

RESEARCH: What employees want from L&D in 2024

Plus: 5 emerging L&D trends and 7 key training strategies

talent Clms YOND



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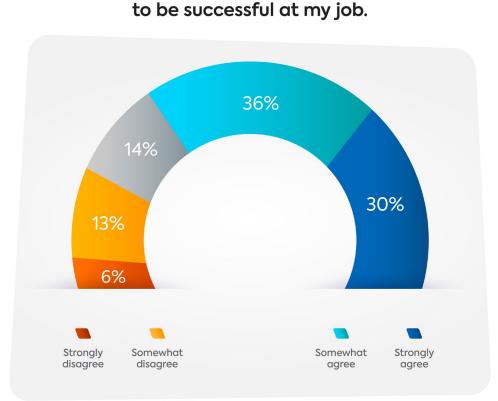
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Introduction

Skills are the cornerstone of the workplace. And, like everything else, they are rapidly changing. The shrinking lifespan of skills is keeping CEOs on their toes, as they think skills shortages can <u>impact profitability</u>. As new <u>research by TalentLMS and Vyond</u> reveals, employees see eye to eye with execs on this, with 66% saying they need to develop new skills to be successful at their job.

I need to develop new skills

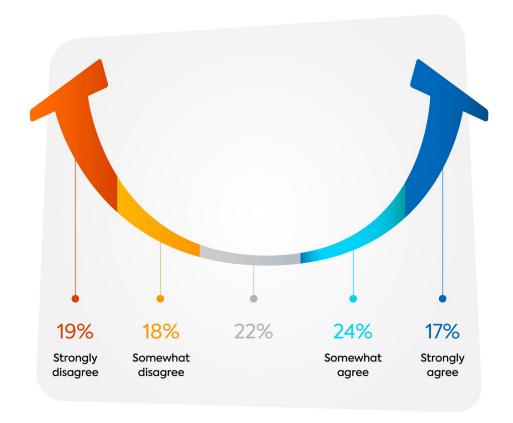


What employees expect from L&D in 2024 $\, \mid \,$ Research by TalentLMS and Vyond

<u>TalentLMS</u> and <u>Vyond</u> partnered up to take the pulse of skills agility in organizations and examine employees' perspectives on training initiatives in 2023. We surveyed 1,000 employees in the U.S., across industries, who have received training from their company.

The research report sheds light on the training and development landscape in 2023 and features a set of predictions on what's on the horizon for L&D in 2024, along with evidence-based takeaways for employers. As a bonus, influential voices from the L&D space are sharing their views on key findings and their impact.

Overall, the data unveiled high employee satisfaction with workplace training, with employees seeing great worth in it. So much so that, **if their company doesn't provide them with training opportunities**, **41% of employees will look for another job in 2024**.



I'll look for another job in 2024, if my company doesn't provide me with training opportunities.

What employees expect from L&D in 2024 | Research by TalentLMS and Vyond

What's more, the role of workforce education is evolving, branching out into life skills and personal development: 68% of employees think non-work-related training that supports their overall well-being will be important in 2024.

Read on for the L&D deep dive and find out where it's all headed.

Key L&D trends for 2024

#1 Personalized learning:

Cookie-cutter training doesn't cut it anymore

Employees are loud and clear when it comes to a one-size-fits-all training approach. They don't want it. Instead, they want training tailored to their individual needs and goals: 80% of employees surveyed in the TalentLMS and Vyond research think personalized learning will be important in 2024. With emerging tech promising to enable personalization at scale, we'll see more orgs in the coming year switching to a more individualized approach to training. From curriculum consumers, learners are set to become curriculum curators.

#2 Learn better, work better, live better: From skills-growth to self-growth

Workplace training will increasingly integrate well-being with skill-building: 68% of employees think non-work-related training that supports their overall well-being will be important in 2024. From mental health and mindfulness to financial wellness, career management, and further, L&D is taking a more holistic approach to employee development. Fusing personal development with workplace learning will not only support employees to work better but also live better.

