

HCM OUTLOOK

Building a Culture of Inclusion, Excellence
and Innovation for the Future of Work



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INTRODUCTION

Hybrid work environments, the Metaverse, AI, vaccine mandates, lockdowns and Zoom fatigue.

**This is now
the future
of work.**

The conditions will continue to be complex, challenging and rapidly changing. All of this creates risks as well as opportunities. Leaders who embraced change and seized the opportunity to build a change-ready culture in their organizations over the past two years are now capitalizing and not falling victim to today's continuously shifting work environment.

Brandon Hall Group has been working with many organizations this year, helping them prepare for the future of work and the digital transformation that is unfolding. This book, *HCM Outlook 2022: Building a Culture of Inclusion, Excellence and Innovation for the Future of Work*, provides our best insights and perspectives on how digital transformation will lead the re-imagining of work today and into the future.

Through our globally recognized awards programs, our professional and organizational certifications and our research, insights and case studies, we are committed to your success. We are in unprecedented times, but it does not mean we cannot achieve unprecedented success.

As winners of Brandon Hall Group Excellence Awards, you are the beacon that will guide your organization into the future. The work will be hard but what you have accomplished positions you well to be that guide and lead the transformation that will unlock the full potential of your employees. We want you to celebrate your achievements and reflect on your accomplishments but remain ready, have your eye on what needs to happen next and envision yourself celebrating future success. We look forward to sharing ideas with you and your

team in an effort to work together to address the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

We have leveraged all our experience and expertise to bring you this book and we are looking forward to sharing ideas with you and your team in an effort to work together to address the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

To be successful in addressing the future of work, a new level of agility, flexibility, adaptability and resilience from your employees will be required. You must be ready to create an employee experience that motivates everyone to collaborate, have meaningful conversations, be empathetic, foster inclusiveness and lead by example. Employees must

be given the digital tools to ideate, create and innovate. We must ensure they have the opportunity to balance work and life, and their leaders will help them to achieve their personal and professional goals.

This book looks at the future of work through the lens of our team and you. We have seen, through your award submissions, the roads you have taken, the mountains you climbed and the valleys you crossed. We bring back to you the experiences that were shared with us and the insights we gained.

Our intent through this book is to embrace the future and help you to begin your plans to ensure your organization is ready for the future of work.

The participation in the 2021 awards year has been remarkable. There is so much to share at the conference and learn from one another.

In addition, we have launched our professional certification program. Individual professional advancement is critically important to effectively build a strategy and execute the plans of your team. Our certifications programs embody the competencies needed to develop and deliver a high impact strategy.

We trust that the book will provide an exciting and invigorating look into the future and that Brandon Hall Group can be your partner in the future success of your organization.

Mike Cooke

CEO, Brandon Hall Group





FUTURE OF WORK

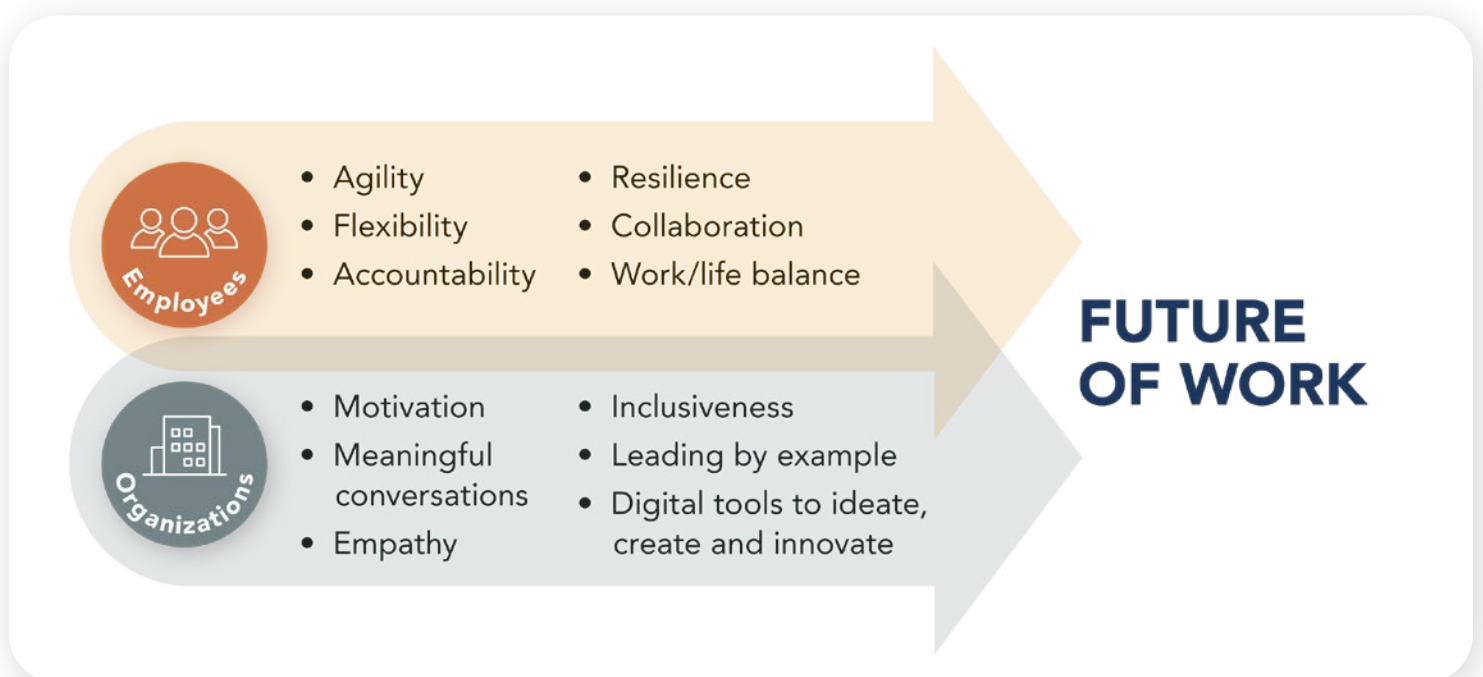
The future of work is now, distilled down to the critical steps we take each day and their immediate impact on the future. We lack the luxury of gazing into a crystal ball and hoping to discover what comes next. Our future will be forged by how we think and act today. What we experience, and how we react and move forward will dictate our fate.

There has never been a time in our work experiences where the future is so immediate. The simplest decision made in a fraction of a second now will create an immediate and long-lasting consequence and rapidly shape our future. Not all our decisions will be the right ones but we must find a way to help our organizations make as many right decisions as possible and create a culture that can rebound from the wrong ones. We must future-proof our employees and organizational settings. This, however, is not a defensive

position. Rather, it is a proactive approach to ensuring that work continues, employees prosper and the organization thrives. If we properly reflect on our collective experiences, there is clarity. We can see what we need to do and can act swiftly and decisively.

The future of work requires the same core competencies for employees and the organization. They are no longer distinctly different or siloed. The future of work demands that we tear down the walls between

us and find common ground. An employee and an organization must embody and foster agility, flexibility, adaptability, resilience, motivation, collaboration, meaningful conversations, empathy, inclusiveness, leading by example, work/life balance and digital tools to ideate, create and innovate. It is our job and our destiny as HR and business professionals to lead the way by serving as the catalysts to developing these core competencies in every employee and the organization.



DE&I Will Evolve into Systemic Transformation

Employers have taken a tactical approach to diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I), with less-than-stellar results. Becoming truly diverse, equitable and inclusive amounts to culture change for many organizations. Learning programs and targeted initiatives will give way to a more universal approach driven by a strategic plan, accountability and active involvement from the C-Suite to the front lines. DE&I must be embedded in organizational culture. Employers have learned the hard way that there are no shortcuts.

Data Analytics Will Drive Transparency and Accountability

The focus on DE&I has produced reams of data. Stakeholders — ranging from stockholders and government regulators to advocacy groups and employees seeking a real commitment to improvement — will pressure organizations to release diversity, equity and inclusion data and be transparent about their goals. DE&I is seen as a business driver, but less than half of organizations hold leaders to the same accountability they have for other business objectives. That will change as pressure mounts for employers to prove that their public commitment to DE&I was more than reactionary rhetoric to a historic outcry for change.

CHAPTER 1:

MASTERING THE ABCs OF DE&I WILL DRIVE INNOVATION

Holistic, Strategic Approach to Culture Change Is the Key to Business Impact

“E” Will Evolve More Quickly than “D” and “I”

Through data, it is much easier to see — and correct — inequities in pay and employment and leadership demographics than changing the culture to truly embrace diversity and inclusion. Though progress has been slow so far, Brandon Hall Group research shows that almost half of organizations plan to invest moderately or highly in addressing leadership and pay equity in 2022. As employers continue to grapple with the complexities of DE&I, addressing inequities is an easier target than the transformation needed to build an inclusive culture.

Targeted Development of Women Will Gain Traction

The underrepresentation of women, people of color and other diverse groups — especially in upper-level leadership — is too severe for employers to continue to turn a blind eye. Traditionally underrepresented populations must be developed for leadership roles. That requires targeted efforts that many employers have been slow to embrace. While all diverse groups deserve attention, women represent about half the workforce and their numbers have been adversely impacted by the pandemic more than any other group. Targeted development, mentoring and especially executive sponsorship are required for women to be represented as they should be. We believe employers will respond.



PREDICTIONS

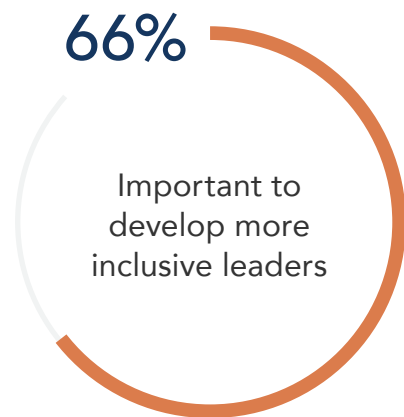
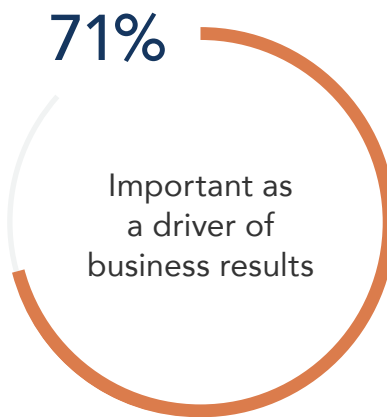
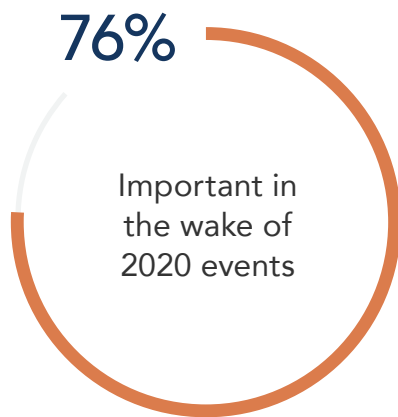


Three words: **diversity**, **equity** and **inclusion** are uttered in almost every conversation related to human capital management. Whether one talks with an HR leader, an employee, a job seeker or a technology provider, diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) is a hot topic.

As a business strategy, it has been researched and championed for nearly three decades and began to emerge as a corporate initiative in the 2010s. But in 2020, in the wake of the social justice movement and COVID-19, it moved to the forefront of the corporate consciousness. Employees and job seekers want to work at diverse and inclusive organizations, tech providers want to enable it and

business leaders want to reap the business benefits from the increased innovation, collaboration and agility that a strong DE&I culture provides.

Despite its status as a business imperative, Brandon Hall Group research shows that efforts to create a culture that is more diverse, inclusive and equitable have not been particularly effective.



Status of DE&I

Source: Brandon Hall Group Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Research Studies, 2021



There are many reasons why improving DE&I has been difficult. Interviews reveal that it is often treated as an initiative or program among a series of initiatives and programs. DE&I often requires a cultural transformation driven by a comprehensive strategy with active support and involvement across the enterprise, including top leaders. Unfortunately, many employers struggle with modeling the principles of DE&I.

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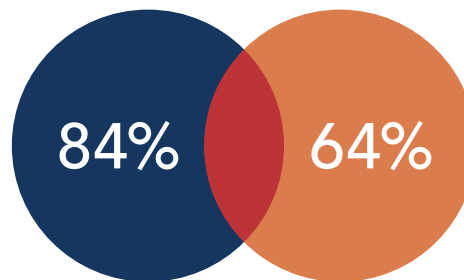
COMPLEXITIES

“Our leaders don’t believe the work applies to them,”

is a typical explanation Brandon Hall Group research respondents give when asked about challenges.

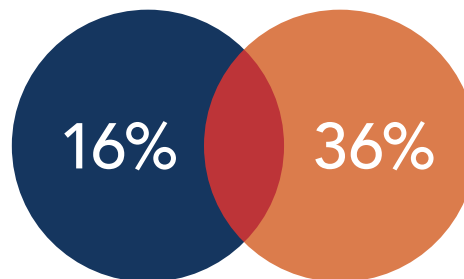
For an organization to be inclusive, leadership must be inclusive. While few organizations — only about one in five — express reluctance to improving inclusive leadership, only 44% of organizations demonstrate inclusive leader behaviors to a high degree, according to *How to Develop Inclusive Leaders: An Inside Look*, a joint study by Brandon Hall Group and Orange Grove Consulting. In addition, only 16% of organizations overall have more than 40% of top leadership coming from diverse groups.

Percentage of VPs and Above from Diverse Populations



Less than two-fifths of senior leaders come from diverse groups.

- Organizations overall
- Organizations in which developing inclusive leaders is important*



More than two-fifths of senior leaders come from diverse groups.

*Important = Survey respondents rating importance of inclusive at 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale

Source: *How to Develop Inclusive Leaders: An Inside Look*, Brandon Hall Group and Orange Grove Consulting





DE&I also suffers from lack of a **comprehensive approach**.

Only about **35% of organizations** employ a DE&I strategic plan or set of short-term and long-term DE&I goals, Brandon Hall Group research shows.

We live in a deeply divided society and it is sometimes difficult for employees to reconcile the nationalistic rhetoric they hear outside of work with the call for inclusion they hear at work.

“There is definitely a segment of our workforce that feels that diversity and equity at work is overemphasized. They see no issues and feel it isn't the organization's role to tell them what to think. There is a political divide among employees that has encompassed the equity work,” said one of many research respondents reflecting on societal and political barriers.

We are hearing more people bring up, in addition to DE&I, the word “belonging.” If you recall the example about being invited to the dance and inclusion is about being asked to dance, does the person truly feel that they belong there? If not, how engaged, or likely is it that they will stay at your organization for a long period of time. So how do leaders help people feel they belong?





Lack of leadership and strategic planning for DE&I creates a disconnect between the level of importance and the impact of DE&I on the business. The high enthusiasm that business and human capital management leaders expressed in 2020 has often led to frustration with the lack of progress in 2022.

16 CONSEQUENCES

For example, Brandon Hall Group research shows that **less than one-third** of organizations:



Address pay transparency issues by gender and race/ethnicity



Have a diverse talent pipeline



Have a leadership group that reflects the composition of the workforce



For organizations to succeed in the ever-evolving world of work, employees must all pull in the same direction, bring their full selves to work and share their wealth of capabilities, experiences and insights. A diverse, inclusive and equitable workplace creates an environment of psychological safety, which is critical for employees to navigate change and take the risks necessary to learn and grow individually and help the organization evolve and thrive.

To create this environment, employers need to take a more strategic, comprehensive approach to diversity, equity and inclusion.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Rather than just listing DE&I as a business priority and addressing it tactically, employers should view DE&I as a **cultural-transformation initiative** that strategically involves the entire organization. Here are some critical questions to consider:

- › How does our culture currently support or impede efforts toward more diversity, equity and inclusion?
- › What are our greatest systemic barriers to achieving a more inclusive culture?
- › How do we overcome those barriers?
- › How can we embed the values of DE&I in all levels of the organization?
- › How can we motivate leaders and eventually all employees to make themselves accountable for creating and sustaining a truly diverse, inclusive and equitable organization?
- › How can we recruit, hire and retain more diverse talent at all levels and functions of the organization?
- › Are our goals and targets measurable and sustainable?



To achieve something as valuable and complex as a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion, organizations must start by building a strong foundation. Many employers, eager to make progress and see a return on their DE&I investment, focus on training initiatives, forming employee resource groups or other tactical steps without developing a comprehensive strategy or having strong leadership in place.

BRANDON HALL

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GROUP POV

Laying the groundwork — sometimes referred to as the ABCs of DE&I — creates the infrastructure needed to create broad cultural awareness and eventually, transformation.

This involves three foundations:

Getting Buy-in from the C-Suite

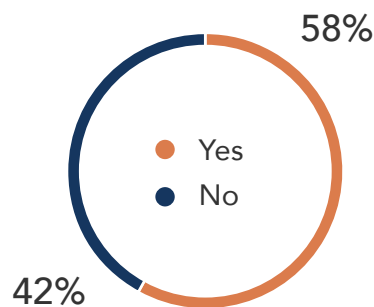
If this already exists in your organization, you are off to a great start. If not, HR and/or key business leaders should advocate for diversity and inclusion and unconscious-bias awareness training at the C-Suite level. This means creating a safe space for these top leaders to ask awkward or embarrassing questions before leading organization-wide inclusivity initiatives. Once top leadership is comfortable and on board, they can be a driving force for setting an authentic, inclusive tone for everyone.

Preparing leaders to conduct a constructive discussion or presentation can go a long way and help prevent any negative backlash. Don't assume that your leaders are equipped to forge ahead, even with the best intentions, without proper training, planning and rehearsing to ensure they are ready to handle these tough, uncomfortable conversations.

Integrating DE&I into Your Core Values

Core values should be periodically reevaluated, especially during periods of disruption and change. If your organization's core values already include DE&I, great! If not, you will need to get buy-in from top leadership to update them.

Organizations Whose Leaders Are Accountable for DE&I Goals



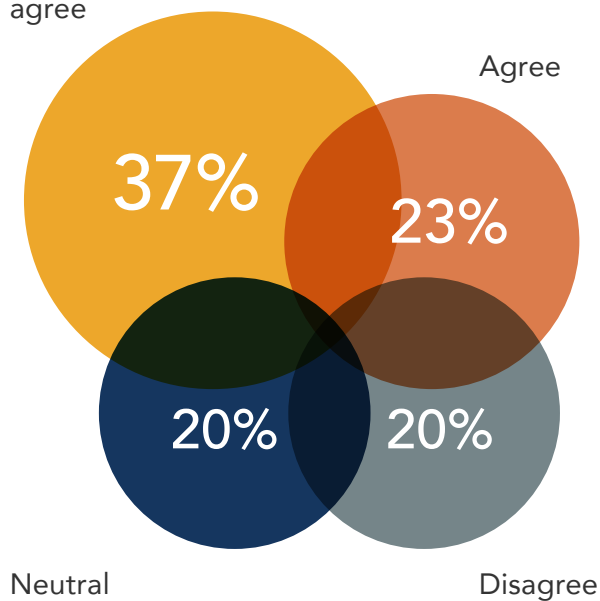
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: What's Changing?



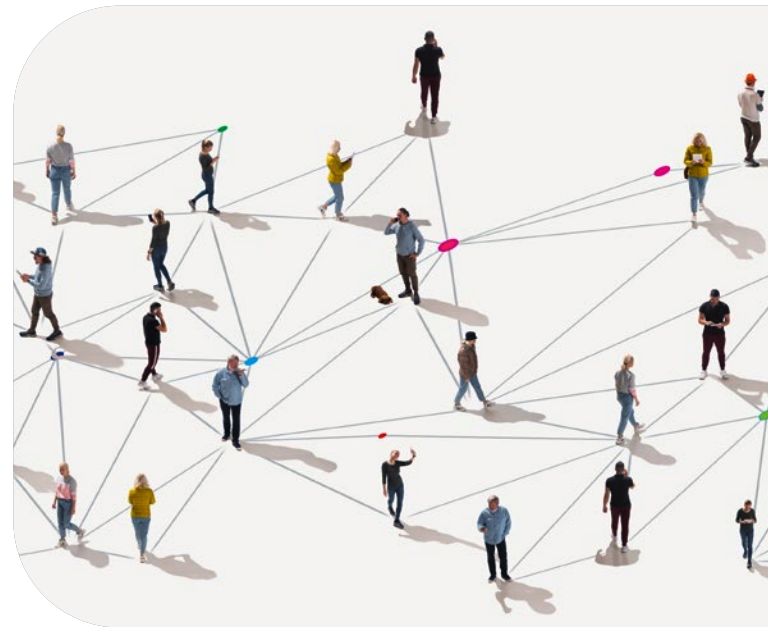
If you decide to update your core values, we recommend asking company-wide for suggestions and feedback from employees, especially if your leadership and HR teams collectively aren't very diverse. The additional perspectives can help fill in gaps and demonstrate a commitment to inclusion by seeking broad input.

DE&I Is a Stated Value and Priority of My Organization

Strongly agree



Source: Brandon Hall Group Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Benchmarking Study



Understanding the Complexity of DE&I

If issues of diversity, equity and inclusion were easy, we would not be wrestling with basic understanding in the year 2022. One critical mistake organizations make is not fully embracing DE&I as a complex and potentially divisive and polarizing issue.

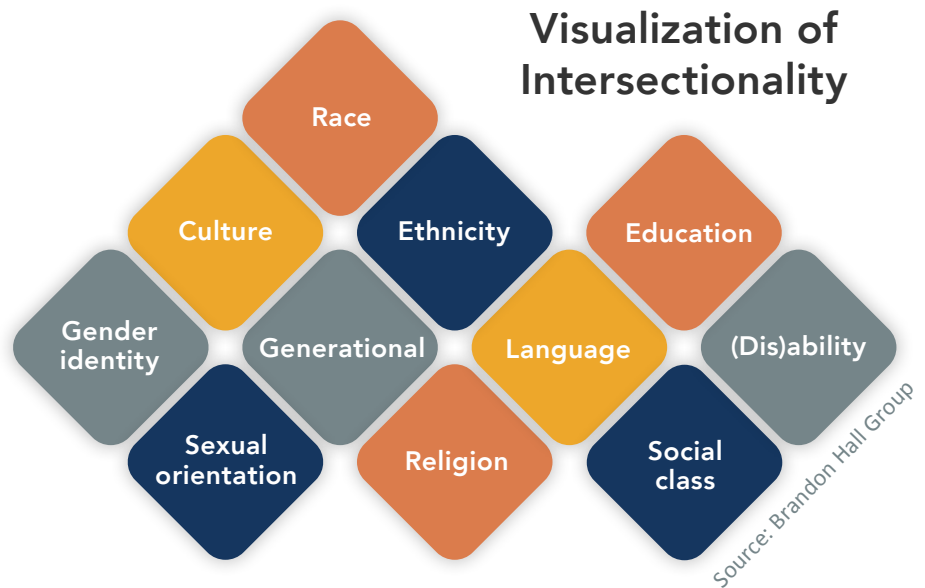
It's important for leaders — and eventually everyone in the organization — to have a thorough understanding of the impact of bias and exclusion, not only in the workplace but in society at large.

