

LEARNING TRENDS REPORT 2026



Welcome to the 2026 Learning Trends Report

This year, we set out to go beyond surface trends. We began by listening to our clients through our annual survey of L&D leaders, then researched the drivers behind their concerns and added our perspective on where these trends are heading and what they mean for L&D.

While AI is a major topic, it's just one part of a larger discussion: how can L&D deliver meaningful, lasting impact in a world of constant change?

At Simitri, we believe true impact comes from building the mindsets, skills, and confidence people need to adapt, lead, and thrive.

In this report, we share an integrated view of the forces shaping the future of learning, from shifting job priorities and embedding learning into workflows, to the practical use of AI and sharper ways to measure learning's impact. You'll also find tools and frameworks to help assess where you are today and where to go next.

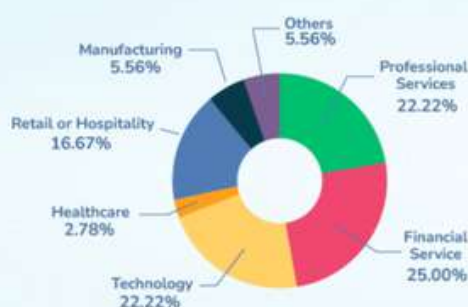
Whether you lead a global function or a team of one, this is your roadmap for future-ready, actionable L&D.

We surveyed L&D leaders across industries and geographies

Survey was sent to over 2000 L&D and business leaders. Regions: SEA, India, Europe, LATAM



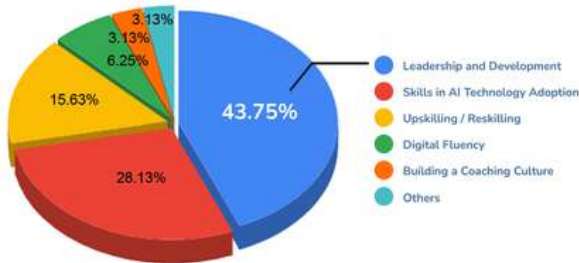
Industries: Finance, Tech, Healthcare, Professional Services



Roles: L&D/HR Leaders, C-suite, People Managers



The Top priorities identified by Learning and Development leaders for 2026:



Leadership and Development remains the number one priority @ 43.75% , as it has for years, with organisations continuing to invest in building strong, adaptable leaders. What's notable this year is the sharp rise in AI Technology Adoption to 28.13% as a learning priority, reflecting the urgent need to prepare people to work with AI.

Alongside this, Upskilling, Reskilling, and Digital Fluency signal a clear focus on continuous learning and workforce adaptability. Simitri sees this as a validation of our focus: equipping leaders not just with skills but with self-awareness, influence, and presence to lead through uncertainty.

Top Motivators for Learning Engagement

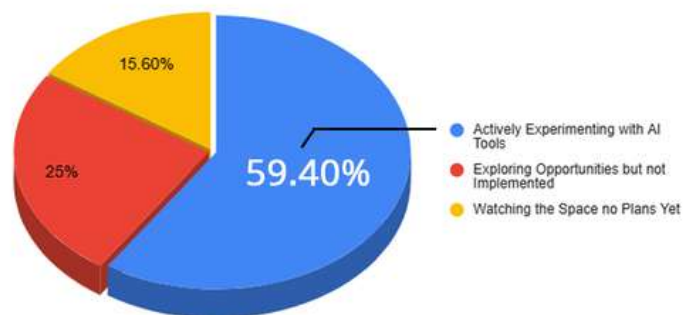


90.63%

Skills shift and job roles evolve, career development remains the top motivator for learning as cited by 90.63% of respondents. In a rapidly changing workplace, staying employable and relevant is front of mind for most learners. Close behind, 59.38% value personalised content that aligns with their current roles and future goals. Manager encouragement influences 50% of learners, while recognition, incentives, and ease of access also play key roles in sustaining engagement.

AI in L&D: From Experimentation to active Implementation

The majority of organisations are already hands-on with AI in learning, while the rest are actively exploring. AI is no longer a future topic, it's firmly on today's L&D agenda.



The Next Big Shifts: What's Set to Impact L&D Leaders Most by 2027

As skills continue to evolve and new roles replace old ones, it's clear that L&D leaders are focusing on strategies that future-proof their people and organisations.

When asked which trends will have the biggest impact over the next 1-2 years:

- 65.63% chose skill-based development as their top focus, reflecting the urgency to equip people with the capabilities needed for fast-changing job markets.
- 62.50% highlighted Generative AI in learning design, as AI continues to reshape how we create, deliver, and personalise learning at scale.
- Coaching at scale (40.63%), internal mobility and talent marketplaces (43.75%), and continuous micro learning (43.75%) also ranked highly, showing how organisations are prioritising agility, development pathways, and bite-sized, on-demand learning.

