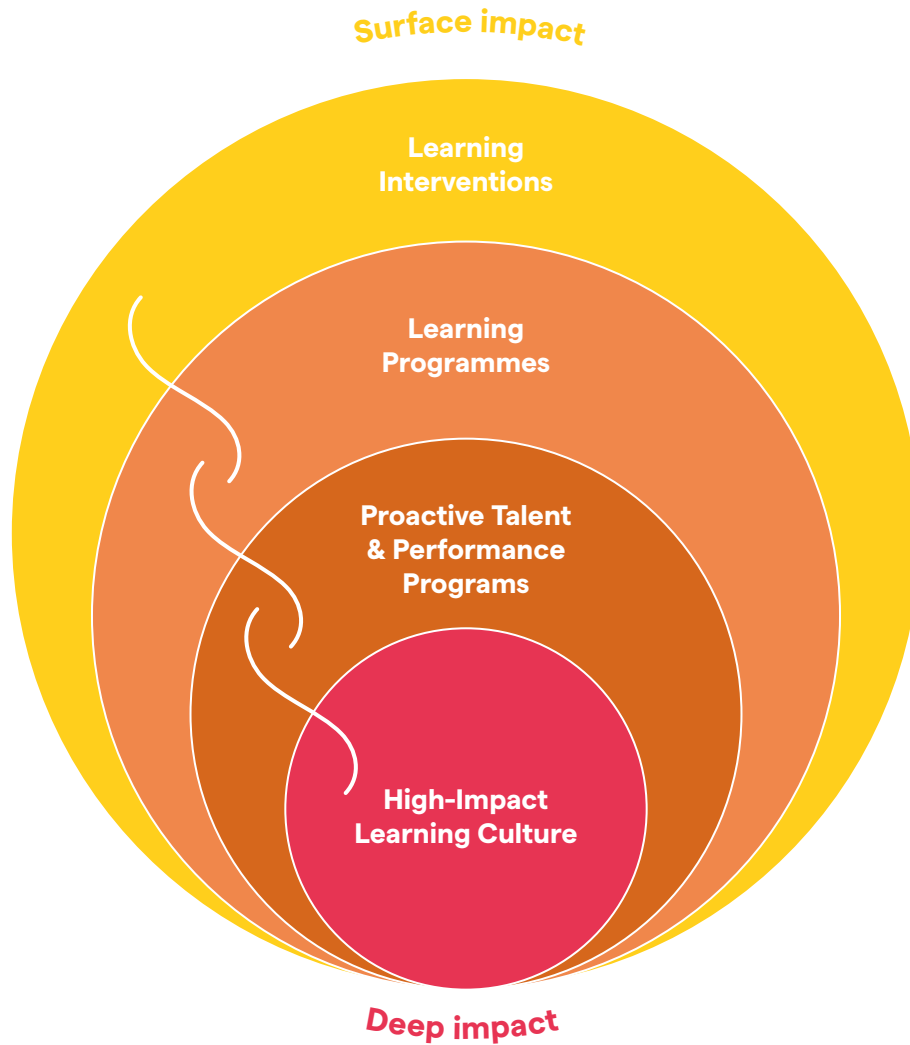
Deep impact

⬡ Deep impact ⬡ Moderate ⬡ Low impact ⬡ Surface impact

2.2 Unleash the power to cultivate

There's more pressure than ever on learning leaders to provide proof of performance impact. Investments in corporate learning continue to rise significantly. But these investments still only have a transactional impact on performance.

Business leaders and the workforce are looking for their L&D to tackle the pain of their critical capability needs. And these needs are growing, becoming more complex and challenging to handle. Over 90% of respondents in our Health Check report say they struggle to identify and provide modern, effective and transformative approaches that solve the capability conundrum.

Investments in learning resources, content and the digital agenda are rapidly increasing. On average, organizations now use 25 different learning technologies, spending over 21% of their budgets on digital.

These investments have increased complexity - disrupting our operating models and ability to support organizations to perform at scale. What's more, we see little sign of leveraging investments because there's still a perception that results will magically appear just by investing in more digital and increasing the reach and access to learning.

We've been tracking the impact of digital on learning for over 15 years and the evidence shows that technology alone does not correlate to business or learning impact. However, the way it is used can dramatically accelerate the learning transformation and impact on performance.
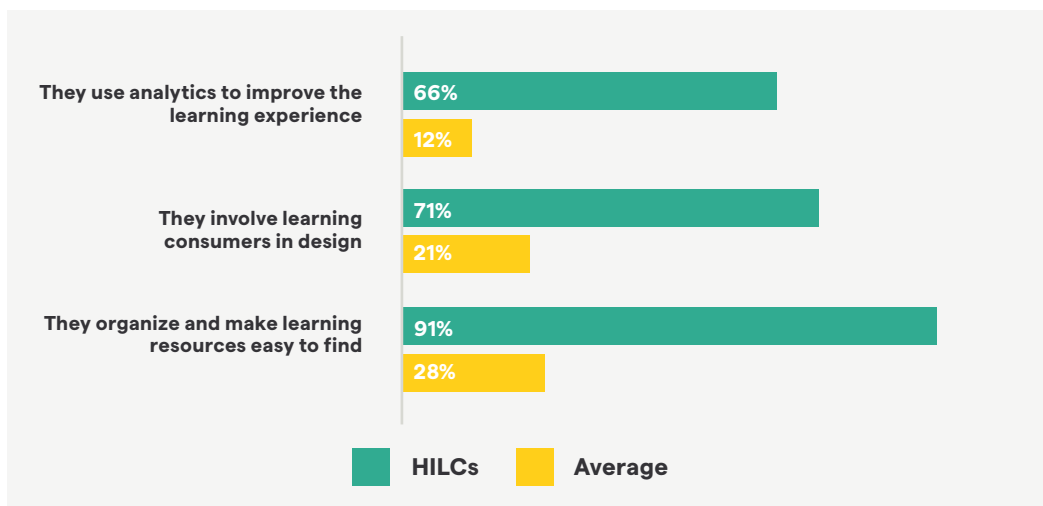
Our latest evidence reveals that over 90% of respondents in our Learning Health Check are not realising the benefits of their digital investments. Instead, they still plan to invest more, without full awareness of why they haven't seen success.

When we analyze high-impact learning cultures (HILCs) – those organizations that track at the top 10% of our internationally recognized longitudinal benchmark study – we see a very different story.

HILCs spend 28% of their overall budget on digital. But it's not the increased spend that allows them to propel and sustain more impact. It's their approach. Their number one focus is on transformation. And they strive to create a consumer-centric learner model that's aligned with critical business capability priorities.

HILCs face the same leader, manager, workforce, HR, infrastructure, budget and people challenges as the rest of us. But they stop to think how they can make the most of what they've got and don't worry too much about what they can't change.

In short, they have a transformative learning mindset. They look through a different lens in order to change capability. Here are just three ways HILCs drive change:

	HILCs	Average
They use analytics to improve the learning experience	66%	12%
They involve learning consumers in design	71%	21%
They organize and make learning resources easy to find	91%	28%

Note: the sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018) learning leaders. Percentages are respondents that answered 7, 8 and 9, on a scale of 1 – 9, 1 being strongly disagree and 9 being strongly agree.

The use of data, insights and business intelligence is on the increase. But most learning leaders don't invest in their data analytics capabilities to make the most of this valuable resource. (See Figure 17)

There's an art to creating a learning culture where people can develop at the pace and scale required to keep up with the organization's plan. Corporate learning is crying out for future-focused experts who can lead change.

But trying to create human-centric learning ecosystems without understanding people's preferences is pointless. Learning leaders believe they understand their audience, but our evidence suggests otherwise.

They try to understand their audience using transactional data. But they can't use this data to measure impact, create transformational success, or change behavior.

Our insights show that learning practitioners' views are extremely disconnected. They're looking through the wrong lens. For example, only 16% believe their people engage in online learning without prompting. But 74% of learners say they're happy to learn online without prompting.

Figure 17. Critical capabilities in decline
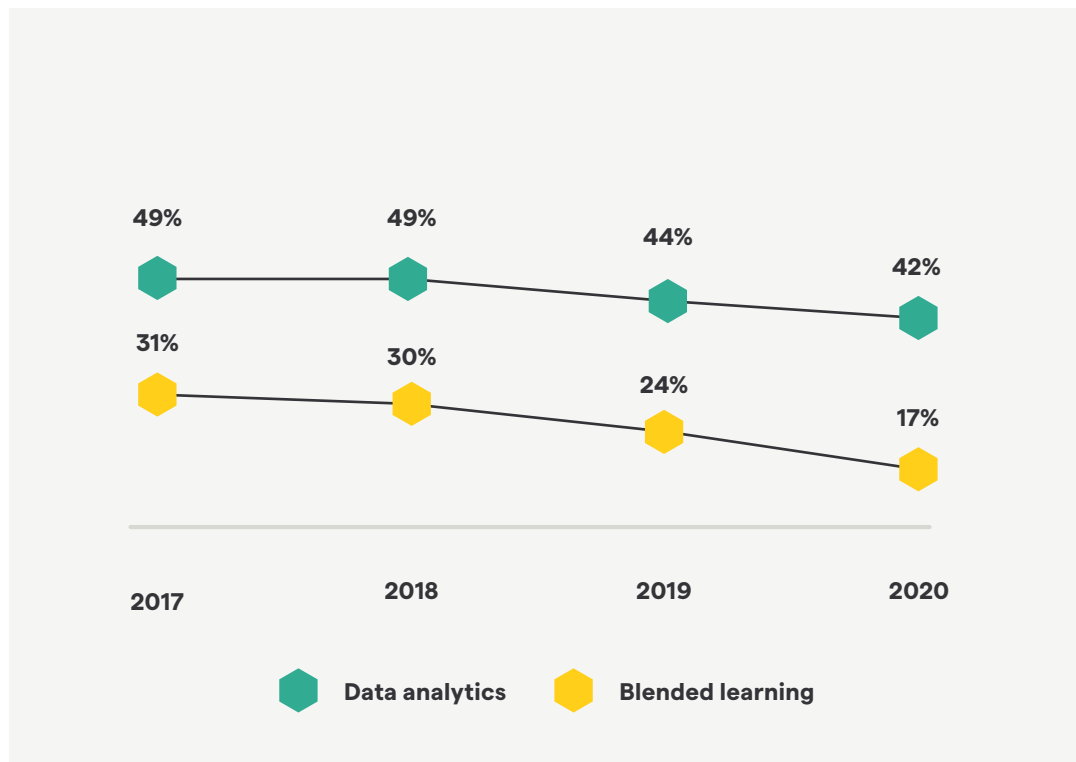
Note: the sample size is *n*=1123 (2020), *n*=702 (2019), *n*=684 (2018), *n*=727 (2017) learning leaders. Percentages represent respondents that have reported to have capabilities in-house.

On average, 31% of your workforce is on the move on a weekly basis. They're either moving to a new part of the new organization, role or project.[20]

Keeping up with people's preferences is complex and challenging. Organizations building credible evidence are increasing their agility and ability to adapt. These resources let them connect with their people more, uncover their relevant issues, and explore what they need and why they want to consume learning in a particular way. In short, they're empowering people to thrive.

Based on our research, less than 10% of organizations reap sustainable benefits from their investments in corporate learning. To understand why, our research uncovered that organizations that fail to gather the right data and build evidence are seriously falling behind. It's no longer viable or beneficial to make assumptions about what we think people need. In fact, it's risky. Our insights show it's learning professionals' biggest blind spot.

Today, only 19% of organizations proactively seek to understand how their people learn what they need for their job. And only 21% involve users in the design of the most appropriate learning approach.

The best performers here lead with purpose. They start with the end in mind and know that people create cultures when they are inspired, see the value for themselves, their colleagues and the organization. For example, they buy in to the concept because they trust it and see the value.

How do we know the business is clear on the purpose of learning/people change and the value dividend it's getting from the investment?

"

I don't think that it is possible to separate 'learning' from the context within which it takes place. In my experience, many 'learning technology' projects don't pay close attention to this. Learning can be considered a result of operating within an ecosystem that is made up not of a single element, but includes all of the people, communities, relationships, interactions, tools, systems, technologies, processes, targets, policies, and regulations of the workplace situation. The value that L&D could bring is in mastering this system of complexity, and getting in on the ground floor of transformational projects; influencing and architecting for learning as our workplace ecosystems are being built, not an afterthought to tick the 'self-service' adoption box within the project's budget constraints. But this is novel. It is risky. It takes a lot of collaborative courage to do this, as well as a healthy understanding of IT and data infrastructures, and while the end result is a very different looking L&D function, perhaps it is one which exists happily on the intersection of a business, productivity, learning, and knowledge management ecosystem.