#3 Al in training:

Innovation, automation, and acceleration

The widespread rollout of AI features, platforms, and tools will impact multiple domains of training such as learning metrics, personalization, content development and curation, assessments, feedback, and more. Throughout the report, we've seen that employees are highly motivated to explore AI, pointing to fertile ground for the accelerated adoption of AI in training. In the forthcoming year, we'll see AI unlocking new opportunities in measuring and bridging skill gaps and driving innovation





#4 Learning with purpose:

Integrating L&D initiatives with business goals

Training alone doesn't guarantee effectiveness. Metrics and analytics are central in assessing the impact of L&D efforts on achieving business objectives. With AI unlocking new levels of reporting and metrics, data-driven training will anchor L&D more deeply in organizational goals. It will enable laser-focused addressing of business needs through training. In short, it will not be just about learning anymore; it'll be about learning with purpose.



#5 Bringing back the human touch: Interpersonal skills in focus

On the heels of WFH, hybrid work, and a lack of socialization during the pandemic, people learned to keep more to themselves. But after falling into the rhythm of social distancing, many still struggle to readjust to the return of social interactions. On top of that, workplaces have become more tech-driven and digital, with a shortfall of human touch and a decline in face-to-face interaction. We anticipate this soft skills gap will come more into focus in 2024, highlighting the need to bring back the human touch in the workplace.



A snapshot of workplace training in 2023: Employee-centric, forward-looking, growth-driving

The data unveiled a broad agreement among survey respondents on the profoundly positive impact of <u>workplace training</u>. Scoring high on the employee satisfaction scale, training and development initiatives in organizations are well-positioned to nurture and develop talent.

Hitting a sweet spot: L&D initiatives score high in employee satisfaction

The majority of employees have a positive sentiment toward the training their companies offer. They are highly satisfied with the different domains of L&D initiatives, and how those impact their role and future progress. Let's dive into the data highlighting how employees rate the different domains of L&D's impact.

Preparing employees for the future of work

71% feel more prepared for the future of work because of the training they received in 2023. The same number of employees are satisfied with how relevant that training was to the latest tech developments and workplace changes.

Firing up career progress

72% of employees have progressed in their careers because of the training they've gotten from their companies in 2023.

Aligned with the latest skill demands

73% of employees are satisfied with how aligned the training they got from their employer is with in-demand skills. Given how fast in-demand skills are changing, this is a remarkable success for L&D.

Relevant to job roles

77% of employees are satisfied with the relevance of training they got from their company in 2023 to their job roles and responsibilities.

Hands-on and practical

74% of employees are satisfied with the practicality and hands-on nature of the training they've got from their employer in 2023.





Christopher Lind

VP/Chief Learning Officer of ChemMed, host of Learning Tech Talks podcast

While I agree with the conclusion there are universal opportunities for employees to develop social skills, there are two ways I would encourage L&D teams to think differently about the problem. First, recognize that it may not necessarily be a problem with the underlying social skills as much as it is applying those skills in new and different ways. You may turn off employees by offering opportunities that treat them as if they lack basic social skills. Instead, focus on educating people on how demonstrating social skills in the digital age looks and feels different. This is more inclusive since it meets people where they are and values their current skills while highlighting the opportunity for skill growth driven by change. Second, make sure you're structuring your development opportunities, emphasizing active opportunities to demonstrate the skills and get feedback. While this has historically been challenging and lacked scalability, technology is radically changing the possibilities.

Training fuels success at work

Employees are highly aware that training plays a key role in their success. They realize the importance of cultivating new competencies through ongoing learning and aspire to upskilling and reskilling that never stops: **66% of employees say they need to develop new skills to be successful at their job**. Consequently, their appetite for learning extends beyond what their companies offer. Close to 7 in 10 employees (68%) participate in additional training to improve their workplace skills on a personal basis, outside of the training provided by their employer.

