2018 Workplace Learning Report

The Rise and Responsibility of Talent Development in the New Labor Market
In today’s dynamic world of work, the path to opportunity—for both individuals, and organizations—is changing.

The short shelf life of skills and a tightening labor market are giving rise to a multitude of skill gaps. Businesses are fighting to stay ahead of the curve, trying to hold onto their best talent and struggling to fill key positions. Individuals are conscious of staying relevant in the age of automation.

Enter the talent development function—the organizational leaders creating learning opportunities to enable employee growth and achievement. They have the ability to guide their organizations to success in tomorrow’s labor market, but they can’t do it alone.

That’s why we surveyed approximately 4,000 professionals globally on LinkedIn with the goal of providing a holistic view of modern workplace learning.

1,200 Talent Development Professionals
200 Executives
2,200 Employees
400 People Managers
Our research shows that today's talent developer is being asked to balance competing demands from executives, managers, and employees alike: They must play a critical role in shaping future workforce strategy, while delivering hyper-relevant content to support employee needs of today, and cater these vast efforts to a multi-generational workforce with varied learning preferences.

To balance these competing demands, talent development leaders today are embracing the role of “relationship builder”—cultivating the relationships that are the backbone of a learning culture that thrives in a workforce of constant change.

Our research answers the talent developer’s most pressing questions:

1. How are savvy talent development leaders adapting to the pace of change in today’s dynamic world of work?
2. Why do employees demand learning and development resources, but don’t make the time to learn?
3. How do executives think about learning and development?
4. Are managers the missing link to successful learning programs?
As the shelf life of skills shrinks, business leaders worry that talent developers are focused on training for today’s skill demands, at the expense of preventing tomorrow’s skill gaps. Balance today’s challenges with tomorrow’s opportunities. If employees can’t find the time to learn, reduce the friction. Meet them on platforms they’re already using with messages that align to their on-the-job needs and professional aspirations.

All parties agree, the #1 priority for talent development in 2018 is training for soft skills.

Talent developers are depending more on online learning solutions to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse, multi-generational workforce—and there’s no turning back.

The rise of digital is transforming talent development. Manager involvement is a critical ingredient to increase employee engagement with learning.

1. Soften the impact of automation.
2. Balance today’s challenges with tomorrow’s opportunities.
3. The rise of digital is transforming talent development.
4. If employees can’t find the time to learn, reduce the friction.
5. Amplify your manager relationships.
Soften the impact of automation.

All parties agree, the #1 priority for talent development in 2018 is training for soft skills.

Each group in our survey—from executives to managers to talent developers—identified ‘training for soft skills’ as the #1 priority for talent development in 2018. In the age of automation, maintaining technical fluency across roles will be critical, but the pace of change is fueling demand for adaptable, critical thinkers, communicators, and leaders. As technology accelerates, soft skills are in high demand to fuel people and business growth.

What are the most important skills for employees to learn from L&D programs?

- Leadership: 74% Talent Developers, 66% People Managers, 66%Executives
- Communication: 66% Talent Developers, 66% People Managers, 64% Executives
- Collaboration: 50% Talent Developers, 50% People Managers, 55% Executives
- Role Specific Skills: 50% Talent Developers, 49% People Managers, 42% Executives
Balance today’s challenges with tomorrow’s opportunities.

As the shelf life of skills shrinks, business leaders worry that talent developers are focused on training for today’s skill demands, at the expense of preventing tomorrow’s skill gaps.

Our research shows that in 2018, talent developers are prioritizing the employee development needs of today. And while that is essential, executives and people managers are looking to talent developers to do more—specifically increase their focus on identifying industry trends to prevent internal skill gaps. While these leaders ranked this as the #2 priority for L&D initiatives in 2018, talent developers placed it as #6 on their list. In order to better partner with these groups to support employee growth, savvy talent development leaders are balancing their efforts.

What do you believe are the most important areas of focus for L&D in 2018?

- **How to Train for Soft Skills**
- **Identifying Trends to Prevent Future Skill Gaps**
- **Understanding the Impact of Technology**
- **Consistent Global Training**
- **Deliver Insights on Internal Skill Gaps**
- **How to Track Skill Development**
- **How to Access Skill Competencies**

Priority #2 for Executives, Priority #6 for talent developers
The rise of digital is transforming talent development.

Talent developers are depending more on online learning solutions to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse, multi-generational workforce—and there’s no turning back.