Employees bring their real-world experiences to work and their attitudes and behaviors are influenced by those experiences. Truly understanding the negative impact of bias goes beyond gender, race, nationality, disability, age or sexual orientation. It's important to understand how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination. This is the concept of intersectionality, which was coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, an American lawyer, civil rights advocate and philosopher.

The concept, based on Critical Race Theory, has many nuances and has generated controversy, especially between political and cultural liberals and conservatives. But the basis of intersectionality is simple and insightful: People have overlapping identities and can experience bias and discrimination on several different levels.

For example, a Black woman is Black and female and can be subjected to discrimination based on race, gender or a combination of the two. A recent documentary

Understanding the complexity of bias and discrimination is important in determining your personal core values and providing input into your organization's core values.



on law enforcement and race brought this into clear focus. It featured a police officer who was Black, female and gay. She described herself as “hitting the discrimination trifecta that I get caught up in every day from the cops, the perms and the public.”

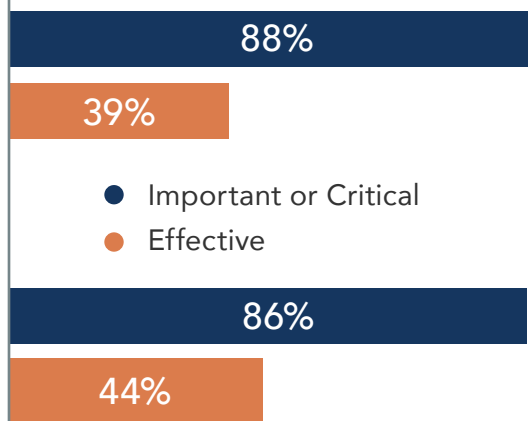
Leaders have a responsibility to continuously learn about the complexities of DE&I and model behaviors that create a culture where all employees, regardless of their backgrounds and experiences, have equal opportunities for success.

Taking a Strategic Approach

Building a culture of DE&I requires building new sets of skills among both individual contributors and leaders, from the front lines to the C-Suite. For many organizations, introducing DE&I amounts of culture change. So education and involvement must be universal and strategic.

This is where many organizations have made mistakes in their DE&I efforts in 2020 and 2021 — starting initiatives without having a strategic plan and governance. Most organizations understand both are needed, but they struggle to make it work effectively.

Strategic Planning for Diversity Equity and Inclusion



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Governance

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, What Are the Key Competencies for DE&I Success?

Functions of a DE&I Strategic Plan

- › Creates understanding of the business need for DE&I
- › Ensures a comprehensive, organization-wide approach
- › Communicates the DE&I mission, values and principles to the organization
- › Creates a framework for winning the support of DE&I from top leadership and key stakeholders
- › Creates processes for widespread involvement in improving DE&I
- › Establishes governance, measurement and accountability for DE&I
- › Creates a framework for managing change

Source: Brandon Hall Group



All business leaders should integrate diversity, equity and inclusion into their strategic thinking, even when they do not have any formal ownership of the initiatives. For DE&I to have a positive business impact, everyone in the organization must demonstrate the values of diversity, equity and inclusion. But it starts at the top. Leaders should think strategically about DE&I as they would with other aspects of the organization.

The goal is to create a culture of “unconscious inclusion” to replace the natural “unconscious bias” that most people have in response to people and situations unfamiliar or foreign to them.

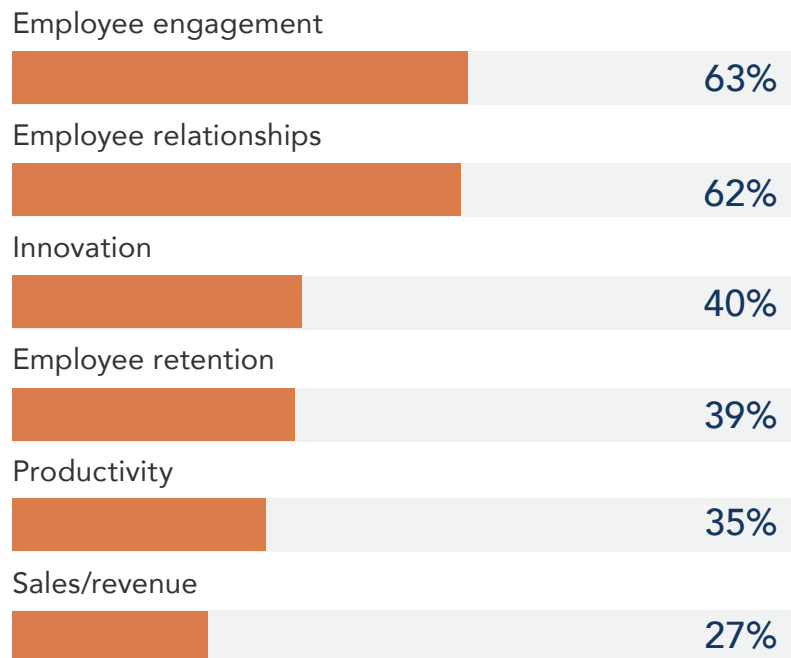
Key Components of a DE&I Strategic Plan

- › Making the business case
- › Commitment and involvement from the top
- › Vision, Mission and Strategy
- › Governance
- › Diverse hiring
- › Onboarding
- › Employee retention
- › Training and Development
- › Communication
- › Marketing, Advertising, Branding
- › Strategic Alliances, Partnerships
- › Corporate Social Responsibility
- › Customer Experience
- › Employee Experience
- › Supplier/Vendor Diversity
- › Measurement, Accountability

If DE&I is an organizational core value, everyone should be thinking about how they can contribute to a DE&I strategic plan if one does not currently exist or how they can more actively support the strategic plan — or help improve it — if there is a plan already in place.

Even supporting DE&I strategies in casual conversations through a short “elevator pitch” or by demonstrating the values and principles of DE&I to colleagues can be helpful. Our research shows that the business impact of DE&I is not nearly as strong as it could be.

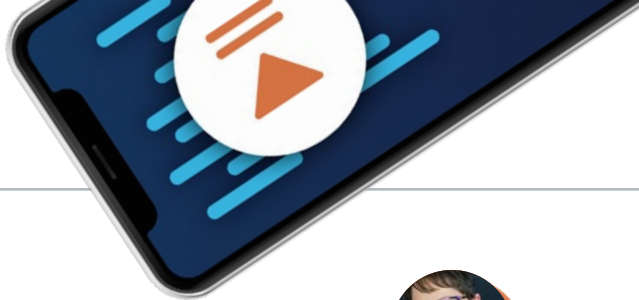
Perceived Impact of DE&I Programs on Key Performance Indicators



Percentages reflect organizations rating DE&I business impact at 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale

Source: Brandon Hall Group Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Benchmarking Study

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Ashley Philipps
Director of
Commercial Effectiveness
OSG

“The employer needs to listen and learn.”

“Few companies are where they need to be or want to be, so as a woman, especially in technology, you are not going to enter a perfect work environment. You have to be willing to help change the culture. But for that to happen, the employer needs to listen and learn.”



Anthony Kane, Ed.D.
Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Center for Excellence in Diversity and Student Inclusion
Duquesne University

“When you see something, you say something.”

“Students have much better understanding of inclusion than adults. GenZ is so socially aware of what is happening around them. A lot of taboos for our generation are not so taboo for them. For them, it is not inappropriate to call someone out for poor behavior or not adhering to university protocols. They are more outspoken and were brought up in a time that when you see something, you say something.”



Leslie Shore
Instructional Designer
Ameriprise Financial

“Progress starts at the top.”

“Advancing DE&I at Ameriprise starts with the tone at the top. Our leadership is supportive and proactive; they are committed to our diversity strategies. They are investing in it, putting people toward it and they are listening to employee feedback. We have 13 very active business resource networks that frequently host virtual and in-person events or discussions related to diversity and inclusion.”





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The Classroom Will Return but in a New Role

Before 2020, the classroom was king. It was the number-one way overall that companies delivered learning. Digital learning modalities were chipping away at that but the pandemic completely knocked instructor-led training off its throne. As the pandemic eventually eases off, there will be a strong desire for in-person learning events, even among remote workers who won't be returning to the workplace. It won't be the centerpiece of the learning ecosystem, however. ILT will become a more strategic, integrated element in a learning environment mainly driven by digital and virtual solutions.

Technology Will Feature Heavily

Companies will take what they learned from delivering learning during the pandemic and apply it when they return to in-person learning. That means using more communication and collaboration tools, as well as bringing technology into the classroom. The ability to share screens and do markups in a virtual class setting will be effective in person as well. Leveraging tools such as video, augmented reality and virtual reality will also boost more hands-on training.

CHAPTER 2:

REIMAGINING IN-PERSON LEARNING POST-PANDEMIC

People Want to Return to In-Person Learning, but It Must be Done Right

Learners Will Demand More from the Classroom

Having an instructor delivering information to a large group of learners will not cut it when they return to the classroom. Learners will be accustomed to acquiring information via videos and other on-demand resources. When they come together in person, there will be a high expectation of putting information and knowledge to use. There should be much higher levels of interactivity among learners and instructors/facilitators, and the learners themselves. Practical working groups, simulations and role-play will be at the center of the event.

Remote Work is Here to Stay

Even though most employees will return to the workplace at some point, it is clear that for many others, remote work is permanent. Organizations will have to factor that into their learning programs. This means recognizing that in-person learning will take more planning, as not everyone is down the hall. Additionally, there will be times when people simply cannot attend an in-person event. Hybrid classroom events are possible and can even be successful but they take some forethought and planning. Again, technology will save the day. The new cadre of permanently remote workers is yet another sign that L&D must continuously rethink its approach to everything in a post-pandemic world.



PREDICTIONS



Developing and delivering learning in the hybrid work environment is an evolving undertaking. Rethinking instructor-led and synchronous training is critical for organizations to optimize learning. **Formal, informal and experiential learning** must evolve rapidly to meet the new dynamic needs of the modern workforce.

We know that there is a percentage of workers not working remotely before the pandemic who will not return to the office post-pandemic. Much of the energy and focus of the past two years has been aimed at meeting the needs of these remote workers. But as things eventually stabilize, people will return to the workplace. Brandon Hall Group research finds that more than two-thirds of organizations expect more than half of their workforce to be on-site after the company's optimal "return to the

workplace" strategy is implemented.

Before the pandemic, in-person, instructor-led training was the number-one modality for learning as far as frequency of use. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, it is impossible to think that there won't be a return to the classroom. Even at the height of the pandemic in mid-2021, about half of companies said it was either highly or critically important to reintroduce ILT as conditions allow. Only 5% were turning their backs on ILT completely.

Like most things in a post-pandemic world, however, the classroom cannot be business as usual. Too much has changed for both business and learners to go back now. This pandemic-induced pause in the classroom should be seen as an opportunity to rethink and retool the entire experience to make it more engaging and impactful.



On a scale of 1-5, please indicate the importance of reintroducing live, instructor-led learning as conditions allow?



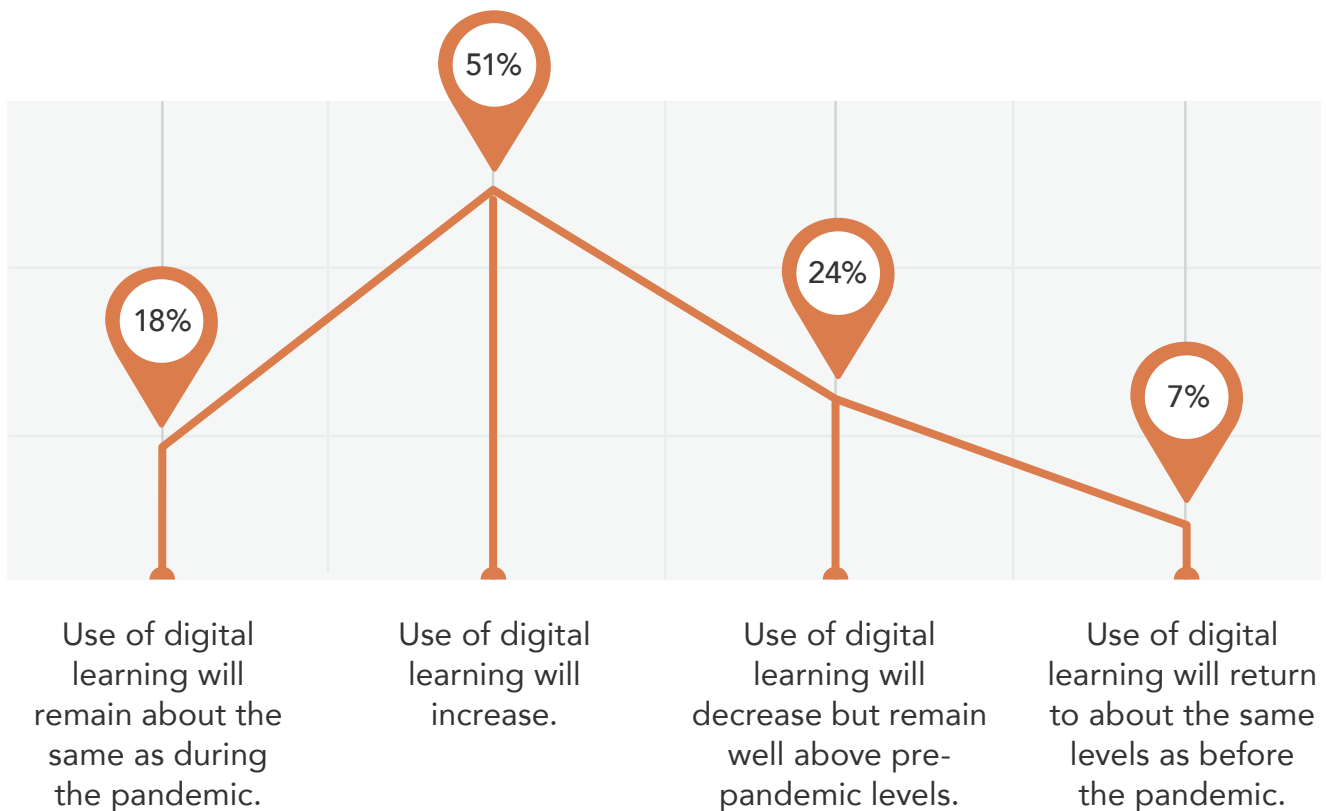
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, COVID-19 Impact on Workplace Practices



Perhaps the biggest challenge to returning to the classroom is the overall effectiveness that digital learning has shown throughout the pandemic. As organizations shifted from ILT to virtual classrooms, eLearning, videos and other digital learning experiences, they began to see how useful they are.

This has been a positive outcome, especially for organizations hesitant to digitally transform learning before the pandemic. As a result, most companies expect their use of digital learning to be higher than it was prior to the pandemic, with more than half expecting it to increase further.

How Do You See the Use of Digital Learning Changing as Your Organization Recovers from the Impact of the Pandemic?



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, COVID-19 Impact on Workplace Practices

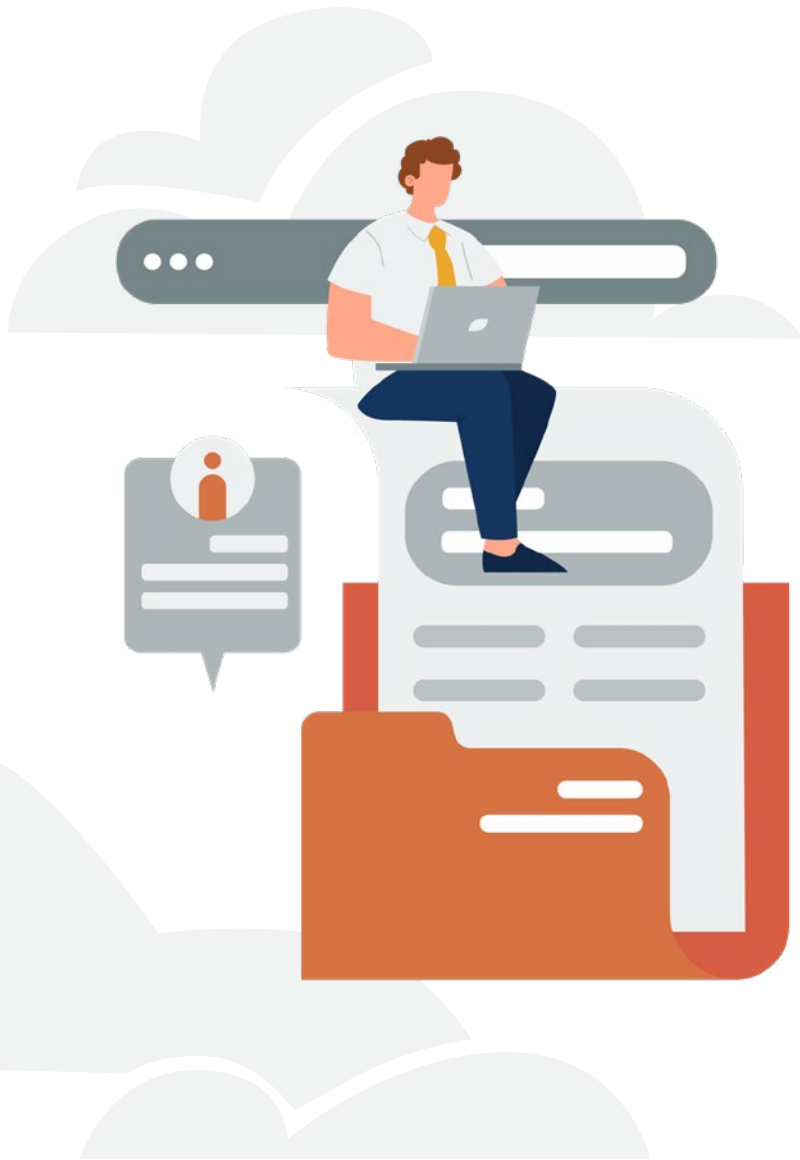
However, none of this means that the classroom is extinct. It just needs to be re-engineered to reach its full potential in a greatly broadened learning ecosystem. The challenge becomes understanding how these digital experiences can enhance and improve the classroom experience.



Another challenge for organizations that want to return to the classroom is budget.

About 70% of companies

said the Learning & Development function experienced a reduction in workforce, a decrease in budget, a restructuring of the function or a combination of those things during the pandemic.



Additionally, once it became clear that the pandemic was a long-term challenge, many ILT budgets were frozen and reallocated to other resources. Most organizations can attest that once a budget is reallocated, it can be very difficult to get those resources back. Simply saying the company is going back to the way things were won't be enough. L&D teams will have to make the case for ILT.

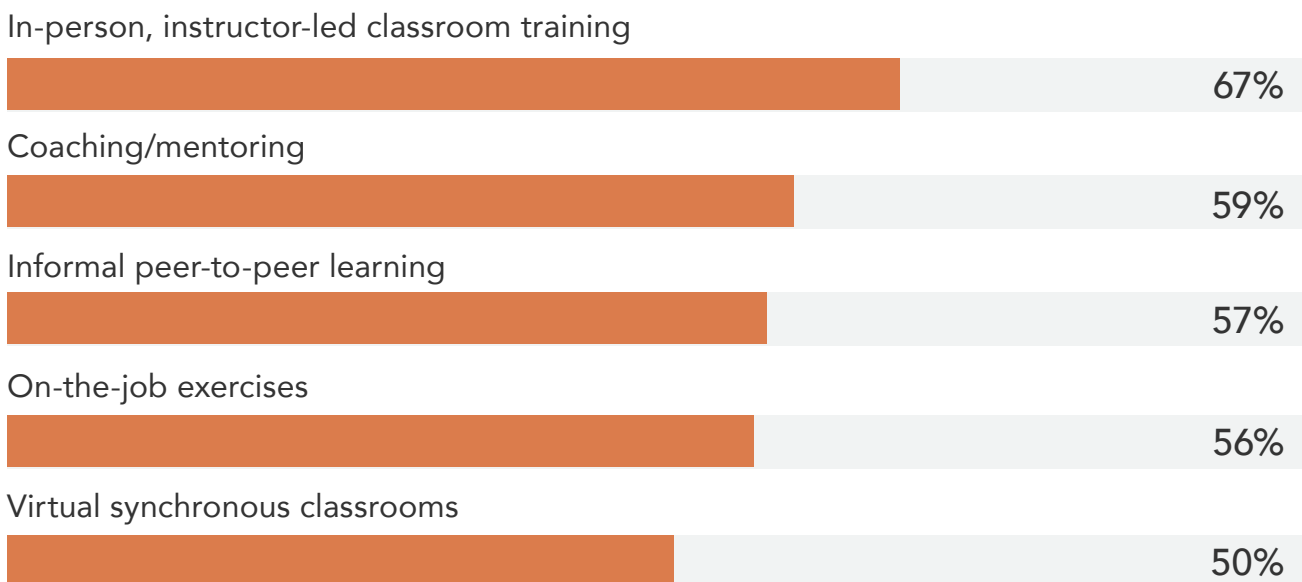
That challenge is exacerbated because even though most workers will be returning to the workplace, a significant number will remain remote. That means bringing people on-site for training will need to be factored into the budget. When so many people began working remotely, many moved from their original locations. Asking them to come in for training suddenly involves travel and accommodations. This is all the more reason to build truly impactful ILT programs.



Organizations must find a way to intelligently reintroduce in-person learning into their environment. For the most part, people want to get together to learn and exchange ideas. Of course, the organization benefits because innovation, performance and results are generated by teamwork and collaboration.

Companies simply didn't rely so heavily on ILT in the past because that was all that was available to them. Even when there are numerous tools and technologies at their disposal, organizations still consider ILT to be the most effective modality for learning overall.