Jonathan Holmes MEd, Learning and Development Manager

Figure 18. The best performers lead with purpose

	Stage 1 Maturity	Stage 2 Maturity	Stage 3 Maturity	High-Impact Learning Culture
% of organizations that have developed a learning culture in each stage	10%	18%	36%	63%
% of organizations reporting barrier as extreme concern	Our organizational culture does not support social			
	30%	14%	3%	6%
	Learning leaders are overwhelmed and under-equipped			
	50%	29%	14%	12%
	People do not have time to share			
	38%	22%	19%	9%
	Lack of investment to future-proof L&D approaches			
	43%	28%	19%	15%

Note: please refer to diagram/model on page 30 and 31.

2.2.1 Start with the end in mind

We encourage our people to take responsibility for their personal development plan — Average 52%, HILCs 91%

Our managers recognize the value of on-the-job learning — Average 32%, HILCs 88%

Our organization understands the value of learning from mistakes — Average 29%, HILCs 76%

Mentoring is an important part of our work culture — Average 25%, HILCs 79%

Our people appreciate the value of learning to the business — Average 28%, HILCs 81%

We regularly communicate performance impacts to senior management — Average 18%, HILCs 84%

We calculate return on investment for our learning programs — Average 8%, HILCs 52%

We actively use benchmarking as a performance improvement tool — Average 10%, HILCs 58%

Average — HILCs

Industry data

Our managers recognize the value of on-the-job learning

% represent learning leaders agreeing/strongly agreeing with the statement

Top 3

Pharmaceutical	Engineering	Health
56%	**50%**	**47%**

Bottom 3

Hospitality	Utilities	Manufacturing
24%	**24%**	**20%**

Regional data

Mainland Europe	Australia and New Zealand	UK
38%	**35%**	**31%**

2.2.2 Why it works

Category	Average	HILCs
Increase employee engagement with learning	22%	56%
Embed the principles of diversity and inclusion	35%	58%
Facilitate continuous learning	22%	55%
Support contextualised learning	17%	45%
Increase attractiveness of company as a great place to work	32%	61%
Enhance our learning brand	22%	47%
Improve staff retention	24%	71%
Extend learning to other locations or offer remote working	33%	55%
Our learning initiatives are delivered in time to meet the needs of the business	41%	91%

Average   **HILCs**

2.3 Transformative leadership

In many cases, there's a misalignment between learning and organizational leaders in their visions of what learning should be. As a result, learning leaders often struggle to get buy-in for new learning methods.

What's more, budget restrictions and increased demands from the organization place learning and business leaders at odds with each other. This impacts their people and the overall organization.

A constant problem for the learning leader is proving value with limited resources available. But it's a catch-22. Organizational leaders must recognize the opportunity that learning brings before they give the support needed to build employees' sustainable skills.

When it comes to engaging and aligning with business leaders and the workforce, most L&D teams struggle to focus on solving the most pressing business challenges their organizations face. Based on our 2020 findings, only one in two currently analyze the problem before recommending a solution.

And only 25% regularly communicate performance impact to senior management. 42% of consumer-learners say they're most likely to be influenced by a leader to learn. But without the right conversations and guidance, investments stay transactional and at a surface level. This blind spot is perpetuating the issue. Unless leaders are educated, things will never change.

Through our Learning Health Check, we often get the feedback that business leaders aren't interested in supporting learning. But this isn't what we see when we look closely at the evidence. Leaders are signing off more investments than ever before. Investments in digital, content, time, and outsourcing are all significantly up. But because of the lack of evidence for what's really adding value, impact continues to fall through the floor.

We need to raise awareness and learn that adding more is not the answer. The right evidence will help you influence your leaders, gain better buy-in and turn your blind spots into actions that lead to added and incremental value.

The best performers drive experiences that matter

How do we know our learning experiences are solving the critical business capability problems?

"

How do we know our learning experiences are solving the critical business capability problems? We recently launched our corporate university, The BU, and we want to make sure the experiences and opportunities we offer through this innovative idea achieve two key things. Firstly, they must support our people to move forward in their professional and personal development. But they must also align closely with the organizational challenges the charity is facing and therefore help us to deliver on our mission.

The charity sector is changing rapidly, and we must ensure we are ready for these changes and have the right mix of capabilities in our people to rise to them. Using evidence from a variety of sources, including our Learner Intelligence Survey from Towards Maturity, we strive to ensure that there is always alignment with our core business goals and long-term direction as set out in our ten-year strategy.
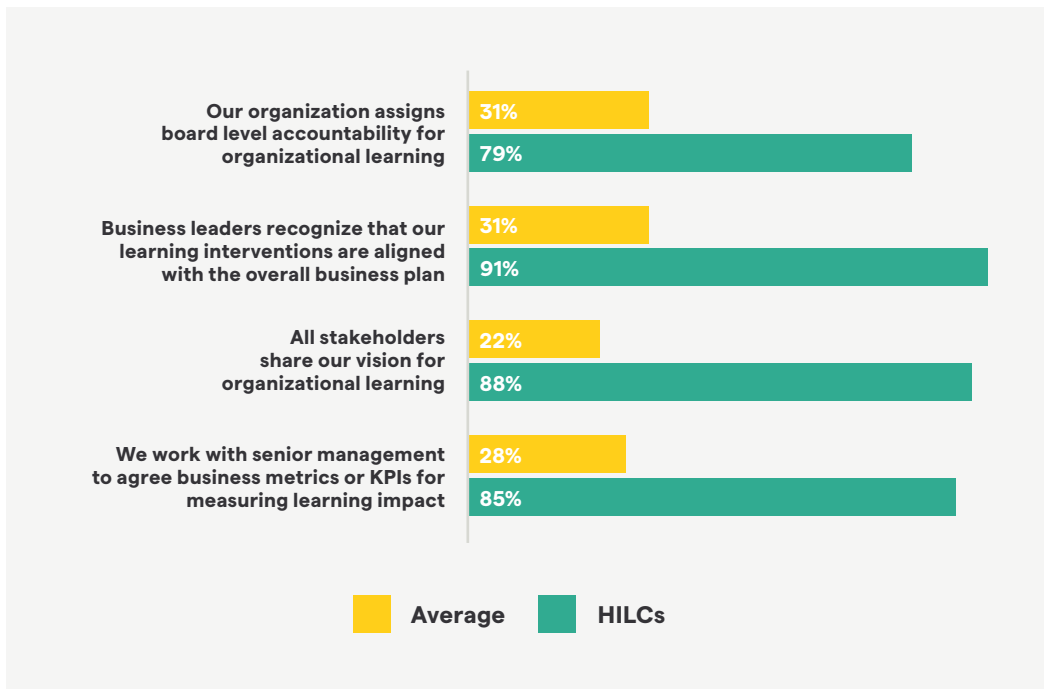
Michelle Harris, Head of Learning Organization Program, Barnardo's

Figure 19. The best performers drive experiences that matter

	Stage 1 Maturity	Stage 2 Maturity	Stage 3 Maturity	High-Impact Learning Culture
% building capability of organization to solve problems	11%	16%	28%	48%
% of organizations reporting barrier as extreme concern	Not seen as a management priority			
	32%	17%	11%	6%
	Reluctance by senior managers to encourage new ways of learning and working			
	35%	22%	15%	6%
	Leaders have traditional expectations of learning/people change that are difficult to challenge			
	43%	28%	22%	18%
	Reluctance by managers to make time for learning			
	54%	37%	29%	21%

Note: please refer to diagram/model on page 30 and 31.

2.3.1 Start with the end in mind

Our organization assigns board level accountability for organizational learning — Average 31%, HILCs 79%

Business leaders recognize that our learning interventions are aligned with the overall business plan — Average 31%, HILCs 91%

All stakeholders share our vision for organizational learning — Average 22%, HILCs 88%

We work with senior management to agree business metrics or KPIs for measuring learning impact — Average 28%, HILCs 85%

Legend: ■ Average ■ HILCs

Industry data

We work with senior management to agree business metrics or KPIs for measuring learning impact

% represent learning leaders agreeing/strongly agreeing with the statement

<u>**Top 3**</u>

Retail	**Engineering**	**Hospitality**
40%	**38%**	**38%**

<u>**Bottom 3**</u>

Government (local and central)	**Transport**	**IT**
13%	**11%**	**19%**

<u>**Regional data**</u>

APAC	**UK**	**US and Canada**	**EMEA**	**Mainland Europe**
44%	**29%**	**29%**	**29%**	**24%**

2.3.2 Why it works

Category	Average	HILCs
We identify why individuals are not currently taking action	18%	65%
We use performance data to measure the impact of our learning programs	10%	68%
Develop a better qualified workforce	30%	59%
Facilitate new ways of working	21%	60%
Support business growth in new markets	22%	28%
Be more responsible to the wider community	26%	36%

Legend: Average, HILCs

2.4 Dynamic capability

In a rapidly changing workplace, people who drive a culture that values lifelong learning will remain relevant and in demand. Workplaces today typically have a global outlook and five generations of people from diverse backgrounds who need to work in harmony.

With a complex, diverse and mobile workforce to support, one size does not fit all needs. And it's unrealistic to support every need. Learning leaders must set a strategy that identifies and aligns with the most critical capability risks at organizational, function, team, and individual level. On top of exposing these, learning leaders should track progress and the impact of learning.

When we bring, build and allow people with a desire and determination to learn, we drive commitment and optimize success. When we focus on organizational health and developing a more capable workforce, we increase the value learning can add. (See section 2.1.)

Although it's not easy to support people with learning that's relevant to their job and at the point of need, it significantly increases the brand value of organizations that get it right.

The best performers connect people with success

How do we know people are optimizing the most appropriate infrastructure that enables them to scale, be nimble and agile?

"

In an ever-changing world, learning leaders need to focus their efforts where they can have greatest impact. This is not in the classroom or through e-learning modules. It's in the daily flow of work. We learn far more from working than we do in other ways. Extracting learning from the flow of work is more critical for organizational performance than adding learning into the flow of work. This is not just hearsay. A study at the Research Center for Education and the Labor Market found that 96% of time spent learning occurs in the daily flow of work and only 4% of time occurs away from the flow of work.
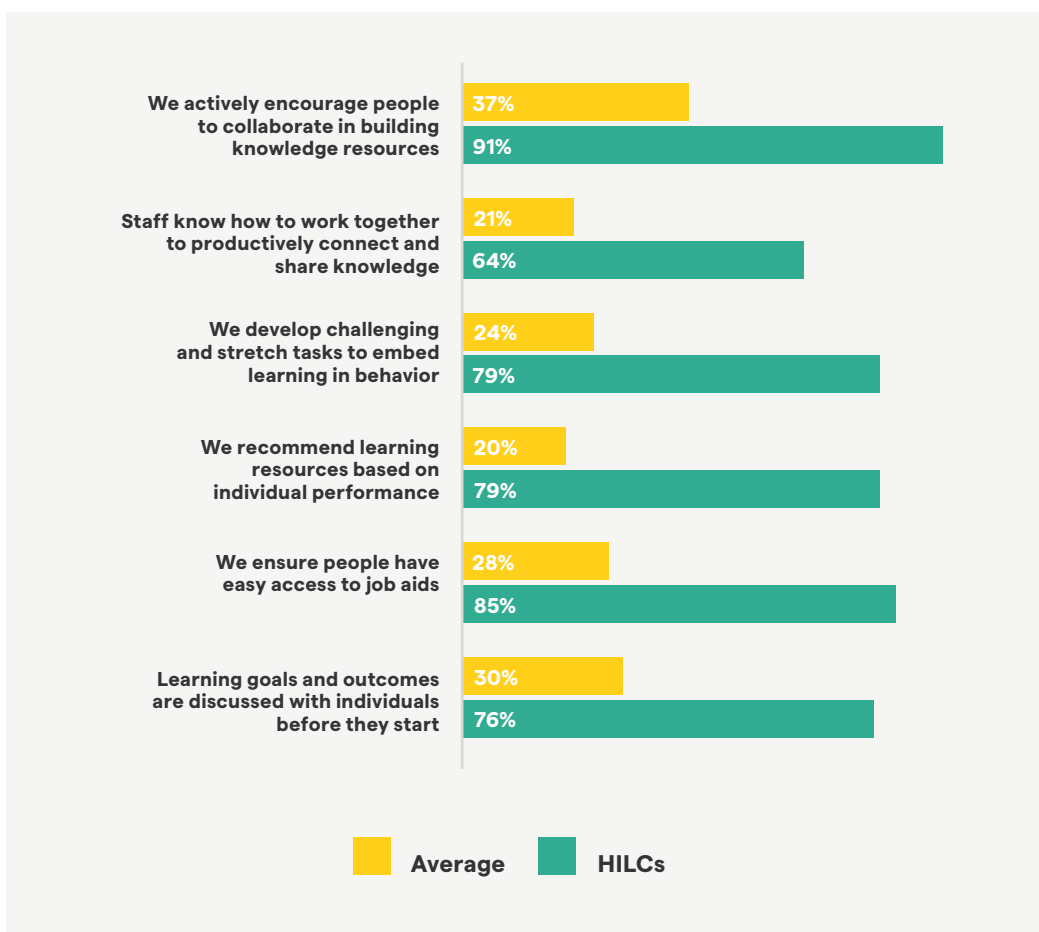
Charles Jennings, 70:20:10 Institute

Figure 20. The best performers connect people with success

	Stage 1 Maturity	Stage 2 Maturity	Stage 3 Maturity	High-Impact Learning Culture
% of organizations improving employee attitude and commitment	16%	26%	35%	66%
% of organizations agreeing/ strongly agreeing	Develop a better qualified workforce			
	21%	38%	52%	59%
	Increase ability to personalize program to individual			
	13%	28%	38%	61%
	Push updated information to employees at the point of need			
	15%	28%	44%	50%
	Increase learning access and flexibility			
	28%	55%	63%	63%

Note: please refer to diagram/model on page 30 and 31.