58% of employees prefer opportunities to learn at their own pace, 49% prefer to learn at the point of need. Talent developers know that they need to rely on digital learning solutions to cater to varied learning needs. A recent ATD report found that almost 90% of companies offer digital learning today. Our survey shows that talent developers depend more on online learning solutions than ever before—not only to deliver content, but to measure learning success.
If employees can’t find the time to learn, reduce the friction.

Meet them on platforms they’re already using with messages that align to their on-the-job needs and professional aspirations.

Each group in our survey identified ‘getting employees to make time for learning’ as the #1 challenge facing talent development in 2018. Yet, 94% of employees say that they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career development. The modern organization needs to meet learners where they already are—aligning development opportunities with employee aspirations, and engaging them through the platforms where they are already spending their time.

“Getting employees to make time for learning”

#1 Challenge for talent development in 2018

Yet...

94% of employees would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career development.
Amplify your manager relationships.

Manager involvement is a critical ingredient to increase employee engagement with learning.

56% of employees say that they would spend more time learning if their manager directed them to complete a specific course in order to gain or improve their skills. Talent developers name “increased manager involvement” as the #2 challenge they face. Getting managers more involved in employee learning is not the only way to see increased learner engagement, but data shows it will likely make an impact.
Talent Developer

They onboard, enable, develop, and activate the key differentiator of any organization—it’s people. They build talent strategy and the infrastructure of employee journeys and experiences. They have the unique ability to hone employee talent and create and curate learning content to empower employees to continue to grow.
How are savvy talent development leaders adapting to the pace of change in today’s dynamic world of work?

The most successful talent developers are balancing today’s challenges with preparing employees for tomorrow’s opportunities.

Executives and people managers ranked ‘identifying industry trends to prevent internal skill gaps’ as the #2 priority for L&D initiatives in 2018, talent developers placed this as #6 on their list.

Talent developers are embracing digital transformation.

Our survey shows that talent developers depend more on online learning solutions than ever before—not only to deliver content, but to measure learning success. They’re watching key industry trends like “microlearning” and “just-in-time learning” in order to better support the modern employee.

Talent developers are preparing their workforce for automation by naming ‘training for soft skills’ their #1 priority.

35% of them expect a budget increase, only 11% expect a decrease, with the majority of their spend allocated to soft skills development programs.

Savvy talent developers are looking to push boundaries with their programs.

They know there’s room for improvement in their programs—and across the board, executives, managers and employees agree, but are rooting for their success!
Talent development is top of mind for organizations

Talent developers, executives, and people managers agree that providing resources to enable talent is crucial to the business. There is consensus that learning and development programs are a necessary benefit to employees and that overall, employees are engaged with those programs.

"The ability of the talent development function to positively affect culture and help plan and execute change make it a dynamic player in driving organizational agility, innovation, and growth that contribute to lasting market leadership."

Tony Bingham
CEO of ATD

The importance of talent development:

- 92% of Talent Developers say L&D is necessary for the benefit
- 90% of People Managers agree
- 90% of Executives say L&D is necessary for the benefit

- 88% of Talent Developers believe L&D is important to leadership
- 86% of People Managers agree
- 90% of Executives believe L&D is important to leadership

- 77% of Talent Developers believe employees are actively engaged in L&D
- 76% of People Managers agree
- 78% of Executives believe employees are actively engaged in L&D

- 74% of Talent Developers believe talent is the #1 priority
- 74% of People Managers agree
- 81% of Executives believe talent is the #1 priority
Training for soft skills is the #1 priority for talent development in 2018

Talent developers say that training for soft skills is their key focus for 2018. In the age of automation, adaptability rules. While maintaining technical fluency will be important, demand for soft skills will continue to accelerate. Industry experts and organizational partners agree that this should be the top focus for talent development in 2018.

“Soft skills—which are needed to effectively communicate, problem solve, collaborate and organize—are becoming more important for success as the workplace evolves socially and technologically.”

SHRM

What are the top priorities for your L&D programs in 2018?

1. How to Train for Soft Skills
2. Consistent Valuable Global Training
3. Deliver Insights on Internal Skill Gaps
4. How to Track Skill Development
5. How to Access Skill Competencies
6. Understanding the Impact of Technology
What about hard skills?

While organizations are counting on talent development to help employees cultivate essential soft skills, talent developers should be aware of the most in-demand hard skills in the workforce as their companies grow their talent and technical capabilities.