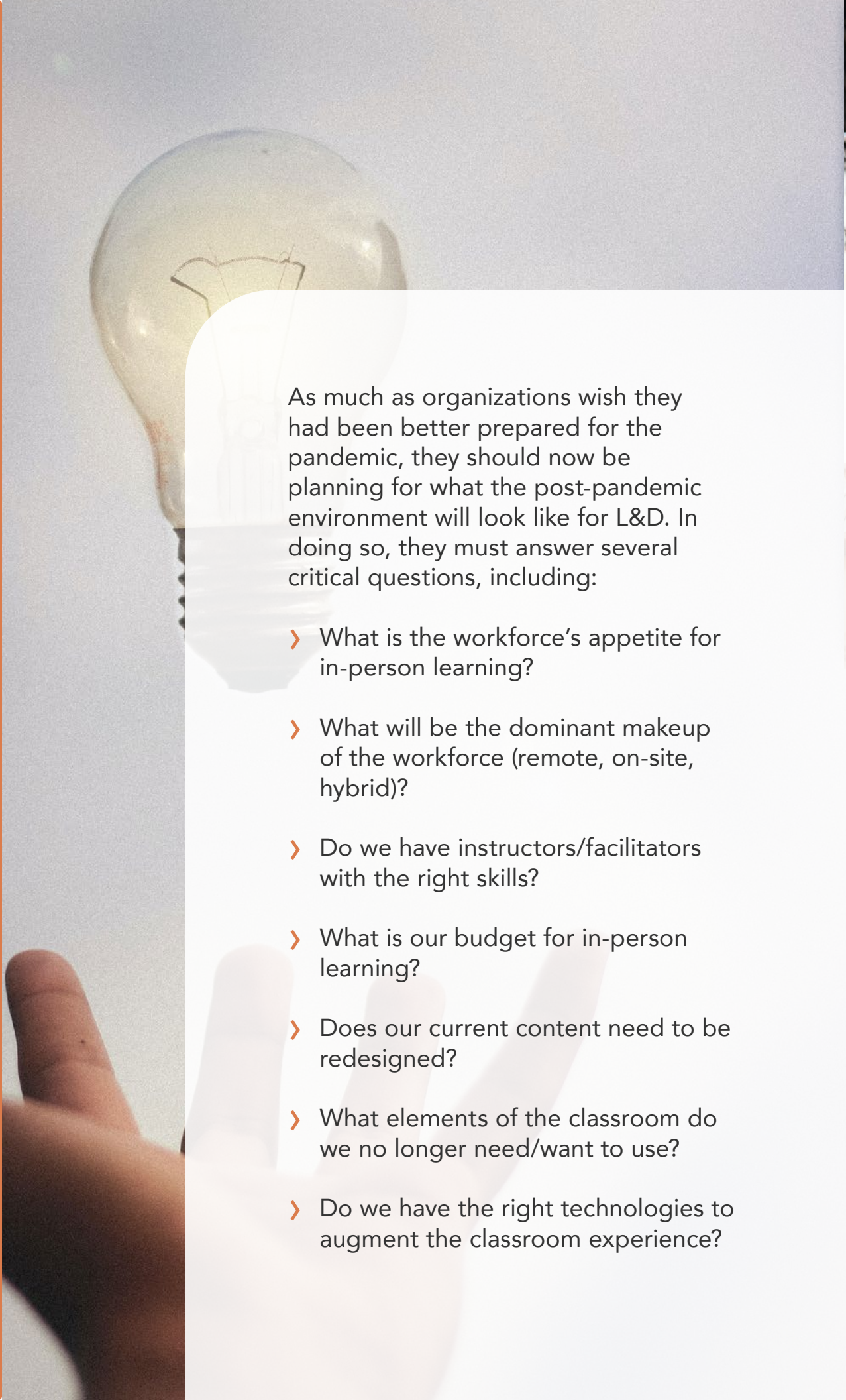
How effective are the following in engaging learners and achieving learning and business outcomes?



Source: Brandon Hall Group State of Learning Practices Study

It would be shortsighted to think we could do away with the classroom forever and rely solely on digital and virtual tools. Even organizations where every employee is remote still like to gather people together when they can. The increased use of digital learning should not push aside the classroom but rather enhance it. As good as some technology is, it hasn't yet been able to recreate the physical connectivity of people being in the same room.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS



As much as organizations wish they had been better prepared for the pandemic, they should now be planning for what the post-pandemic environment will look like for L&D. In doing so, they must answer several critical questions, including:

- › What is the workforce's appetite for in-person learning?
- › What will be the dominant makeup of the workforce (remote, on-site, hybrid)?
- › Do we have instructors/facilitators with the right skills?
- › What is our budget for in-person learning?
- › Does our current content need to be redesigned?
- › What elements of the classroom do we no longer need/want to use?
- › Do we have the right technologies to augment the classroom experience?



If they haven't already, organizations must immediately devise strategies to meet the future needs of the business and learners. If the pandemic proved anything, it is that most organizations were unprepared for what change truly is. A big part of this will be working out just when and how to bring back in-person learning experiences.

BRANDON HALL GROUP POV

Acknowledge the New Normal

Unless your organization is one of the few where every employee is or will be back where they were before the pandemic, you will be dealing with new workforce dynamics. Some people will be remote and some may be on work schedules that are not synchronized with the rest of the company. When rethinking the classroom, it will be important to consider these people and whether to have them come in for learning, participate virtually or not participate at all. There is no one right answer; it will be up to managers and L&D leaders to determine what is best in each situation.

Design Based on Your Learning Objectives

Look at the key learning objectives for your programs. Are you seeking to impart knowledge? Foster debate and exchange ideas? Your learning objectives will guide how and when to use the classroom. For courses primarily designed to communicate information (one-to-many), consider using other means to disseminate that knowledge before the classroom experience. A video introduction can get everyone on the same page ahead of time and feedback tools give instructors insights into what needs to happen in the classroom.

The classroom can then be leveraged for more many-to-many interactions and collaboration. This will maximize the productive time together and give the participants ownership of their interaction. More digital tools can be used to share outcomes outside the classroom for reinforcement.

Promote Inclusivity

In a hybrid environment, it is critical to understand your audience's technology situation. What is being used (laptops, iPads, tablets, smartphones, etc.)? What are the audio options? For instances where remote learners won't be attending the class in real-time, ensure there is enough content and follow-up material for them, as well as opportunities to contribute to the ongoing discussion.



Impart Clear Rules of Interaction

Another key to keep from wasting precious in-person time is to restate the expectations for the class. Communicate the objectives and outcomes for the course with learners. Clarify whether the session will be recorded and if so, where and how it will be used. For hybrid classrooms, include basic information as to how to ask questions, as well as when and why to use the mute function. Be sure to have a way for remote learners to signal technical glitches in real-time.

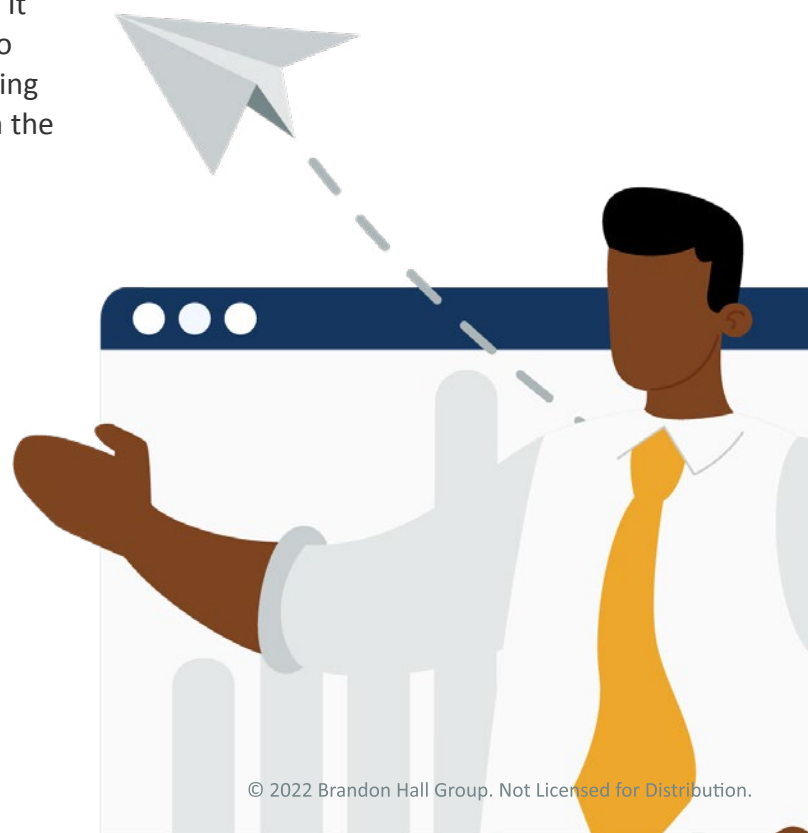
Be Concise and Engaging

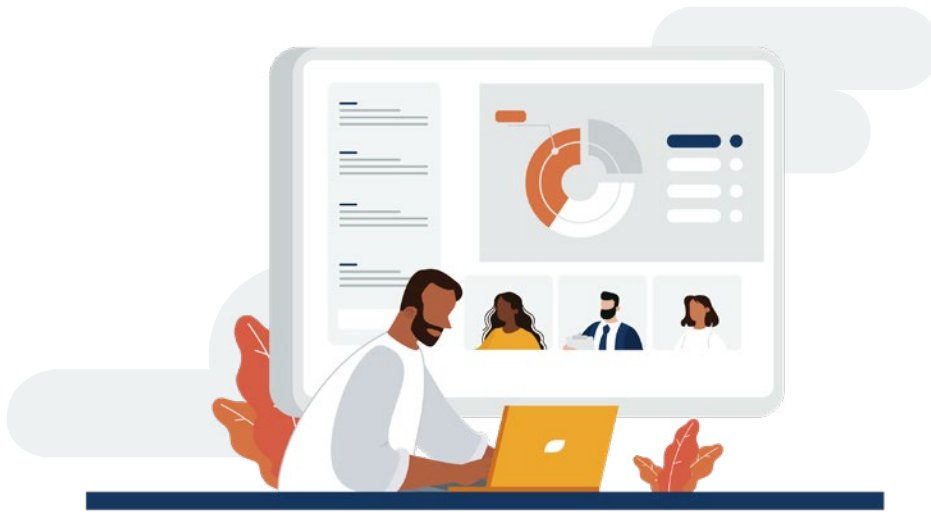
Given that people will have around two years' worth of experience getting everything they need digitally and virtually,

classroom programs must step up their engagement. Ensure there are plenty of opportunities to collaborate and share. It is difficult for large groups to discuss anything in depth in a virtual environment. Audio limitations mean that people cannot hear each other and there is a lot of starting and stopping with “no, you go first” or “you’re on mute.” Chat features are a good alternative but it can be difficult to keep up with a lively discussion. Text communication also falls short without facial expressions and tone. This is the reason in-person training remains so critical to many organizations. It is important to remove anything superfluous in the

class that will get in the way of collaboration.

At the same time, it is important to keep attention spans in mind. In a remote environment, people have been able to pick and choose what and when they pay attention to. If we are asking them to be engaged for large chunks of time, we’d better deliver. It might require limiting classes to 45 minutes. This limit can help your learners become more motivated and focused during class activities and discussions. If you need more time, consider multiple sessions with breaks.





Technology Is the Classroom's Best Friend

The discussion about in-person learning and digital learning should not be a zero-sum, one-or-the-other proposition. If anything, it is technology that will ensure the classroom of the future is successful. Facilitators can create a narrative for each class using polls, videos, questions and other tools. These interactions can be used to break up the classroom time and keep learners engaged and energized.

Promoting peer interaction could strengthen your

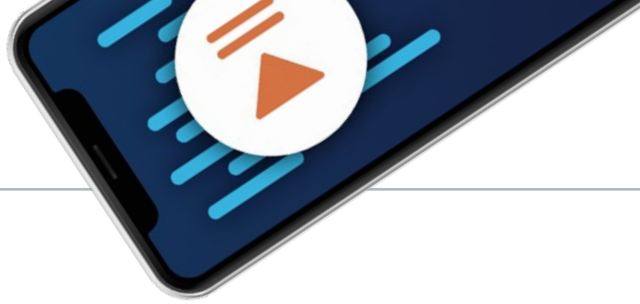
learning community. For instance, one option is to organize a live session where instructors encourage debate and respond to questions. Prepare some guiding questions, launch a challenge to be solved or a project and ask your learners to tackle it. Consider assigning duos or small groups before the live session.

Think Beyond the Classroom

Since learning is not a passive event, it shouldn't end when the class does. Design and plan for human interaction outside of class

to reinforce the learning and foster knowledge exchange. Keep in mind that peer-to-peer learning helps learners review concepts from the class while enhancing their communication and critical thinking skills as well as teamwork.

Asynchronous communication tools, such as online chat channels, message boards and discussion groups, allow for communication anytime, anywhere. They can help build and sustain the learning community by keeping learners engaged while increasing collaboration through discussion and peer-to-peer interaction. Communication tools also keep instructors and facilitators in direct contact with learners outside the classroom. Facilitators can contribute to and monitor multiple conversations, whether they are one-to-one, one-to-many or many-to-many. This is also a great source of course feedback.



Haylee Metzner

Sr. HR Program Specialist II
Talent & Leadership Development
Synopsis

“The future of in-person learning in a post-pandemic world looks different than before.”

“The flexibility we have found in learning both asynchronously and virtually is a benefit that many will be unwilling to compromise on. Rather, just as we’ve done with our communications channels, our learning channels will diversify to become even more complex with a variety of options to suit each individual’s taste. In a pre-pandemic world, the answer to many of our learning initiatives was to pull folks together into one classroom, in one time zone, in one language. This is no longer a comfortable reality for many of our organizations

and individuals. The future of in-person learning as part of a learning ecosystem will resemble that of all-purpose flour in a baker’s kitchen — while it may have once been the best tool available for every job, through research and innovation it has become specialized — to be used for specific outcomes in which no other available option will suffice. In-person learning can create relationships, breed innovation, unearth diverse ideas and build trust, but the cumulative cost will encourage many to strive for these same outcomes in new ways.”



REIMAGINING IN-PERSON LEARNING POST-PANDEMIC



“We have an audience chomping at the bit to get together in person again, but at the same time, they are also struggling with concerns over their families’ health, disrupted child care and schooling, and more.”



Betsy Kvedar, CPTD
IBM Z Sales Enablement
IBM Systems

“The pandemic has forced us to break down both our assumptions and tasks to a component level to redefine the outcomes needed for moving forward on a learning program. This has not only enabled us to continue meeting organizational expectations, but it also allows us to bring a new level of thoughtfulness to the learning activities that we deliver. To minimize fatigue with virtual engagement, there is a lot of attention

given to optimize the message and delivery for easy consumption. It is my belief that when we return to in-person learning, this is a practice that we will continue to apply. Classes and events may be shorter in duration, with more online or asynchronous components that enable participants to connect with one and other. But there will also be opportunities to complete selected tasks on their own.”



REIMAGINING IN-PERSON LEARNING POST-PANDEMIC



Brandon Hall Group
**EXCELLENCE
AWARDS 2022**

THE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

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Employers Will Embrace Universal Leadership Models

More than half of employers (56%) cannot agree on how their leaders should think and act, according to Brandon Hall Group research. This means different values and principles are often taught at various levels or parts of the organization. As team-driven, collaborative and inclusive leadership increases, competing leadership models create confusion and are not scalable. Two-thirds of organizations say they must refine or redesign their leadership models. This should happen relatively quickly as employers realize they must develop leaders at all levels at scale if they want to thrive.

Digital Coaches and Mentors for Leaders Will Become the Norm

More than 80% of organizations believe coaching and mentoring their leaders is critical, according to Brandon Hall Group research. Meanwhile, more tech providers are releasing digital coaching and mentoring platforms with increased customization options to leverage internal and external coaches and mentors. As employers continue to move away from event-driven leader training, they will realize that this digital approach to coaching and mentoring is a strategic, scalable way to personalize leader development and build a culture of continuous leader learning.

CHAPTER 3:

REINVENT LEADER DEVELOPMENT FOR THE MODERN WORKFORCE

Develop Diverse, Inclusive Leaders at All Levels
through Continuous, Personalized, Practical Learning

Leader Development Will Enter the Metaverse

Employers increasingly realize that the best way to understand their leaders' potential is by putting them in real situations they must navigate in future roles. Leading organizations already leverage sophisticated digital simulations. The metaverse — immersive 3D digital worlds based on virtual reality gaming experiences — is a logical evolutionary step. Through the metaverse, simulations can be more specific and realistic, incorporating more personas, body language and other variables that can make simulations more nuanced and realistic than ever.

Employers Will Rethink Leader Priorities

Leaders struggle to make time for self-reflection and learning because of the daily demands of their jobs. At the same time, employers complain that leaders don't spend enough time developing their teams. Something must give. This year, we saw Excellence Award-winning organizations automate some administrative responsibilities or redesign manager positions to move administrative and rote responsibilities to lower-level roles, allowing leaders to spend more time with their teams. We believe more organizations will redesign leadership roles to enable their leaders to better collaborate with and motivate their teams.



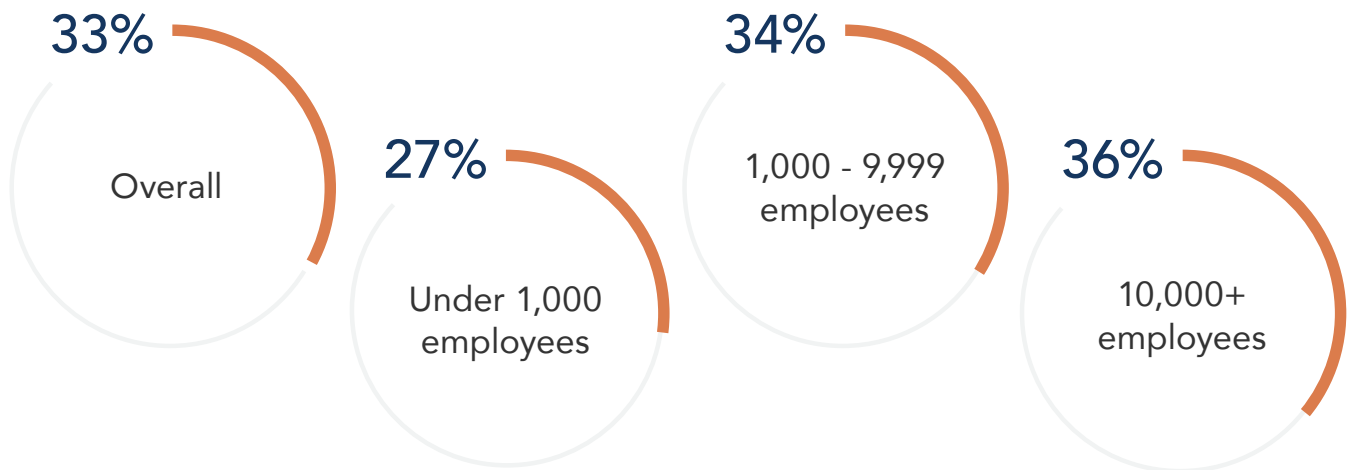
PREDICTIONS



Leader development needs reinvention.

Year after year, leadership development budgets increase, but the impact of the training on the business remains stagnant or decreases because most organizations emphasize event-based learning with little reinforcement, inclusion or practical application. Significant change is needed for leadership development to improve.

Effectiveness of Efforts to Develop Great Leaders

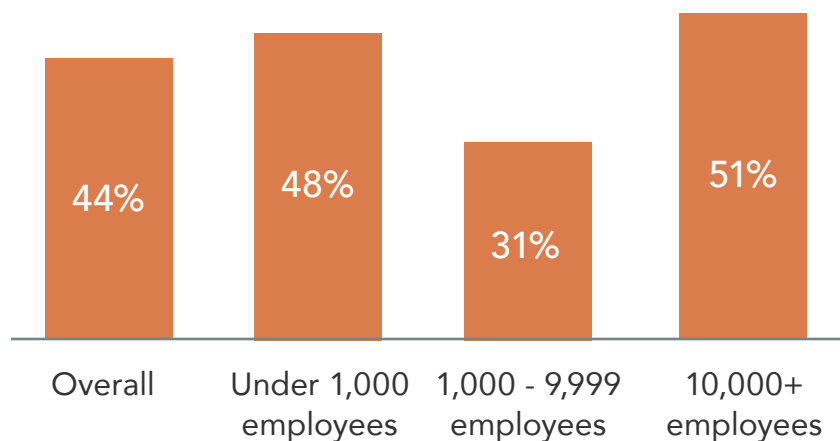


Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Great Leaders: How Do We Develop More?

In today's multicultural and multigenerational workforces, inclusion and collaboration are critical for leadership success.

Most employers (76%) are receptive to improving the level of inclusion and inclusive leadership in their organizations and 56% rate it as important, according to Brandon Hall Group research. But less than half of companies are having success in effectively training leaders to demonstrate inclusive leadership.

Organizations Demonstrating Inclusive Leader Behaviors to a High Degree



Rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How to Develop Inclusive Leaders: An Inside Look



The need for better leadership is so acute that 10 Leadership Development topics were rated as important or critical by at least

70%
of organizations

responding to our research.

Most Important Leadership Development Topics

Team leadership



Communication



Strategic planning/critical thinking/problem-solving



Crucial conversations



Emotional intelligence



Change management



Developing high-potential employees



Managing a remote team



Embracing cultural diversity



Managing a crisis



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Do We Improve Leader Training?

BRANDON HALL GROUP CERTIFICATIONS



Brandon Hall Group professional certifications are comprehensive educational programs centered around a multiphase knowledge test. The exams aren't about memorization and theory but developing new competencies and skills that can be applied in your organization right away.

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Certified Human Resources Strategist (CHRS)



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Certified Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Champion (CDEIC)



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Leadership in this era is more about collaboration, enablement and inclusion than directing or controlling. But a majority of organizations lack widespread agreement on the critical attributes and competencies of great leaders and how to develop them. That makes great leadership development experiences difficult.

The principles and behaviors needed for successful leadership in this evolving era are not intuitive to many leaders. They take practice — often a lot of practice. And for the most part, organizations don't give leaders the time they need to develop.

Top Challenges in Developing Leaders' Skills

69%

"Little or no time to learn and improve myself"

68%

"Making myself a priority"

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Do We Improve Leader Training?

If employers want leadership to improve, they must give leaders time for development. That includes providing experiences — through online exercises or live or online simulations, either individually or with cohorts — that allow them to apply what they have learned and practice new behaviors. Leaders, and prospective leaders, must be put in situations that they may face in future roles. How else can one evaluate their potential for success?

Level of Importance in Types of Leadership Training

More focus on practical skills needed for future roles



Dedicated sessions to help new leaders or leaders new to a role



Availability of self-assessment tool



Working sessions with peers to discuss their experiences and how they resolve situations



Rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Do We Improve Leader Training?

It is important to drill down to "moments" that are most critical for leader roles at various levels. These could include, for example, seeing how leaders handle:

- > A star performer wanting to leave
- > An overextended team member who needs help
- > Giving and receiving feedback
- > Managing fallout from unexpected layoffs
- > Managing the disruption of a merger or acquisition



**More than
80%**

of research respondents
said leadership
development should:

- Focus more on practical skills needed for current and future roles.
- Provide more help in transitioning leaders to new roles.
- Be more personalized and continuous.