2.4.1 Start with the end in mind

We actively encourage people to collaborate in building knowledge resources — Average 37%, HILCs 91%

Staff know how to work together to productively connect and share knowledge — Average 21%, HILCs 64%

We develop challenging and stretch tasks to embed learning in behavior — Average 24%, HILCs 79%

We recommend learning resources based on individual performance — Average 20%, HILCs 79%

We ensure people have easy access to job aids — Average 28%, HILCs 85%

Learning goals and outcomes are discussed with individuals before they start — Average 30%, HILCs 76%

Average   HILCs

Industry data

We develop challenging and stretch tasks to embed learning in behavior

% represent learning leaders agreeing/strongly agreeing with the statement

Top 3

Professional Services	Retail	Education (HE,FE)
36%	**34%**	**31%**

Bottom 3

Social Care	Charity Sector	Transport
11%	**12%**	**11%**

Regional data

Asia Pacific	UK	Mainland Europe
34%	**24%**	**24%**

2.4.2 Why it works

Integrate learning within the workflow
- Average: 13%
- HILCs: 48%

Deliver greater value for money
- Average: 28%
- HILCs: 56%

Improve the quality of learning delivered
- Average: 38%
- HILCs: 79%

Improve communication and teamwork
- Average: 24%
- HILCs: 55%

Improve talent management
- Average: 18%
- HILCs: 67%

Legend: Average | HILCs

2.5 Learning ecosystems

Investment in learning resource, content and learning technologies is continuing to increase significantly. But providing proof of success is not materializing. As highlighted in section 1.5, digital alone doesn't increase impact, but the way you use it can.

It's rare for organizations to have a clear view or future vision for their learning ecosystem. They often confuse the need to provide access to knowledge and actual learning (behavioral change support).

Learning can be defined in many ways. But most psychologists agree it's a relatively permanent change in behavior that results from experience.

The three major types of learning described by behavioral psychology are: classical conditioning, operant conditioning and observational learning. For learning to stick (e.g. a change in behavior becomes the new normal), all three types require self-driven will. So it's important how people view the world. It's unlikely people are conscious of this lens or lenses, but they'll either help or hinder success.

We often get feedback that people don't have the time to learn. This is not the case. Time is a surface excuse and not the real root cause of the issue. People are investing more of their own time and money in learning to improve their career opportunities. They're excited by the variety of learning now freely available at the touch of a button. And their expectations are higher. For example, they're savvier about what they value. When we dig deeper into the root cause of 'not having time', most people say it's because they're not being consulted.

It's not time; it's value. They don't value what's on offer as part of their corporate learning portfolio because they perceive it as inaccessible, irrelevant to their needs and they don't believe their effort will be recognized or rewarded.[22]

In 2019, Harvard Business Review agreed.

"If individuals aren't learning, neither is the organization. It becomes like stagnant water with the outlet choked off: unmoving, increasingly algae ridden and surfaced with scum. It's the opposite of a flowing river or the power of the ocean tides. When we facilitate learning, even require it of individuals, we create new carrying capacity for growth throughout our organizational ecosystem. If we don't... well, we live or die by the growth of our people".[23]

This isn't easy because choice and complexity of learning solutions has increased. Today, people often just look at the digital ecosystem rather than taking a holistic view of consumer impact and experience.

> **Where the best performers are seeing value is when they match learning to value. They start with a view of a thriving ecosystem and facilitate critical connections.**
>
> How do we know our learning ecosystem is thriving and allowing people to connect, collaborate and share knowledge when and how they need to?

If we want to make our ecosystems more human, we need to bring stories to life. According to *The Guardian*, "There's a human story behind every data point." [24] There is an art to this, but once mastered it's a key ingredient in capturing audiences.

21. See www.forbes.com/sites/joshbersin/2017/03/28/watch-out-corporate-learning-here-comes disruption/#fdae4bedc59f
22. This insight is from data analyzed in our Learner Intelligence Program, n=9809 (2019 – 2020)
23. See hbr.org/2019/07/your-organization-needs-a-learning-ecosystem
24. See www.theguardian.com/membership/datablog/2019/mar/23/a-decade-of-the-datablog-theres-a-human-story-behind-every-data-point

"

We have great resources, new programs, the best technology, yet people are not prioritizing their learning. Sound familiar?

To have a truly functioning learning ecosystem, you need to create excitement, a passion for learning and therefore value for the individual. Real learning happens when you connect at an emotional level; create desire and opportunity for personal growth and leverage this to improve your business.

That's a tough nut to crack yet not impossible! It takes a cohesive learning culture supported by line managers, leadership, HR and employees. They all need to see, feel, understand the value it brings them and therefore the business. You get this right and it flows in to business results, productivity and engagement. Create commitment to ongoing learning, not compliance!
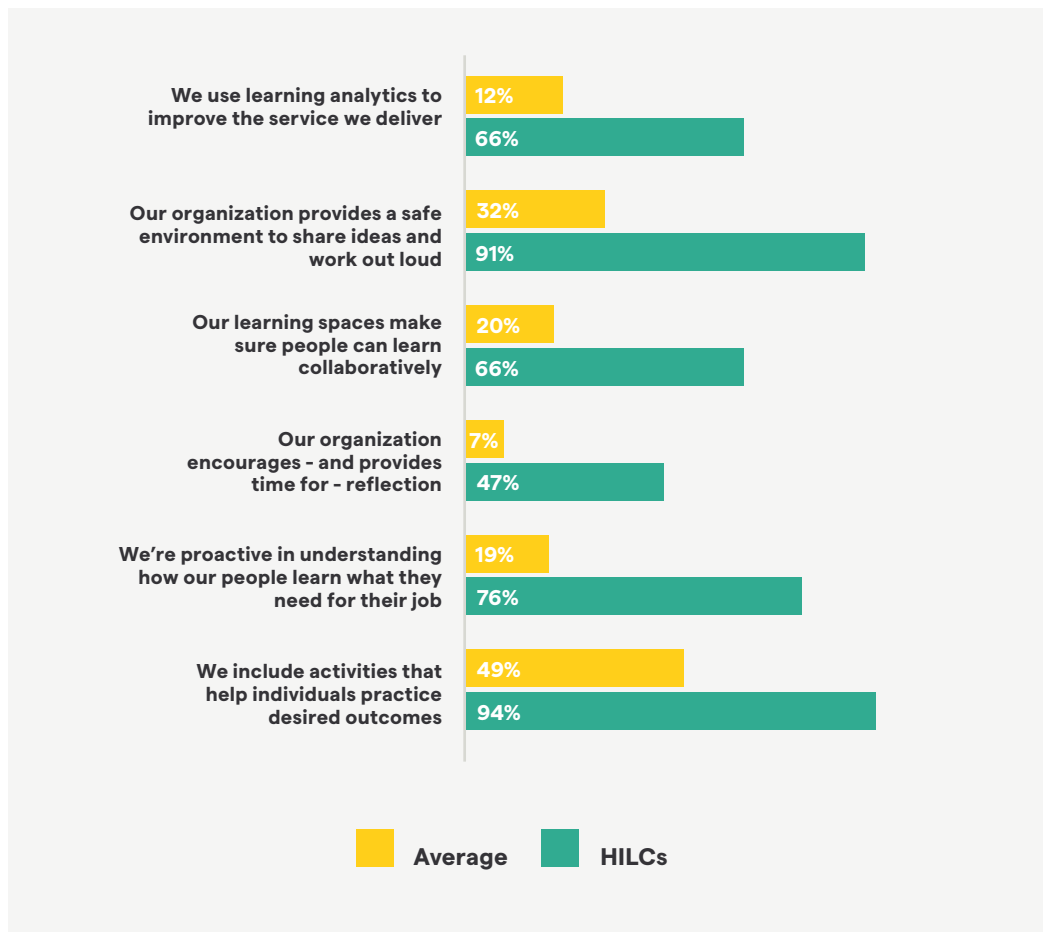
Helen Grysztar, Head of Learning and Development

Figure 21. The best performers match learning with value and facilitate critical connections

	Stage 1 Maturity	Stage 2 Maturity	Stage 3 Maturity	High-Impact Learning Culture
% of budget spent on digital technologies	19%	22%	25%	28%
% of organizations utilising the digital technology	Communities of Practice			
	47%	68%	66%	62%
	Artificial Intelligence			
	11%	21%	27%	26%
	LMS			
	71%	82%	85%	91%
	LXP			
	17%	25%	36%	47%
	Social Networks			
	55%	68%	72%	74%
	Learning Record Stores			
	10%	17%	21%	29%

Note: please refer to diagram/model on page 30 and 31.

2.5.1 Start with the end in mind

We use learning analytics to improve the service we deliver
- Average: 12%
- HILCs: 66%

Our organization provides a safe environment to share ideas and work out loud
- Average: 32%
- HILCs: 91%

Our learning spaces make sure people can learn collaboratively
- Average: 20%
- HILCs: 66%

Our organization encourages - and provides time for - reflection
- Average: 7%
- HILCs: 47%

We're proactive in understanding how our people learn what they need for their job
- Average: 19%
- HILCs: 76%