Balancing tech-driven and people-centered workplaces

Hybrid and flex work, overall digitization, and ongoing tech advancements have put new challenges on relationships and interaction at work. This was underscored in data shining light on a people skills gap: **41% of employees say there's a lack of social skills at their office.** Employers seem aware of this, as soft skills training tops the list of non-mandatory training topics that companies are rolling out.

In addition, one-quarter of employers (26%) offer office etiquette training, aiming to help employees get back on track when it comes to working together in the same environment. Still, these initiatives already taking place may need to be ramped up. With widely available AI tools spreading like wildfire in the realm of hard skills, educating employees on mastering people skills carries a lot of weight right now.

The engagement paradox

An overwhelming majority of employees (69%) said the training their company offers keeps them engaged from start to finish. This demonstrates the effectiveness of L&D initiatives in capturing and holding attention, despite some of the chronic pain points in training still being present, as we'll see in the next section.

However, today's work life is characterized by excessive multitasking, with employees juggling numerous tasks simultaneously. With this multitasking becoming the norm rather than the exception, the following finding is not so surprising: 64% of employees tend to multitask (reply to emails, check notifications, etc.) when watching an online training session.

This may seem at odds with the previous finding on high employee engagement with training programs. Nevertheless, the distracted nature of modern work impacts learning too. Multitasking has been instilled in all facets of work life, and learning is not an exception. This contrast underscores the importance of considering attention dynamics when creating training programs and content, ensuring that busy employees can effectively absorb and apply the learning material.



Expert's take:

Sarah Cannistra

Fractional Chief Learning Officer & L&D Career Coach

Is multitasking really a problem? I'm not sure it is. We're always talking about how to make things more engaging, with the expectation that people should be glued to their seats. In reality, human things are happening while people learn and that's okay.

Pain points of workplace learning

In spite of an overall positive employee sentiment toward training, the survey pinpointed several pain points where L&D can do better. We'll examine below the three key obstacles employees find the most challenging with training at work.



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Lengthy sessions

Overly extended, unengaging training sessions are a chronic drawback for L&D, one that still remains to be cracked. Therefore, it may not be so surprising that the survey found **long training sessions** are topping the list of obstacles to learning. Time-consuming and unnecessary drawn-out training can cripple learning initiatives.

Monotonous delivery

The runner-up challenge highlights another persistent L&D pain point: the monotonous presentation of information. An **unengaging delivery method** can transform the most interesting topic into a total snoozer. Long chunks of text, text-heavy slides, and a lack of visual and interactive elements can dramatically sink the effectiveness of learning.

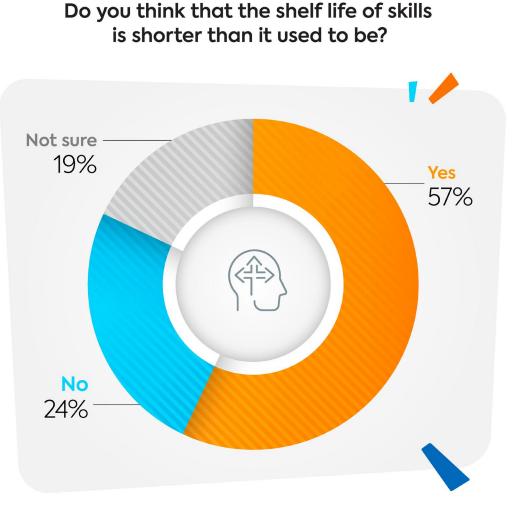
Restricted access

The third most common challenge is on-demand access to training. This demonstrates a strong employee preference to be able to **learn at their own pace,** in their own time. And it emphasizes that they're not always able to do so.

Restricted access to training contradicts the overall preference for personalization and flexibility. Providing on-demand access to training materials and content is a key factor in creating a positive learning experience. After all, what's the point of investing resources into creating educational content if employees can't access it around the clock?