That is an indictment of traditional leadership development. Leaders go through training but don't believe they can apply what they learn nor believe they have support after training to adjust to new or different roles. That should sound the alarm bells for change.

When asked what could be improved in leadership development, the three top answers overall were:



Add or increase coaching and mentoring for leaders.



Add or increase peer group collaboration.



Increase applicability of training to real-world scenarios.



CRITICAL QUESTIONS

As we all grapple with how to thrive in the new and evolving world of work, now is the perfect time to shed the legacy of ineffective leadership development.

Some critical questions for organizations to answer:

- › What are the major business and organizational challenges we face?
- › What are the values and behaviors our leaders should represent and model to conquer our challenges?
- › What are the barriers that impede great leadership in our organization?
- › How can we diversify our leadership group to better represent our workforce and customers?
- › How do we build a culture of inclusive leadership where leaders at all levels have the interest and ability to truly tap into the talents and motivations of their teams to collaborate, empower and inspire rather than wielding authority?
- › How do we better prepare our current and future leaders to drive our success?



Adopt One Model for How All Leaders Think and Act

From the front lines to the C-Suite, leaders should live by the same values and principles. Employers must have one consistent leadership model throughout the organization. The level of understanding and demonstrated competency can vary by leader level, but the principles should remain consistent. But that is not the case in the majority of organizations.

*BRANDON HALL
GROUP POV*

Organizations with Widespread Agreement on What Makes Great Leaders



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Great Leaders: How Do We Develop More?

We believe this must change. With a universal model, if someone is hired into a leader role or promoted from one role to another, they will learn — and lead by — the same principles. That is critical

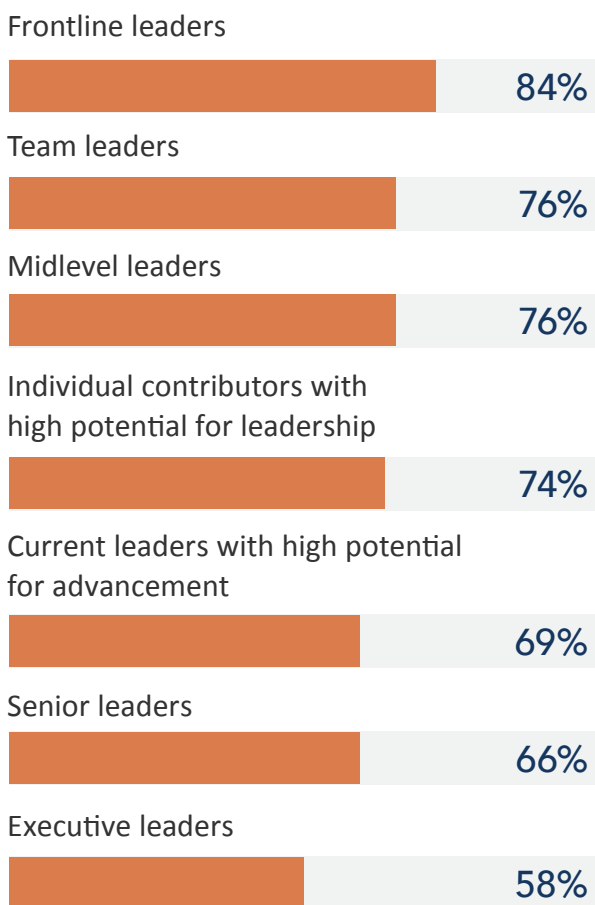
for leaders — and for the people they lead — because they know what to expect. Consistency in principles and execution drives trust in leaders and the organization.

Empower All Employees to be Leaders

From the moment employees enter the organization, they should be taught and coached on how to lead and collaborate in work teams. In today's world, an employee could be a leader in one team based on unique capabilities and experience, and a collaborator in others. They must understand team dynamics and the different roles in high-performing teams and be agile enough to change roles as needed. That is another reason why there should be one leadership model for the entire organization — roles may change, but basic values and principles must be consistent across different situations.

Most organizations are realizing that leadership development must be democratized:

High Priority* for Developing Leaders

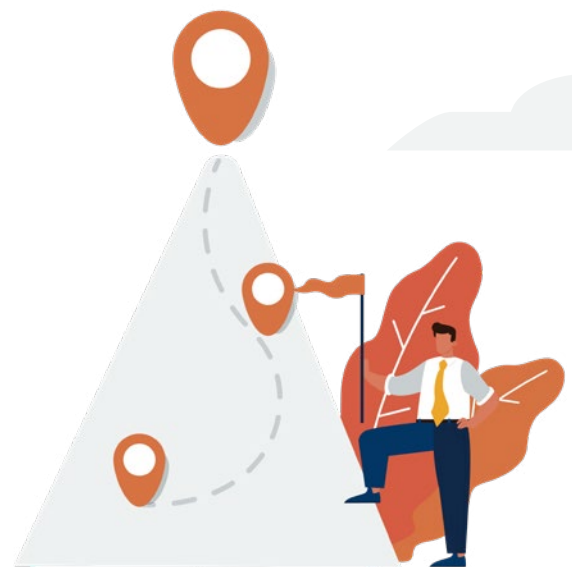


**Rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale*
Source: Brandon Hall Group Impact of Leadership Development Study

This is not a simple process. First, there is the matter of scale. Event-driven learning is not feasible. One-size-fits-all learning is also unfeasible.

Some employees are more suited to leadership than others, so different types of leadership must be identified. Some may be suited for supervisory leadership, others for team leadership, thought leadership, logistics leadership and so on.

Performance is a default indicator of potential for leadership in many organizations, but research has shown that performance is not a good indicator of potential. Assessment — both formal and informal — is underutilized for understanding employees' strengths and areas of development. Potential should be evaluated based on capabilities, aspirations and the level of engagement.



Most Important* Actions for Identifying High Potential for Leadership



**Important = Rating of 4 or 5 on 5-point scale*
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Great Leaders: How Do We Develop More?

Develop a Culture of Continuous Leader Learning

Too many organizations still do most leadership training in classrooms, with varying degrees of reinforcement. Coaching and mentoring, peer-to-peer learning, scenario-based exercises and other types of experiential learning are important to enable leaders to build an understanding of leadership over time. Our latest research shows the types of leadership development that organizations believe are most important.

Most Important* Strategies to Improve Leader Training

Coaching leaders



Creating continuous learning paths



Mentoring leaders



Enabling peer-to-peer discussions to share challenges, experiences



Measurement of impact of leader training on desired business outcomes



Balancing development of business savvy and people/culture skills



Empower leaders to take time for self-reflection and self-improvement as part of their jobs



Offering immersive learning by doing



**Important = Rating of 4 or 5 on 5-point scale*
 Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Great Leaders: How Do We Develop More?

Most employers have the best intentions with leader development. But too often, the day-to-day demands of work get in the way of employees focusing on their development. Employers who are serious about developing great leaders should include self-development in employees' job responsibilities. Making learning part of their jobs will give you a better chance of getting employees to embark on a journey of continuous learning toward great leadership.

New skills often require unlearning one set of behaviors before replacing them with new ones. That takes practice, ideally in a safe environment where mistakes lack real-world consequences. Trial-and-error is a big part of learning, so employers need to enable it.



Most Important* Leadership Development Approaches

85%

Scenarios to practice leadership skills, with guided working cases to practice and real-time feedback from a coach

85%

More focus on practical skills needed for future roles

82%

Dedicated sessions to help leaders who are new to a role

74%

Working sessions with peers to discuss their experiences and how to resolve situations

73%

1:1 coaching with some facilitated small-group discussions

**Important = Rating of 4 or 5 on 5-point scale*

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Great Leaders: How Do We Develop More?

Focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Leaders must reflect the diversity of the workforce and customer base and be inclusive and collaborative in their style of leadership. Most organizations have work to do on both fronts.

Half of organizations have less than 30% of their senior leaders (VP and above) from diverse groups (women, people of color, people with disabilities,

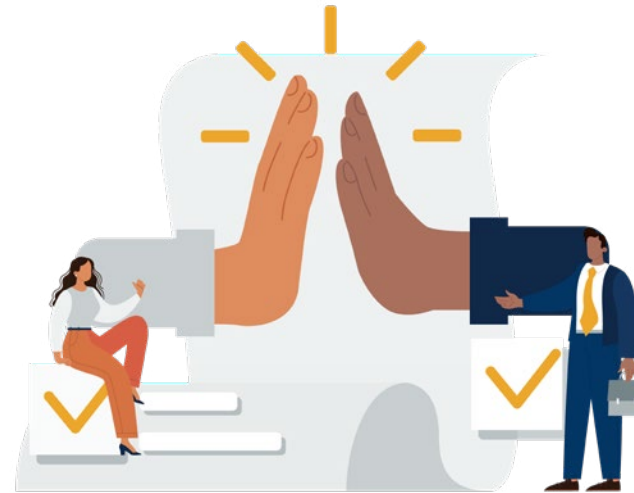
LGBTQ+). There is more diversity in frontline and midlevel leadership positions, but then the representation falls off a cliff.

Many executives pay lip service to supporting diversity, equity and inclusion, but less than 25% of organizations use executive sponsorship or executive mentoring to

develop high-potential women, people of color, people with disabilities or the LGBTQ+ population. Only about 40% of organizations have specific “owners” of targeted development efforts for people of diversity. When no one has accountability for an initiative, it’s less effective.

Thriving in a fluctuating and hybrid work environment means organizations must leverage all the talent they have. That means taking steps to include underrepresented groups, and leveraging all the capabilities of the entire workforce.

Reaching out to employees at all levels and involving them in making work the best it can be, helps drive business results while also driving engagement and talent retention. All employees want to feel valued and inclusion drives their sense of belonging.



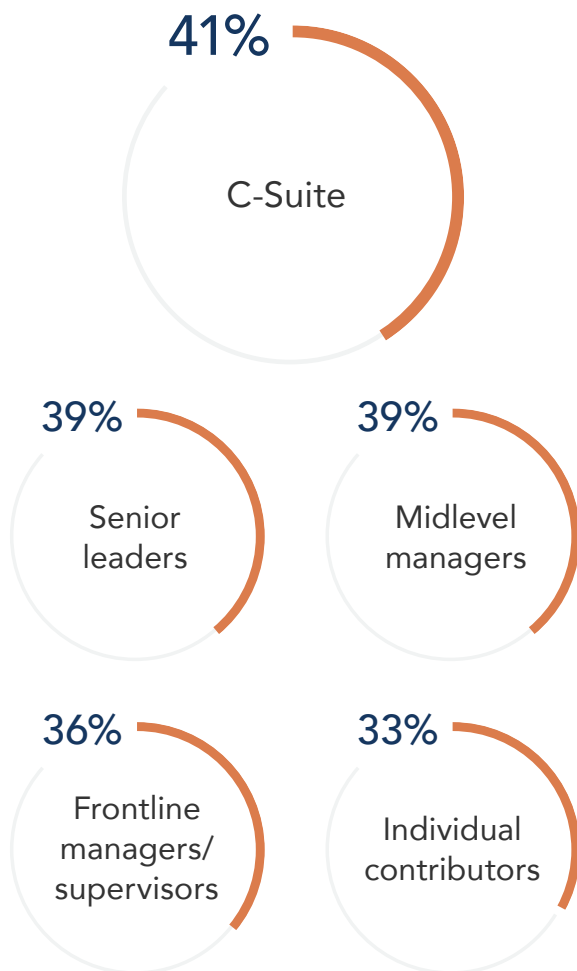
Key Inclusive Leader Traits

Unconscious-bias awareness	Authenticity	Empathy
Collaboration	Self-awareness	Learning-focused
Action-oriented	Accountable	Courage
Adaptability	Emotional Intelligence	Cultural Intelligence

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How to Develop Inclusive Leaders: An Inside Look

In many organizations, this type of inclusive leadership would mean wholesale culture change. Not everything can be done at once, however, so we recommend prioritizing frontline and midlevel leaders, who have the most contact with the employee base.

Current State of Inclusive Leader Training at Different Levels



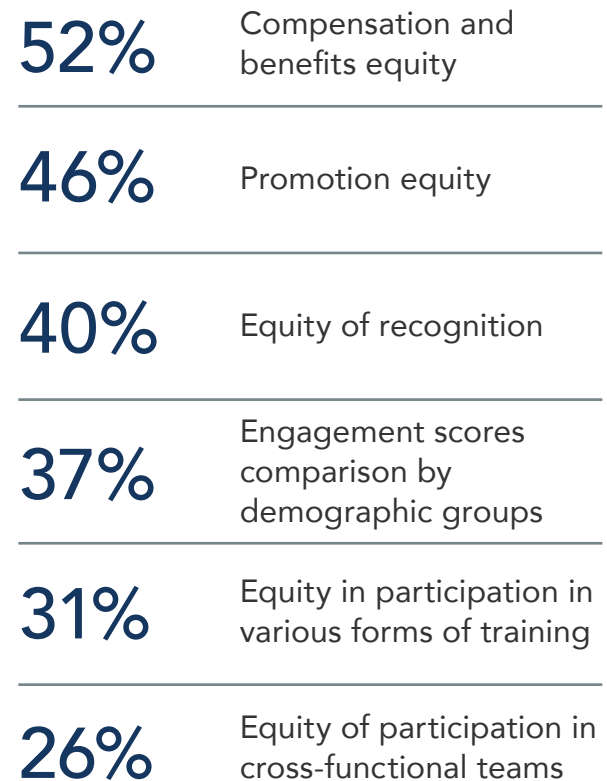
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How to Develop Inclusive Leaders: An Inside Look

When evaluating inclusive leadership and the level of inclusion, it is important to try to see what employees experience in the organization through their eyes. Our research shows that most leaders believe their organization

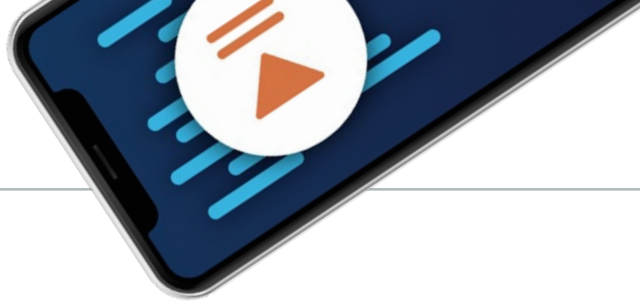
is inclusive without understanding that messaging and management actions may send a different message to employees than what was intended.

Inclusion takes many forms — career opportunities, learning opportunities, compensation, recognition and performance ratings, to name just a few. As organizations work to lead inclusively, they must use specific business metrics to measure progress.

Use of Metrics to Evaluate Inclusion



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How to Develop Inclusive Leaders: An Inside Look



Christine Noffz

Co-founder
Coaching and a
Leadership Coach
BenchStrength

**“Organizations
must learn to
communicate
differently.”**

“Men don’t ask questions; women do. Sometimes this approach can reflect poorly on women and their ability to do a job or grow to the next level of leadership. On the flip side, it creates an environment of collaboration and discussion because two heads are better than one. Taking that perspective, organizations need to be taught how to communicate differently as men and women work together.”



Kim Forseille

Assistant Vice President,
Learning & Development
Canadian Western Bank

**“Contextualized,
continuous
learning is
critical.”**

“Leadership learning has gone from a 12- to 16-hour in-class program to continuous, contextualized learning. We give leaders real-time problems to address, such as identifying a difficult conversation that is needed now but they have been avoiding. We coach them and discuss how to handle these conversations, have them do it and then they report back to us. We discuss each situation and discuss what went well and what could improve.”



**REINVENT LEADER DEVELOPMENT
FOR THE MODERN WORKFORCE**

Learning Will be an Agent of Change for the Business

The pandemic completely shattered what it means to be “change-ready.” As companies respond to changing markets with new practices, processes and technologies, L&D must be on the forefront of those changes. Without the L&D function as a strategic partner to the business, skills gaps will remain and digital transformation will be stunted. Organizations without a strong learning culture will still be recovering from the current upheaval when the next one approaches.

Agility Will Become a Core Characteristic for Learning

Learning cannot assist the business with drastic and ongoing change unless the function itself changes. The design, delivery and measurement models of the past will reveal their age as organizations lean heavily on L&D to keep them prepared for the future of work. Agility will become a critical facet for every aspect of L&D: strategy, content, technology, team members, etc. Without it, skills gaps will widen and organizations will lose their competitive advantage.

Learning’s Stature in the Business Will Continue to Rise

The pandemic showed many organizations how critical L&D is to the business. The need to reskill and upskill quickly, along with the demands of a newly remote workforce, meant that companies had to rely on L&D to solve new and immediate challenges. This provided an opportunity to build deeper relationships with business stakeholders and become a more strategic partner to the business. It is up to L&D to leverage this new position wisely.

CHAPTER 4:

LEARNING STRATEGIES TO MAKE ORGANIZATIONS CHANGE-READY

L&D Should Not Simply React but Must Become an Agent of Change for the Business

The Focus Will Shift from Specific Skills to Skills Frameworks

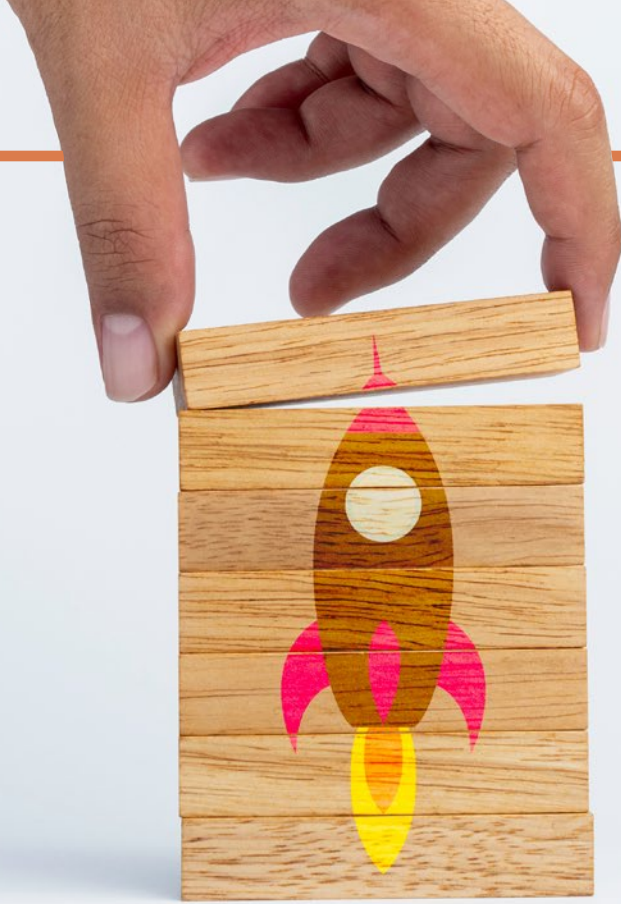
Rather than spending huge amounts of time and effort building a skills and competencies inventory, companies will focus more on the mechanisms that allow them to develop those skills. Organizations spent too much time trying to source definitive skills lists that they can work from, only to receive an incomplete list or see the skills they've identified change or go away altogether. Companies will recognize the need to focus on a smaller set of core skills while building frameworks, processes and tools that make it much easier to develop new skills as their need becomes apparent. This will keep companies from depending on skill snapshots that only represent a mere moment in time.

Companies Will Finally Understand the Needs of Their Learners

The promise of personalized and contextual learning has been growing for years. It is time organizations finally abandon the one-size-all approach. Technology has come to a place where leveraging everything we can know about learners, including what, when and how they learn takes no more effort than building large, generic programs — except the results are far better.



PREDICTIONS



The
FUTURE
of **WORK**
is never **FAR** away.

Organizations like to think they are preparing for the future but imagine it is some distant state they may never reach.

CURRENT
STATE

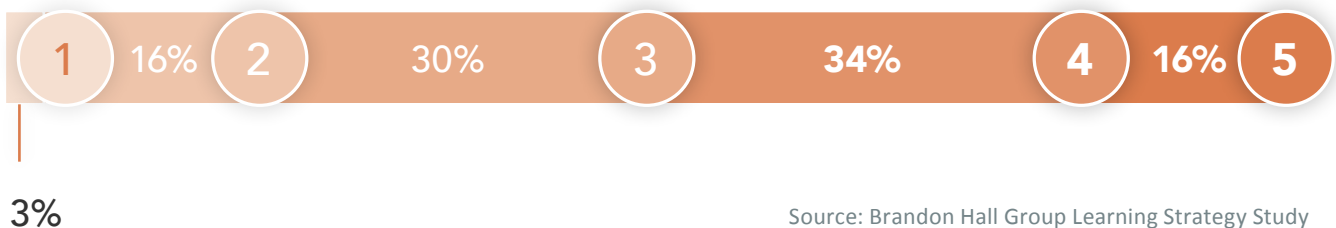
Perhaps the most universal and impactful business consequence of the pandemic is the redefinition of the word “change” that companies had to come to grips with. Most were simply unprepared for the speed and the scale things changed in 2020. And it may only be the beginning.

An expanding remote workforce, automation, artificial intelligence, machine learning and many other factors are converging to make the next few years the most volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous time ever for business. Organizations cannot hope to simply hire their way through these changes. Learning must take center stage in growing the skills and competencies the business requires to navigate the future.



Brandon Hall Group research finds that just **55% of companies** consider themselves change-ready and fewer believe their approach to learning is well-positioning them to meet the challenges the future will bring.

On a scale of 1 to 5,
to what extent do you feel that your approach to learning at this time is positioning you well to meet future-of-work requirements?



Source: Brandon Hall Group Learning Strategy Study



We know what we have to do in the short term,
but it's **challenging** to know if what
works today will work tomorrow.

The environment in which organizations are currently operating is quite complex, so it is a given that developing the necessary resilience and adaptability is full of challenges.

Even in companies where the vision and mission of the learning strategy are focused on change and the future of work, the L&D team often doesn't have the kind of relationship with business leaders that is required.

This is reflected in the depth and quality of the L&D strategy. Only half of companies say their strategy strongly includes input from business stakeholders. Even fewer say that it is well-aligned with business objectives.

To what degree do each of the following apply to your organization's current learning strategy?



