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Working in a New Way

Modeling the Human Side of Organizational Success

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The People Have Spoken. They Want to Learn at Work.

When learning is part of an organization's culture, there is a difference in the success that the business is able to drive. And when organizations create learning that fits the reality of what humans can accomplish during a workday, factoring in the working environment, it's effective.

How do successful organizations make this happen? Oxygen recently partnered with HCI in a study that revealed businesses everywhere are seeking breakthrough performances from their people – and are willing to pay for them. However, the systems in place today to help people succeed aren't meeting executive expectations. There is a gap between what CEOs hope to get from their investments and how learning organizations actually operate – as if the pressure to repeat and scale learning has all but dropped the human elements that make learning at work effective.

Our research reinforced the view that when learning is humanized and tied to business outcomes, people and their organizations perform better. And this has major implicationsfor the people developing learning experiences and for the way these experiences demonstrate their value to the business.

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The Digital World is Disrupting How We Work

The way we communicate has changed dramatically. The amount of information available – and the ease of access to it – has reshaped the way businesses interact internally and with customers.

The definition of success at work and what constitutes customer satisfaction has also changed. Yet, the approaches in use today to achieve both are stuck in the practices of previous decades.

CEOs Want Change... But Learning Methods are the Same as Ever

Dramatic improvements are being called for, as evidenced by significant investments. Yet it's still unclear whether the investments can be tied to real results.

Executives are understandably confused. Why don't their investments translate into measurable successes?

This disconnect represents an unprecedented opportunity for learning and enablement leaders.

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People Want to Learn at Work

Who is Expected to Teach Them?

The corporate L&D market is huge: $140 billion, according to Deloitte and Josh Bersin in his 2018 Talent Trends report. Who uses all this funding? And how do they use it?

Some high-performing organizations (HPOs) have figured it out, but many companies haven't.

Talent Trends: HR Technology Disruptions for 2018

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Key Findings

Executives want improvements in learning, but they lack clear direction as to where to invest beyond the obvious area of compliance.

Lower performing organizations (LPOs) have not updated the way learning is measured, nor do they engage with the business to better serve their audience.

C Level	Lower Performing Organizations
Limited awareness of what the learning function does beyond compliance	Still operate based on outdated measurements
No language to describe what they want/ need from the learning function	Unable to articulate business impact in business terms
Improving the skills and development of their employees is top-of-mind	Tend to be reactive and siloed, rather than a collaborative business partner

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Here's What the Audience Has to Say

More Realistic, Role-Specific Content

"The intention wasn't necessarily to equip me with what I was going to do in my field role. It was very generic. I felt taken care of with a good lunch and happy hour. But there wasn't anything that I took away from that experience that I did on my job. It didn't connect the dots for me."

– JEN B., ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

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People at High-Performing Organizations are Powered by Role-Based Learning

My Organization Effectively Customizes Learning That is Specific to a Role

Our research confirmed that the people responsible for driving success at 90% of HPOs participate in learning that's catered to their roles and responsibilities. This type of role-based learning is the signature of leaders who understand the realities their people face. What they deliver meets the demands of their audience. Less than two-thirds of other organizations surveyed could say the same.