In-demand skills for employees

The findings from the TalentLMS and Vyond survey emphasized a high awareness of employees on the diminishing half-life of skills, and a constant need for upskilling and reskilling. Next, we zoomed into the most coveted skills for employees and compared them with the skills they've got training on.



What employees expect from L&D in 2024 | Research by TalentLMS and Vyond

We wanted to unveil which skills employees want to master, while also gauging the alignment between offered and desired training. The comparison unpacked an overall alignment, with some areas pointing to a slight disconnect.

The results pinpointed soft skills as the most frequently offered, non-mandatory training in 2023, followed by <u>training on leadership and management</u>, digital skills, and DE&I. From these, only leadership and management training is among employees' top three preferences.

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Next, let's dive into the training wishlist of employees, examining the top three skills they want to develop.

Leadership and management training: Seeking to increase influence

Leadership and management take the top spot as the most coveted type of training. This choice reflects the desire of employees to take charge of their own career growth. It also indicates an aspiration to build influence in their teams and companies, guide and inspire others, and make an impact. Finally, leadership skills are transferable: they can be used not only at work, but also in personal life.



Expert's take:

Jonathan Halls

Veteran learning development consultant, author of Confessions of a Corporate Trainer

Of course, leadership training has always had a high draw but it's interesting that AI is in the top 3. Is it seen as a tool to manage a more balanced life, saving time on routine tasks, and increasingly creative ones?

Mental health training: Balance and control

Mental health training takes the second spot on the list of most desired training for employees. With global crises arising one after another, keeping inner stability and staying focused is getting more challenging for many. This is where mental health training comes in, supporting employees who need it the most to stay afloat and productive. Moreover, among the youngest group of employees—from 18 to 24, counting 137 survey respondents—mental health training ranks first as the most desired training.

Al tools training: Keeping up with intelligent tech



Expert's take:

Professor Jules White

Director of the Vanderbilt Initiative on the Future of Learning and Generative AI

Generative AI can provide an "exoskeleton for the mind" that will help people learn faster, in more targeted and personalized ways, and in a way that is more private. This augmented intelligence will allow individuals to seek clarification, without fear of judgment, wherever and whenever they need it.

The third-voted skill, training on new AI tools, shows that employees want to stay on top of developments. They want to keep up with emerging tech and learn how to leverage it in their work. Looking into what they get vs. what they want, employees are getting less training than they want on new AI tools, financial literacy and financial wellness, entrepreneurship, and mental health training.

Employees are embracing artificial intelligence

In addition to the above-highlighted **gap in Al training,** another stat underlines employees' zeal to jump on the Al bandwagon: 67% desire to get training on how to use new Al tools. What's more, 71% of workers seek to understand Al's impact on their roles.

After all, AI has taken the world by storm, blurring the lines between human and artificial intelligence. It swept away a belief that only the human brain is capable of complex tasks such as decision-making, writing, and learning. It has shaken whole industries, domains, and job roles. Nevertheless, employees appear eager to embed this new technology in their daily work. On the other hand, not all employers seem able to follow the current, as only half of surveyed employees (51%) said their company keeps them up-to-date on how AI might impact their role.

Self-driven skill building

In spite of employers covering a wide range of skills in offered training, as seen above, more employees are pursuing skill-building and learning beyond company-provided training. During 2023, 68% of employees improved workplace skills outside of training provided by their employer, spotlighting the rise of lifelong learning. This shows an increase compared with 2022, when 57% were pursuing learning opportunities on their own, as the <u>TalentLMS and SHRM survey</u> on the state of L&D has found. This percentage is slightly higher for Gen Z workers (18-24), with 72% engaging in self-driven learning.