We include activities that help individuals practice desired outcomes
- Average: 49%
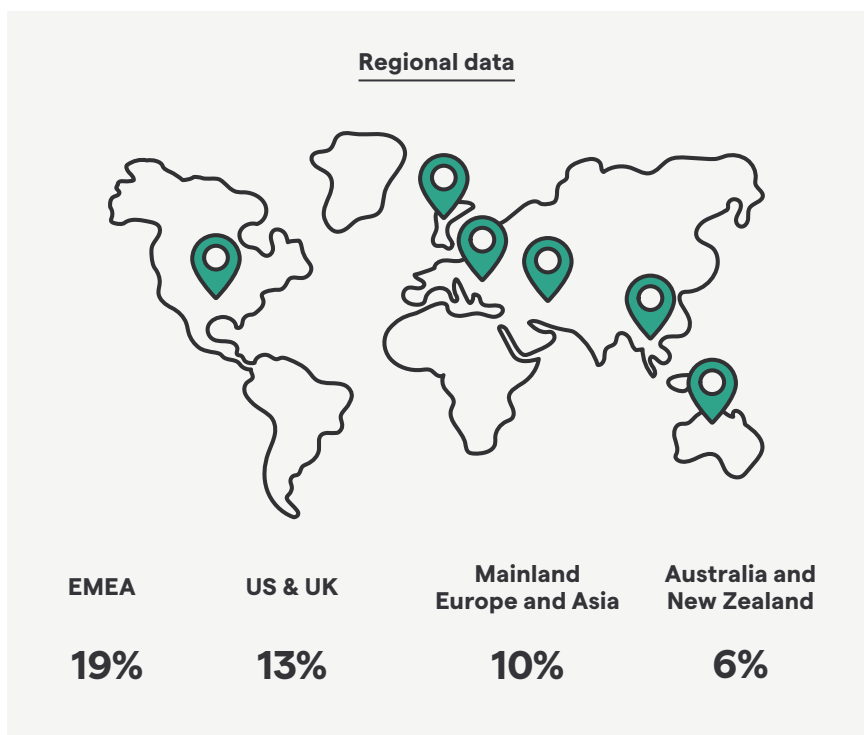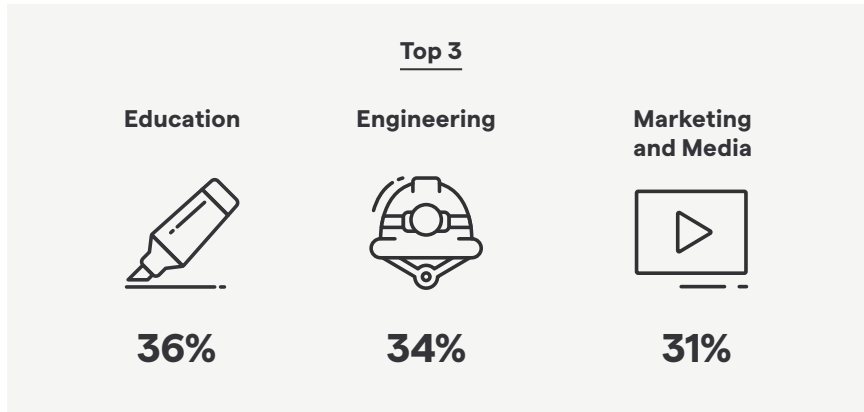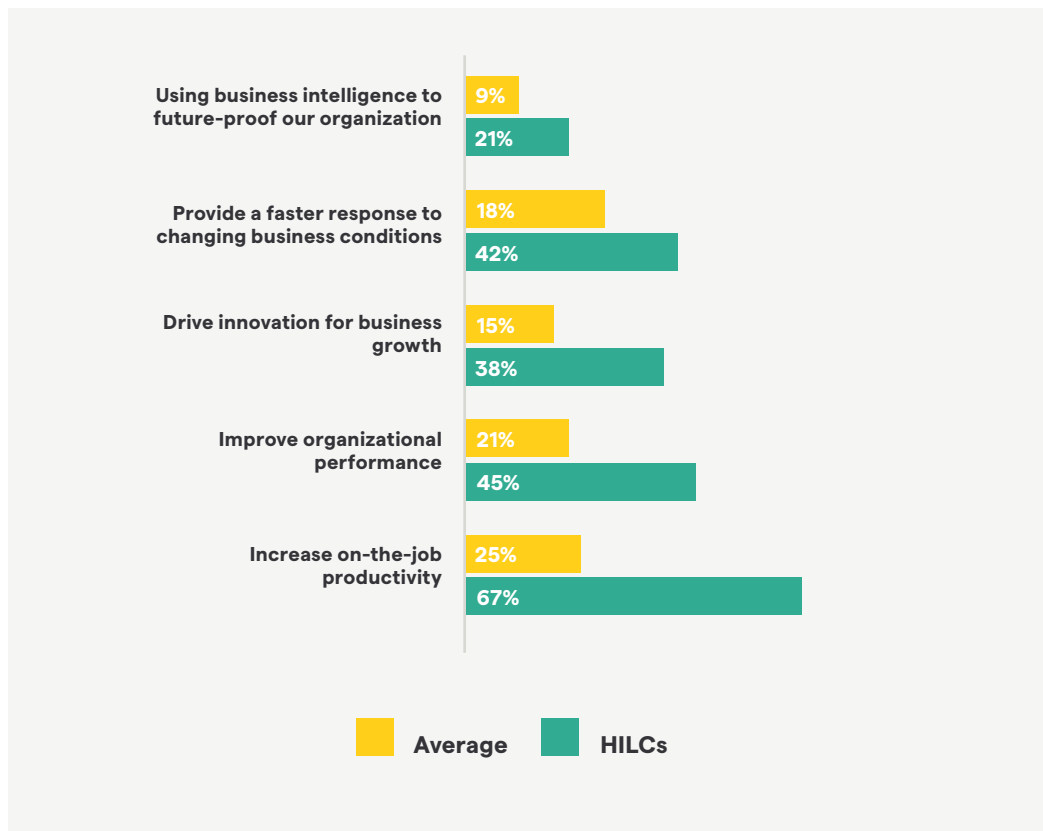- HILCs: 94%

Average   HILCs

Industry data

We use learning analytics to improve the service we deliver

% represent learning leaders agreeing/strongly agreeing with the statement

Top 3

Education	Engineering	Marketing and Media
36%	34%	31%

Bottom 3

Charity and Voluntary sector	Professional Services	Health and Pharma
11%	12%	11%

Regional data

EMEA	US & UK	Mainland Europe and Asia	Australia and New Zealand
19%	13%	10%	6%

2.5.2 Why it works

	Average	HILCs
Using business intelligence to future-proof our organization	9%	21%
Provide a faster response to changing business conditions	18%	42%
Drive innovation for business growth	15%	38%
Improve organizational performance	21%	45%
Increase on-the-job productivity	25%	67%

Average   **HILCs**

"

As a Learning and Development specialist, one of the critical measures for me is to create learning that supports the needs of the learner and brings change, and that's imperative, otherwise what is the point. This has pushed me to create learning that 'hits the mark' for the learner. Technology has enabled me to do this in a very different way so that my learning audience can access learning at the point of need. We are doing all the right things in pushing digital tools out there, particularly in large organizations, but the culture of learning has to support, and that is still the missing link.

Brid Nunn, L&D Consultant

2.6 The rise of the consumer-learner

Access to learning is becoming increasingly more open, changing how people access and consume learning. Organizations that actively seek to create an agile learning culture by guiding behavior – based on the principles of self-determined learning (heutagogy) – are more likely to have a deeper understanding of their people.

Organizations that report their people engage in self-determined learning without prompting are 31% more likely to proactively seek to understand how their people learn. Agile learning organizations recognize the needs and characteristics of the consumer-learner, and adjust their learning conditions and portfolio based on detailed behavioral analysis and insight.

Identifying skills gaps and learner needs, the learning leaders within these organizations are better equipped to provide relevant learning solutions that place the learner at the center. These organizations are:

11%

more likely to enhance individual wellbeing

18%

more likely to embed the principles of diversity and inclusion

24%

more likely to improve employee retention

Learning leaders are not taking the opportunity to understand and empower their learners, as they're often unaware of the value of learning. As a change in behavior is required, individuals must learn themselves. We can guide and support people, but in the end, learning will only impact performance if individuals want it to.

When we empower people to 'own' their learning journey and see how it adds value to them and their organization, we see increased levels of motivation, resilience and performance.[25] Learning agility – encouraged through the autonomy associated with heutagogy – has an influence on an individual's motivation tto learn, and also on the wider business.[26]

Successful organizations are ever-changing environments. Learners cannot hold on to redundant skills and expect to help their organization thrive.

In agile learning organizations – where people engage with self-determined learning without prompting – individuals and businesses see the benefits. Compared with organizations where this behavior isn't present, these switched-on cultures are:

12%

more likely to increase on-the-job productivity

24%

more likely to develop a better qualified workforce

28%

more likely to provide faster response to changing business conditions

These organizations understand their learners use data, encourage autonomy in learning, and provide necessary support and guidance at the point of need.

25. See https://emeraldworks.com/research-and-reports/workplace-learning/who-moved-my-skills
26. This insight is from data analyzed in our Learner Intelligence Program, *n*=9809 (2019 – 2020)

Most organizations that actively seek to create an agile learning culture – by guiding behavior based on the principles of heutagogy – are more likely to have a deeper understanding of their people. Organizations that report their people engage in self-determined learning without prompting are 31% more likely to be proactive in understanding how their people learn.

Figure 18. The characteristics of the high-impact consumer-learner

(J. Daly, 2020)
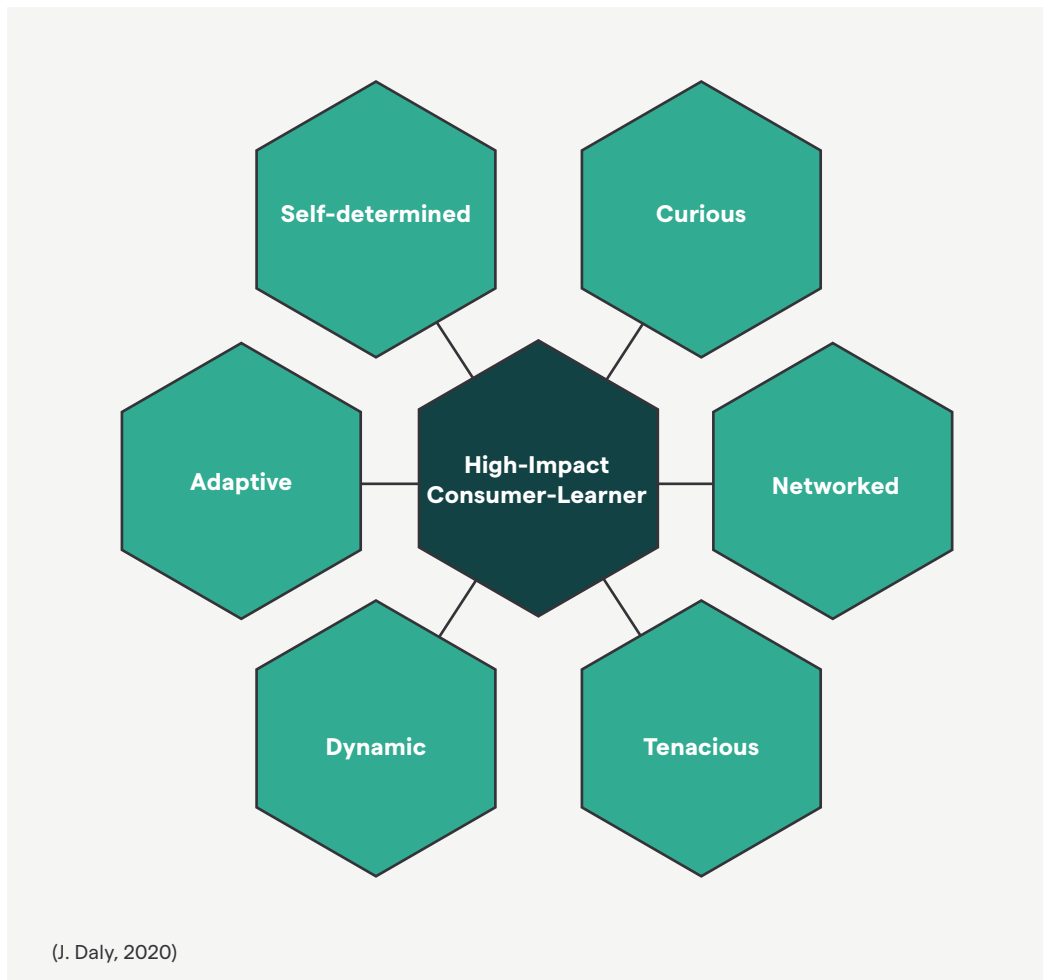
One of the critical challenges facing organizations is the acquisition of skills. This report highlights how top-performing organizations use conventional and creative approaches to up- and re-skill their workforce.

The best performers nudge transformative behavior

How do we know people are actively engaged and aligned, and are optimizing and influencing our vision for learning?

"

This is a moment for our profession to shine and to demonstrate our value, articulating how our insights on human behavior and learning theory can advance business strategies and key results – just as much as our colleagues in data science, analytics and cloud engineering.

The evidence is telling us that the learning community needs to wake up from its big siesta and start acting on our own data! There is so much research and insight at our finger tips to help inform our learning plans, it can feel overwhelming. But reading the information, and thinking it's interesting is not enough.

We need to ask ourselves what is getting in the way and stopping us from taking the leap and doing something new and different. It's not easy, and we all have daily requests and demands on our time, but if we want to be enablers of thriving,high-performing teams that continually do their best work, we need to get laser focused on what we can practically apply in our organizations, and start finding the small things that can make a big difference.