Using LinkedIn data from our 500+ million members, we identified the skills companies were working hardest to fill and coupled that with related job. Here are the top 5:

1. **Cloud and Distributed Computing**
   - **Related Jobs:** Platform Engineer, Cloud Architect

2. **Statistical Analysis and Data Mining**
   - **Related Jobs:** Business Analyst, Data Analyst, Statistician

3. **Middleware and Integration Software**
   - **Related Jobs:** IT Manager, Systems Integration Engineer

4. **Web Architecture and Development Framework**
   - **Related Jobs:** Web Developer, Full Stack Web Developer

5. **User Interface Design**
   - **Related Jobs:** UX Designer, Web Developer, UI Designer

Get the full list here

“Workers of the future will spend more time on activities that machines are less capable of, such as managing people, applying expertise, and communicating with others. The skills and capabilities required will also shift, requiring more social and emotional skills and more advanced cognitive capabilities, such as logical reasoning and creativity.”

**McKinsey & Company**
Talent developers should balance near-term needs with strategic workforce planning.

There is only so much we can do in one year. And while training for soft skills is and should be a top priority for talent development this year, talent development professionals should also take the initiative to prepare employees for the fast-approaching future.

Industry experts and organizational partners call on talent developers to focus on strategic workforce planning—to turn outward to skills trends to inform their decisions on internal strategy. Talent developers should look to external partners and technology solutions to help them identify these trends and implement programs to proactively address skill gaps.
As the rate of skills change accelerates across both old and new roles in all industries, proactive and innovative skill-building and talent management is an urgent issue. What this requires is a talent development function that is rapidly becoming more strategic and has a seat at the table—one that employs new kinds of analytical tools to spot talent trends and skills gaps, and provides insights that can help organizations align their business, innovation and talent management strategies to maximize available opportunities to capitalize on transformational trends.

World Economic Forum
In 2018, talent developers have a diverse portfolio of resources to address the needs of a multi-generational workforce, with an increased dependence on online learning solutions.

Talent development professionals are most excited about digital learning solutions that can support quick takeaways, immediately solve needs, and provide great engaging content.

Top 3 online learning industry trends for talent developers

- **Microlearning**: 49%
- **Just in Time Learning**: 46%
- **Employee Experience with Engaging Content**: 46%

What learning resources do you use to train employees?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Resource</th>
<th>2018 Workplace Learning Data</th>
<th>2017 Workplace Learning Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-House Instructor-Led Classes</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Training/eLearning (Created In-House)</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Training/eLearning (External Provider)</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Instructor-Led Classes</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-to-Peer Coaching</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification Programs</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition Reimbursement</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Managers</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As companies grow, they dedicate more budget to scalable online learning solutions that meet ever-growing skill demands.

More talent developers are expecting a budget increase this year.

2017: 27% of talent developers expecting budget increase

2018: 35% of talent developers expecting budget increase (only 11% expect a decrease)

Percentage of spend on online & classroom L&D by company size
Talent development professionals continue to explore the best ways to measure learning.

Today, talent professionals measure success based on qualitative feedback on in-classroom programs and quantitative data based on engagement with digital learning. In the near-future, they want to demonstrate success of learning programs in terms of team metrics and retention.
Talent development aims to measure learning based on team metrics and retention.

While there is no silver bullet to define ROI, talent development is looking for ways to measure learning based on team metrics and retention. Executives and people managers agree that retention and team metrics are the best ways to demonstrate the success of learning programs.

Which of the following would show success of L&D programs?

- INCREASE IN PERFORMANCE METRICS
- RETENTION
- QUALITATIVE BEHAVIOR CHANGE
- ABILITY TO APPLY LEARNINGS
- EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE
- USE OF LEARNING PROGRAMS

Talent Developers People Managers Executives
Measuring the impact of L&D programs is not an exact science, but measuring team metrics and retention rate is a great start.

**TEAM METRICS:** Look at team metrics before a relevant team training and after. Is there an increase in that team’s core metrics? The learning program may not be the only contributor to that success, but it likely made a difference.

**RETENTION:** Look at retention rate at the start of a new program. After 6 months to 1 year of launching a new learning initiative, measure retention rate again to see if there has been an increase in retention and/or decrease in employee turnover.

**EXAMPLE:** In a department of eight, two people left and were replaced during the measurement period.

### RETENTION

- **# of individual employees who remained employed for entire measurement period:** 6
- **# of employees at start of measurement period:** 8

75% Retention Rate

### TURNOVER

- **# of separations during the measurement period:** 2
- **average # of employees during the measurement period:** 8

25% Turnover Rate

Source: SHRM
Getting employees to make time for learning is the #1 challenge facing talent development in 2018.