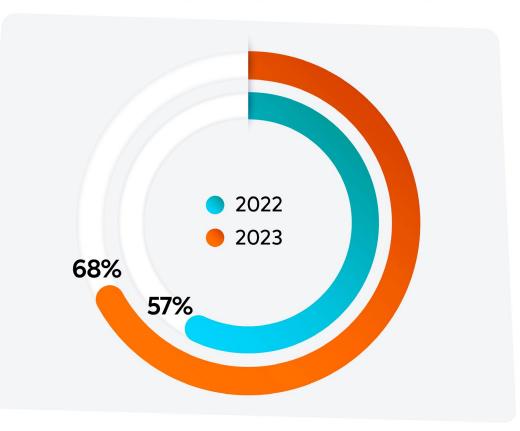
Expert's take:

Sarah Cannistra

Fractional Chief Learning Officer & L&D Career Coach

We can't keep the gates to education closed anymore, no matter how hard we try. Instead, we need to become learning marketplace curators—and trust that our employees are smart enough to figure out what they want to develop in and give them the autonomy to seek it out.

A surge of employees forging their own skill paths



% of employees pursuing learning and building work skills on their own, beyond company-provided training

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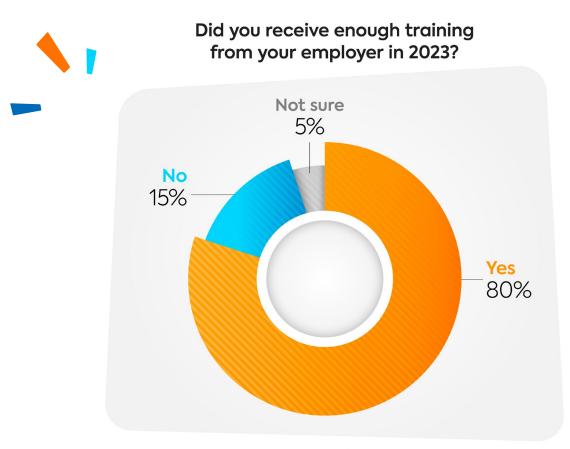
Putting the pieces together:

What does the perfect training look like

In the previous section, we've seen the most defining features of the L&D landscape and in-demand skills for employees, along with their views on AI. This section will untangle the nitty gritty of training, and examine the anatomy of the most engaging delivery formats. But first things first.

Did employees get enough training?

We asked employees if they got enough training from their employers, and the overwhelming majority (80%) said yes. This suggests a positive perception of how committed employers are to their employees' professional development. Indeed, the following survey finding confirms this: 73% of employees said their employer is committed to their training and development.

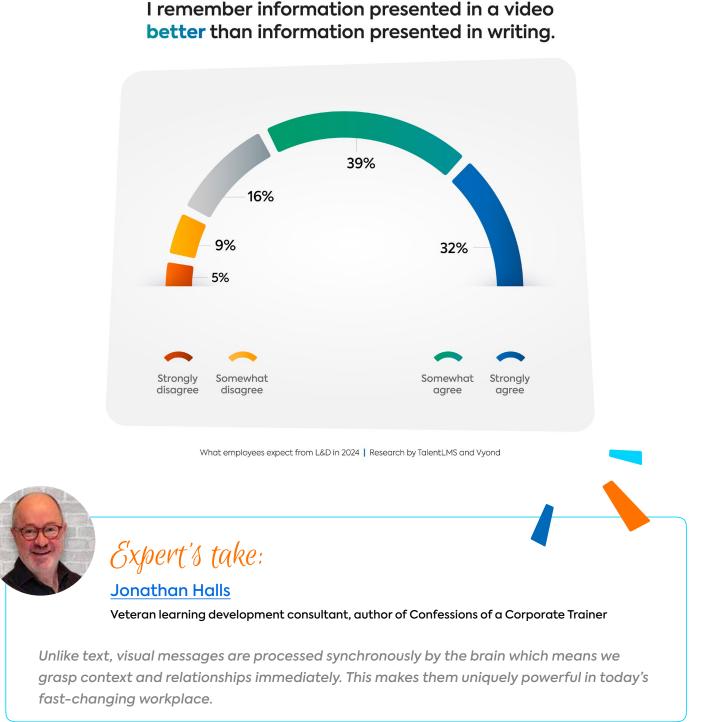


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The most engaging training delivery formats