The future of L&D is skills-first, AI-enabled, and built for continuous growth.

The One Conversation L&D Leaders Aren't Having But Should

As the future of work accelerates, four priorities are quietly but urgently, reshaping the L&D agenda. These aren't just trends. They're signals of a deeper shift: from static roles to dynamic skills, from one-off programs to embedded learning, from generic training to personalised career impact.

Here's what's rising to the top for forward-thinking L&D leaders:

			
Shifting from role-based to skills-based development Empowering employees with adaptable, transferable capabilities, not just job-specific tasks.	Leveraging AI for leadership development and coaching Using intelligent tools to shape personalised learning journeys, uncover leadership insights, and enhance program design.	Embedding continuous, business-relevant learning into daily workflows Making learning seamless, contextual, and directly tied to performance.	Linking skills and training to career relevance and progression Ensuring development translates into real opportunities for advancement and employability.

Together, these priorities reflect a broader imperative: to future-proof the workforce, build organisational agility, and ensure learning is a strategic lever for growth and not just a support function.

The survey insights reveal more than current priorities, they signal where L&D must head to stay relevant and resilient. Up next: three key trends that link today's actions to tomorrow's impact, with strategies to sustain momentum and drive measurable results.



In reviewing recent insights from the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report, alongside broader shifts in leadership and AI, one thing is clear: human capability is gaining ground. Empathy, critical thinking, adaptability, and creativity, once considered soft skills are now emerging as the most valuable assets in the workforce of the future. As automation accelerates, it's these distinctly human qualities that will set people and organisations apart.

Our survey results are clear:

L&D leaders are shifting their focus fast.

65.63% of respondents ranked skills-based development as their top priority, followed closely by internal mobility and talent marketplaces. It's a decisive move away from traditional role based training, in favour of agile, flexible strategies that prepare employees for the jobs of tomorrow.

This shift mirrors what the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report has been signalling: job roles are evolving, and so must the way we develop talent.

Let's look at 3 real jobs and how the skills for those jobs shift with technology:



Legal Associate

When AI legal agents start handling contract reviews, due diligence, case law research, and basic drafting faster and cheaper than any human associate ever could, what keeps a lawyer relevant?

Human capabilities to focus on:

- Complex negotiation skills: AI can draft a contract, but it can't navigate the emotional, cultural, and strategic nuances of a tough negotiation between two feuding parties.
- Client relationship management: Trust and empathy-driven client advisory, understanding unstated concerns, political undercurrents, and reputational risks.
- Strategic judgment: Advising clients on grey areas where law meets ethics, public perception, and long-term business impact.
- Advocacy and storytelling: In litigation, the ability to read a room, build a narrative, and influence a jury or judge is a deeply human art.



Credit Risk Analyst

AI and machine learning models are already better, faster, and more consistent at crunching data, identifying risk patterns, and generating credit scores. AI can run simulations and assess default probabilities across vast datasets in seconds.

So what keeps a Credit Risk Analyst valuable in this AI-driven environment?

- Judgment in ambiguous, complex cases:
- AI works well within patterns and historical data, but real-life credit decisions often involve incomplete, conflicting, or non-quantifiable information (e.g. a new market entrant, a politically exposed person, or a borrower impacted by a regulatory grey area). Human analysts can weigh qualitative factors AI can't.
- Stakeholder influence and negotiation:
- Risk decisions are rarely black and white. An analyst must sometimes challenge a relationship manager's optimistic projections or convince a credit committee to approve a borderline deal because of strategic, reputational, or long-term partnership considerations.
- Scenario-based risk strategy:
- AI can model risk, but humans decide what scenarios to plan for. Analysts will increasingly focus on creating forward-looking, human-context scenarios (like geopolitical shocks, climate risk, or regulatory changes) that AI can't fully anticipate.
- Ethics and risk culture stewardship:
- Deciding when to override a model for ethical, reputational, or societal reasons will remain a human responsibility. For example, should a distressed SME in a pandemic-hit sector be given leniency despite a poor score?

Sales Person

AI is increasingly handling lead generation, pipeline forecasting, customer data analysis, and even generating personalised emails or proposals at scale. In some industries, AI virtual sales agents can already manage basic transactions and inbound queries.

So where does the human salesperson still win? With:

- Emotional connection and trust building:
- AI can deliver facts and product features, but it can't replicate the emotional intelligence needed to read a client's mood, sense hesitation, or adapt in real time to unspoken concerns. People buy from people they trust.
- Complex consultative selling:
- In B2B or high-value B2C sales, clients often have unique, non-standard needs. Human salespeople excel at diagnosing client problems, navigating organizational politics, and co-creating bespoke solutions, something AI struggles with when variables multiply.
- Negotiation and deal closing:
- Closing a tough deal isn't just about price or specs, it involves navigating relationships, egos, risk aversion, and sometimes corporate drama. Humans are still far better at sensing what's unsaid and knowing when to push or back off.
- Storytelling and vision selling:
- AI can list benefits, but humans inspire. A good salesperson paints a picture of what's possible, links product benefits to personal or business ambitions, and connects emotionally to decision-makers.
- Crisis handling and objection management:
- When a deal hits a snag, a competitor undercuts pricing, a decision-maker changes, or a crisis affects the client, it's human empathy, problem-solving, and relationship capital that keeps it alive and move it forward.