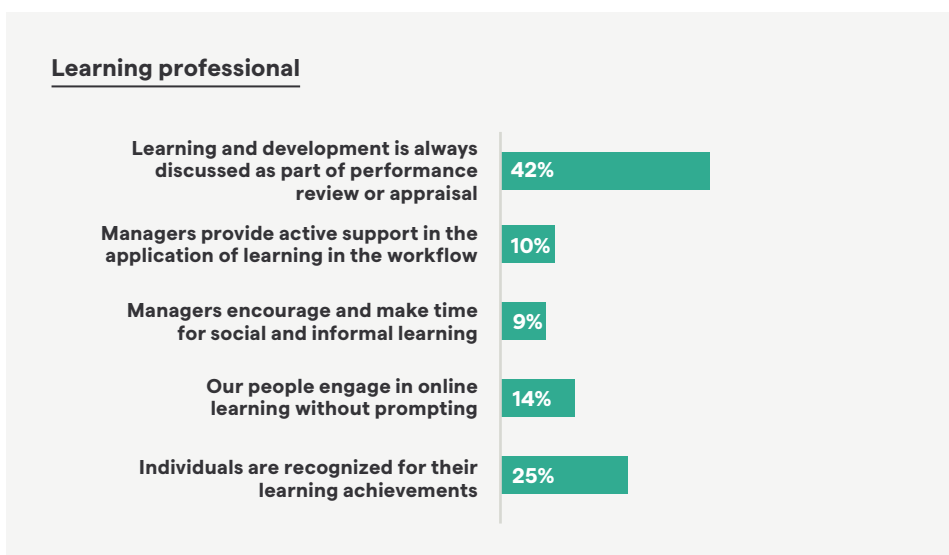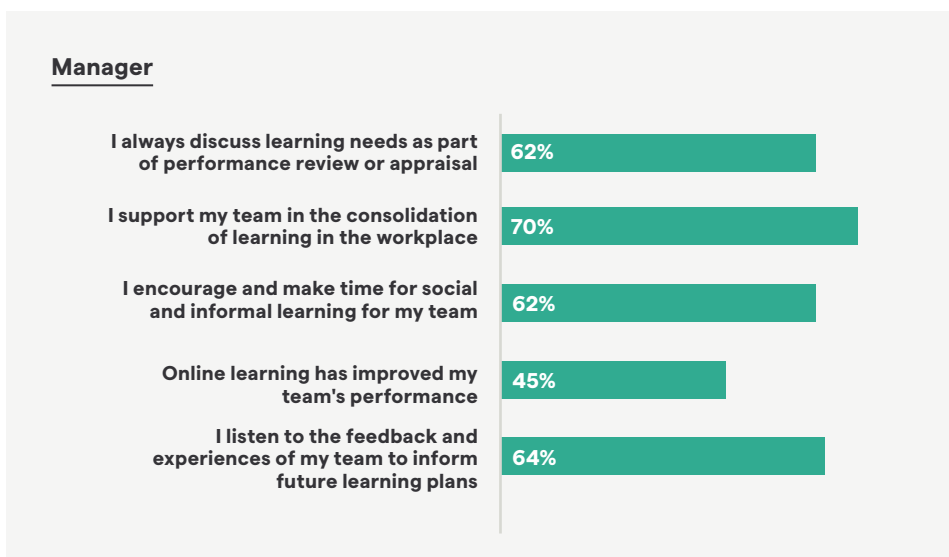**Catherine Morgan, MCIPD, Senior Learning and Development Manager**

Figure 22. The best performers nudge transformative behavior

	Stage 1 Maturity	Stage 2 Maturity	Stage 3 Maturity	High-Impact Learning Culture
% of organizations increasing self-determined learning	13%	21%	30%	50%
% of organizations agreeing/ strongly agreeing	Individuals engage with self-development without prompting			
	7%	16%	32%	50%
	We provide people with the means to prove capability for their job			
	14%	39%	70%	82%
	Individuals recommend learning to colleagues as a result of their experience			
	17%	41%	49%	64%
	We are proactive in understanding how our people learn to do their job			
	5%	24%	53%	76%

Note: please refer to diagram/model on page 30 and 31.

2.6.1 Start with the end in mind

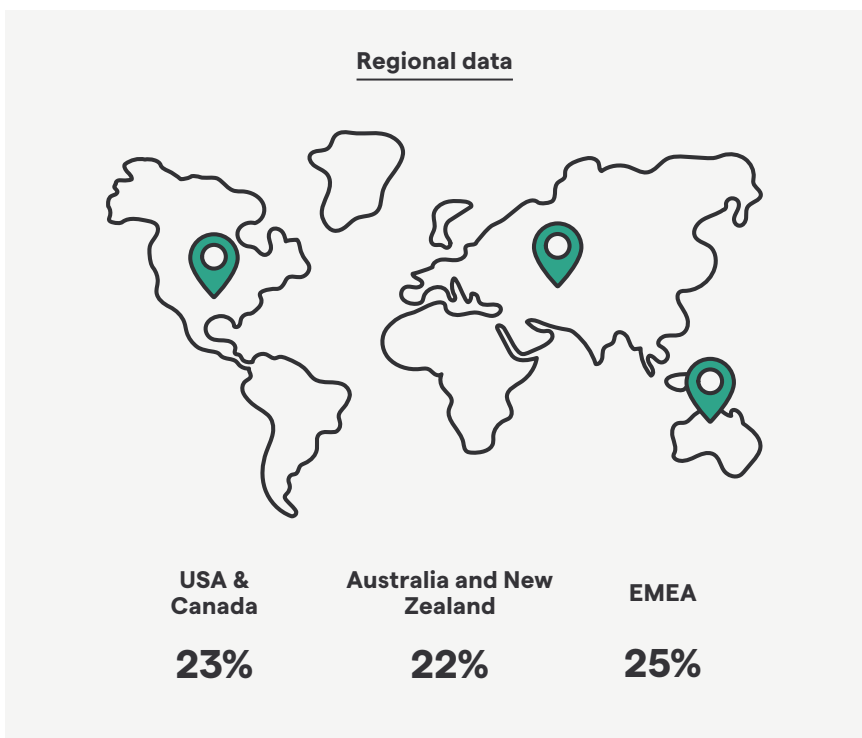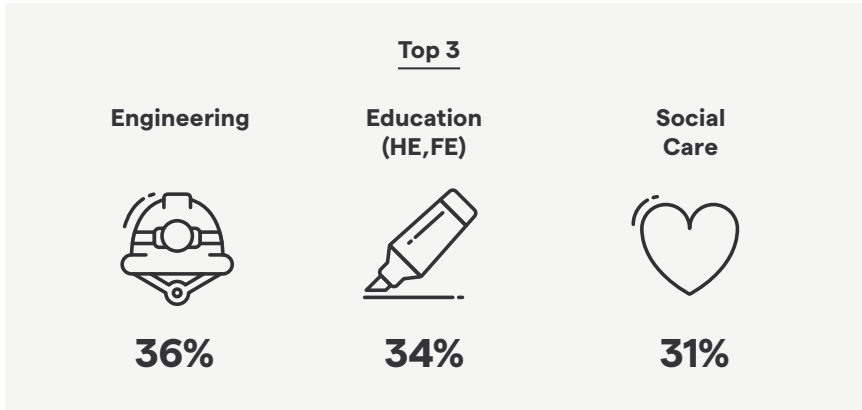There is an inherent disconnect between the perceptions of learners, managers, and learning leaders.

Learner

Statement	%
I have a clear and agreed development plan	49%
My direct supervisor or manager supports me afterwards in the application of learning in the workplace	53%
My direct supervisor or manager makes time for me to learn at work	56%
I'd recommend technology-enabled learning to others	67%
I feel my contribution is valued by my organization	55%

Manager

Statement	%
I always discuss learning needs as part of performance review or appraisal	62%
I support my team in the consolidation of learning in the workplace	70%
I encourage and make time for social and informal learning for my team	62%
Online learning has improved my team's performance	45%
I listen to the feedback and experiences of my team to inform future learning plans	64%

Learning professional

Statement	%
Learning and development is always discussed as part of performance review or appraisal	42%
Managers provide active support in the application of learning in the workflow	10%
Managers encourage and make time for social and informal learning	9%
Our people engage in online learning without prompting	14%
Individuals are recognized for their learning achievements	25%

Note: percentages represent agreement/strong agreement with the statement.

Industry data

Our people engage in online learning without prompting

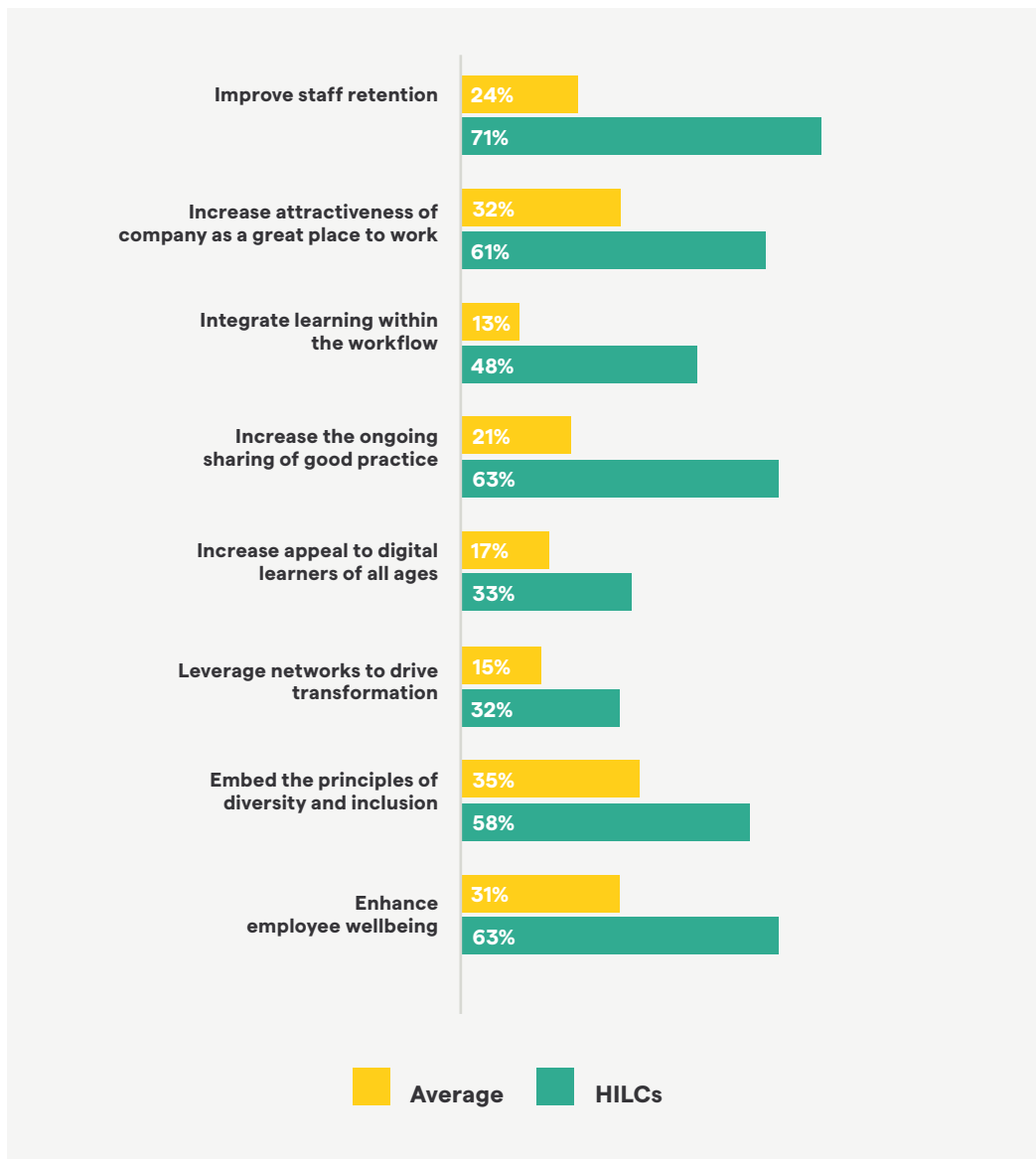**% represent learning leaders agreeing/strongly agreeing with the statement**

Top 3

Engineering	Education (HE,FE)	Social Care
36%	34%	31%

Bottom 3

Local Government	Transport	Health
11%	12%	11%

Regional data

USA & Canada	Australia and New Zealand	EMEA
23%	22%	25%

Duration in Company						
Variable	**0-6 months**	**6 month-1 year**	**1-2 years**	**2-5 years**	**5-10 years**	**Over 10 years**
I have a clear and agreed development plan (staff)	65%	56%	54%	49%	39%	35%
I always discuss learning needs as part of performance review (manager)	82%	83%	66%	65%	61%	50%

Employees that have individual development plans:

47%

65%

██ **Average**   ██ **HILCs**
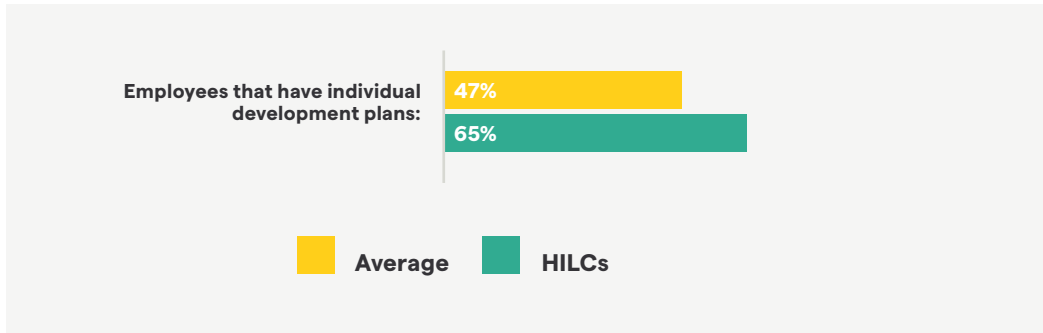
Age						
Variable	**20 and under**	**21-30**	**31-40**	**41-50**	**51-60**	**61 and over**
I have a clear and agreed development plan (staff)	63%	59%	37%	39%	44%	49%
I always discuss learning needs as part of performance review (manager)	88%	65%	56%	59%	71%	73%

2.6.2 Why it works

Improve staff retention
- Average: 24%
- HILCs: 71%

Increase attractiveness of company as a great place to work
- Average: 32%
- HILCs: 61%

Integrate learning within the workflow
- Average: 13%
- HILCs: 48%

Increase the ongoing sharing of good practice
- Average: 21%
- HILCs: 63%

Increase appeal to digital learners of all ages
- Average: 17%
- HILCs: 33%

Leverage networks to drive transformation
- Average: 15%
- HILCs: 32%

Embed the principles of diversity and inclusion
- Average: 35%
- HILCs: 58%

Enhance employee wellbeing
- Average: 31%
- HILCs: 63%

Legend: Average · HILCs

2.7 Innovative learning guidance

There are currently significant capability gaps across the learning profession. There are also talent shortages in areas such as data, analytics, AI and behavioral change expertise that are holding the industry back. Learning practitioners lack the necessary understanding of learning and behavioral science, and that lack perpetuates traditional perceptions of learning.