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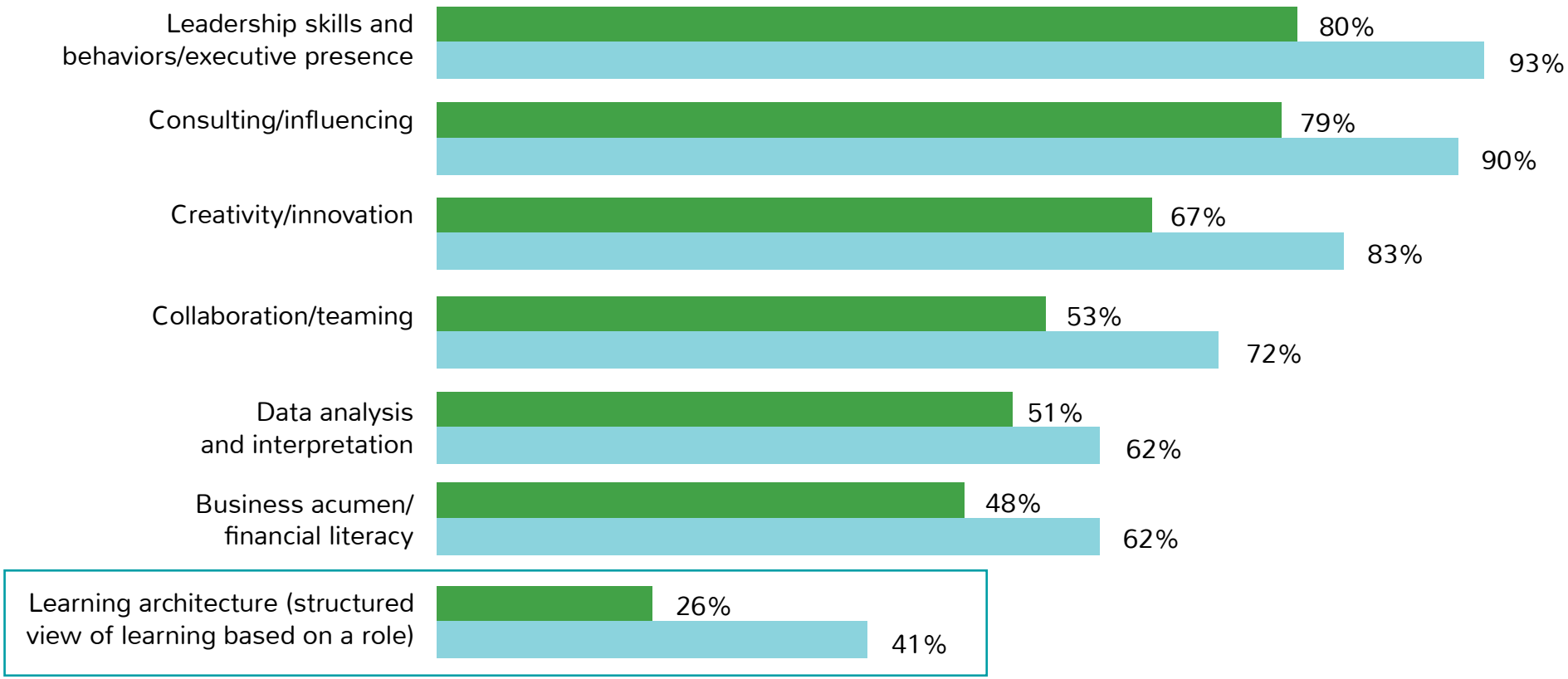
What, No Architecture?

The graph below shows the percentage of learning and enablement professionals who report each skill as critical to what they create. Architecture is at the very bottom of the list.



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For High-Performing Organizations, Learning is Not a Singular Goal

Plans are aligned with business outcomes and standards of internal accountability are set.

HPO employees learn because it's part of the culture. Not only are they interested in learning more, they're allowed to do so at work and expected to hold themselves accountable as their goals change.

High-performing organizations set a standard for talent and business outcomes. They can trace the work they do to the essential outcomes that drive the business forward.

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Here's What the Audience Has to Say

Lack of Personalized Support

"A lot of the training and support that was given to me throughout my career never really helped. It was very linear; it was of a one-and-done type of a thing. Sales training should be an ongoing journey that you take through your organization and your career."

– JENN W., BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

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High-Performing Organizations are Powered by Supportive Leadership

Learning Leaders are Highly Involved in Business Planning to Determine the Needs of Their People

Almost all high-performing organizations (86% of those HPOs surveyed) have learning leaders who are closely involved with their audiences. These leaders have an understanding of both the business results the C Level needs to achieve and the realities their audience faces. Just shy of half of low-performing organizations reported engaged learning leaders. Low engagement from leaders increases confusion and makes it even harder for people to succeed.

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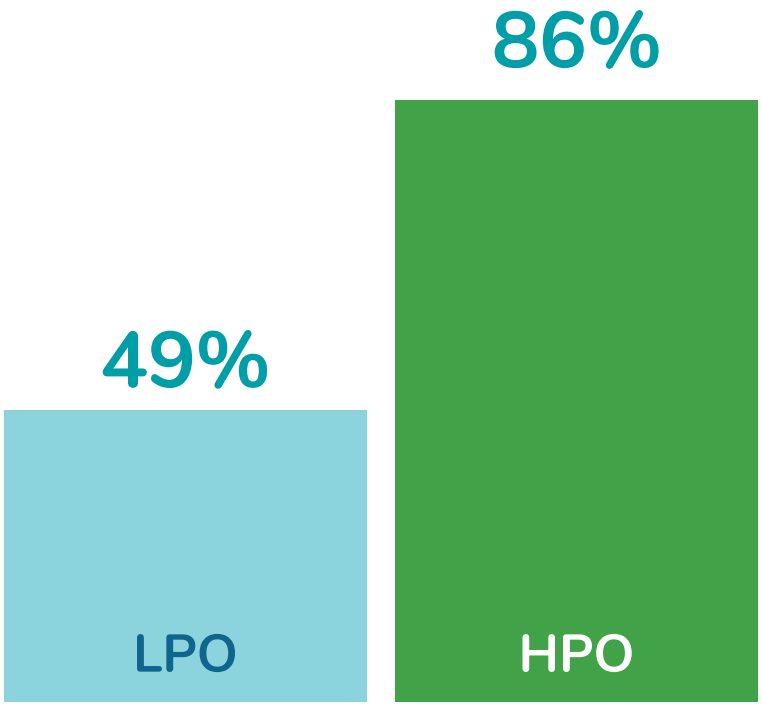

Learning leaders are highly involved in business planning to determine the needs of their people.