For this reason the Future of Jobs Report Belongs in Every L&D Strategy

You may know the World Economic Forum for its annual Davos summit but for L&D leaders, its real power lies in shaping workforce insights. Every two years, the Future of Jobs Report maps the skills, roles, and trends shaping the global talent landscape.

It's not just research, it's a roadmap.

- Which jobs are growing or disappearing?
- What capabilities will keep your workforce competitive?
- How do you align learning with business strategy?

This report gives you the language, data, and foresight to drive meaningful conversations with HR, business heads, and the C-suite.

IN A WORLD WHERE LEARNING MUST EVOLVE FASTER THAN EVER

This is the play book for staying relevant.

So if you're in L&D, this should be essential reading.



Having worked with clients across industries, We see a clear pattern:

The organisations moving fastest on these priorities are the ones reaping early advantages in talent retention, innovation, and leadership strength.

When every company in an industry uses similar AI tools for efficiency, automating operations, reporting, customer service, and basic analysis, the differentiation won't come from process anymore.

It'll come from the human experience:

- Who negotiates better?
- Who builds more trust
- Who innovates unexpected ideas?

The future doesn't belong to the most automated company, but to the one that knows how to stay human in a digital world.

Without those human capabilities, companies risk being reduced to commodities competing in a race to the bottom on cost.

We're already feeling the difference between human connection and AI generated interaction. You can sense it in the emails you receive. It's increasingly easy to spot when a message was crafted by a machine versus when someone took the time to think, empathise, and communicate with intention.

Even in a digital world, people buy from people. Brands that offer emotionally intelligent service, meaningful conversations, and relationships built on trust will win loyalty. Those that rely solely on AI transactional interactions may achieve efficiency, but they'll deliver experiences that are forgettable and easily replaced.

As AI handles more of the functional, it's the human skills like empathy, storytelling, judgment, and emotional intelligence that will differentiate businesses and brands.

Why These Skills Actually Matter, With Real-World Impact

We talk a lot about “human skills,” but what do they actually look like on the job? These real-world scenarios show why the core skills outlined in the Future of Jobs Report aren't optional; they're what elevate performance, trust, and leadership in high-stakes environments.

INSURANCE:

A family just lost everything in a fire. The claim? Processed in seconds. The conversation? That's on the adjuster. And what the family remembers most.

Human skill at play:

Emotional Intelligence - Empathy, hearing emotions, not just facts. Slowing down when urgency says "go fast."

Explore:

Building Emotional Intelligence Workshop

TELECOM:

The network's down, customers are furious. Sure AI logs the complaints. But it's the ops lead who smooths the edges, handles the vendors, and keep the board off the CEO's back.

Human skill at play:

Stakeholders management + Negotiation.

Explore:

Stakeholder Management and Influencing Skills

LUXURY RETAIL:

A VIP client walks in, no appointment. The chatbot's long gone. It's the associate who makes her feel known, who gets it right without her asking.

Human skill at play:

Client centricity. Seeing needs before they're spoken.

Explore:

Client Centricity and Service Excellence

DATA CENTRES:

The system's throwing red flags. AI says "potential outage." The managers says. "Here's what we do." It's 2AM. There's no playbook.

Human skill at play:

Judgement under pressure.

Explore:

Decision Making and Problem Solving.

PHARMA

A recall hits. Regulators are on the phone. AI handles forecasting. But only a human can navigate the fallout with integrity and calm.

Human skill at play:

Ethical leadership

Explore:

Leading with integrity and influence

F&B:

It's 4:59pm. Three waiters just called in sick. The guests are still coming. Kitchen's prepped. Floor? Chaos. The Manager pulls it together - no drama, no panic.

Human skill at play:

Resilience. Adapt, decide, lead.

Explore:

Resilience and Agility in the Workplace.

BANKING:

The market just tanked. A Client is panicking. AI can crunch risk data, but it won't calm nerves. That takes a relationship manager who can listen, lead with clarity, and rebuild trust in a storm.

Human skill at play:

Clear communication. Not "just" talking. It's simplifying, translating, and earning confidence.

Explore:

Communicating with Impact

Bottom Line As L&D leaders, it's our job not just to react, but to look ahead. The Future of Jobs Report isn't just industry commentary. It's a sharp, data-backed framework for what your workforce will need to survive and thrive. If your L&D strategy isn't aligned to this yet, it's time to ask yourself why not.