Based on our findings this year, on average, only 34% of learning teams keep up to date with the latest research into learning theory (e.g. neuroscience). And only 27% integrate new concepts into practice.

Our understanding of how people learn is evolving because of the developments in cognitive neuroscience. Helping a few people learn is easier to manage than helping a workforce learn at scale. But the fundamental principles are the same.

Our insights have tracked a decline in the capability of L&D related to adult learning theories. Since 2017, critical capabilities such as supporting ongoing workplace performance, using data analytics to gain insights, and digital content development, have dropped by an average 3-5%. In 2020, only 33% of learning leaders report that their teams keep up to date with the latest research into learning theories, compared with 37% in 2018.

With a lack of familiarity with modern learning literature, learning professionals are not helping organizational learning move forwards. With heads stuck in the past, learning leaders don't know the benefits of self-determined learning and the use of behavioral economics in shaping nudges to encourage heutagogical behaviors.

Professionals lack the skills and knowledge to encourage heutagogy and learning agility at scale – and often fail to establish an engaging learning experience. So, how are they going to overcome the diminishing talent pool? Learning leaders must invest in themselves before focusing their attention on advancing others.

There are many opportunities to enhance learning from their new position within the organization. Embracing their role as evidence-based experts and guides, learning professionals can lead organizational learning and help overcome the skills impasse by facilitating and enabling a balanced approach.

Learning leaders are at a loss how to move forward with skills acquisition in the modern workplace. Overwhelmed by new digital technologies, fresh thought leaders, and innovative learning theories, it's no wonder learning functions don't know how to progress.

Learning leaders increasingly recognize they're not equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in their role. Which is ironic, as this is often the burning issue to address across the wider business.

Before learning leaders can start to overcome the emerging skills gap in the business and develop the capacity of their learners, they first need to address the skills gaps in their own team.

Facilitating heutagogy within a business doesn't require fewer skills. It requires new skills to be applied in different ways. Stepping back from the front line of learning delivery doesn't stop learning professionals from shaping the future of their organizational learning. They just guide development in a new manner.

The skills that organizations believe are essential for learning practitioners are in decline.

It's important to identify the difference between providing guidance and providing leadership. It can be difficult for learning leaders to give up the reins when it comes to learning. But those creating an agile, self-determined learning culture appreciate that they need to take a step back, as learners begin to lead themselves.

Instead of leading from the front, learning leaders in successful organizations focus on:

– guiding career development with blended solutions

– guiding performance through content curation

– rewarding and recognizing people for taking responsibility for their own personal development

– guiding learning resources based on individual performance

Using subtle nudges, learning leaders take on the role of enablers rather than facilitators. That way, learners can take control of their own learning journeys.

The best performers adapt capability to need

How do we know we're accessing reliable and credible business intelligence and making more informed decisions in partnership with key stakeholders?

"

Most of us in our work want to focus on what's important for the organization and, once significant problems or opportunities are discovered, identify the most effective solutions or interventions. One striking finding is that only around half of the learning leaders strongly agreed that their L&D activity is aligned with the organization's goals and that everyone on the L&D team understands these goals. This means there's a fair chance that much of what is done within L&D is unrelated to what the organization needs. The L&D function will only become more effective if it understands and focuses on what's important for the organization.

Rob Briner, Professor of Organizational Psychology

Figure 23. The best performers adapt capability to need

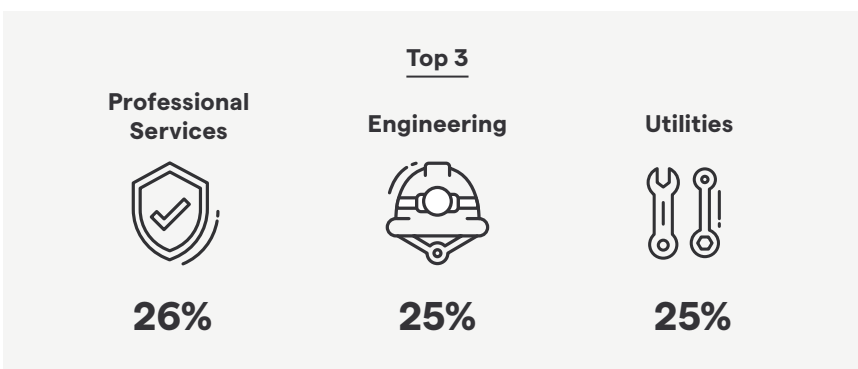|	Stage 1 Maturity	Stage 2 Maturity	Stage 3 Maturity	High-Impact Learning Culture
% of organizations providing CPD opportunities for learning/people change	33%	50%	62%	73%
% of organizations having the capabilities in-house	Performance consulting			
	25%	33%	56%	80%
	Data analytics			
	11%	18%	33%	53%
	Implementing blended learning			
	29%	52%	71%	88%
	Support workplace performance			
	13%	27%	40%	74%

Note: please refer to diagram/model on page 30 and 31.
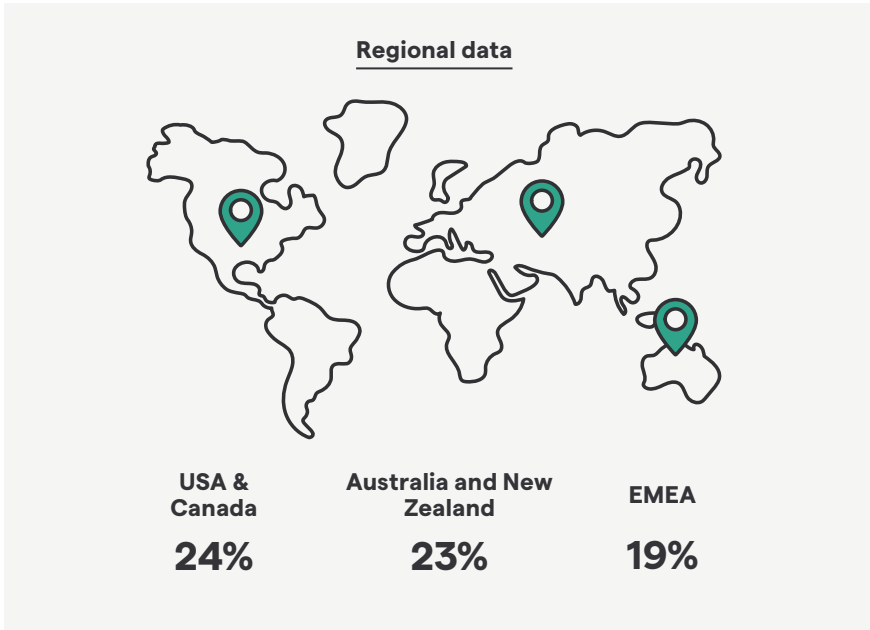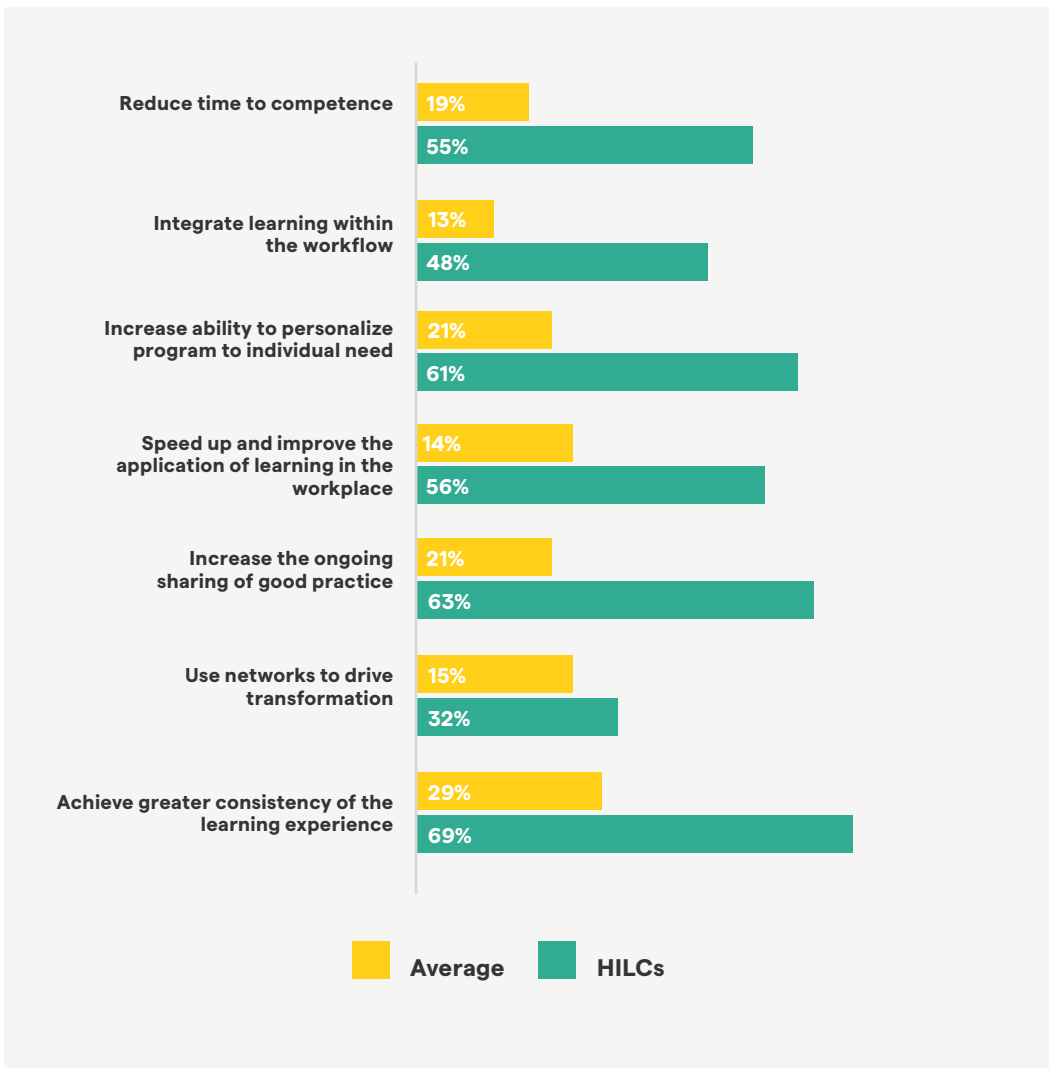
2.7.1 Start with the end in mind

We are proactive in understanding how our people learn what they need for their job
- Average: 19%
- HILCs: 76%

We use learning analytics to understand individual needs
- Average: 10%
- HILCs: 59%

We use diagnostic tools to tailor learning to individual needs
- Average: 9%
- HILCs: 41%

We organize our learning resources to make it easy for people to find what they need
- Average: 28%
- HILCs: 91%

We understand the critical questions that we need to ask of external providers
- Average: 43%
- HILCs: 97%

Our learning staff have the right skills to exploit learning technologies for business advantage
- Average: 21%
- HILCs: 67%

Our learning staff keep up to date with the latest research into learning theory (e.g. neuroscience)
- Average: 33%
- HILCs: 87%

Legend: ■ Average ■ HILCs

Industry data

We're proactive in understanding how our people learn what they need for their job

% represent learning leaders agreeing/strongly agreeing with the statement

Top 3

Professional Services	Engineering	Utilities
26%	25%	25%

Bottom 3

Hospitality	Transport	Central Government
6%	0%	10%

Regional data

Region	Percentage
USA & Canada	**24%**
Australia and New Zealand	**23%**
EMEA	**19%**

2.7.1 Start with the end in mind

	Average	HILCs
Reduce time to competence	19%	55%
Integrate learning within the workflow	13%	48%
Increase ability to personalize program to individual need	21%	61%
Speed up and improve the application of learning in the workplace	14%	56%
Increase the ongoing sharing of good practice	21%	63%
Use networks to drive transformation	15%	32%
Achieve greater consistency of the learning experience	29%	69%

Legend: **Average** (yellow), **HILCs** (green)

3. Foresight

Culture Club – High-impact learning cultures are beating the odds

Learning leaders with high-impact learning cultures are 10 times more likely to have sustainable impact on the four critical levers of business: growth, transformation, productivity, and profitability.