Getting employees to make time for learning has moved up to the #1 challenge facing talent development. This makes sense. If employees are not taking the time to learn, then L&D programs cannot be successful.

Our data shows that the #2 challenge facing talent development, "getting managers to take an active role in employee learning", is a viable solution to overcoming the #1 challenge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>2018 Workplace Learning Data</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting Employees to Make Time</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Managers Involved*</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Budget</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating ROI</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Growth Mindset*</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small L&amp;D Team</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning to Overall Strategy</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Data &amp; Insights</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

56% of employees say they would spend time learning if their manager told them to complete a specific course to improve on or gain a new skill.

*New survey question
Organizational partners acknowledge that talent developers face significant challenges in their missions to upskill the organization—including cultivating growth mindset.

Growth mindset is top of mind for business leaders. They identify growth mindset as the #2 challenge facing their talent development teams. It’s likely that they think efforts to encourage growth mindset would encourage employees to make the time for learning.

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### What do you think are the top challenges for the talent development team?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
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<tr>
<td>Getting Employees to Make Time</td>
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<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating ROI</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Awareness</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Alignment</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With growing demands, talent leaders still feel there’s room for improvement in their programs—and across the board, executives, managers and employees agree.

In 2018, savvy talent leaders are embracing the role of relationship builder to partner with these groups more to meet the learning needs of the full organization.

- Talent developers have increased confidence in their L&D programs. Their willingness to recommend their own learning programs has increased 40% since last year! This is something to celebrate.
- Still, only 1/3 of talent developers would be willing to recommend their own programs this year—they know there is room to grow.
- This drops further when we examine the willingness of executives, people managers, and employees to recommend L&D programs—with the lowest net promoter score among employees, specifically millennials.
Employees

The heartbeat of the organization and its biggest differentiator. They’re the individual contributors of today and the managers of tomorrow. They’re now dominated by a millennial generation eager to learn and contribute.
Why do employees demand learning and development resources, but don’t make the time to learn?

It’s a fact—employees want to learn, but don’t feel they have the time. 94% of employees say that they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career development. Yet, the number one reason employees say that they feel held back from learning is because they do not have time to learn the skills they need.

Managers play a big role in employee learning. 56% of employees say that they would spend more time learning if their manager directed them to complete a specific course in order to gain or improve their skills.

Talent developers must meet employees where they are with experiences they want. 58% of employees prefer opportunities to learn at their own pace, 49% prefer to learn at the point of need. This experience can only be achieved by online learning solutions.

The modern organization needs to meet learners where they already are. Aligning development opportunities with employee aspirations, and engaging them through the platforms where they are already spending their time.
Employees value career development more than ever before

94% of employees would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career development.

87% of millennials say development is important in a job compared to 69% non-millennials.

DEVELOPMENT IS IMPORTANT IN A JOB

| MILLENNIAL | 87% |
| NON-MILLENNIAL | 69% |

By 2025, millennials will make up 75% of the workforce.

"Millennials fundamentally think about jobs as opportunities to learn and grow. Their strong desire for development is, perhaps, the greatest differentiator between them and all other generations in the workplace."

Gallup
Employees are motivated to learn by manager relationships and opportunities for upward mobility.

Managers account for at least 70% of employee engagement scores—they can actually negate the positives of learning and development programs. Creating programs to get managers engaged with L&D is critical to the success of the talent development team.

What would lead you to spend more time learning workplace skills?

- Manager Directed: 56%
- Required Learning for Promotion: 49%
- Peer Recommended: 45%
- Participation Tied to Promotion: 43%
- Incentives: 40%
- Executives Knew Who Was Learning: 28%
- Time Spent Learning Was Visible: 28%

Managers account for at least 70% of employee engagement scores.
The modern employee wants to take time to learn when they’re in the office. They want opportunities to learn at their own pace and to access learning at the point of need.

85% of employees are not engaged or actively disengaged at work. Increase employee engagement by providing the learning experiences they want—when and where they want them.

If I could give one solid piece of advice to L&D leaders, it would be to listen to your most satisfied employees and ask them how they learn and how they measure their progress. Satisfied and engaged employees are gold to our organizations...if they have found the secret...we need to unlock it.”

Louisa Schaefer

How do employees prefer to learn?