Contact us

Do you need our help? Let's talk

TREND 2

AI IS RESHAPING THE L&D LANDSCAPE

AI isn't on the horizon. It's already reshaping how learning happens

From hyper-personalised content to real-time feedback, it's transforming how teams learn, grow, and adapt. But here's the truth: having the tools isn't enough. You need a strategy. And many L&D teams are already making their move.

Our survey shows that:

- **Nearly 60%** of organisations are actively experimenting with AI in learning
- **Another 25%** are currently exploring its potential

That's more than 80% treating AI not as a future add-on, but as a core component of their learning strategy. Even more telling? 62.5% of respondents believe generative AI will significantly impact learning design within the next 1-2 years.

This isn't just about automating admin. It's about reimagining how learning is created, delivered, and experienced.

Have You Started Your AI Learning Strategy?



Yes, we're experimenting

Awesome! You're ahead of the curve.

Want to take it further?
Download our AI Optimisation Checklist to make sure your pilots are scalable, ethical, and aligned with business KPIs.

Get a second opinion from a Simitri strategist.



Not yet, but interested

Don't wait until it's urgent.

L&D teams that start small today are outperforming those still in planning mode. Want a simple place to begin?

Book a 1:1 Team Diagnostic Session: AI Tools Primer and Beginner's Roadmap



We need help

Falling behind is more expensive than catching up.

The cost of inaction? Missed talent development, lost retention, and skill gaps that keep growing.

Book a free 20-min consult with a Simitri strategist

Case Study: How Accenture Uses AI to Make Learning Strategic



Accenture has embedded AI into its internal talent and skills platform, enabling the organisation to track more than 8,000 distinct skills across its global workforce. But they didn't stop at visibility.

Even more impressively, the platform connects those learning journeys with real-time project opportunities—ensuring that employees apply their growing skills in meaningful, immediate ways.

Leveraging AI, Accenture can now recommend learning pathways that are not only tailored to an employee's current role, but also aligned to their long-term career aspirations.

This isn't just training. It's learning that happens in the flow of work. It's L&D functioning as a strategic engine for workforce development and internal mobility.

And it doesn't happen by chance; it's the result of intentional planning, forward-thinking investment, and a belief that AI can unlock both individual and business potential.

The Strategic Imperative of AI in L&D

High employee turnover is a substantial financial burden for organisations. Replacing an employee can cost approximately 33% of their annual salary, encompassing recruitment, onboarding, and lost productivity.

AI-driven L&D programs offer new ways to personalise development, accelerate skill-building, and boost engagement, making learning more timely and relevant. Organisations that offer comprehensive training programs have seen a 218% higher income per employee compared to those that don't.

Enhancing Retention Through AI-Powered Learning

Retention is deeply influenced by how supported and developed employees feel. Structured onboarding and ongoing learning are key drivers and AI can amplify their impact by delivering adaptive, relevant content tailored to each learner.

By identifying skill gaps and providing targeted learning opportunities, AI helps build confidence and momentum early in the employee journey. This continuous, personalised support strengthens engagement, fosters growth, and contributes to a culture where people are more likely to stay and thrive.

Where Can AI Help Most?

Personalisation at Scale

Adaptive learning platforms are transforming training by tailoring content to each learner. Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach, AI evaluates an individual's current knowledge, skills, and learning style, then adjusts the learning path in real time.

A struggling learner might be guided to foundational content or extra practice, while someone advancing quickly is challenged with more complex material. This ensures learning is more efficient, relevant, and impactful, helping employees grow without wasting time or falling behind.

Example Tools



Docebo

Uses AI to personalise learning experiences, dynamically adjusting paths based on learner progress.

[Visit](#)

Saba Cloud

Offers adaptive learning and content recommendations tailored to employee's performance.

[Visit](#)

Micro learning and Just-in-Time Training

AI is making learning more responsive by delivering bite-sized, relevant content exactly when it's needed. Instead of waiting for the next training cycle, employees can get real-time support through apps, chatbots, or notifications based on their immediate context.

For example, if a manager needs a quick refresher on project management, AI can instantly suggest short, focused modules to bridge the gap, keeping learning efficient, targeted, and actionable.

Example Tools



Cornerstone OnDemand

Offers AI-curated microlearning content tailored to an employee's role, preferences, and real-time needs.

[Visit](#)

SmartScroll™

Reinforces learning post-session through multimedia reflections designed for Executive Presence and Leadership Development.

[Visit](#)

Automated Content Creation and Curation

AI can now create quizzes, simulations, even video scripts tailored to your team's needs, cutting down the time and cost of content development. With Natural Language Processing (NLP), it also scans large volumes of material to extract and summarise key points, giving learners only what's most relevant.