Leadership Sponsorship is a Key Highlight of High-Performing Organizations

Determining the Needs of the People – Why is Your Audience Important?

Our research showed that few organizations are facilitating necessary conversations between business leaders and learning experts. Often, the two are skeptical of each other and unwilling to work together.

In fact, more communication between the two groups can facilitate the creation of meaningful learning that speaks to the everyday reality of employees.

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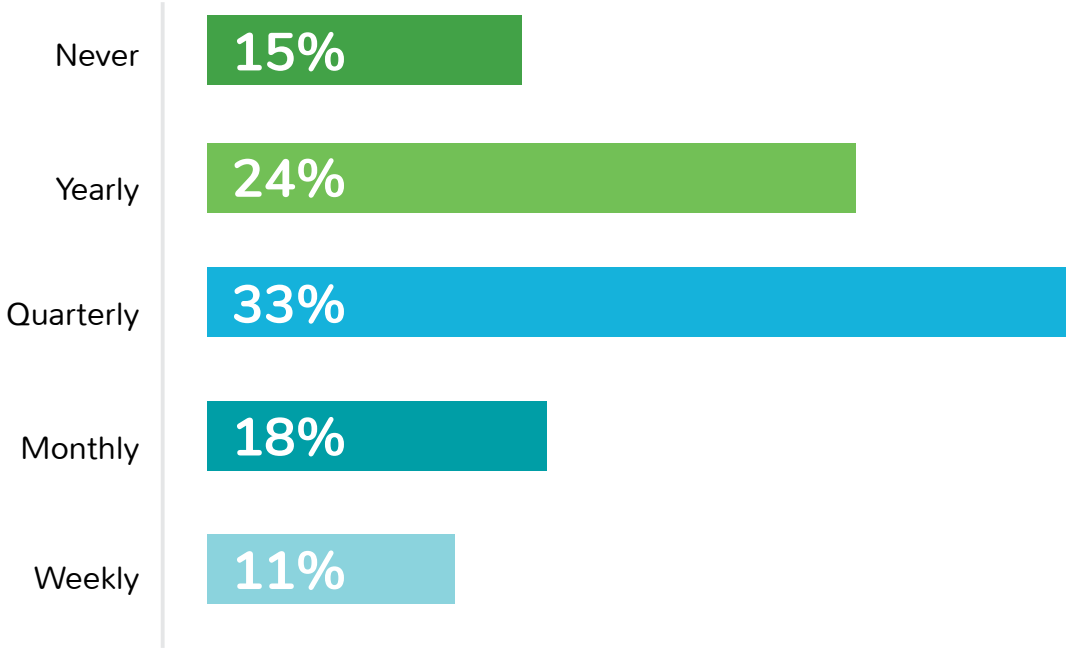
People Aren't Meeting with Stakeholders Enough

When asked the question, "How often are you personally listening to and consulting with stakeholders to create content for their people?" the numbers were low across the board. People reported low levels of interaction, with most only interacting on a quarterly basis.

Even more startling was that 24% of respondents reported getting together with their stakeholders only once a year.

No matter who the stakeholder groups are, learning and enablement leaders are not engaging in enough conversations to truly determine the needs of the audience.



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High-Performing Organizations See Learning as a Process and Not Just an Event

HPOs understand that learning is a career (and lifelong) journey. Adapting to new mindsets, new ideas and changing demands is part of the business model, not something a company is forced to do when the market suddenly shifts.

HPOs align learning initiatives with business objectives. The stakeholders involved also have goals that shift based on demand and customer requirements.

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Here's What the Audience Has to Say

More Empathy for the Audience

"When you start talking to people, connecting the dots, and using a lot of empathy and engagement, you've got us. You've got us salespeople at that. We're all about the relationship."

– JENN W., BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

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Organizations Stand to Shift Toward Stronger Sponsorship of Learning

Major gaps were discovered between high performers and low performers when asked the question, "To what extent do the following statements describe how learning is approached and perceived at your current organization?"