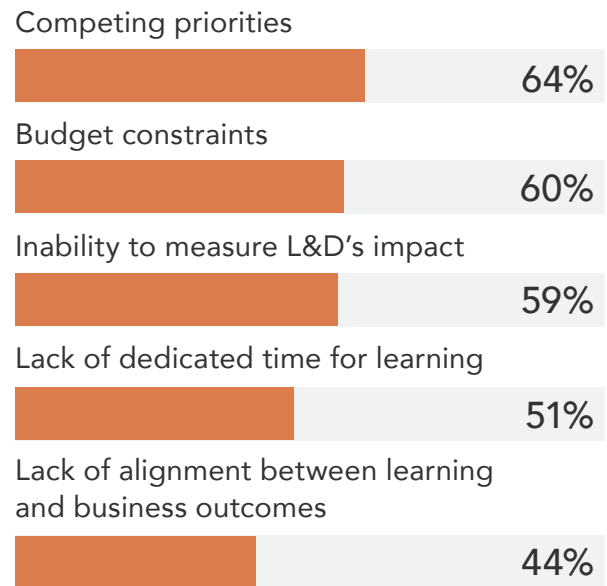
1 = Not at all; 5 = Completely

Source: Brandon Hall Group Learning Strategy Study

Without this input and alignment, L&D can never hope to keep up with the business as it changes, let alone lead the charge. Additionally, L&D teams acutely felt the pressures the pandemic placed on

organizations. Brandon Hall Group's 2021 *State of Learning Practices Study* found that 70% of L&D teams faced a reduction in workforce, a reduction in budget, a restructuring or some combination of the three. The need to do more with less has rarely been as critical. As a result, we see competing priorities and budgetary constraints topping the list of challenges to the execution of the learning strategy.

Which of the following do you see as challenges to executing your organization's learning strategy?



Source: Brandon Hall Group Learning Strategy Study



The challenges Learning & Development teams face have real implications for the business.

When asked how important business leaders consider learning is to the success of the business,



of companies

say the answer is either important or critical.

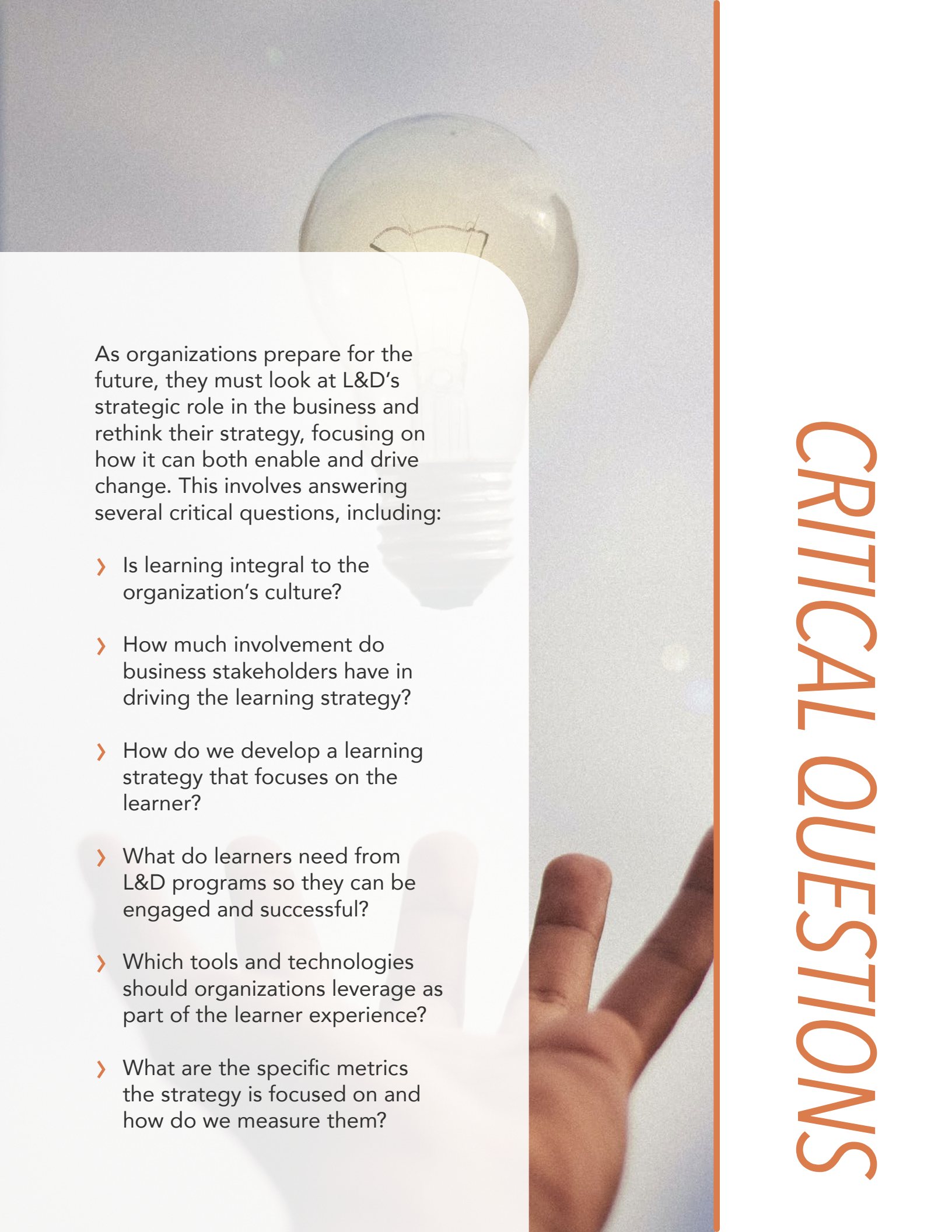
4-5



However, when asked if the organization is learning-focused, **fewer than half** rate themselves a 4 or 5.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Learning Strategy Study

L&D must find a way to close the gap between its importance to the business and its integration into the organization's culture. Fewer than 30% of companies say their current approach to learning is having a strong, positive impact on the organization's ability to respond to market conditions and competition. This is primarily due to learning being viewed as an HR issue, something separate from the job and not a strategic business process.

A hand is shown from the bottom right, holding a glowing yellow lightbulb. The background is a soft, light blue gradient. The lightbulb is the central focus, with its glow illuminating the surrounding area. The hand is positioned as if presenting the lightbulb.

As organizations prepare for the future, they must look at L&D's strategic role in the business and rethink their strategy, focusing on how it can both enable and drive change. This involves answering several critical questions, including:

- › Is learning integral to the organization's culture?
- › How much involvement do business stakeholders have in driving the learning strategy?
- › How do we develop a learning strategy that focuses on the learner?
- › What do learners need from L&D programs so they can be engaged and successful?
- › Which tools and technologies should organizations leverage as part of the learner experience?
- › What are the specific metrics the strategy is focused on and how do we measure them?

CRITICAL QUESTIONS



If organizations want to put their workforce in a position to win, they must help them learn more and at a faster pace. Organizations should begin now to create a learning strategy that ensures an agile, flexible and adaptive workforce with the skills to make the business successful. Learning is the catalyst for talent to take on the future of work with confidence.

BRANDON HALL

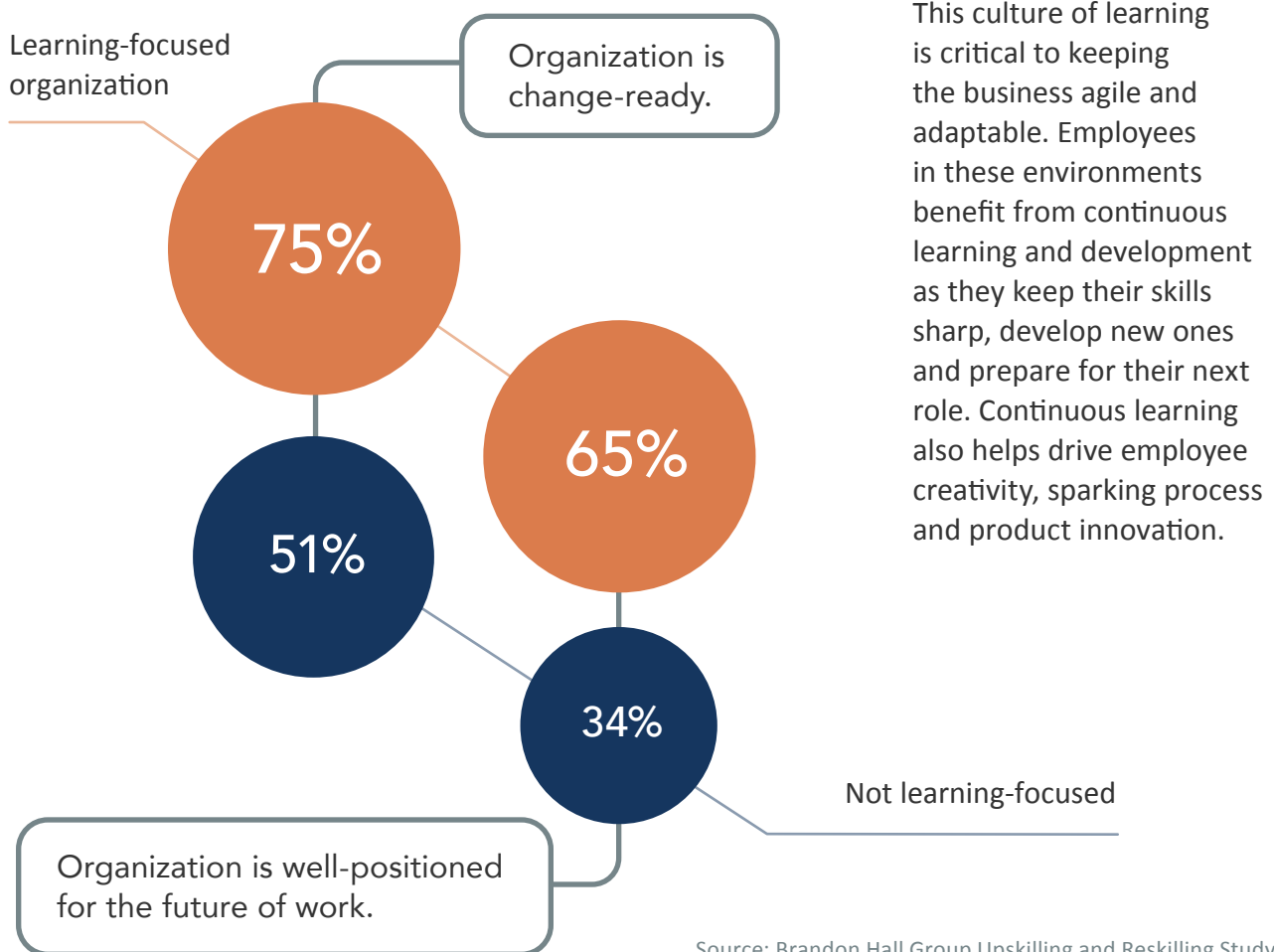
74

GROUP POV

It starts with a strong yet agile learning strategy that defines a framework for success, how to deliver it and how to measure it. This establishes the foundation that enables the L&D function, its people and its technology to adapt and evolve with changing business needs while developing a workforce that also evolves and adapts.

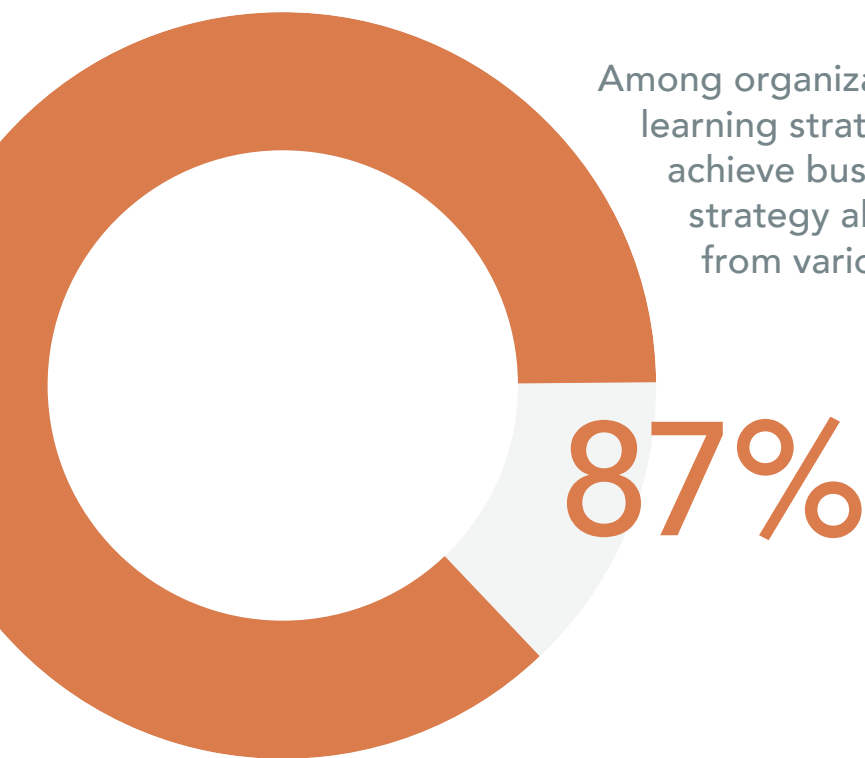
Build and Strengthen a Culture of Learning

When organizations are “learning-focused” (learning is integral to the culture), they are much better prepared to handle whatever the future may bring. Brandon Hall Group’s *Upskilling and Reskilling Study* found that companies that identify as learning-focused not only are more likely to say they are change-ready, but they also say they are better positioned for the future of work.

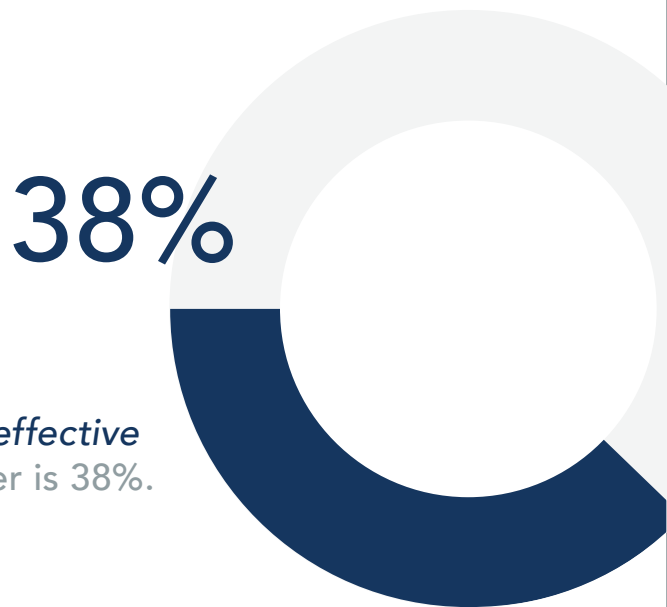


Include Key Business Leaders and Stakeholders in Developing the Strategy

Without involvement from key stakeholders, the learning strategy has very little hope of aligning with the business. It is these business leaders who know what they need from the workforce to meet their goals. By working together, the L&D function can develop goals that match business goals and layout for the business how learning can help them.



Among organizations that say their learning strategy is *effective* at helping achieve business goals, 87% say the strategy absolutely includes input from various business stakeholders.



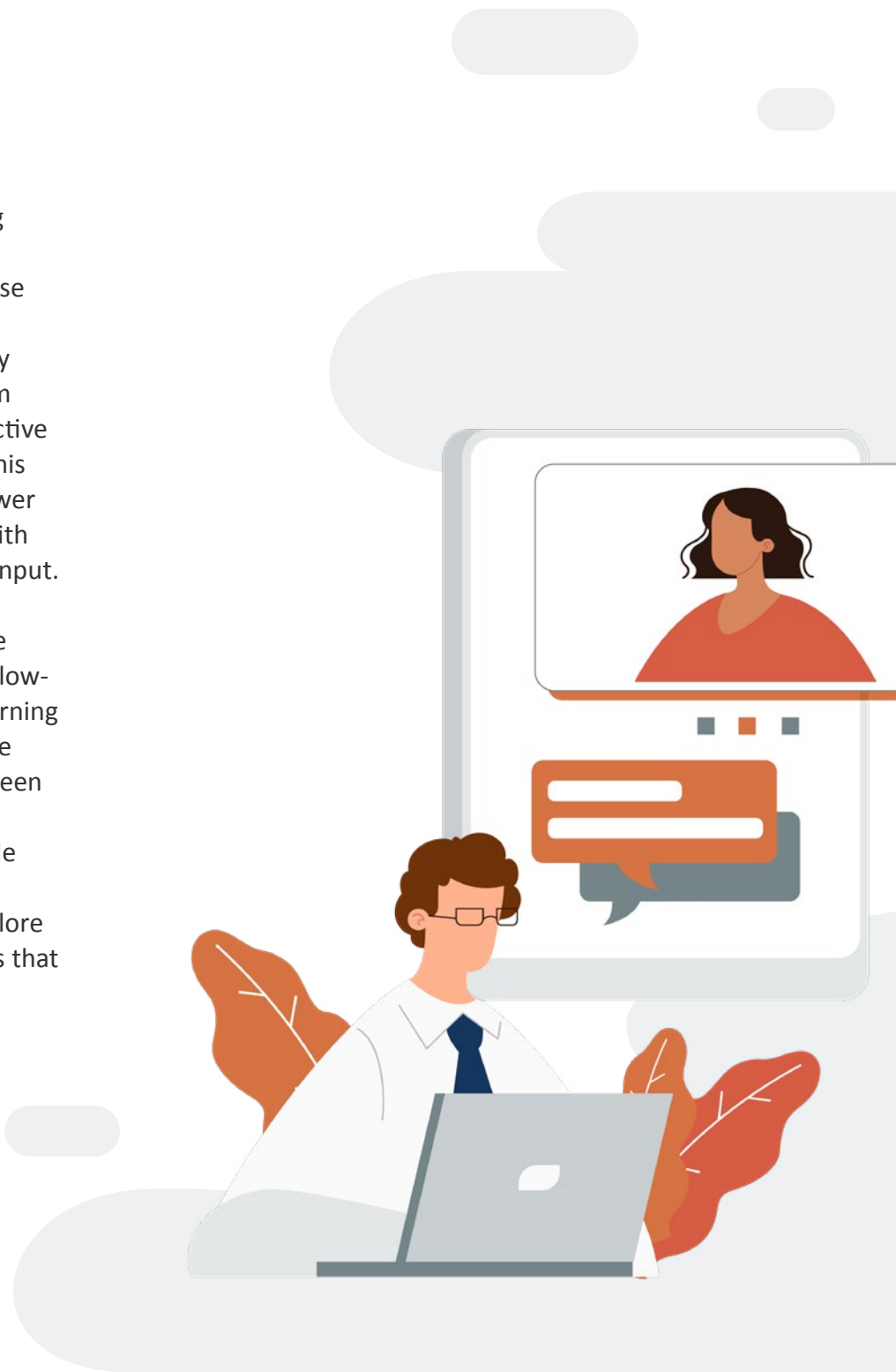
For those with an *ineffective* strategy, that number is 38%.

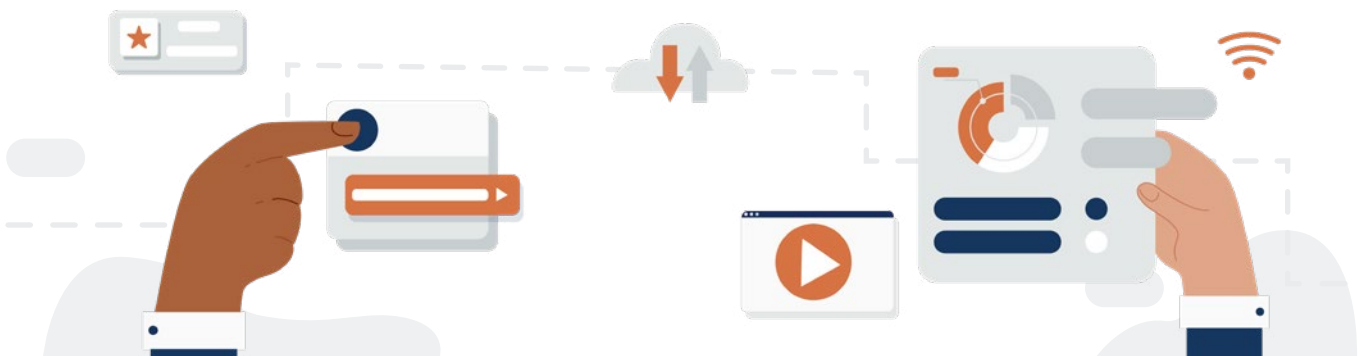
Companies where the learning strategy is well-aligned with business and learner objectives are more than twice as likely to say their learning approach is having a strong, positive effect on the proliferation of innovation. This is critical for future success.

Focus on the Learner Experience as the Expression of the Learning Strategy

Companies with successful learning strategies put the learner at the center. Eighty-seven percent of these companies say their strategy aligns with learner objectives and 80% say the strategy includes feedback from learners. Companies with less-effective strategies are more likely to omit this kind of attention to the learner. Fewer than one-third align the strategy with learner objectives or include their input.

Additionally, the learner experience itself is lacking for companies with low-performing strategies. Effective learning strategies create experiences where learners are aware of the link between learning and their objectives. They are also much more likely to provide a contextual, personalized learning experience where learners can explore and discover learning opportunities that are relevant to them.





Lay Out a Technology Road Map that Will Allow You to Execute the Strategy and Adapt

Creating the right learner experience not only requires the right strategy but also the right technology to make it a reality. The kind of highly blended, contextual and accessible experiences that are effective need a great deal of thought when it comes to technology. A single LMS may not be enough. With an ecosystem that increasingly includes more video, microlearning, simulations and other interactions outside of

the class and course, companies must be prepared to do robust due diligence on their technology selections.

Develop a Framework for Measuring Success

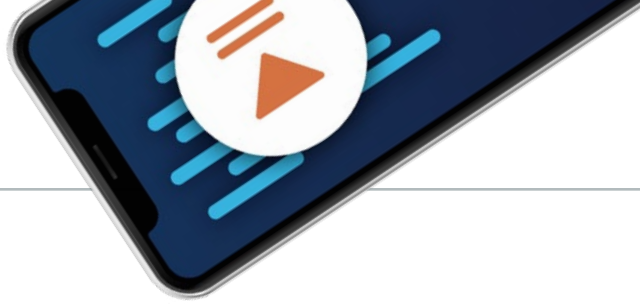
Companies have traditionally struggled with meaningful learning measurement. To fine-tune the strategy and unleash its potential, organizations must be able to measure and analyze learning's impact on real outcomes. Completions and smile sheets are not enough. A strong measurement

framework with defined, measurable metrics built into the strategy is required. Key business stakeholders can help determine these metrics from the view of the business and L&D leaders can tie them to learning outcomes. Proper measurement can demonstrate learning's real value, identify successful (or not) programs and give L&D a solid foundation upon which to build. An inability to effectively measure learning's impact is one of the biggest challenges to its success. Without proper measurement, L&D has no guidance on how to adapt and evolve programs to meet changing business needs.