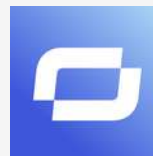
Whether it's a personalised quiz or a full training module built from internal knowledge, AI ensures your learning content stays current, focused, and scalable without the manual lift.

Example Tools



Articulate 360

Enables rapid eLearning development with AI-driven content suggestions and interactive design tools.

[Visit](#)

Synthesia

Allows you to generate professional training videos using AI avatars and voiceovers - no production crew required.

[Visit](#)

Intelligent Tutoring and Feedback

AI is transforming how learners get support, acting as a virtual tutor that delivers real-time, personalised feedback on coding, writing, and language learning. These tools offer immediate corrections, answer questions, and adapt to the learner's style, speeding up progress and reducing reliance on one-on-one human feedback.

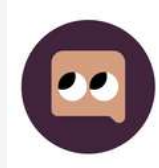
Especially in areas that require repetitive practice, like programming or language acquisition, AI provides timely, targeted coaching that builds confidence and independence.

Example Tools



Duolingo

Uses AI to correct pronunciation and grammar while adapting to individual learning speed.

[Visit](#)

Khanmigo by Khan Academy

An AI tutor that offers step-by-step help and personalised learning paths across subjects.

[Visit](#)

Codesignal

Evaluates code in real-time and offers instant feedback to help learners debug and improve.

[Visit](#)

Analytics & Learning Insights

AI-powered analytics are revolutionising how L&D teams track learner progress and engagement. By analysing behaviours like quiz scores, time spent, and interaction levels. AI uncovers trends, identifies at-risk learners, and highlights what content is working (or not).

This enables proactive support and data-driven decisions, helping organisations close knowledge gaps, refine content, and ensure ROI on learning programs. With predictive insights, you can even forecast future skills needs before they become urgent.

Example Tools



Cornerstone OnDemand

Offers detailed analytics on learner's performance and content effectiveness.

[Visit](#)

Learning Pool

Tracks engagement, flags at-risk learners, and provides actionable insights for content improvement.

[Visit](#)

Xyleme

Provides engagement metrics and analytics across demographics to assess content impact.

[Visit](#)

The Future-Ready L&D Professional

As AI reshapes how we work and learn, the role of Learning & Development professionals is also evolving. It's no longer just about delivering workshops or creating static training plans. To stay relevant and deliver meaningful ROI, L&D leaders must transition from traditional training roles into future-ready capability enablers.

Where we are today:

Most L&D teams focus on classroom facilitation, developing standard training plans, and delivering role-based content. Feedback loops are often delayed, and course design is built for the average learner rather than personalised needs.

Where we're headed:

Tomorrow's L&D professionals will be architects of learning ecosystems, designing adaptive, data-informed experiences. They'll use AI to deliver just-in-time learning, real-time feedback, and customised development pathways that build organisational capability, not just individual skill.

Five Skills That Will Define Future L&D Leaders

As L&D professionals shift from content creators to capability builders, five critical skill areas will define the leaders of tomorrow.



Data Literacy & Learning Analytics

The era of guesswork is over. Today's L&D leaders must interpret and act on learning data to prove effectiveness and inform strategy.

What this means: Tracking learner engagement, progression, and completion
Identifying skill gaps through behavioural data
Making evidence-based decisions on content and delivery



Quick Tip:

Start by analysing dashboards from your LMS or learning platforms like Xyleme or Learning Pool.



AI & Technology Integration

You don't need to code but you must understand how AI supports learning at scale.

Think: Adaptive learning systems like Docebo Automated content creation tools like Synthesia Just-in-time chatbots and nudges Fluency in AI tools will become a basic requirement, as leaders will need to assess vendors, drive implementation, and guide ethical use.



Design Thinking & Personalisation

Learners today expect more than generic content, they want relevance. Design thinking helps L&D:

Empathise with learner needs
Co-create and prototype experiences
Continuously adapt based on feedback



Try This:

Simitri's "[Creating Learner-Centric Experiences](#)" workshop explores how to build journeys that evolve with the learner.



Agility & Change Management

With business needs constantly shifting, L&D must keep pace by:
Piloting and iterating new solutions
Aligning quickly to changing priorities
Supporting hybrid and AI-assisted models

⚙️ Toolkit Highlight:

Simitri's **"Agile L&D Framework"** equips teams for fast-moving environments.



Ethical and Inclusive Leadership

As AI becomes embedded in learning ecosystems, so does responsibility. L&D must ensure:

Content is inclusive and bias-aware
AI tools are used ethically and transparently
Learner data is handled with care and consent

⬇️ Download:

Future-Ready L&D Capability Checklist

AI as a Partner, Not a Replacement

AI can personalise, automate, and recommend but it can't replace the emotional intelligence that L&D leaders bring. The future isn't about replacing humans; it's about freeing them to do more of what only humans can do.