Zooming into mediums used for training delivery, data revealed that the most frequently used delivery ztops the list may lie in the highly engaging nature of the medium: 72% of employees feel more engaged when interacting with training programs that incorporate short video content than with

programs that don't. What's more, over 7 in 10 employees remember information presented in a video better than information presented in writing.



Simulations topped the high engagement scale, ranking neck and neck with video—66% of employees find simulations highly engaging, closely followed by videos at 65%. The third most engaging training format is in-person instructor-led sessions (ILT), with 63% of employees finding it highly engaging.

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Training formats used in employee training



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Coming after video, the next channel companies use for bringing training to learners are in-person, instructor-led sessions and online eLearning courses, which are rated highly engaging by 59% of employees. Other delivery methods that follow are: Virtual, instructor-led sessions, available on-demand and at a scheduled time; digital PDFs or web copy; group projects and role-playing activities. It's worth highlighting that simulations are the least used medium used by companies to deliver training, even though the employees have ranked them as the most engaging training format. Practicing skills in a safe, simulated environment seems to resonate highly with employees, and employers should work on covering this gap and offer more such experiences.

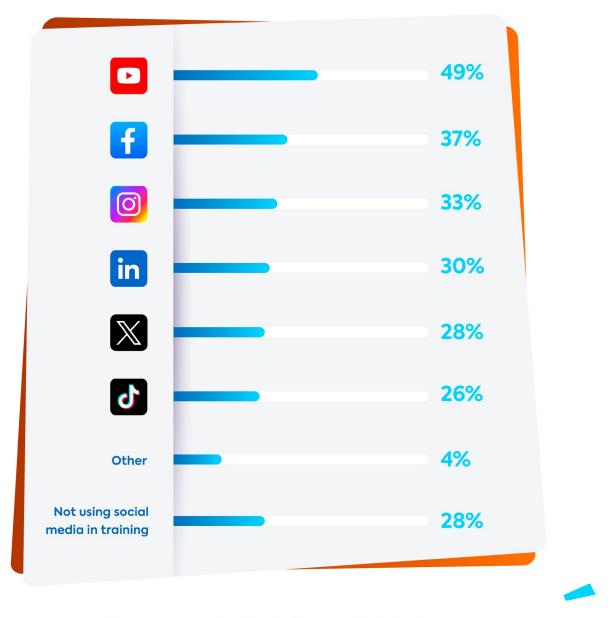




Social media in learning

The usage of social media in learning appears widespread: **58% of employees say they use social media to learn new skills.** Positively, employers are keeping up. As shown in the graph below, they use a variety of social media platforms in employee training—mostly ouTube, followed by Facebook and Instagram. Finally, only 28% of employees said that their company doesn't use social media in training.

Social media platforms companies use for employee training



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Seven takeaways for employers

#1 Fast-track the development of new skills

In the disruptive times we're going through, maintaining skills agility is crucial. That means anticipating future skill needs and crafting effective L&D initiatives around them. The data from our research has shown that employees are aware that the half-life of skills is shrinking, and that they need new skills to be successful in their jobs. They hold upskilling and reskilling in high regard: 81% of employees think enriching and expanding training programs with more skills will be important in 2024. But organizations need to accelerate skills development, instead of taking the reactive way of scrambling training when the need arises. Fast-tracking the building of new skills should be high on the business agenda for 2024.