- 68% of employees prefer to learn at work
- 58% of employees prefer to learn at their own pace
- 49% of employees prefer to learn at the point of need
Recommendations for Action

Inspire:
Employees, especially millennials, feel empowered to make a difference in their organizations and the world. They’re inspired by opportunities for personal growth. Talk about learning’s impact on an employee’s journey to where they want to be and the impact they want to have.

Motivate:
Employees are motivated by manager relationships and learning tied to promotion paths. Help managers understand the impact they can have on employees. Help employees understand which qualities they need to cultivate to get to the next level in their careers.

Partner:
Employees are your best source of feedback on your tools and programs. Find out what they want from learning opportunities, and get them involved in making change within the organization.
Executives

The leaders and the most public figures of the organization. They have the power to shape culture from the top down and advocate for the power and importance of continuous learning and growth.
How do executives think about learning and development?

Executives are willing to do more to help encourage learning.

As the shelf life of skills shrinks, executives worry that talent developers are focused on training for today’s workplace demands, at the expense of tomorrow’s skill gaps.

90% of executives say learning and development is a necessary benefit to the employees at the company. They said they are using their platforms to encourage employee learning, but are willing to do more.

There is an opportunity for talent developers to get a seat at the executive table.

Executives say that tying learning to business outcomes (i.e. retention) could covet talent development leaders a seat at the executive table.

Executives believe the most important skills for employees to learn are soft skills.

The top 3 skills that executives want talent development to cultivate in employees are leadership, communication, and collaboration.
Talent is top of mind for executives

81% of executives say talent is the number one priority at the company

90% of executives say that developing employees is very important to the leadership at the company

90% of executives say that learning and development is a necessary benefit to the employees at the company
Executives feel that they’re using their platforms to encourage employee learning, but they are willing to do more.

**How executives encourage learning**

- Encourage employees to participate in L&D program: 68%
- Speak about learning resources: 58%
- Participating in L&D events: 48%
- Speak about culture of learning: 43%

**How executives would be willing to encourage learning**

- Promote L&D opportunities: 51%
- Speak about key wins in learning: 46%
- Speak about value of learning: 44%
- Publicly attend L&D events: 34%
For the talent developers that don’t feel they have a seat at the table, executives see a path forward.

Executives say that tying learning to business outcomes and playing a role in helping the company overcome business challenges would help the L&D team covet that seat.

According to executives, 24% of talent developers already have a seat at the executive table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What would help your L&amp;D team earn a seat at the table?</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tie learning to business outcomes</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the company overcome business challenges</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees improve job performance</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers say that L&amp;D is a must-have</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees want L&amp;D to be a bigger part of culture</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executives say that the success of L&D programs is best demonstrated by the impact of learning on retention and performance metrics.

Which would demonstrate the success of L&D programs?

- Retaining Top Talent: 68%
- Increase in Performance Metrics: 65%
- Employee Feedback about Ability to Apply Training: 47%
- Qualitative Feedback Employee Behavior Change: 46%
- Employee Usage of Learning Programs: 35%
- Employee Feedback on Learning Programs: 32%
Executives identified soft skills training as the most essential skillset to cultivate through talent development programs.

92% of executives say that soft skills are equally important or more important than technical skills.\(^6\)

89% of executives say that it is difficult to find people with soft skills.\(^7\)

"People skills are more and more important in an era where we have powerful and pervasive technology. It sounds counterintuitive, but to beat the bot, you need to be more human."\(^6\)

Paul Roehrig
Chief Strategy Officer, Cognizant Digital Business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the most important skills for employees to learn from L&amp;D?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEADERSHIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>COLLABORATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROLE SPECIFIC SKILLS</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIME MANAGEMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAM OR PLATFORM USAGE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVES
Recommendations for Action

Inspire:
Executives are inspired by elevating organizations to be leaders in their space. Organizations that lead will have talent with the most relevant skills. Make the case for talent development as your key differentiator when asking for more resources or pitching new large-scale programs.

Motivate:
Motivate executives by demonstrating the impact that learning has on business outcomes like retention and team metrics.

Partner:
Executives know that getting employees to make time for learning is a problem. Identify ways that executives could do more to promote learning. Make the ask and document and demonstrate the impact of increased executive involvement.
People Managers

People managers are the coaches and the mentors of the organization. Managers are one of the biggest drivers of employee engagement. They can help create an environment for continuous learning and guide employees to learning resources in order to develop their careers.
Are managers the missing link to successful learning programs?

Employees will engage with learning if asked by their manager.

\( \frac{2}{3} \) of employees say that they would be motivated to learn if their direct manager was involved. \( 56\% \) of employees say that they would spend more time learning if their manager directed them to complete a specific course in order to gain or improve their skills.