Determine Whether L&D Has the Right Skill Set to be Successful in the Future

The modern learning ecosystem requires a wider variety of skills to be successful and many have not traditionally been available to L&D. Beyond instructional designers and admins, L&D functions increasingly need access to skills such as web design, user-experience design, mobile development and data analytics. Companies with effective learning strategies are more than twice as likely to have these roles within the L&D function.



Scott A. Miller

Enterprise Strategic Initiatives Learning
and Change Management Executive
Global Human Resources —
The Academy at Bank of America



Kelly Palmer

Chief Learning & Talent Officer
Degreed

***“Upskilling the workforce
is the most urgent issue
of our time.”***

“As learning professionals, you need to step up to the challenge and be proactive about developing an upskilling strategy in collaboration with your business leaders. You need to be specific about which skills are most important for the future of your business and exactly how your employees are going to build those skills.”

***“Seeking new ways to
evolve corporate education
and development, from
the inside out, is the only
way that we’ll be able to
proactively enable our
businesses to keep pace
with changing needs in the
financial services sector.”***

“The Academy at Bank of America is serving the global organization with an integrated model of onboarding, role-based preparation, coaching, and skills-based development that enables an internal mobility strategy for our teammate life cycles. Bank of America is also adding external partnerships in targeted communities and geographies to help cultivate a prepared corporate workforce to join the workforce with key skills and capabilities for success.”



LEARNING STRATEGIES TO MAKE ORGANIZATIONS CHANGE-READY

EXCELLENCE AT WORK

THE PODCAST



Hosted by

Rachel Cooke

Chief Operating Officer
Principal HCM Analyst

Brandon Hall Group's Excellence at Work podcast focuses on innovative, cutting-edge Business, Learning and HR topics that weave current market research, technology and industry leaders into each episode.

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Team Development Training Will Surge

Three-quarters of organizations accomplish more than half of their work through teams and 86% say that will increase, Brandon Hall Group research shows. At the same time, organizations are losing people to The Great Resignation and struggling to find the right people to replace them. Therefore, collaboration through teams will be essential as organizations seek the right mix of talent to drive business success. However, less than half of organizations say they are effective in leveraging teams. Team development sits toward the top of training priorities and will surge in the years ahead.

Collaboration Capabilities Will Determine Career Growth Potential

As work in teams continues to increase, individual competencies and skills will be less important than team and collaboration capabilities. Already about 40% of organizations include an individual's performance in teams in assessing overall performance, our research shows. That will accelerate as work in teams continues to grow. Employees' ability to collaborate will be the linchpin to business success and the key differentiator as they seek to grow their careers.

CHAPTER 5:

DEVELOP YOUR TEAMS TO THRIVE IN A HYBRID WORLD

High-Performing Teams Are the Future of Work, but the Required Mindset and Behaviors Do Not Come Naturally and Require Heavy Investment in People and Technology

Employers Will Invest Heavily to Optimize Digital Collaboration Technology

Organizations that want to get their hybrid work model right must create world-class digital experiences that enable both in-person and digital collaboration. Investment in collaboration technology, which increased during the pandemic, will accelerate. Eventually this will evolve into use of metaverse technology — immersive 3D digital worlds based on virtual reality gaming experiences — to produce imaginative and creative new ways for people to collaborate and work in teams.

All Employees Will be Empowered to Lead

As work accomplished through teams increases, employers will need more people who can lead all types of teams. Brandon Hall Group research shows that team leadership is the most critical aspect of team development. Because teams comprise a mix of talent best suited for a particular task or project, organizations can't rely just on managers to lead teams. The needs are too many and the required skills and competencies too diverse to rely on so few to lead. Therefore, organizations will continue to democratize leader training and increase the focus on team leadership.



PREDICTIONS

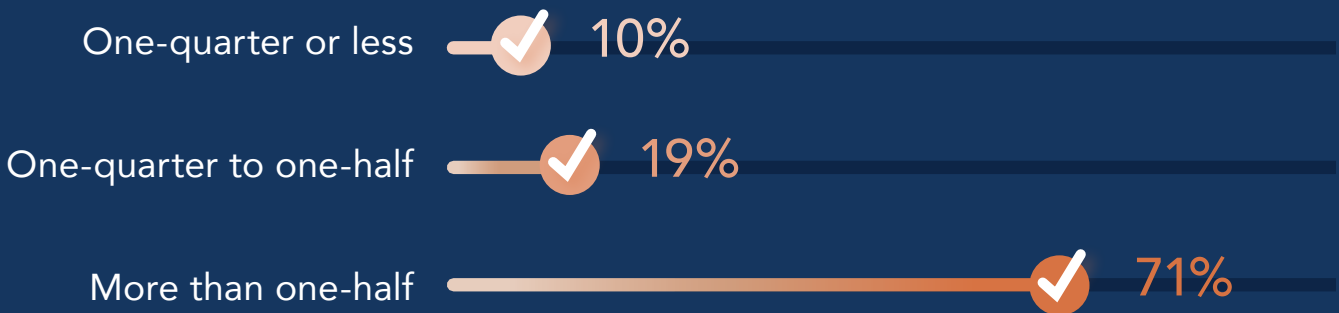


TEAMS ARE THE FUTURE OF WORK.

Hall Group research shows. This is expected to increase in the next two years in 86% of organizations.

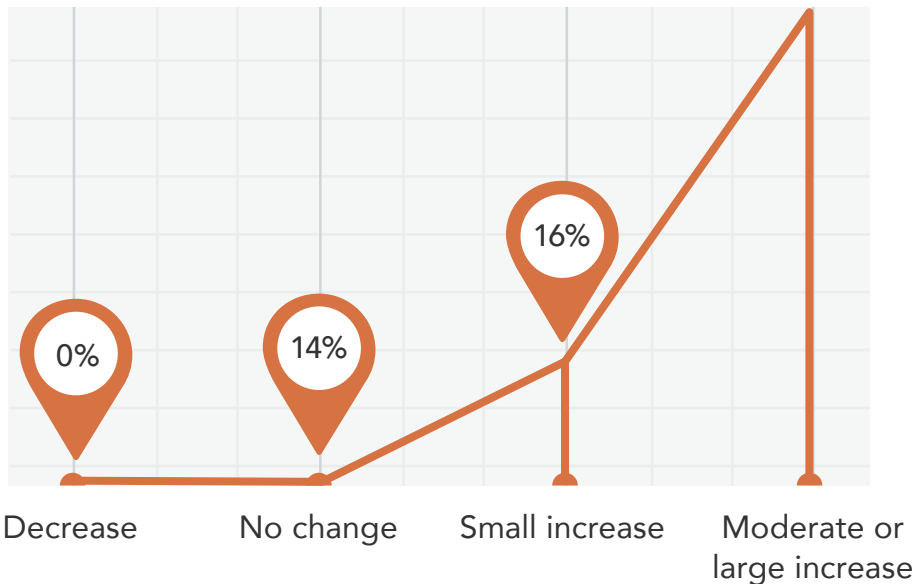
In 71% of organizations, at least half of work is accomplished in some sort of team, Brandon

Amount of Work Accomplished through Teams



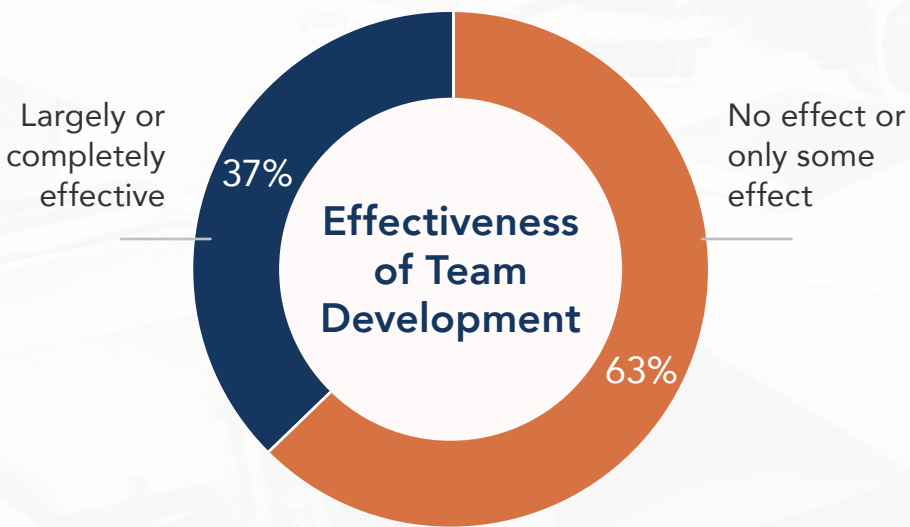
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Build Teams for the Future of Work?

Projected Increase in Work Accomplished through Dynamic Teams in Next 1-2 Years



The impact of COVID-19 also boosted the importance of teams, the research shows, and that naturally increased use of virtual teams. However, only 22% of organizations say team effectiveness improved during the pandemic. Less than four in 10 organizations say team development programs are effective or very effective.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Build Teams for the Future of Work?

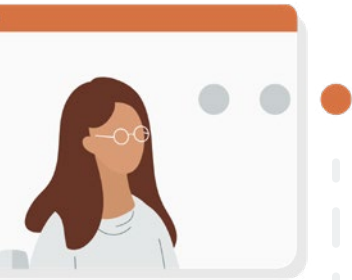


On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the effectiveness of your organization's team development efforts based on how teams will be leveraged in the future.

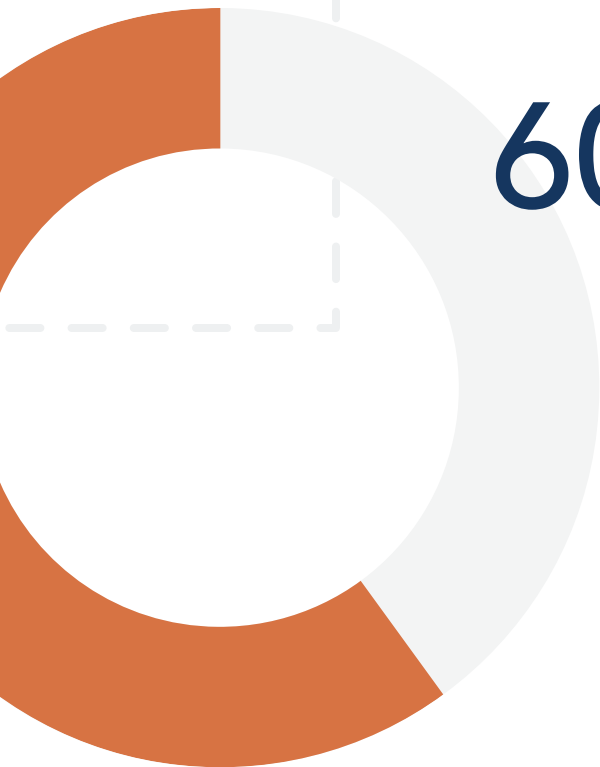
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Build Teams for the Future of Work?



Working in teams, leading teams — and developing strong team behaviors — are complicated. Teams come in many shapes and forms ranging from functional work teams to cross-functional teams, troubleshooting teams, project teams and self-managed teams.



Some teams work at one location but with remote and hybrid teammates, where some members are together in one place while others connect virtually from potentially several locations. The advent of virtual teams requires digital tools, different skills and collaboration styles than in-person teams. An organization, especially a large, dispersed enterprise, can have different digital collaborative tools. Some members of a cross-functional team, for example, may use tools they are relatively unfamiliar with while others use tools native to them.



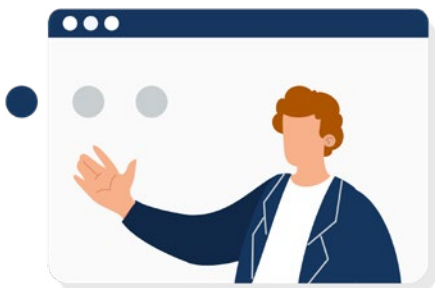
60%

of organizations will do at least half of their team collaboration virtually post-pandemic.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Develop Teams for the Future of Work?

Our research shows only about one in three organizations has technology that allows for real-time collaboration across the organization without the need for messy transfers and lost data from switching between multiple platforms.

An employee can be a member of several teams and may play a different role in each one. Each team can have its own culture, norms or rules. Employees in multiple teams may need to operate and collaborate differently for each team, use different tools and pursue different business goals.



Understanding Team Dynamics

Perhaps the most complex aspect of working in teams is understanding what a team is and the dynamics for success. A team is more than a collection of individuals.

A high-performing team is composed of individuals with specialized expertise and complementary skills who are goal-oriented and hyper-focused on achieving clear, outstanding results. Together, they collaborate and innovate to produce work at the highest levels.

That level of collaboration does not come naturally to many people. It takes training and most organizations — almost eight of 10 — concede they do not invest enough time and budget for team development, according to Brandon Hall Group research.

Most Critical* Areas for Team Development

Team leadership at all levels of the organization



Creating opportunities for continuous learning so team members can consistently improve collaboration and other team-related competencies



Team leadership for senior leaders



Virtual collaboration



Leading in virtual teams



Trusting and respecting teammates



Selecting the right people for a team depending on mission and circumstance



*Critical = Rating of 5 on a 5-point scale
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Build Teams for the Future of Work?



Most organizations are not ready to leverage the power of teams to drive innovation and business results in the future of work.

90 CONSEQUENCES

To excel at working with teams, according to our research:

- › Team members must understand their roles and trust each other to operate within team norms and objectives.
- › There is full governance in place.
- › Technology is in place and effectively leveraged to collaborate virtually.
- › Team members provide feedback and recognition that enables continuous learning and improvement.

Only 18% of organizations say the maturity of team development is at this high level. About one-half of organizations either have loosely organized — and therefore, unpredictable — teams or are only now beginning to strategically develop team skills across their organization.




Brandon Hall Group Team Maturity Model



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Build Teams for the Future of Work?

A culture of high-performing teams requires a culture change for many organizations, particularly for those with traditional top-down, command-and-control leadership and management.

Teams require a different way of working. Teams are about collaboration among people with complementary skills and experiences to create value that drives business outcomes. Team leadership, therefore, should be focused on setting objectives and enabling team members to get the best out of each other to reach the objective.



To effectively leverage the power of teams, organizations must consider several key questions:

- › What role will teams play in the future success of the organization?
- › Do we understand the drivers of successful teams?
- › Do we understand the subtle but important differences between teams operating in live, virtual and hybrid environments?
- › Do we have the right technology to enable our teams to be successful?
- › Do we invest enough in team development?
- › Do we teach and model the skills and competencies to enable people to serve as team leaders?
- › Do we have the culture to empower and support high-performing teams?
- › Do we understand how to assess whether teams are successful and making a difference for our business?

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

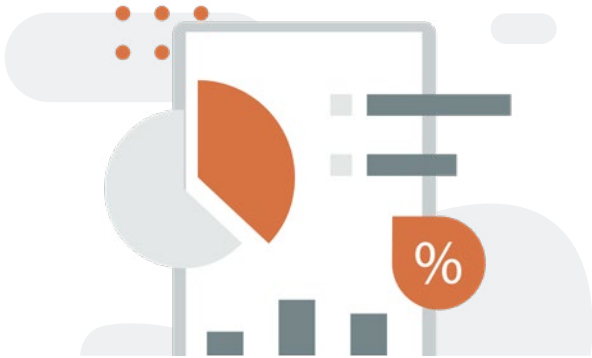


Most organizations know that teams and team leadership are critical for success. We asked about the importance of teams in several research contexts over the past year and between 60% and 75% of organizations believe team development is important.

BRANDON HALL

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GROUP POV



But investment in team development is low. Our research shows that less than 40% of organizations believe they are effectively developing teams as they will be leveraged in the future.

The decision to invest more appears to be a no-brainer for many reasons. Perhaps the best one is that when you invest in developing teams and team leaders you are also addressing other organizational needs. Consider the top indicators of a high-performing team:

Top 10 Indicators of a High-Performing Team

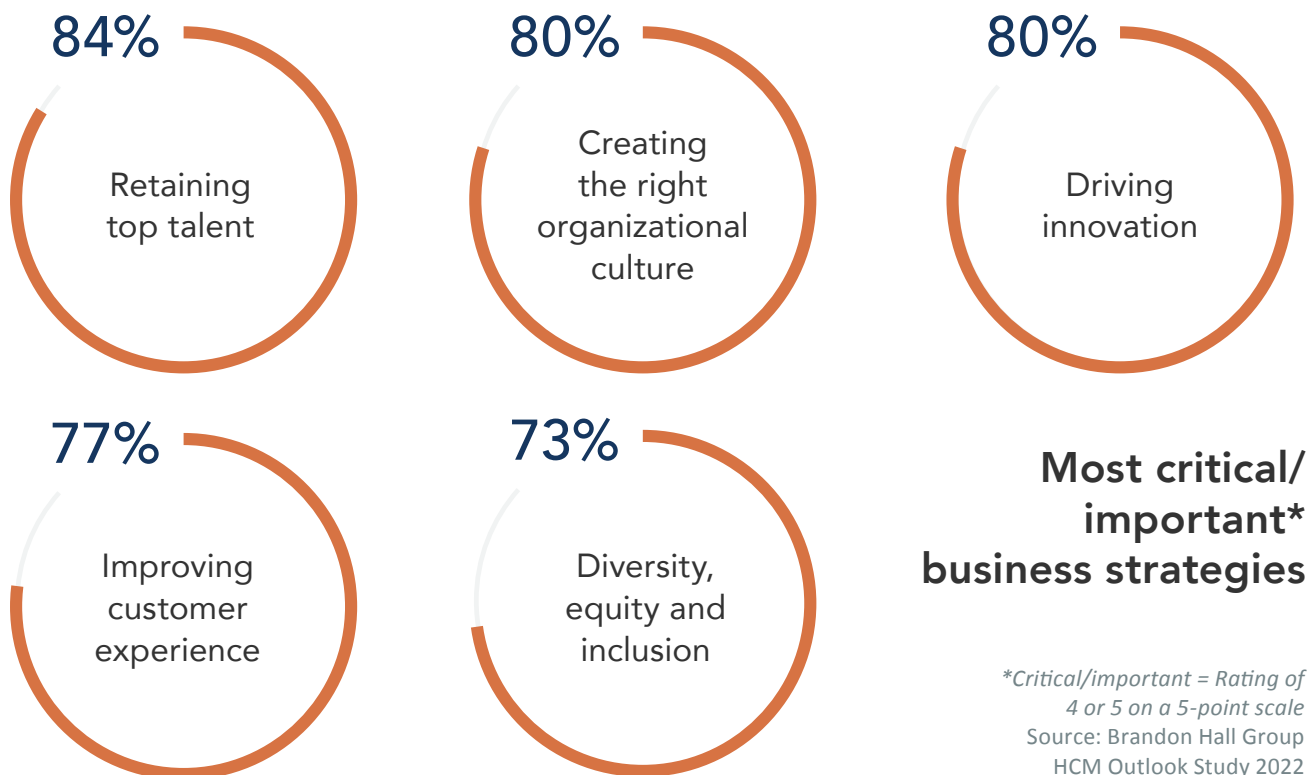


Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Build Teams for the Future of Work?

None of these behaviors, actions and strategies are unique to teams. They are also drivers of:



Now look at the most critical/important* business strategies for next year, according to our new HCM Outlook 2022 study:



Notice the commonalities? Team development is not a silo; it is a way to drive several talent goals efficiently for exponential progress. Teams are the future of work because bringing diverse talent together to collaborate and innovate embodies an organization's key success drivers.

Foster a Team Mindset

High-performing teams and strong ongoing team development are outgrowths of a team mindset: “We can do it better together and we will do it better together.”

It requires an understanding of the skills and competencies team leaders and members need to make teams successful. This includes:

- › **Connecting skills** — Skills people use when working together. Connecting skills are dependent on the mission, goals and objectives of the team. A person’s connecting skills on a technical team might not translate well to a strategic team, for example.
- › **Complementary skills** — Skills that are often used in tandem by different people. Again, this is dependent on the team’s mission. For the team to be successful, you need team leaders and members whose connecting and complementary skills mesh well.



Embrace Technology

Team selection is complicated. You are trying to match the competencies, experiences and behavioral traits of employees across an enterprise. Any type of talent selection is subject to bias. Talent management technology enables organizations to match candidates to a team based upon talent profiles that include experiences, certifications,

education and skills assessments, aspirations and behavioral traits.

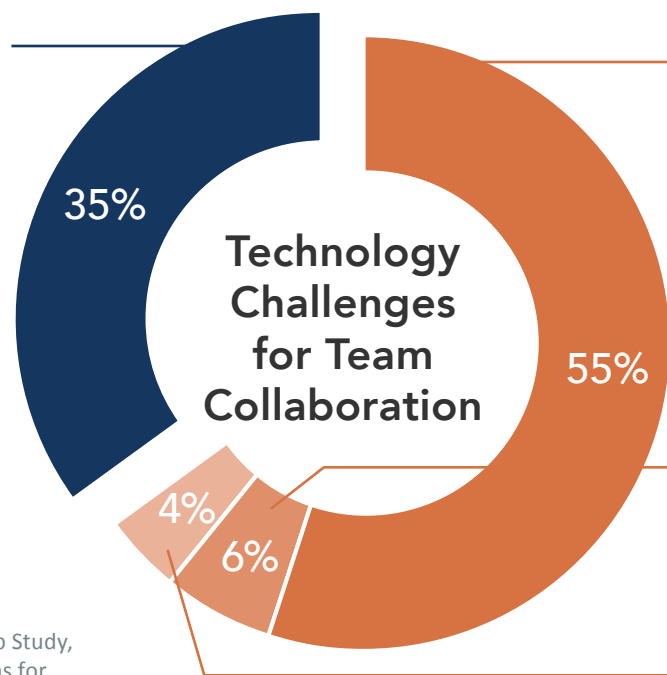
Because much of teamwork will be virtual, strong collaboration technology — ideally a common platform across an enterprise or business unit — is critical. There is currently a significant difference between the percentage of organizations that produce most of their

work through teams and those with a single dedicated technology solution to support team collaboration.

Organizations must be willing to plan for their future by creating the right technological environment to support the real-time exchange of ideas and seamless communication that are the hallmarks of top-tier team-assistance technology.

Optimized

We have **one** platform for team collaboration across the entire organization.



Non-optimized

We have **multiple platforms** for team collaboration used by different teams, business units, regions, etc.

No collaboration technology now, but we **plan** to purchase one solution within the next 6-12 months.

We **don't** use technology for team collaboration and do not plan to purchase.