#2 Fire up internal mobility to address skill gaps

Despite its vast benefits, internal hiring is an untapped talent pool for the majority of organizations: Only <u>10%</u> of jobs are filled with internal, lateral hires. Furthermore, data from our research pinpointed employees' positive views toward upskilling as a way to bolster professional growth and upward momentum: 77% think it'll be important for their companies to offer training that provides career and development opportunities in the upcoming year, so that they can transition into new roles. This shows a tremendous yet untapped talent pool and potential for bridging skill gaps. With time-to-hire rates at an <u>all-time high</u>, organizations should focus more on developing the missing skills within their existing workforces, and nurturing talent from within.

#3 Embed learning into the workflow

As long as working and learning are separate activities living far from each other, training will be pushed to the important-but-not-urgent realm. To bring these two together, weave training into the flow of work. <u>Research suggests</u> that this approach can help learners retain and apply new skills and concepts in their day-to-day work. And TalentLMS and Vyond research has shown that employees want more learning, but not in big chunks of time or in a monotonous way.

#4 Shift from a content-centric to a learner-centric approach

L&D has evolved from being centered around content to focusing more on the needs and preferences of the user. Still, many orgs continue to revolve around learning content for the sake of content. Instead, companies should put learners at the center of L&D initiatives, and design content to fit their needs. Consider their flow of work, preferences, and learning styles when designing training. Apply interactive and experiential learning, and include activities, simulations, and real-world applications that engage employees in the learning process. Finally, consider continuous feedback and assessment, which are integral to the learnercentric model, and design training in such a way that employees can take control of their learning journey.

#5 Empower learners with data

As many as **68% of employees would like** to have access to more data about their training, to measure and analyze progress.

This brings to light an underlying desire of employees for a more data-driven and resultsoriented approach to training. Therefore, place more emphasis on providing learners with databased insights into their training. In return, this will boost employee motivation and enrich their learning experience.

#6 Craft captivating training experiences

The TalentLMS and Vyond survey revealed the key elements of highly engaging training experiences.

Shorten lengthy sessions:

Long sessions are the #1 challenge employees face with training. Instead of slapping them with never-ending materials, make content more user-centric and concise, start dropping nuggets of knowledge, and leverage microlearning and nano-learning.



Expert's take:

Jonathan Halls

Veteran learning development consultant, author of Confessions of a Corporate Trainer

People have been wanting to shorten training for years but we mustn't lose sight of the fact that learning takes time. Research shows this. But we can increase efficiency by personalizing the content and learning experience as well as weeding out redundancy.

Create a cinematic learning experience:

Employees are loud and clear when it comes to their preference for visual learning. 72% feel more engaged when interacting with training programs that incorporate short video content than with programs that don't. At the same time, 7 in 10 employees remember information presented in a video better than information presented in writing.

The reason why video is so popular with learners is because it engages both visual and auditory senses—employees can see and hear the content. Use rich imagery, color, and relatable characters and situations to immerse learners.

Good visualization matters, so do not neglect it: 78% of employees say visual representations of abstract concepts help them understand those concepts better.

Flex training:

Give more autonomy to employees on what and when they learn. 79% of employees say that more flexibility in choosing training topics and timing of training will be important in 2024.

Training with a human touch:

To help employees learn faster, use storytelling and humor. 76% say humor helps them remember more of the training content. And for 74% of employees, information retention is easier when storytelling is used.

Finally, make sure to assess the acquired knowledge to solidify the learned skill: 74% of employees say a short quiz at the end helps them remember what they learned.





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Expert's take:

Professor Jessica Briskin

Department of Technology, Analytics, & Workforce Learning at Bloomsburg University

Methods such as humor, visual representations, storytelling, and videos have been prominent trends in eLearning, aligning with the fundamental principles of effective instructional design emphasizing the creation of engaging, learnercentered experiences. Leveraging these elements aims to cultivate a positive and enjoyable learning atmosphere that motivates learners and keeps them focused on their educational journey. When using any of these methods, it is important to note that the method's effectiveness depends on factors such as the target audience, cultural sensitivity, media quality, relevance, and the overall tone of the educational content.