Where AI Ends and Humans Begin



AI Excels at:

- Recommending next steps
- Detecting behavioural patterns
- Automating content creation
- Scaling learning delivery



Humans Are Irreplaceable

- Leading with empathy
- Mentoring and coaching
- Navigating organisational dynamics
- Driving cultural and behavioural change

Looking Ahead: What Will Change and What Won't

- In the next 3 years, expect AI to recommend content, track skill growth, and automate parts of onboarding and compliance.
- In 5 years, most large companies will use AI-powered platforms to guide personalised, on-demand learning journeys.
- In 10 years, AI will support most learning infrastructure but strategy, culture, and leadership will still be human-led.
- L&D teams that grow their digital fluency, stay grounded in human insight, and adapt with purpose will thrive in this next chapter.

Bottom Line

AI is revolutionizing the L&D landscape, not by replacing professionals, but by amplifying their reach, insight, and impact. From personalizing learning to delivering real-time feedback and optimizing content creation, AI is enabling a smarter, faster, and more targeted approach to capability-building.

But the true power lies in how we blend intelligence with empathy.

To thrive in the age of intelligent learning, L&D professionals must embrace data, design personalised journeys, lead with ethical clarity, and stay grounded in the human connections that make learning stick.

This isn't about replacing the human touch, it's about enhancing it.

Contact us

Let's unpack the possibilities. AI and your learning goals.

TREND 3

ROI IS NO LONGER OPTIONAL



In our work with L&D professionals across industries and regions, one question consistently comes up:

“How do we actually measure the ROI of our learning programs?”

It's a fair question, and a pressing one.

Whether you're part of a small HR team or leading global talent strategy, the demand for proof is growing. Budgets are under scrutiny, and business leaders want evidence that learning is driving real value, not just ticking a box.

Our survey confirms this shift in mindset.

A striking 90.63% of respondents said career development is the top motivator for learning, far ahead of incentives or access.

This is the unlock:

When learning is relevant to roles, careers, and business priorities, it's more likely to be applied, tracked, and measured.

That's when ROI moves from abstract to actionable.

- This trend isn't about cutting costs, it's about demonstrating impact in ways that align with what matters most: career pathways, workforce agility, and organisational outcomes.

How much return will we see and how fast?

It sounds simple. And yes, there's a formula to help quantify it.

ROI = (Total Benefits - Total Costs) / Total Costs x 100. So, let's say your investment in employee learning is \$20,000 and the value of your total benefits is \$50,000



ROI = (\$50,000 - \$20,000) / \$20,000 x 100. In this scenario, your ROI would be 150%

But here's where it gets tricky:

Investing in people creates value that's not always easy to measure.

It's one thing to tally what you've spent, and another to calculate the long-term gains: increased performance, higher retention, stronger culture.

TANGIBLE BUSINESS MEASUREMENT

How to Prove Training Works (and Pays Off)

Most learning programs talk about impact but few can prove it. Here are 7 ways to connect learning to real, measurable business results. Each method includes a practical example and suggested visuals to help bring the data to life.

1. Connect Learning to Business Goals

Start with what matters most.

Before launching any learning initiative, identify the business priorities you're trying to influence, such as revenue growth, customer satisfaction, efficiency, or employee retention. Use those priorities as your anchor metrics.

Example:

A company aims to boost quarterly sales by 20%. They implement a targeted sales training program. Three months later, sales have risen by 25%. The training directly supports the business objective, delivering clear ROI.

2. Use Pre- and Post-Training Assessments

Track progress with data.

Run knowledge checks, quizzes, or manager assessments before and after training to gauge growth.

Example:

Customer service reps score 60% on a conflict resolution quiz before training and 85% afterward, providing clear evidence of skill improvement.

3. Look at Performance Improvements

Focus on how people actually perform post-training.

Measure job-specific KPIs before and after training, such as efficiency, error rates, speed, or quality.

Example:

After project management training, teams deliver projects 15% faster and are more consistently on budget.

4. Tie Training to Financial Results

Show the money.

It's not always easy, but some training programs directly contribute to top-line revenue or bottom-line savings.

Example:

After advanced digital marketing training, campaign optimisation leads to \$500,000 in new revenue. Training cost? \$50,000.

5. Measure Engagement and Retention

Happy people stay and perform better.

Engaging learning experiences can improve morale, reduce attrition, and support long-term growth. SmartScroll™ delivers measurable impact by extending learning beyond the workshop through daily prompts, making ROI visible and learner engagement sustained.

Example:

After a 6-month leadership program, engagement scores rise by 20%, and team turnover drops by 10%.

6. Track Cultural Shifts

Learning shapes how people work together.