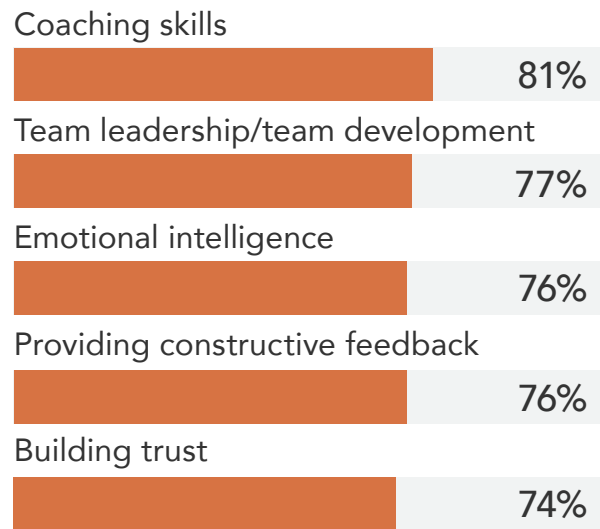
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Develop Teams for the Future of Work?

Enable All Employees to be Team Leaders

In a team-driven work culture, anyone can be in a leadership position at any time. Team leadership is based on expertise and experience related to the purpose and objective of the team and a demonstrated ability to empower and collaborate with diverse groups, not on someone's rank in the organization.

Therefore, organizations that want to be future-ready should develop leaders at all levels to lead teams and be strong team members. More than three-quarters of organizations rated team leadership and team development training as critical or important, ranking only second to coaching skills.

Most Important* Competencies for Leaders



**Important = Rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale*
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Great Leaders: How Do We Develop More?

Team leadership requires a different mindset and firm understanding of team dynamics. Assuming a senior leader, department head or frontline leader can seamlessly move into a leadership role in a cross-functional, cross-regional or global team without training and support resources is a mistake. Because of the diverse and complementary skills needed for high-performance teams, leaders must also develop expertise in team-member selection, which can differ considerably from the individual hiring decisions they are accustomed to making.

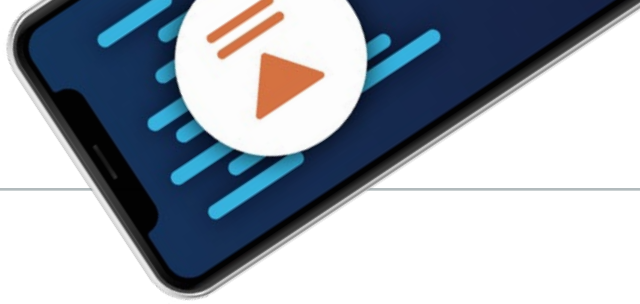




Develop Effective Team Governance

Each team is unique, with its own reason for being, and goals and vision for success. In addition, one team's members may also be members of other teams, which may have their own way of working. Therefore, successful teams must have a firm understanding of how the team and its members should function.

Team charters are a good way to introduce governance and ensure everyone understands the responsibilities of the team as a whole and as individual members. In interviews, several organizations with a strong team culture said they had online team governance resources, including team contract templates that could be customized for each team. Some organizations had each team member sign the contract to demonstrate the importance of abiding by team norms.



Juanita Casas

Director of Customer Operations
Bunny Studio, New York City

“Everyone is part of the team.”

“Our organization is all about collaboration and the power of the team. There are no ‘closed doors’ even though we are remote. You can message anyone, the CEO or anyone else. Everyone is part of the team. The overwhelming feeling you get is that we are all in this together. We are all seen as being on the same path to achieve the same objectives, even if we see them from a different point of view.”



Sven Sjølyst

Head of Platform Products
Lyse, Stavanger, Norway

“Control vs. value creation”

“Team leadership is not about control but about value creation. As a leader, you need to set clear objectives and provide a framework within which to work. Then you follow up on those objectives. You do not have to control how or when or where people work. You just need to steer them in the right direction and set clear goals for the value they create. You need to have leadership by objectives rather than by control.”



Organizations Will Embrace the Use of Advanced Analytics to Predict Hiring Needs

Advanced analytics in talent acquisition have been around for some time. What is new is that companies, possibly out of necessity rather than from their own momentum, will begin using predictive analytics as their primary means of sourcing and hiring talent as it relates to their very specific needs. The war for talent is in full swing and simply throwing money at salaries to remain competitive is no longer working. Instead, successful organizations will make use of advanced analytical models to target specific groups when and where they need them.

The Candidate Experience Will be Tailored to the Organizational Culture

Certainly, the remote workplace is here to stay, at least in some capacity. Due to this, organizational culture has become more, not less important, as organizations seek to differentiate themselves from their competitors by means of the type of work they do, and how it is done in their unique culture. Knowing this, organizations will make a concerted effort to express that culture during the hiring process, ensuring that every candidate understands the value proposition of the company culture both as a selling point and as an early start to feeling part of the overall values and mission of the company.

CHAPTER 6:

HOW YOU HIRE DEFINES YOUR COMPANY CULTURE

Create Meaningful Work and
a Meaningful Company to Work for

Organizations Will Take a Cultural Outcome-Based Approach to Talent Acquisition

Hiring does more than fill gaps in the skills needed at an organization — it can also be a way to bring in fresh perspectives or change the very nature of how an organization defines itself. Organizations that want to create more meaningful work, or create a more collaborative culture, for instance, will begin to look to hiring as a way to redefine their organizational culture and will use appropriate metrics to measure the effects of hiring on culture for that reason.

The Hiring Process Will Focus on Culture Much Earlier than Ever Before

With the aforementioned rise in stay-at-home and remote workers, organizations have become more comfortable hiring people in previously untapped geographies. Due to this, the importance of recruitment marketing has risen dramatically and now organizations are seeing the need to tailor their message differently for specific demographics, physical locations and job types. This will extend to the way organizations position their culture, and will also force organizations to determine what culture they will want to embody moving forward.



PREDICTIONS



When it comes to hiring affecting company culture, how you hire can be just as impactful as who you hire. Many organizations are beginning to understand that, as the onboarding process has come under intense scrutiny during the shift to a more hybrid workplace over the last two years.

*CURRENT
STATE*

Brandon Hall Group research shows a clear connection between company culture metrics and the onboarding process:

88%

“Employees believe in what the organization stands for.”

80%

“We have a diverse workforce that mirrors our community and customer base.”

79%

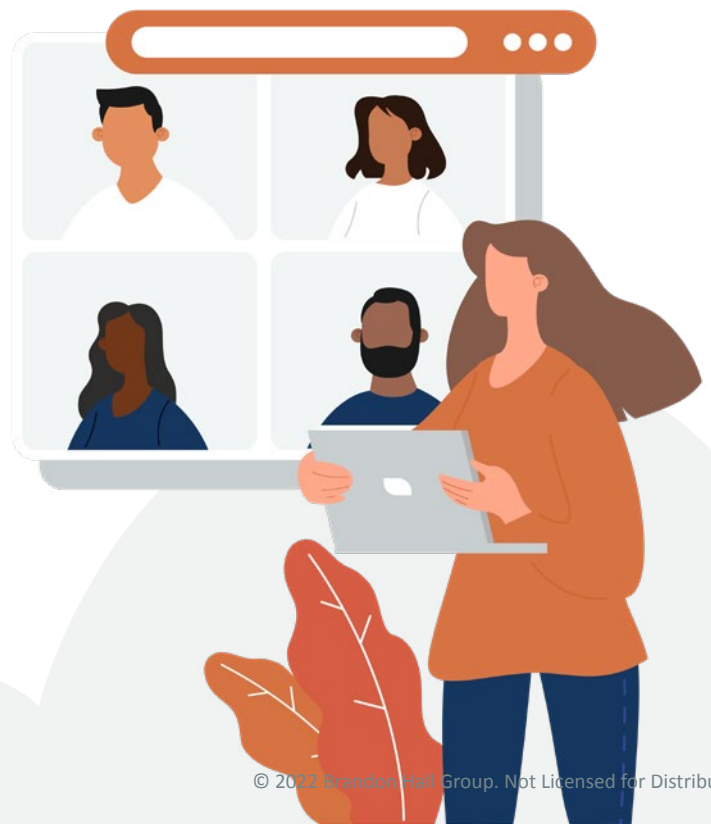
“Employees feel a strong sense of belonging.”



Percentage of organizations rating this result as important to critical during the onboarding process.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, The Impact of Strategic Onboarding

Employees and employers are on the same page. Employees want to feel a sense of belonging and having meaningful work and employers want the same thing because that will help them achieve the business results they seek, regardless of industry or company size.





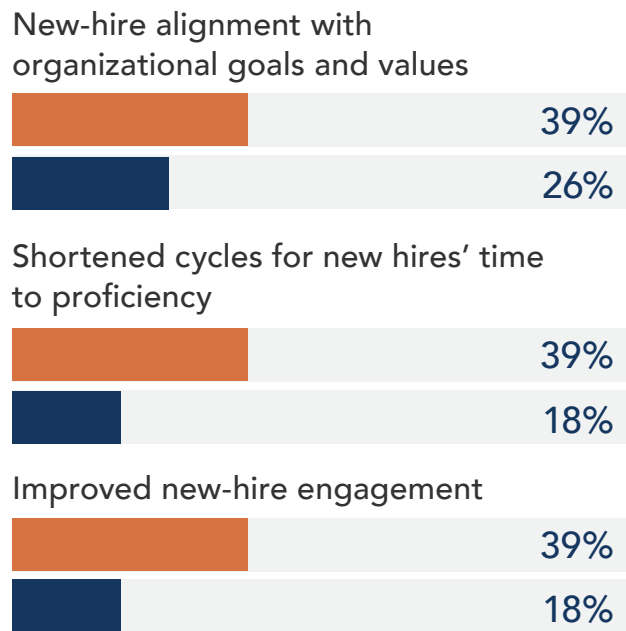
Although the desired result is agreed upon by all parties, organizations struggle to create a seamless experience from the early stages of talent acquisition through the end to make a more positive candidate experience.

Creating personalized messaging during the early recruitment marketing phase, to having employees fully buy into the organizational missions and values, is the goal but the effectiveness in achieving those results, especially during the crucial onboarding phase, often falls short of the perceived importance of those outcomes.

The quality of onboarding greatly connects recruitment promises to reality and impacts talent retention.

Indicate the level of importance and effectiveness in your organization for the following onboarding outcomes.

- Percentage of organizations listing this as critically important
- Percentage of organizations indicating they were highly effective at acting upon that outcome



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, The Impact of Strategic Onboarding

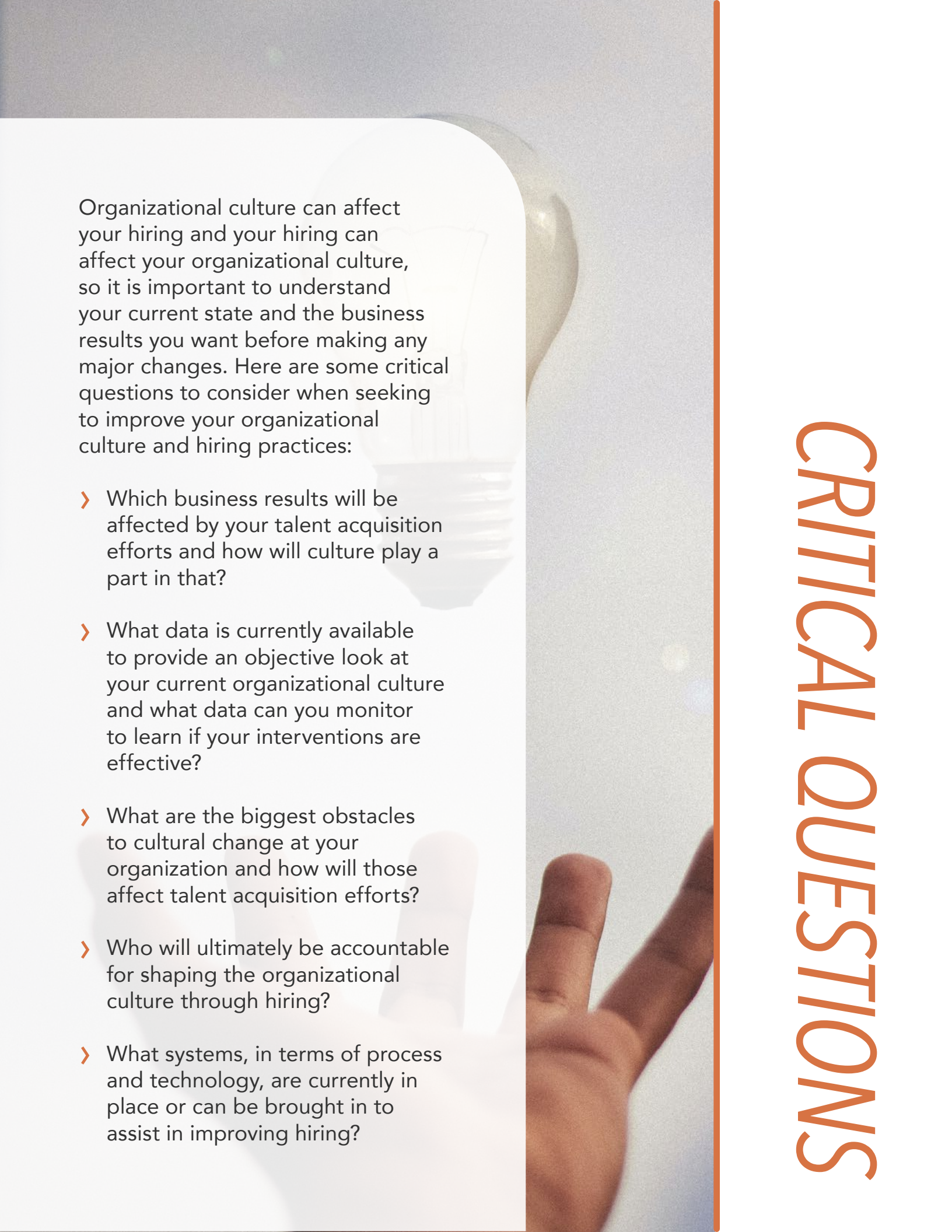
For organizations seeking to improve the effectiveness of any phase of talent acquisition, including onboarding, the biggest challenges are in understanding candidate needs rather than trying to meet more traditional metrics such as time-to-fill. Any company can lower its time-to-fill by spending less time interviewing but it might not be vetting candidates well enough or giving candidates enough time to learn about the organization. It can be a delicate balance, weighing the candidate experience against the immediate needs of the organization, but striking that balance will result in a better outcome.



Having a **distinct and recognizable culture**, regardless of what that culture is, is vital in today's talent marketplace.

Even after the return to work, the landscape of work has forever changed and organizations able to use their culture as a selling point and driving force for engagement are the ones that will succeed in the new normal.

Organizations must create impactful places to work and communicate that impact to employees, present and future. As more and more organizations start casting a wider net in the search for talent (spurred on by having less fear of remote workers), simply paying people more will no longer be a viable way to keep workers interested; The Great Resignation has already started to show this. The new future will be one where employees decide where they want to work based on an organization's values, mission and people. The companies that succeed will be those that hear that need and respond to it best.



Organizational culture can affect your hiring and your hiring can affect your organizational culture, so it is important to understand your current state and the business results you want before making any major changes. Here are some critical questions to consider when seeking to improve your organizational culture and hiring practices:

- › Which business results will be affected by your talent acquisition efforts and how will culture play a part in that?
- › What data is currently available to provide an objective look at your current organizational culture and what data can you monitor to learn if your interventions are effective?
- › What are the biggest obstacles to cultural change at your organization and how will those affect talent acquisition efforts?
- › Who will ultimately be accountable for shaping the organizational culture through hiring?
- › What systems, in terms of process and technology, are currently in place or can be brought in to assist in improving hiring?

CRITICAL QUESTIONS



Determine Where to Introduce and Express Cultural Values in the Hiring Process

Each organization will be different but Brandon Hall Group research has shown that broad changes are clearly emerging.

*BRANDON HALL
GROUP POV*

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The most common change is that much more hiring is done remotely but with the important caveat that for successful organizations, the main focus has gone from getting through talent acquisition activities (application, interviewing, onboarding, etc.) as fast as possible to using onboarding as the most impactful time to express organizational culture. With remote workers, sometimes the positive aspects of an organization's culture are tougher to express and an inability to get your organization's culture across during onboarding can have unseen but no less damaging consequences.

Understand the Main Trends Impacting Culture and Hiring

Three major trends impacting hiring and culture emerged over the last year.

One, **recruitment and onboarding** have become the key areas of expressing company culture and values, as mentioned earlier.

This is not just due to the pandemic but from movements toward the empowerment of the workforce, its

globally dispersed nature and a better understanding of psychology, emotional needs and inclusion.

Trend two is organizations taking a more **humanistic approach to hiring**, resulting in a change of metrics given the most weight.

Instead of pure productivity numbers, it is now diversity, engagement and connections/communication. Although productivity still matters, the long-term effects of these other metrics are being considered more heavily.

Trend three, **transparency and upfront ethics statements**, is the new normal when dealing with candidates.

Both marketing and products focused on end-user or employee-centric views are looked upon more favorably, especially as employees are becoming more aware of how ML/AI/algorithms are used in the hiring process. The bottom line is that your organization should be proud of its culture and part of that pride is shown in its openness.

Customize Your Candidate Experience According to Your Current and Desired Culture

Simply put, employees want personalization, organization and humanization. Personalization means that the new-hire process is not generic and overly focused on paperwork but is tailored to the individual, as much as can be reasonably expected. Being able to

carry over data from the recruitment process is key to this, as that data can be used to automate a more customized approach to the new hire experience.

Organization is the other side of the personalization coin, meaning that there should be some consistency in the new-hire process so everyone has the same sort of experience, letting them feel they are part of a shared culture. Organization also means having a high level of self-service and efficient processes to help all candidates get through

the paperwork and compliance aspect of hiring as efficiently as possible.

Finally, humanization means access to wellness and well-being resources and including quality-of-life aspects to the new-hire process. Making direct connections between employees and managers (and each other), giving employees options to express themselves and most importantly, finding ways to express meaningfulness in the employee's job, are all important.

The following is a list of new-hire activities and/or practices, followed by the percentage of organizations that currently employ that practice:



Source: Brandon Hall Group Talent Acquisition Benchmarking Study

Use Advanced Analytics to Predict Hiring Needs as It Relates to Organizational Culture

There is a lot of talk about the future of predictive analytics but it is usually focused on metrics such as flight risk or compensation. However, Brandon Hall Group research shows that 92% of organizations believe using predictive/prescriptive analytics can improve new-hire retention. Many high-end talent acquisition solutions use algorithms that adjust to time in the system, amount of communication, pay rates and other factors to determine burnout, stress levels and flight risk.

What makes these new advancements in talent acquisition technology

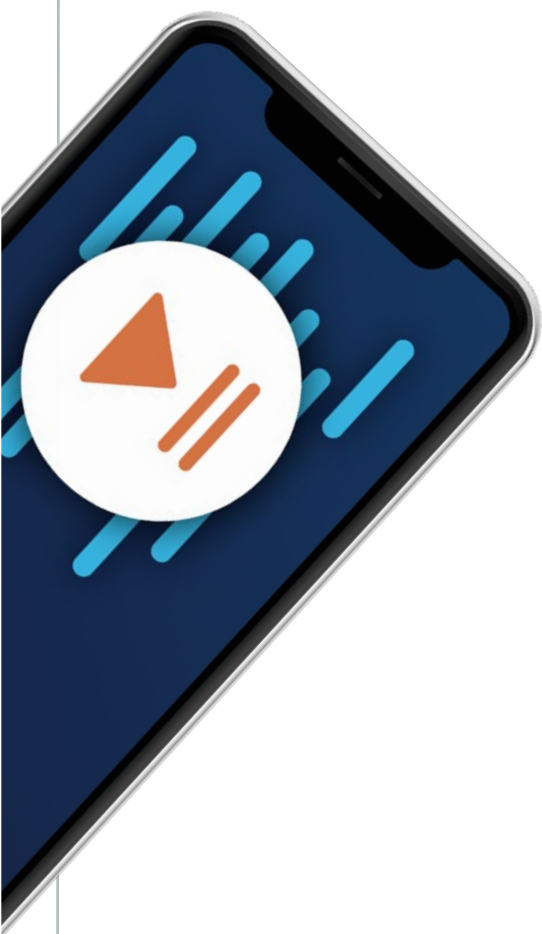
even better is that they do not require advanced levels of data-analysis skills but are calculated and communicated to users in a way that makes it clear what factors are contributing to the data while giving the ultimate decision-making actions to HR or TA leaders. As with all forms of employee data, there are clear benefits to transparency and also a great amount of helpful information that can assist in scenario planning.

Focus Your Efforts on Outcomes Under Your Control

The changes to hiring that have the most impact on your organizational culture aren't always the ones that should be pursued. Sometimes the most strategic action is to look at how your

organization measures hiring practices and how it acts upon that information. Brandon Hall Group asked organizations where they were having trouble making meaningful changes to hiring and one thing became abundantly clear: Organizations struggle to effectively control the outcomes of their hiring and onboarding because they focus on things such as changing demographics or generational shifts; external factors outside their sphere of control.

To succeed in a major endeavor such as matching your hiring to your organizational culture, it isn't always about making massive changes but rather making a series of small changes that are within your control. Those often result in very positive business outcomes.



Nicole Davies
VP of Talent Optimization
Valet Living

“Valet Living created a virtual orientation curriculum to ensure a uniform understanding of the company’s values.”

“The company also made onboarding specific to an employee’s role to focus on the skills needed to be successful.”



*TEACHING NEW HIRES
ABOUT THE NEW CULTURE*



**Organizational
Excellence
Program**

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**ORGANIZATIONAL
EXCELLENCE**

PROGRAM

Brandon Hall Group's Organizational Excellence Program recognizes the best HCM programs that transform their organizations and achieve breakthrough results.

Organizational Excellence is a subset of award winners that are also members. Through membership, Brandon Hall Group takes a deep dive into organizations' HCM programs during monthly meetings and quarterly strategy briefings.

This program recognizes your organization's accomplishments with an unmatched level of credibility based on BHG's 28+ years of experience recognizing excellence in organizations from around the world.

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For additional information, please contact success@brandonhall.com

The Opportunity Marketplace Will Become Ubiquitous

There is no better way to assess the potential of employees than by seeing how they adapt to unfamiliar situations. Opportunity marketplaces are digital platforms where organizations provide — and employees find — projects and short-term work opportunities, usually aligned to high-priority work. OMs give employers a way to address temporary capacity challenges while giving employees access to new experiences that help them grow. It's a win-win that we believe is a can't-miss. There is plenty of supply because tech providers are moving heaven and earth to enter this new market.