Others		High-performing organizations
24%	Senior leaders regularly communicate the value of learning to the entire organization	58%
21%	Learning is designed into everyday work activities as well as episodic events	51%
45%	Failures are opportunities to learn	75%
32%	Learning opportunities are personalized to the role or individuals	54%
51%	We believe learning is not just an event	68%

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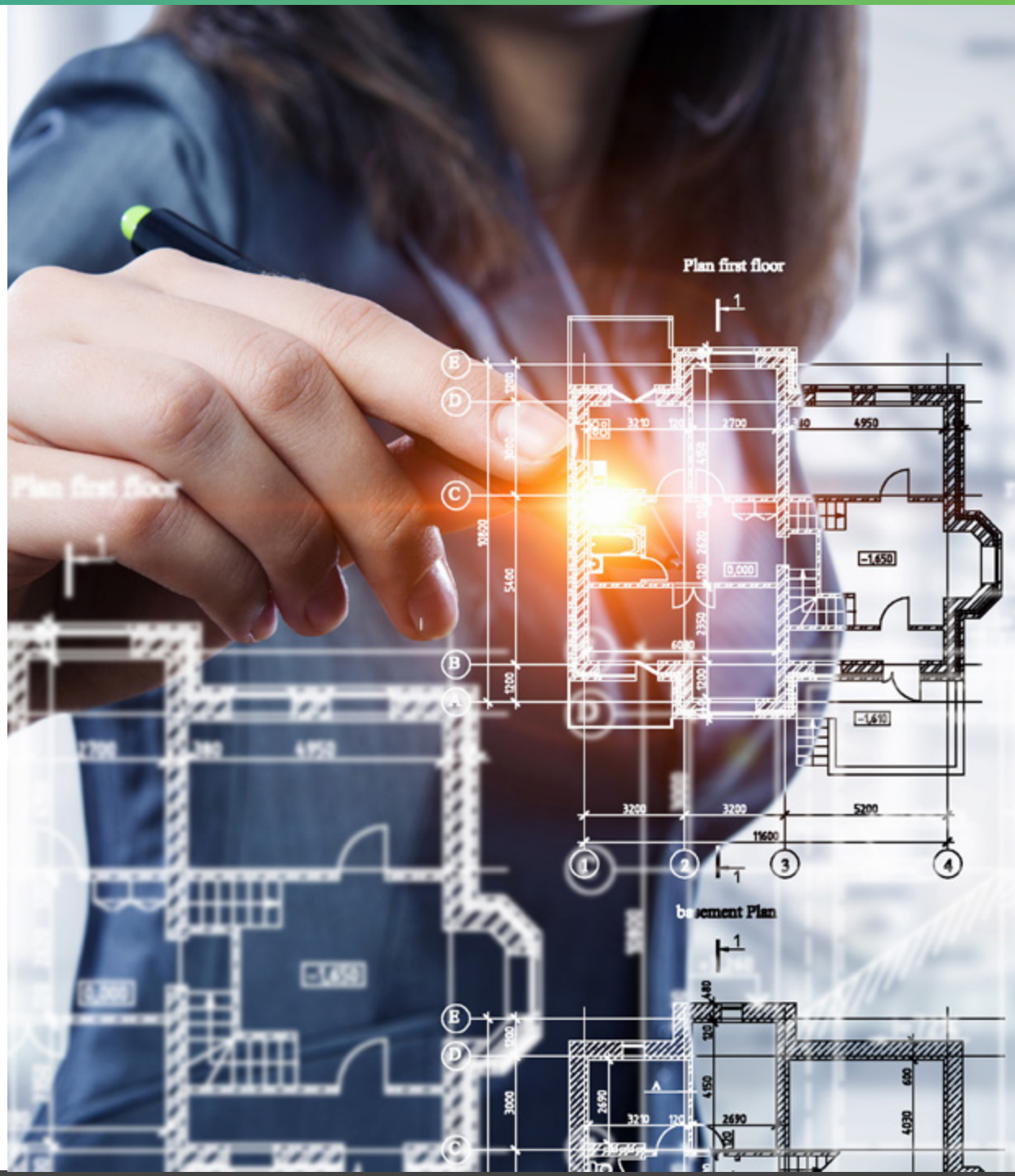
High-Performing Organizations Focus on Continuous, Embedded, Relevant and Engaging Learning

These learning elements may be aspirational, but HPOs embed them into their cultures. HPOs regularly communicate the value of learning to the entire organization. They communicate cross-functionally. For learning and enablement leaders, this means keeping in touch to adjust architecture and programming as needed.