"

This research provides not just hindsight - a look at what has been - and it goes beyond the insight of suggesting why things happen the way they do. It adds foresight, becoming a useful guide to what will work in the future, and what is likely to fail.

The L&D profession needs to pause and use this evidence to good effect to consider what we do next. As we look to the next decade, it is evident that what has succeeded for L&D until now - the production of materials and the delivery of courses - will not succeed for us in the future.

Tomorrow's workforce requires us to be bolder, more in tune with the business, and less focused on delivery. How will we achieve this? The answer will vary depending on context, but this report is the right place to start in searching for answers.

If we want to look back in 2030 and see a very different story of success, we must sow the seeds of change now.

Donald H Taylor, Chair, Learning and Performance Institute

3.1 The future world of work is shifting

Looking at insights from the last decade – and the predictions from organizations about how 2030 will look – we have a unique viewpoint from which to bring valuable foresight to the L&D industry.

Today, L&D has a 30% chance of success.[27] This is the same as any behavioral change odds. When you add the need to hit a moving and VUCA[28] target, we must think and act differently from what we've done in the past.

Philip Tetlock, author of the book **Superforecasting: The Art and Science of Prediction**, says that the best performing 'super forecasters' are those that explore insights from multiple sources and from different viewpoints. They should also adjust their predictions incrementally as they move towards the future.

"Whether a team is making a forecast about a single event (such as the likelihood of a U.S. recession two years from now) or making recurring predictions (such as the risk each year of recession in an array of countries), a successful team needs to manage three phases well: a diverging phase, in which the issue, assumptions, and approaches to finding an answer are explored from multiple angles; an evaluating phase, which includes time for productive disagreement; and a converging phase, when the team settles on a prediction. In each of these phases, learning and progress are fastest when questions are focused, and feedback is frequent."[29]

As we look to the next decade and organizations strive to keep pace with change, we see the shift to eco-centric organizational models. Although there's a desire to move to more connected business models, most organizations are still in transition. The world's most famous professor of management studies, Dave Ulrich, says:

"In today's digital world of incredible change, volatility, disruption, and turbulence, organizations need to reinvent themselves to become ever-more responsive to dynamic market opportunities. We decided to name the reinvented organization a market-oriented ecosystem (MOE). Even though it is a bit of a "clunky" phrase, it captures the essence of the emerging organization logic because it starts with market-oriented opportunities: opportunities beyond mere market share. Market opportunities create a compelling purpose that brings people together. Ecosystem then refers to how resources and people are organized to win in the marketplace."[30]

If we consider just a few things that are rapidly transforming consumerism and the future of work on a global scale, it's clear we can't carry on not focusing on points of success when it comes to learning. (See Figure 24.)

We now need to start with a different end in mind and a new mindset. This is illustrated by the need to build in and consider just a few things that will require different learning leadership if you want to provide proof of success. For example, the circular economy, gig economy, knowledge economy, war for talent, 5G, AI, machine learning, blockchain, the aging workforce, and changing nature of work for women.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) have launched several scenarios for 2030. One dominant thing that emerges is that only 9% of the workforce will be in full-time permanent employment. With these predictions – and looking back at our evidence – the only way to beat the odds is by creating learning cultures that sow the seeds of success.[31]

"When desperate people seek easy solutions without doing the hard work of fundamental learning and change, resilience is undermined and real growth and learning fade."[32]

27. See www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/the-irrational-side-of-change-management
28. VUCA; volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity
29. See Philip Tetlock, author of Superforecasting: How to Upgrade Your Company's Judgement, has been studying the most accurate futurists. hbr.org/2016/05/superforecasting-how-to-upgrade-your-companys-judgment
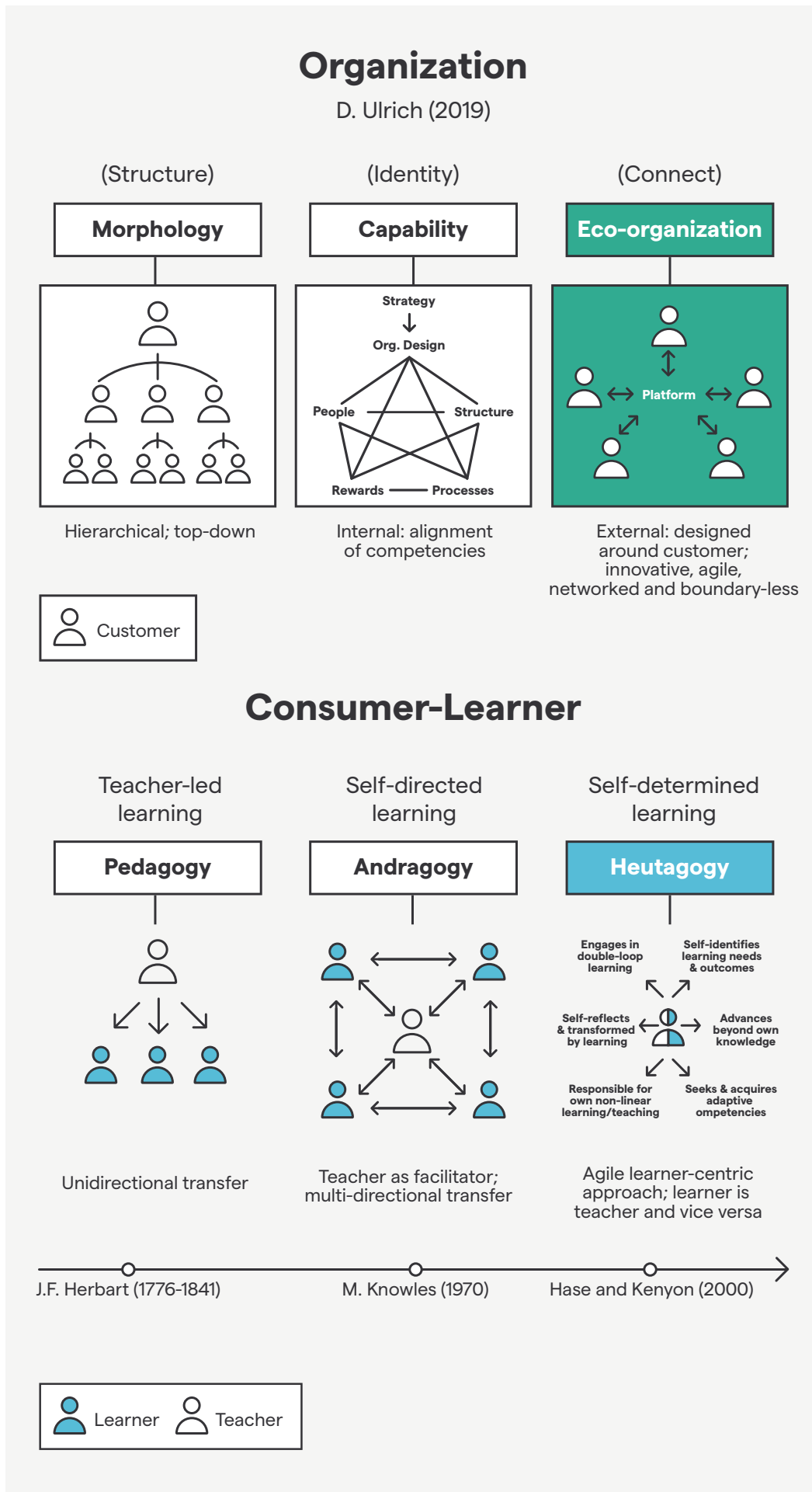30. See David Ulrich's article on organizational ecosystems; www.linkedin.com/pulse/emergence-market-oriented-ecosystem-moe-organization-dave-ulrich/
31. See WEF/PWC 2030 www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/people-organization/workforce-of-the-future/workforce-of-the-future-the-competing-forces-shaping-2030-pwc.pdf
32. Dave Ulrich, The Why of Work: How Great Leaders Build Abundant Organizations That Win

Figure 24. Evolution of organization and consumer-learner

Organization

D. Ulrich (2019)

(Structure)	(Identity)	(Connect)
Morphology	**Capability**	**Eco-organization**
Hierarchical; top-down	Internal: alignment of competencies	External: designed around customer; innovative, agile, networked and boundary-less

Strategy → Org. Design — People — Structure — Rewards — Processes

Platform

Customer

Consumer-Learner

Teacher-led learning	Self-directed learning	Self-determined learning
Pedagogy	**Andragogy**	**Heutagogy**
Unidirectional transfer	Teacher as facilitator; multi-directional transfer	Agile learner-centric approach; learner is teacher and vice versa

Engages in double-loop learning
Self-identifies learning needs & outcomes
Self-reflects & transformed by learning
Advances beyond own knowledge
Responsible for own non-linear learning/teaching
Seeks & acquires adaptive ompetencies

J.F. Herbart (1776-1841) M. Knowles (1970) Hase and Kenyon (2000)

Learner   Teacher

3.2 Sowing the seeds of future success

If we go back and explore where we've got to so far, it will allow the most ambitious and most curious people to have a new future-fit mandate for corporate learning.

As we look to the future, we're not starting from a solid foundation. Exploring the hindsight and insight sections of this research shows that the majority of what we focused on yesterday and today isn't fit for purpose for the future.

This doesn't mean that we have to throw out everything. But it does mean we need to do less – better.

Now we have a unique viewpoint on the three perspectives (the last decade, today and the next decade) we're in a unique and credible position to bring some valuable foresight scenarios to learning leaders.

The most successful leaning leaders of the future will have mindsets, habits and practices that work on a constantly moving platform. The only way to do this is to start with the end in mind.

To make the jump from average to outstanding in learning, we must harness people power. This is not a quick win, but sowing the seeds of change in this way will reap long-term rewards. In fact, this approach is the only way to succeed in learning.

If you're looking to beat the odds and create high impact conditions that bring a competitive edge to organizations through people, you'll need to set out a mandate for the next 10 years. And realize you're now leading from a faster-moving platform. The best learning leaders do this by considering expectations from the C-suite, leadership and consumers of learning. They draw on their relative strengths and the purpose of their company. For example, a clear understanding of what enables the organization to generate value through opportunities and trends in their marketplace.

Top performers, and those with the most potential to beat the odds in our industry, go one step further and reframe the points of success. Such reframing recognizes that organizations are competing for talent, revenue, and influence on a global scale. And those who can provide proof of the points of success – internally and externally – are significantly increasing their chances of success in more competitive markets. They also mitigate their risks against those fierce forces of change.

A new mandate for learning success needs to focus on business change and not learning. Although this isn't a new concept, it seems that we're still getting confused by the difference between access to knowledge and learning.

In the future, people will need more convenient access to accurate knowledge. And they'll need learning experiences that are set up for self-determined consumer-learners. When it comes to the learning experiences, the points of success must include proof of impact and transformation. For example, measuring the journey of behavioral change.

Figure 25. A future mandate for learning cultures: points of success

Knowledge (80%)	Learning (20%)
People need to know how to access for reference purposes but don't need innate knowledge	People need innate knowledge to perform, make judgements, or problem solve
Access to knowledge aligned to content goal – Education: how to optimize on-demand knowledge – Convenient access to knowledge – Job aids – On-demand content (internal and external) – Transactional analytics such as usage, access, gap analysis, content accuracy, author or SME, proof of success aligned to knowledge goals – Knowledge asset management	**Access to learning experiences aligned to behavior goal** – Education: difference between access to knowledge and learning – Learning in the flow of work – Learning goal – Reflection space – Stretch and challenging opportunities – Transformational analytics such as learner DNA or intelligence, organization's critical capability, function, team and individual level, speed and quality to capability, proof of success aligned to learning goals – Behavioral change – Organizational health

When it comes to the 20% of learning required, there's a growing demand for learning cultures. If set up for success, learning cultures can significantly increase, transform and sustain performance.

Our longitudinal study provides proof that High-Impact Learning Cultures (HILCs) can support people to collectively thrive and allow organizations to drive a faster and more accurate response to change. And this helps bring a competitive advantage.