#7 Learning takes a village: Develop a learning culture

With innate curiosity, humans are the ultimate learning machines. Throughout this research, we've seen employees expressing a thirst for knowledge and a desire to master new skills, along with pursuing learning opportunities beyond work training. Companies that satisfy this appetite, and nurture an overall culture of continuous learning, will benefit in the long run from an evolving workforce that doesn't stand still.

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Conclusion

The TalentLMS and Vyond research portrayed a comprehensive view of the L&D landscape, to serve as a roadmap for turning learning into a strategic advantage. It unpacked numerous insights and learnings, along with effective strategies, practical recommendations, and takeaways.

In summary, the data emphasized a growth mindset of the workforce. Employees are highly receptive to experiential learning that equips them with a blend of practical and future-relevant skills. They favor crisp, varied, visual, and round-the-clock learning experiences and moments. And they're interested in training that powers horizontal and vertical career progression.

Employers can leverage these insights to align training initiatives with employee aspirations and preferences, and make every learning minute count. There is a valuable opportunity to capitalize on employees' thirst for learning, and nurture the internal talent pool to close skill gaps.

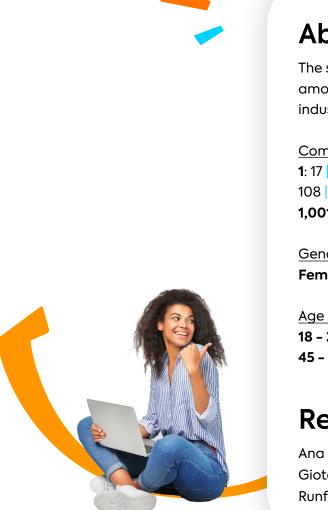
As a discipline, L&D holds the potential to be a rising tide that lifts all boats. Ultimately, it is perfectly positioned to help people **learn better, work better, and live better**.

Learning and success are closely linked. The steeper the learning curve, the sharper the curve of success.

Looking ahead to 2024, L&D is set to fuel individual and organizational success. Use the findings and takeaways from the report to supercharge it.

Research by TalentLMS

TalentLMS' original research uncovers the latest trends on workplace learning, indemand skills, and the future of work. It is frequently cited in credible and influential tech and business publications across the globe.



About this research

The survey was conducted online on October 9, 2023, among 1,000 employees in the US across different industries.

<u>Company size of surveyed employees:</u> 1: 17 | 2-5: 23 | 6-10: 44 | 11-25: 53 | 26-50: 64 | 51-100: 108 | 101-250: 76 | 251-500: 108 | 501-1,000: 194 | 1,001-5,000: 141 | >5,000: 151 | N/A: 21

<u>Gender breakdown:</u> Female (50,8%) | Male (49,2%)

Age groups breakdown: **18 - 24** (12,7%) | **25 - 34** (27,7%) | **35 - 44** (34,4%) | **45 - 54** (15,1%) | **> 54** (10,1%)

Research team

Ana Casic (TalentLMS), Christina Pavlou (TalentLMS), Giota Gavala (TalentLMS), Mark Rader (Vyond), April Runft (Vyond), Shannon Latta (Vyond).

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About TalentLMS

TalentLMS is the LMS built for success, enabling organizations to create a culture of continuous learning by delivering training designed with adoption in mind. With an experience that's fully customizable, easy to manage, and a joy to use, teams embrace training while feeling right at home.

About Vyond

Vyond is the leader in Al-powered video creation. Over 65% of the Fortune 500, tens of thousands of businesses, and millions of end users use Vyond to transform mission-critical content into vibrant business communication that engages customers and employees, and drives positive business outcomes.

> Build a learning culture in your organization with TalentLMS.

Upskill your people with TalentLMS. Easy to set up, easy to use, easy to customize.

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