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Here's What the Audience Has to Say

More Information Isn't Better

"The onboarding process is always the tough part. In sales the goal is to get you ramped up as fast as possible. And the experience is usually drinking from a fire hose. It's too much information too fast, and frankly, most of the information is stuff that you wouldn't even need until you've been on the job for six months. You're given it in the first six weeks and you will have forgotten most of it by the time you got there."

– DAVE L., SALES LEADER

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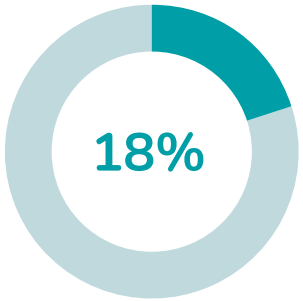
How Do You Know the Investment Isn't Going to Waste?

On average, only 18% of those surveyed were able to measure something with real business impact

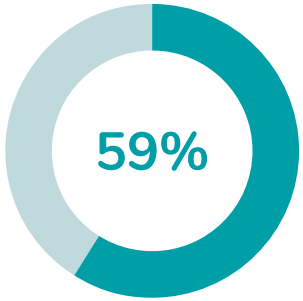
- High-performer retention
- Time to proficiency for new hires
- Return on investments of the learning function
- Percentage of quota attainment



Most organizations measure something. But only 18% of those surveyed actually measured areas of business impact. Yet a staggering $120B is spent on solutions. Where is the money going?

An average of 59% of those surveyed tend to measure areas with untraceable business impact

- Audience reactions and receptiveness to a training
- Employee engagement
- Increases in knowledge, skills or capabilities
- Predicting future learning needs



The majority of respondents tend to measure areas that cannot be traced to business impact. These are things that have been cited as success criteria for decades and may say something about the audience's attitudes toward their experience, but say nothing about whether someone is able to do something different in their job.

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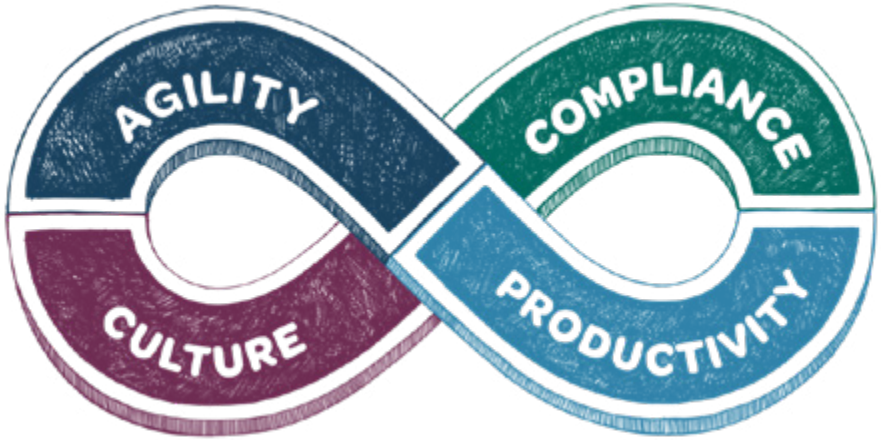
The Learning Organization of the Future is Multifaceted and Enables Transformation as Well as Compliance

Our research showed that there is nothing but opportunity for learning and enablement leaders to shift into a way of working that allows for more relevant, role-based learning experiences tied to business impact. If leaders are able to make this shift, they can also change the perception of their function from one that provides just compliance and check-the-box learning to a multifaceted provider of services that complement the mandatory with the transformational.



Agility

We develop our talent to meet the emerging needs of the workplace and keep pace with change.

Culture

We invest in the personal development and learning of our employees to attract and retain the best and brightest.

Compliance

We emphasize legal compliance and orientation to infrastructure and resources.

Productivity

We increase effectiveness and efficiency and reduce the ramp up for new employees or those in new roles.

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What can we do next?

Businesses need help in more than just compliance and CEOs need help to understand where their investments are being spent. What can you do next to connect learning to outcomes?

1

Plan on a holistic approach with your business to add value through compliance and capabilities, all necessary to drive the business strategy.

2

Work to drop the learning lingo we all know so well and practice talking like the business people in your organization.

3

Engage to understand the business requirements and outcome clearly.

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(2017). Deloitte global human capital trends: Rewriting the rules for the digital age. Retrieved from https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/human-capital/articles/introduction-human-capital-trends.html

Survey:

350 people in learning, training, HR, enablement

Interviews:

14 C level executives

5 subject matter experts

5 enablement leaders

4 salespeople

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