Over 99% of leaders who participated in the Health Check research want to drive a learning culture. But fewer than one in five organizations manage to achieve one. Of those that do, only two out of three can provide proof that they can sustain this status.

A learning culture requires a more targeted, disruptive and adaptive model for learning at organization, function, team and individual levels. This requires integrated leadership and learning professionals who possess the expert capability of leading transformative learning at scale.

Future-focused professionals will need to be comfortable with guiding change via the right experience and the right evidence. Often, they'll have to facilitate change through a network of internal and external experts. These people can share their expertise with the business, supporting them to keep up with the pace required.

The most progressive and impactful organizations embed learning into the flow of life and ecosystem of the organization. That means people buy in to the co-creating model.

The best performers thrive because leaders, consumer-learners and learning professionals change work together to identify, drive and deliver the critical capability goals of the organization. There's so much more learning available for people. But unless critical capability needs are actively managed and tracked, organizations lose momentum for guiding transformation to stick, and the ability to impact performance dies.

This approach requires a learning culture within the business and designing an iterative approach that allows learning to impact a moving environment. Learning professionals must start with the end in mind and transform the fundamental.

What's more, only 31% of business leaders are able to recognize how organizational learning is aligned with their overall business plan. Only 20% of learning leaders can speed up and improve the application of learning. And only 16% are capable of using data and insights to make informed decisions.

HILCs are not the largest organizations and they don't have the biggest budgets or an abundance of learning resources. But they are led by high-impact leaders who have a future-fit attitude and know how to connect and network in smart ways. These leaders create a 'distributed trust' model and use evidence as well as experience to continuously drive impact.

3.3 Leading a high-impact learning culture

Leading HILCs of the future will require a new mandate for learning leaders, too.

As we look to the future, we know that new, complex and even more challenging forces are bringing new risks for learning leaders. Organizations that win in more competitive markets will need to be more adaptable.

As it's estimated that 70-80% of future workforces will need up- or re-skilling on a continual basis, we see HILCs as a platform to adaptability, because they're organic in nature and focus on driving transformative behavioral change.

It is also estimated by the great work of John Kotter and McKinsey that up to 70% of change does not stick. These odds can be changed but the approach must recognize what forces they are up against.[33]

We must embrace next-level, advanced technologies and analytics. And consider how two new imperatives can provide even deeper proof of success.

First, we see the emergence of more advanced analytics like Culturomics. This area of intelligence looks at how frequently a word is used over a period of time – and how this relates to changes in culture. Smart speakers and bots are popping up everywhere, and becoming part of everyday life. Google Ngram Viewer is already exploring this. As words are originated and exchanged by humans, it's no surprise that culture and behavior are in the spotlight.

Advanced analytics are predicted to move into strategic workforce dynamics in interesting ways over the next decade. Used effectively, they could take behavioral economics to new heights. They could do this by analyzing how our culture is changing, by measuring the health of our workforce dialog. It's designed to study human culture and cultural trends over time by means of quantitative analysis of words and phrases.

AI and machine learning are set to disrupt and transform our thinking and approach in so many ways. But we'll need to support and trust people, as insights will be harder to gather and govern if we don't use this evidence in appropriate and ethical ways.

Second, we must look at culture through critical behavioral economics lenses.

33. See www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/the-irrational-side-of-change-management

We must become adaptive and reinvent corporate learning to become iterative in nature, aligned to self-accountability and self-responsibility. So, discover the 20% of critical focus that will make an 80% change.

The more in touch we are with people and guide them to learn and grow, the more we need to adapt. What we have today is in no shape or form fit or relevant for the future.

How people consume and need to consume learning is rapidly transforming. So, as learning leaders, we must become a prism for behavioral change. This will require expertise and precision navigation that only the combination of the right people and the right business intelligence can achieve.

We must re-emerge as the trusted experts. It's not about new job titles, but developing a portfolio of dynamic capabilities, and facilitating learning ecosystems. And we need to hone the ability to adapt from being a learning analyst to a learning architect, who can connect with a learning engineer and draw on learning science to nudge and guide.

Only 6% of the workforce are influenced by learning professionals today. So, it's time to let go and guide people to be self-determined in connected and boundary-less ways.[33]

The future of corporate learning must be focused on behavioral change because the learning ecosystem is predicted to 'have feelings' and to be 'personal' and 'vocal'. So, learning futurologists who increase adaptability and impact will need to know the health, mood and mindset of the workforce.

Learning cultures are contextualized: there isn't an off-the-shelf version. In such contexts, people are rewarded and recognized for learning: it's integrated and not an afterthought.

Only high-trust organizations will thrive. Those in survival mode will lose momentum even quicker than they do today. So, it's vital we find our brand promise and principles if we are to fulfill our purpose. (See Figure 26.)

Figure 26. The high-impact learning culture model (J. Daly, 2020)

3.4 Back to the future: The six habits of high-impact learning cultures

As we look to the future, we need to start with the end in mind. As Learning & Organizational Development (L&OD) professionals, now is our opportunity to sow the seeds of success so that, when we do arrive in 2030, we have not left it to chance. Instead, we will have taken an evidence-based approach and be recognized as the experts our organizations need us to be.

If we look to beat the odds and arrive at 2030 as credible experts, we need to provide the critical proof points of impact. These odds are steep, but as this research has highlighted, these odds can be beaten if they're approached differently from today. Successful high-impact learning cultures (HILCs) are just that: more ambitious and better at learning and performing at scale. They focus on less, but do it better. And they only focus on learning aligned to their critical capability risks.

Learning leaders with HILCs are 10 times more likely to outperform others in regard to the four critical levers of business: growth, transformation, productivity and profitability. Just imagine a scenario when this was only the start for L&OD, and those at this point today had leaped into 2030. If we start now, we have an opportunity to become a power industry of professionals, highly credible and rewarded, and recognized for our ability to add value.

By taking a people-centric approach and democratizing learning, we can harness people power. By being evidence-informed, we can nudge and guide – providing expert guidance that leads to impact.

Our insights have identified six common habits that act as their 'North Star' principles and are practiced continuously by learning leaders of HILCs:

1.
**Lead with purpose
(Clear L&OD Intent)**
How do we know the business is clear on the purpose of learning and the value dividend it's getting from investment?

2.
**Nudge behavior
(Transformative Leadership)**
How do we know people are actively engaged, aligned, optimizing and influencing our vision for learning?

3.
**Facilitate critical connections
(Thriving Learning Ecosystem)**
How do we know our learning ecosystem is thriving and allowing people to connect, collaborate and share knowledge when and how they need to?

4.
**Drive experiences that matter
(Self-Determined Consumer-Learners)**
How do we know our learning experiences are solving the critical business capability problems?

5.
**Connect people with success
(Dynamic Capability Impact)**
How do we know people are optimizing the most appropriate infrastructure that's enabling us to scale, and be nimble and agile?

6.
**Adapt capability to need
(Precise Learning Guidance)**
How do we know we are accessing reliable and credible business intelligence and making more informed decisions in partnership with key stakeholders?

Appendix A

Our Methodology

This report considers organizational learning from multiple critical perspectives. It draws on the contributions of 8,500 learning leaders and 65,000 employees.

Data sources:

1. Data from learning leaders is gathered online via our Health Check tool. Respondents are taken through an in-depth review that explores the 'health' of their strategy and their readiness for future transformation and change.

2. Data from employees is gathered online through our close work with multiple organizations. Representative samples are taken from each organization. The data used in this report has been collected between September 2018 – December 2019.

In most cases the analysis and data representation are a summary of the data expressed in percentage terms. Whenever we discuss group differences, this is due to several statistical tests performed and a significant difference being found.

Data analysis:

We perform several advanced statistical tests to understand relationships, differences and patterns, which are then utilized to make claims and predictions. The following statistical tests have been used for this report:

1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis
2. Hierarchical Multiple Regression
3. Logistic Regression
4. ANOVA, ANCOVA, MANOVA
5. Pearson's Correlations, Spearman's Correlations

To perform these tests, we use two statistical software packages: SPSS and STATA.

Appendix B

Our Methodology

Extended table of technologies

Figure 11. Learning leaders' use of digital learning tools for the past three years

Digital tools	2018	2019	2020
Knowledge Access			
Learning Management System	89%	82%	80%
Job aids (e.g. pdf checklists, infographics)	70%	74%	79%
Open education resources/digital materials offered free at the point of use (e.g. Wikipedia, YouTube, OU, TED)	65%	64%	68%
Massive Open Online Courses (e.g. Coursera)	32%	33%	38%
Feeds/curation and social bookmarking (e.g. Curatr, Pinterest, StumbleUpon)	18%	19%	18%
File and presentation sharing applications (e.g. GoogleDocs, Dropbox, SlideShare)	60%	57%	62%
Collaborative			
Communities of practice (communities to support working practices/subject interest groups)	55%	54%	55%
Webinars (e.g. Webex, Live Meeting, Adobe Connect, GoToMeeting)	79%	69%	68%
Interactive video	28%	31%	40%
In-house/enterprise social networks (e.g. Yammer, bespoke internal systems)	56%	58%	60%
VOIP conferencing/screen sharing tools (e.g. Skype, Google Hangouts)	68%	70%	79%
User-generated content	38%	35%	43%
Collaborative project tools (e.g. Basecamp, Trello, Smartsheet, Slack)	40%	46%	52%
Cognitive and Advanced			
Artificial intelligence tools (e.g. Intelligent Tutoring Systems, virtual assistants, chat bots, Alexa, Siri)	9%	14%	16%
Continuous Learning Platforms (e.g. Degreed, Axonify, Fuse, LXPs)	15%	19%	22%
Augmented reality (e.g. live situations augmented by computer-generated sensory input such as sound, video)	14%	15%	18%
Wearable technologies (e.g. Google Glass, GoPro, smartwatches, productivity wristbands)	13%	13%	9%
Virtual reality (e.g. Oculus Rift)	14%	13%	17%

Note: The sample size is n=1123 (2020), n=702 (2019), n=684 (2018) learning leaders. Percentages represent those respondents that reported having the digital tool in-house.

Appendix C

Towards Maturity Ambassadors

Thanks to the support of the Towards Maturity Ambassadors, who share our belief that independent research should be freely available to all. We thank them for their support over the last decade.

Founding ambassador

Learning Technologies, incorporating Learning & Skills, is Europe's leading showcase of organizational learning and the technology used to support learning at work.

www.learningtechnologies.co.uk

Dossier offers solutions for enterprise competence management and learning compliance. With our customers operating in high consequence industries such as health, aviation and finance, we ensure capability where it matters.

www.dossiersolutions.com

Founding ambassador

LEO helps organizations move learning to the heart of their business strategy through designing and delivering a strategic mix of world-class multi-device learning content, media, tools and platforms.

www.leolearning.com

Kallidus is a leading provider of software and award-winning content to help attract talent and develop them through their entire employee lifecycle from initial hire to high flyer.

www.kallidus.com

Cognician helps companies to scale meaningful conversations for life-changing learning through digital coaching with custom learning design and development for digital coaching, as well as client-ready programs.

www.cognician.com

Kineo literally means to set things in motion – and that's what we aim to do when it comes to workplace learning, helping leading businesses to improve their performance with creative learning solutions that deliver results.

www.kineo.com

docebo

Docebo is a cloud-based, LMS designed to increase performance and learning engagement. Offered in over 32 languages, Docebo offers an enterprise solution for training employees, partners and customers worldwide.

www.docebo.com

saba

Saba combine the art and science of talent with dynamic technology to deliver a "just for me" talent experience – personal journeys for every person, every team, and every company. From attracting future stars, to developing skills, to coaching for growth, to creating a culture that engages and inspires.

www.saba.com

PurpleMedia

PurpleMedia are award-winning creators of bespoke e-learning and comms material. Creative isn't just what they are – it's what they do by using a 'campaign' approach and storytelling methodology to emotionally engage and inspire.

www.purplemedia.co.uk

Raytheon Professional Services

Raytheon Professional Services (RPS) is a global leader in performance training and learning solutions, designing tailored learning solutions that align with an organization's key business objectives and goals.

www.raytheon.com

KPMG

KPMG is a global network of professional firms providing Audit, Tax and Advisory services. They deliver the measurable skills capability an organization needs to realize their strategic aims.

www.kpmglearningacademy.co.uk

speexx empowering communication

Speexx helps large organizations drive productivity by empowering employee communication skills across borders. The award-winning cloud-based solution features blended language learning for more than eight million users worldwide.

www.speexx.com

GROWTH ENGINEERING

Growth Engineering are learning technology specialists, founded in 2004 and headquartered in Windsor (UK). They're laser-focused on making learning more fun and engaging, thereby helping learners to unleash their inner superheroes. Their learning solutions have helped companies like L'Oreal, EE, Flight Center and Hard Rock to get a better return on their training investments.

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