If your focus is on inclusion, collaboration, or leadership, monitor culture through pulse surveys, feedback, or behavioral change.

Example:

Post-DEI training, survey results show a 30% improvement in employees' confidence in the company's diversity efforts.

7. Calculate Cost Savings

Training doesn't just earn, it saves.

Efficiency, error reduction, and process improvements can lead to substantial operational savings.

Here are five examples:

Scenario Savings Investment ROI Example:

1.Reducing Banking Transaction Errors

After a compliance and accuracy training program for front-line staff:

Before training: 2% transaction error rate, costing approx. \$500,000/year in corrections, fines, and customer goodwill compensation.

After training: Error rate drops to 0.5%, saving the bank \$375,000/year.

ROI Calculation:

Training cost: \$50,000

Savings: \$375,000/year

Return: 7.5x ROI

2.Shortening Loan Processing Time

Loan officers undergo process optimisation and system efficiency training:

Before training: Average loan processing time: 10 days

After training: 7 days

Impact: Faster processing enables more volume, reducing backlog overtime costs by \$150,000/year.

Training Investment: \$30,000

Net Annual Savings: \$150,000

ROI: 5x

3.Reducing Staff Turnover in Call Centres

After implementing a customer service and resilience program:

Turnover rate drops from 25% to 15%

Cost to replace one employee: \$8,000

100 employees in call centre: Saves \$80,000/year in recruitment and onboarding costs

Training cost: \$20,000

ROI: 4x

4.Reducing Production Downtime for FMCG

After a lean manufacturing and safety training program:

Downtime before training: 60 hours/month

After training: 40 hours/month

Value of one hour of downtime: \$5,000

Savings: 20 hours × \$5,000 × 12 months = \$1.2 million/year

Training cost: \$100,000

ROI: 12x

5. Decreasing Product Return Rates

Sales and retail staff trained on product handling and display:

Product returns due to mishandling drop from 3% to 1.5%

Annual product returns value: \$500,000

Savings:\$250,000/year

Training cost:\$50,000

ROI: 5x

How Leading Companies Measure ROI

Investing in training is no longer just a checkbox

It's a strategic move with measurable business impact. Here are two powerful examples of how global companies are doing it:



Amazon's Upskilling 2025 Initiative

Launched in 2019, Amazon committed \$1.2 billion to provide 300,000 U.S. employees with access to free training by 2025. Through nine targeted programs like the Amazon Technical Academy and Machine Learning University, over 70,000 employees have already participated. Success is measured by post-training job placements, ensuring the training translates to career growth and internal mobility.

[Full Report](#)



Mastercard's "Unlocked" Talent Marketplace

In 2022, Mastercard launched Unlocked, an AI-powered internal talent platform that connects employees to short-term projects, mentors, and learning opportunities. With 90% workforce adoption and over 500,000 logged project hours, the impact is tangible: 1 in 3 users have made internal career moves, and employee satisfaction in career development has grown by 10 to 20%.

[Featured In](#)

Bottom Line

The workplace is changing fast. According to the World Economic Forum, nearly 50% of today's job skills will need to be updated within the next five years. In response, the global learning and development market is projected to surge from USD 9.72 billion in 2023 to USD 54.41 billion by 2032.

This growth signals a major shift: businesses are no longer just investing in training, they're investing in transformation.

To make that investment count, learning programs must go beyond participation. They must drive measurable impact, fuel innovation, and empower employees to grow with the business. Because in today's world, the ROI of training isn't optional. It's essential.

[Contact us](#)