Managers can be encouraged to increase involvement in employee learning.

Engage managers by tapping into their motivations. \( 53\% \) of managers say they would invest more time encouraging learning for their direct reports if it was a path to promotion for employees.

Managers have a lot on their plate—keep it simple.

Make it easy for managers to recommend learning opportunities. \( 52\% \) of managers say they would encourage learning if a system helped to recommend courses based on certain criteria.
People managers deeply value a corporate culture of learning. They know that learning programs can make their jobs easier and close skill gaps.

According to people managers:

A culture of learning is important to the business: 96%

Employee learning can save me time: 92%

Learning can help close skill gaps on my team: 90%

I would use L&D more if employees learn important skills from L&D: 90%

I would use L&D more if employees gained management skills: 82%

I have seen employees grow and improve because of L&D: 81%

Managers are a critical part of the Zillow Group Learning and Development program. We truly believe that employees should own their careers, but we know that it is important that a manager supports you. That's why we have a slogan that says career development is 'employee led, manager supported.'

Lauren Miller
Sr. Program Manager, Learning & Development at Zillow Group
People managers look to talent development programs to help their employees grow in their careers and develop new skills to excel in their current roles.

What is the #1 reason you typically recommend L&D programs to direct reports?

- Help career growth: 53%
- Improve skills for role: 33%
- Expressed interest in new skill: 7%
- Immediate problem to solve: 3%
- Unfamiliar with resources: 2%
- Don’t typically recommend: 2%
People managers are motivated to encourage learning when it is tied to a path to promotion and when they have a system that can help recommend learning opportunities.

Which of the following would motivate you to encourage your direct reports to spend time learning?

- GAVE EMPLOYEES A PATH TO PROMOTION: 53%
- A SYSTEMED RECOMMENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: 52%
- IMPROVED EMPLOYEE JOB PERFORMANCE: 39%
- ONLINE LEARNING FOR TEAM TO LEARN AT THEIR OWN PACE: 34%
- COMPANY STRUCTURED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: 29%
- SENIOR MANAGER REQUESTED: 21%
Like executives, people managers agree that the most important skills training that talent developers can provide for employees are soft skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Specific Skills</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program or Platform Usage</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Managers agree that retention is the best way to demonstrate the success of learning programs.

Which of the following would demonstrate success of L&D programs?

Retaining top talent because of learning programs - 69%

Increase in employee performance metrics - 54%

Employee feedback about ability to apply learning - 50%

Qualitative employee behavior change - 49%

Employee usage of learning programs - 43%

Employee feedback on learning programs - 39%
PEOPLE MANAGERS
Recommendations for Action

Inspire:
Managers are inspired by the potential for learning to impact employee career development. Inspire them by surfacing stories of employees within your organization who have utilized learning resources to grow in their careers.

Motivate:
Managers are motivated to encourage learning when it effects employee career growth and they can easily recommend learning opportunities. Tie learning to career paths within your organization, and offer solutions that help managers easily recommend learning to their teams.

Partner:
Managers know it is hard for employees to make time for learning. Partner with managers to identify moments when it makes sense to incorporate learning into existing routines with employees, such as 1:1s or performance review discussions.
Talent developers, you have the ability to lead your organization to success in tomorrow’s labor market.

You create the learning opportunities that enable employee growth and achievement within your organization. But, as you well know, a successful learning culture needs employee engagement, executive endorsement, and manager involvement.

Use this 2018 Workplace Learning Report to help you better understand, engage, and build the partnerships that are necessary to cultivate a thriving learning culture.
LinkedIn Learning is the only online learning platform designed to meet the needs of modern learners and the demands of modern business. Combining the unparalleled breadth and depth of Lynda.com’s library of real world expert-led courses with the data and insights fueled by the LinkedIn network of 530 million professionals, LinkedIn Learning is uniquely able to deliver the right content to the right learners at the right time, and help your people engage, learn, and succeed within your organization.

Get in touch to learn how LinkedIn Learning can help your talent development initiatives. Visit learning.linkedin.com
Survey Methodology

We surveyed approximately 4,000 professionals globally on LinkedIn. 1,200 L&D or HR professionals who either influence or are decision makers for their companies’ L&D budgets, 400 people managers, 200 execs, and 2,200 learners from North America, Europe, and Asia. These survey respondents are LinkedIn members who were selected based on information in their LinkedIn profile and were contacted via email between July 2017 and September 2017.