Let's map your learning priorities together

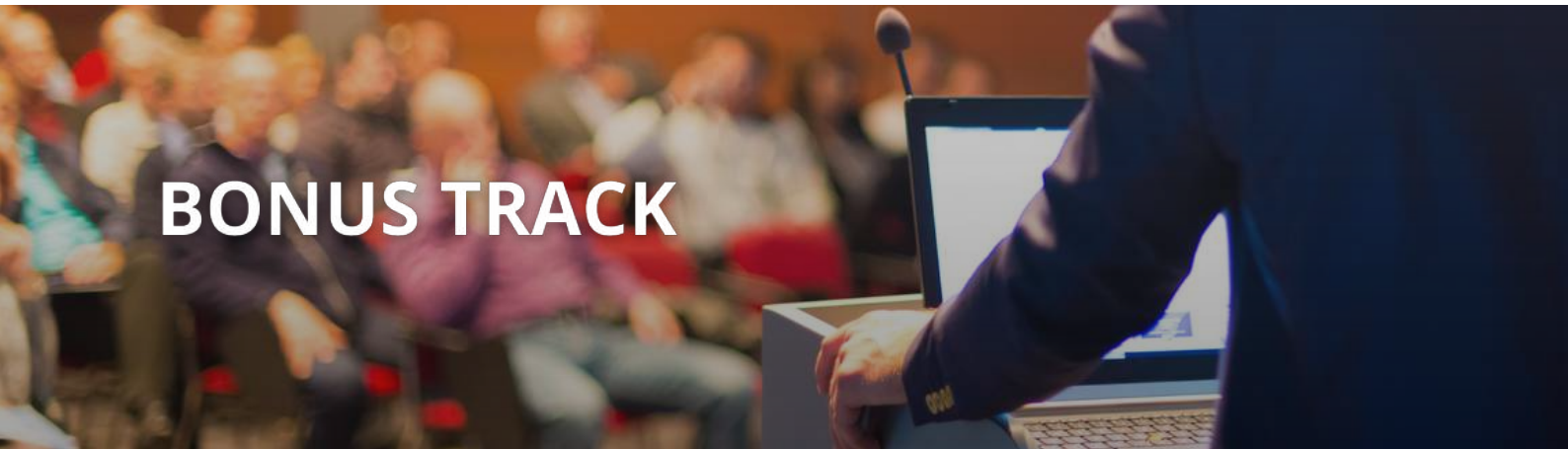


CONCLUSION

The trends outlined in this report, together with what we're seeing across industries, point to a fundamental reshaping of how learning is approached: moving from fixed roles to adaptable capabilities, and from formal programs to more embedded, continuous development.

This isn't just a shift in tools or terminology, it reflects a deeper change in how organisations prepare for uncertainty, build resilience, and enable people to grow in dynamic environments.

While there's no one-size-fits-all solution, the direction is clear: learning strategies that align with real-world behaviours, business priorities, and human potential will be critical to building a workforce that is both resilient and ready for what's next.



BONUS TRACK

BONUS TRENDS & RESOURCES

Bonus Trend: How AI Is Redefining the Role of the L&D Professional

As AI continues to transform how learning is delivered, measured, and scaled, it's also reshaping the expectations of those who lead it. The L&D professional of the past was often a content expert or facilitator. The L&D professional of the future? A strategist, a technologist, a change enabler. AI doesn't make L&D teams obsolete, it makes them more essential, provided they evolve with intention.

From Order-Takers to Capability Architects

THE SHIFT IS PROFOUND:

From creating content to designing learning ecosystems. From managing programs to orchestrating personalised, real-time development. From reporting completion rates to proving impact through data and insight. This means L&D professionals must now develop new, cross-functional capabilities that blend human insight with digital fluency.



Bonus Trend: Lifelong Learning is Now a Business Imperative

As career spans lengthen and job roles evolve faster than ever, the need for lifelong learning is no longer aspirational, it's strategic. Companies that enable continuous development are seeing gains in retention, adaptability, and internal mobility.

What We're Seeing:

Employees expect regular upskilling and stretch opportunities Talent marketplaces are emerging to match people with projects, not just jobs Learning is becoming a core component of EVP (Employee Value Proposition)

What This Means for L&D:

Move from "event-based" training to continuous development ecosystems Promote self-directed learning with curated internal and external content Work with Talent/HR to design clear development pathways Break: Sidebar "Lifelong learners are more likely to stay, grow, and lead." SmartScroll™ a tool for sustaining development over time, ideal for continuous learning ecosystems.



Bonus Trend: ESG and Purpose-Driven Learning

Sustainability, ethics, and social impact are now firmly on the business agenda. Learning can be a powerful driver of organisational values, helping employees not just perform, but connect with purpose..

Emerging Themes:

Sustainability and climate literacy integrated into leadership training DEI moving beyond compliance to inclusive team culture building Ethics, wellbeing, and responsible tech use (especially AI) entering L&D roadmaps

What This Means for L&D:

Partner with ESG or DEI teams to embed purpose in learning Create modules around sustainability, inclusion, and ethical leadership Reinforce values through stories, conversations, and shared goals "Purpose drives performance, and learning makes it real."

Interactive Diagnostic: "What's Your L&D Mindset?"

Ask your team to reflect:

- Are we facilitators or capability builders?
- Are we reactive or proactive?
- Are we tech users or tech strategists?

Next Step:

Download Simitri's Future-Ready L&D Skills Map to assess your current capabilities and identify growth areas for your team.

[Download](#)



RESOURCES

Download

Downloadable Checklist • Is Your L&D Strategy Future-Ready?

An 8-point self-assessment to help you evaluate your team's strengths and gaps across skills, systems, and impact.

Download

3-Minute Quiz • How AI-Ready Is Your L&D Team?

A light-touch diagnostic to quickly surface where your team stands and where to focus next.

Download

Planning Worksheet • Build Your 2026 L&D Strategy

A structured template to help you define priorities, align with stakeholders, and outline measurable learning goals.

Download

ROI Comparison: Hiring vs. Upskilling vs. AI Integration

Download our comprehensive ROI Comparison sheet



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