Automation Will Facilitate Everyday Feedback and Development

Almost half (46%) of organizations say they are ready for, or already leveraging, AI- and ML-driven technology to replace human interactions and decision-making, according to Brandon Hall Group research. We believe more organizations will get on board and that this type of technology will have a powerful impact on the daily workflow and performance feedback that often keeps managers from more substantive, growth and career-focused conversations with their team members. In the future, this technology will also automate feedback processes and provide timely, data-based feedback to employees.

CHAPTER 7:

REALIZE THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR WORKFORCE

Expand Opportunity, Deemphasize Performance Reviews to Drive Engagement, Retention, Innovation

Performance Reviews Will Finally be Reimagined

Only 6% of employers believe their performance evaluations are a highly accurate predictor of an individual's potential, according to Brandon Hall Group research. After organizations are armed with tools to automate daily interactions and develop opportunities to evaluate employees on what they're capable of rather than what they've done, employers will finally shed the ball and chain of traditional performance reviews and focus on assessing potential.

Supervisors Will Evolve from Performance Managers to Career Developers

When technology frees managers from some of the daily drudgery and administrative rigors of their jobs, they will be free to become the partners their employees need them to be. With daily feedback and workflow interactions automated, managers can spend more time coaching employees on how to reach their personal and professional goals and develop their careers.



PREDICTIONS



When employers talk about how they will thrive in the future, conversations often focus on upskilling and reskilling employees to meet changing business needs. Certainly, that is important but not everyone has the same potential to evolve in ways that benefit the organization. It's important to identify high-potential talent and prioritize their development. They will be the ones to drive future success, either as individual contributors or leaders.

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STATE*

The problem is that most organizations struggle to understand potential. Almost three-quarters say they must get a better understanding of the core competencies, skills and abilities needed for success in specific roles now and in the future, according

to Brandon Hall Group research.

Why is this such a big challenge? Because employers focus predominately on performance to evaluate their workforces. Many organizations are stuck in

talent processes ranging from performance management to career and succession management and learning and development, that are antiquated and unsuited for the complexities of today's workforce and business environment.

Understanding Employee Potential: Importance vs. Effectiveness

Understanding employee potential is important.

90%

24%

Our talent processes are effective in helping us understand employee potential.



Importance and effectiveness = 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Do You Predict Future Performance?



Only **6%** of organizations

believe their performance evaluations are accurate predictors of an individual's future potential to a high degree. However, organizations often base high-potential identification heavily on performance evaluations.

Leaders, in particular, are often selected based far more on their past and current performance than on demonstrated leadership capabilities, engagement or aspirations. That means many employees identified as having high potential may actually lack potential — or at least have less potential than colleagues who have capabilities or aspirations of which the organization may be unaware.

Ironically, when asked to identify important elements in understanding employees' potential for future success, research respondents rated past and current performance 10th and 11th among 13 choices. Here are the critical indicators:

Most Important Elements in Understanding Employees' Potential

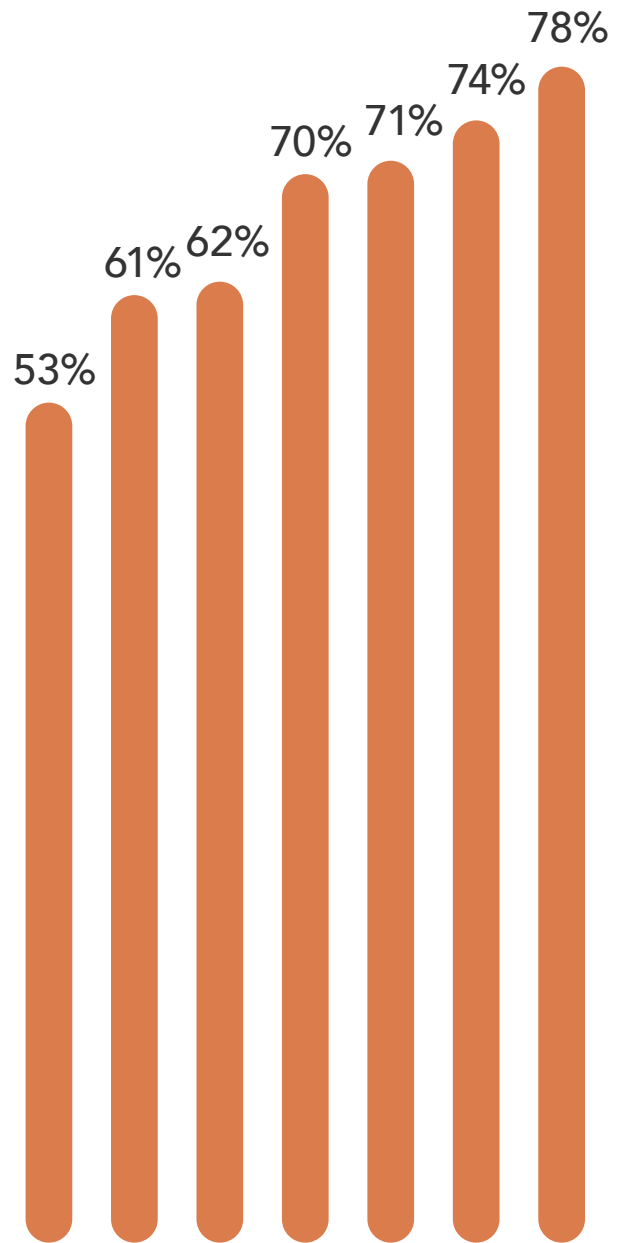


Importance and effectiveness = 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Do You Predict Future Performance?



While understanding the capacity of individuals and the organization to adapt to ongoing change has never been more important, many employers are essentially operating blind.

Employers must transform their approach to identifying and developing potential. The place to start is by building stronger connections with employees and providing more opportunities to demonstrate their potential. Here are seven approaches that a majority of organizations said would improve the evaluation of employee potential.



How to Improve Evaluation of Employee Potential

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Do You Predict Future Performance?

Reward, recognize employees more often.

Improve reinforcement of all types of training.

Interact with employees more often.

Provide more clarity around career advancement opportunities.

Have more frequent career discussions.

Provide more opportunities to learn inside, outside organization.

Provide more exposure to new responsibilities, assignments.



Organizations that experience better business outcomes tend to take a more holistic approach to assessing potential. For example, employers reporting increased customer satisfaction scores year-over-year are:

73% more likely | to frequently discuss development opportunities with employees.

64% more likely | to regularly discuss employees' well-being.

50% more likely | to frequently discuss career opportunities.

44% more likely | to frequently recognize employees' accomplishments.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Do You Predict Future Performance?

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Employers should rethink how they evaluate potential. Key questions to consider include:

- › Beyond performance, what factors should we consider in evaluating employee potential?
- › How can we provide more opportunities for employees to grow and show their potential?
- › How can we have more meaningful conversations with employees that reveal hidden capabilities or aspirations that could aid our evaluation of potential?

CRITICAL QUESTIONS



FOR EMPLOYEES

To aid conversations with employees, here are some high-value questions, according to our research, that managers can ask them. Capturing this information and having ongoing discussions will help you gain a better understanding of your employees' goals and mindsets:

- › What are your ultimate professional goals?
- › What do you think you need to learn to reach your goals?
- › What types of roles would fit your professional goals?
- › Do you believe the organization offers roles that meet your professional goals?
- › In what time frame do you see yourself achieving your professional goals?
- › What are you uniquely qualified to do?



Employers need a workforce with the skills, agility and resilience to navigate continuous change. It's critical for employers to invest most heavily in the people who have the greatest likelihood of success.

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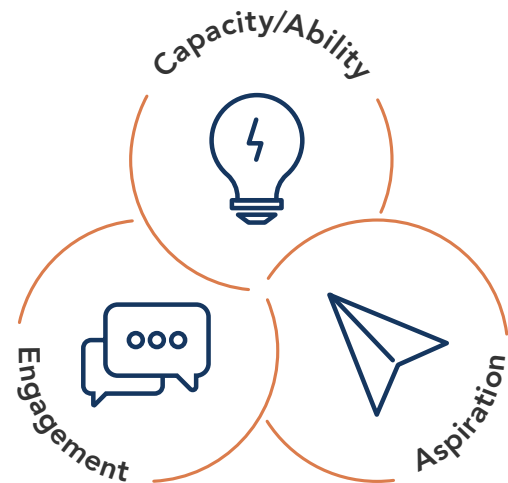
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GROUP POV

Here are the strategies high-performing organizations use to better assess potential:

Assess Potential in Three Dimensions

Rather than over-emphasizing performance, employers can get a better understanding of potential by using this model:



Capacity/Ability

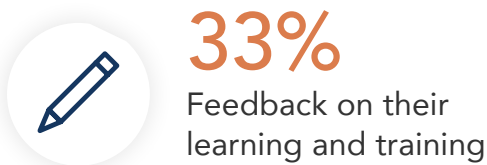
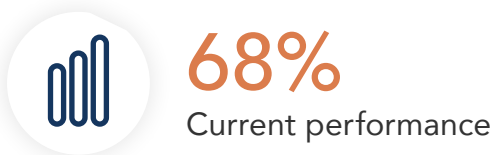
Most organizations only evaluate for capacity/ability because it is the easiest to correlate with performance. An employee may have other capabilities that do not show in job performance but might be a great fit for another role. For example, someone may have high emotional intelligence that you have not assessed for or is not easily demonstrated in the person's current role. All organizations have employees with hidden abilities that can be discovered in several ways, including:

- › **A manager's or team leader's observations** of an employee's individual work or interaction with team members.
- › **Observed progress** after a coaching session.

- › **Peer feedback** in the form of recognition or appreciation of good work or collaboration.
- › **Formal assessments.** There are many science-based assessment tools for skills, capabilities and behavior traits that can provide insights on an employee's potential to grow beyond their roles.

Whichever approaches you take, understanding an employee's capacity requires more than the traditional once- or twice-a-year evaluation. Even when managers have frequent check-in meetings with their team members, they are far more focused on current and upcoming work than setting goals, coaching, feedback and connecting employees with new learning opportunities.

Topics Covered in Manager-Employee Check-ins



Frequency = Rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale
Source: Brandon Hall Group Study,
How Do You Predict Future Performance?

Engagement

Organizations need people with the appetite to tackle challenges and high-pressure situations, contribute beyond their specific job roles, collaborate well with others, are curious and take the initiative to drive change and innovation.

Managers often assume that employees who do not excel lack the potential for growth. But employees are sometimes in roles that do not bring out all their capabilities. Looking at their level of engagement can lead to greater insight. Here are some engagement-based indicators of potential:

- › **Volunteering to take on responsibilities beyond their job,** such as cross-functional team projects, involvement in employee resource groups or community outreach efforts.
- › **Willingness to help peers.** This could range from pitching in on tasks, to volunteering to be a “buddy” or mentor to a new employee or showing extraordinary effort in individual or team projects.
- › **Willingness to actively participate in team meetings** and suggest solutions to challenges or questioning policies or procedures that others are not willing to do.
- › **Proactively seeking out and completing learning opportunities** that improve their skills.

Aspiration

Aspiration is important because it helps determine whether the person's interests and objectives align with the organization's goals and needs. Employees' career ambitions are important to know and understand. Their aspirations outside of work are also important because they could impact their career goals and their level of engagement.

Sharing aspirations, especially if they involve interests outside of their job or leaving the organization, will not occur unless employees trust the manager. Employers must enable and empower managers to have developmental and career conversations with employees on a regular basis and build strong relationships.



39%

"We Believe Employees' Aspirations are as Important as the Organization's When Considering Career Development."

Answer reflects respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Career Development: Do You Know What Employees Want?

Whether employees want to pursue a future with your organization or not, it's important to understand where they stand and what they want in the future. That can be enormously helpful for succession planning at all levels of the organization.

Expand Opportunities for Employees to Demonstrate Their Potential

Many organizations tend to look at providing development opportunities and getting work done as two separate functions. In fact, they are often one and the same.

If managers understand what employees' talents and aspirations are, they can look for projects and other opportunities to let them show their potential and develop their talents while also accomplishing work goals.

Learning and development has traditionally been event-based — live or virtual classroom training or eLearning courses. While that is beginning to change, many managers still view learning as taking employees away from work instead of an outcome of exposing employees to new opportunities and responsibilities. This concept of learning by doing, or experiential learning, is a growing trend.

Which Types of Learning are Important/Critical to the Success of Your Business?



90%

Increasing Experiential Learning



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Optimizing Learning to Drive Performance

By taking this approach, managers accomplish several objectives:

- › Provide employees with new opportunities that can engage them, develop their skills and agility, and demonstrate that the organization is a good place to progress their careers.
- › Give themselves an opportunity to evaluate how employees react to new situations, which can lead to insights on their potential to adapt and grow into new roles.
- › Achieve business goals that might not be possible without extending employees beyond their specific roles.



This requires managers to have two important mindsets:



Growth mindset. With a growth mindset, people believe a person's abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. Talent is just a foundation. This creates a focus on learning and resilience.



Team mindset. Team mindset helps build a strong workplace culture in which everyone works toward common goals. The idea is to leverage the skills, competencies and abilities in cross-functional teams to drive business performance.



Employers that cultivate these mindsets can expand their ability to create new opportunities for employees, assess their potential for future roles and maximize resources to accomplish business goals that could not be reached with a traditional siloed approach.

Coca-Cola, for example, saw a shift in consumer buying habits during COVID-19 and needed to realign the highest-priority work. There were some teams or functions that absorbed more work and had fewer people to contribute, whereas some teams or individuals temporarily had more capacity and a lengthier runway to complete the work.



The company developed a web-based open marketplace that empowered the workforce to connect and partner on short-term opportunities aligned to high-priority work. Coca-Cola now has a system to address temporary capacity challenges while also giving employees sources of new experiences that help them grow while meeting immediate business needs.

Leverage Technology to Create an Opportunity Marketplace

Most organizations do not have the resources to develop such a dynamic solution in such a short time. But the opportunity marketplace is an emerging category in human capital management.

Opportunity marketplaces are digital platforms where organizations provide — and workers find — the opportunities most relevant to their mutual benefit and success. Relatively new tech companies such as Gloat and Fuel50 are emerging to provide these platforms while iconic providers such as Oracle, SAP and others have added an opportunity marketplace to their suites.

Organizations that Match Employees to Teams, Projects that Can Aid Their Professional Development

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Career Development: Do You Know What Employees Want?

23%

As employers — even large enterprises — struggle to build career paths that provide enough high-quality opportunities to attract employees to stay, matching employees to shorter-term options is an efficient and inclusive way to strategically align the aspirations of individual employees and the enterprise.

We recommend organizations give serious thought to the concept of the opportunity marketplace. It helps reframe career development from lateral and vertical moves to dynamic experiences that provide individual growth options while meeting organizational needs. We believe the opportunity marketplace will emerge as a staple of talent management in the months and years ahead.





Frank Crowell

Owner

Wilson Learning South Africa



Michelle Ross

People and Organization

Development Lead

Syngenta Seeds North America

**“Managers need
a development
mindset.”**

“We must get our managers to be better partners with employees in their individual development. IDPs just sit online and nothing happens. There are no conversations. Development priorities are not set. We are working with managers to shift the mindset from not engaging unless the employee asks to having them understand that helping employees develop is a large part of their responsibilities.”

**“Focus on
aspiration.”**

“I had friend who went to Oxford and Harvard who became an HR manager for a small bus company in Qatar. He had all the ability in the world, but not the willingness to apply it. I had an acquaintance who was dyslexic. He runs a huge chain of furniture stores with a Grade 9 education and learned everything else by doing. He was really driven. When people look at potential, they often look at degrees and experience and decide whether someone should be developed. My advice is, don't be obsessed with someone's qualifications, be obsessed with their aspiration.”



**SPEAKING OUT ON UNDERSTANDING
EMPLOYEE POTENTIAL**

Coaching and Mentoring Will Become a Less Formal Process

Having more remote workers does not mean that interactions that used to be primarily face-to-face, such as coaching and mentoring, will be going away. Instead, high-performing companies will learn to adapt to a more informal coaching and mentoring style, which is needed anyway as most organizations (60%) believe their managers don't offer enough coaching to their employees, according to Brandon Hall Group learning research. Look for more companies to create avenues and pathways for managers and employees to self-select and create their own coaching and mentoring systems based on what works for them.

How Organizations Measure Culture Will Change

Much of the positive benefits of organizational culture, such as collaboration, a shared sense of mission and strong loyalty will still be outcomes that organizations seek, but how culture is measured will need to change based on a changing workforce in terms of demographics, geographies and changing work styles. The use of team-based technologies, informal connections in a network and inclusion in social networking within the organization are all new ways that organizations measure their cultural impact, and many more methods will be used in the coming years.

CHAPTER 8:

MANAGING THE INFORMAL WORK CULTURE FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

In 2022, Formality Is Merely a Formality

Organizations Will be Adaptive About Returning to Work

Organizations are already finding that their old workplace policies are being tested regarding who is coming to work, when and why. Successful organizations are taking a hard look at the reasons for being in a physical workplace, while also being mindful of the preference of the employee for more social interaction or more time spent working from home or a remote location. As global situations continue to shift, organizations will likewise need to adapt to changing conditions and employee attitudes and desires.

Informal Learning Will be a Hallmark of Informal Work Cultures

As organizations see an ever-increasing reliance on learning to reinforce their value proposition, so they will rely on culture to do the same. To this end, the style of learning must match the organizational culture, and for this reason more and more organizations will begin to utilize informal learning at previously unheard-of rates. Self-paced, self-directed learning taken in sporadic chunks across a wide variety of delivery methods will become the norm, and the ability to track and coordinate the progress and skill level of learners will be the mark of successful technology interventions.



PREDICTIONS



First,
a clarification:

Informal organizations aren't a specific, defined type of company such as a nonprofit or publicly-traded company but represent the social structure and connections that inform the processes and people that allow an organization to function outside of defined hierarchies and workflows.

*CURRENT
STATE*

There are informal leaders, informal learning sessions, informal teams ... the list goes on and on. There have always been informal workplaces and many organizations exist on a spectrum of formality or at the very least have aspects or parts of the organization more formal than others.

However, the last two years gave rise to a considerable number of remote and work-from-home (WFH) individuals and teams, and this led to the addition of informal workplaces. How organizations deal with this new dynamic will go a long way in determining their future success, as the WFH phenomenon is bound to be a big part of the future of work.





Organizations have formal structures for a reason. The need to measure, monitor and manage employees and their work is intrinsic to the modern workplace. Brandon Hall Group research has shown the importance of using data to make decisions though much of informal work is not “datafied,” making it harder to perform the actions outlined on Pages 136 and 137.

However, just because work is done informally does not mean it cannot be recorded and used for **business decisions**.



Network analysis, where electronic communication is analyzed to see who is talking to whom and where information is accessed and when, is highly useful but cannot be done without the proper technology and expertise.

Likewise, many managers are untrained in managing informal workplaces or may be unwilling to do so. Informal leadership requires a different set of competencies and

many managers and other leaders could be hesitant to change simply because the workplace demands it; it may seem easier to enforce levels of formality rather than adapt to the needs of the employees. However, the changes toward informality are coming due to changes in demographics, technology and culture, so it is well worth reskilling or providing new training to those leaders who will be part of the future of your organization.



There are several reasons to foster informality in certain situations. In the most common cause, it can be a response to a cultural change that is happening or already happened at your organization. However, just because it is a ground-up movement does not always mean it is the right thing. As discussed before, neither informal nor formal organizations are intrinsically better than the other; they each have benefits.

The major benefits of an informal organization are:



Greater and more honest communication

Communication is something that often happens naturally. However, not everyone is a born communicator, so each person must find their own manner and frequency of communication. Having a more informal communication structure allows individuals to express themselves as they see fit without worrying about hitting certain numbers or being required to speak to certain people. This also means that the conversations they have are more genuine and this can lead to more open communication and better creative teamwork.



More humanistic

Today's workforce expects some personalization and to be treated as a person and not merely one generating a certain amount of productivity. Certainly, this has always been the case, but there is currently a greater focus on interpersonal relationships and the social needs of employees. Modern tech solutions also provide for more wellness and well-being care, and organizations with informal structures will find it easier to create and maintain employee social connections with a minimum of oversight.



Better adaptability

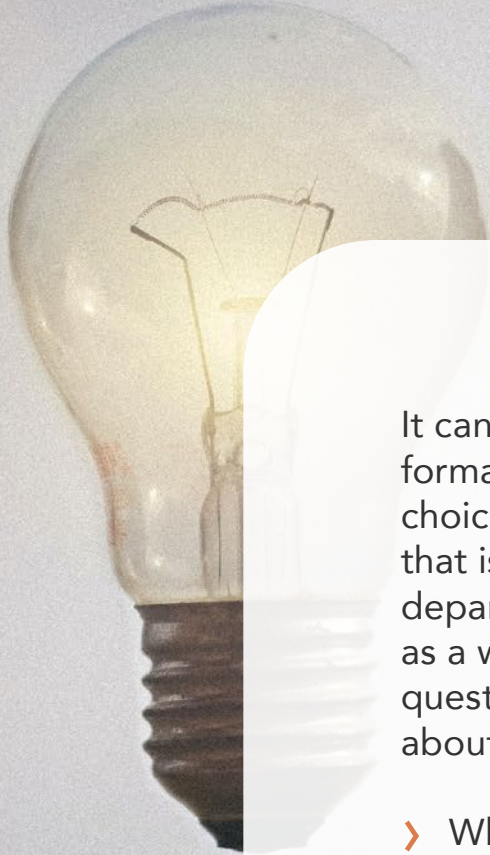
Informal organizations are, by their very nature, responsive and flexible to change. As they are fluid in structure, it can sometimes be difficult to tell when change is taking place. This can be a great asset to any organization experiencing pressure from external forces causing their workplace to adapt, as informal workplaces can quickly shift to new modes of work in rapid time without the need for written and practice processes or rigid power structures.



Cultural values are emphasized.

Informal organizations do a much better job than their more formal cousins expressing the quirks and differences that make their organization unique. Cultural beliefs and values are communicated directly from employee to employee in ways that make it more real and give it a chance to occur and change naturally rather than through top-down mission statements.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS



It can be tempting to think of formality or informality as a binary choice but it is often something that is constantly in flux for each department and the organization as a whole. Here are some critical questions to consider when thinking about the informal workplace:

- › What data can we gather from informal work and how can that data be used to achieve business results?
- › How can we motivate leaders to adopt a more informal style, as needed, for certain individuals and teams?
- › How does our culture currently support or block efforts toward formality or informality?
- › What are our greatest barriers to achieving a more informal workplace?
- › How do we break down and overcome those barriers?



Informal Work Cultures Should Utilize Informal Learning

Onboarding is an area that strikes a fine balance between the need for informal and formal processes. New employees need to fill out the necessary paperwork and get access to their tools and assignments, but they also need to meet managers and associates and begin assimilation into the work culture.

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GROUP POV

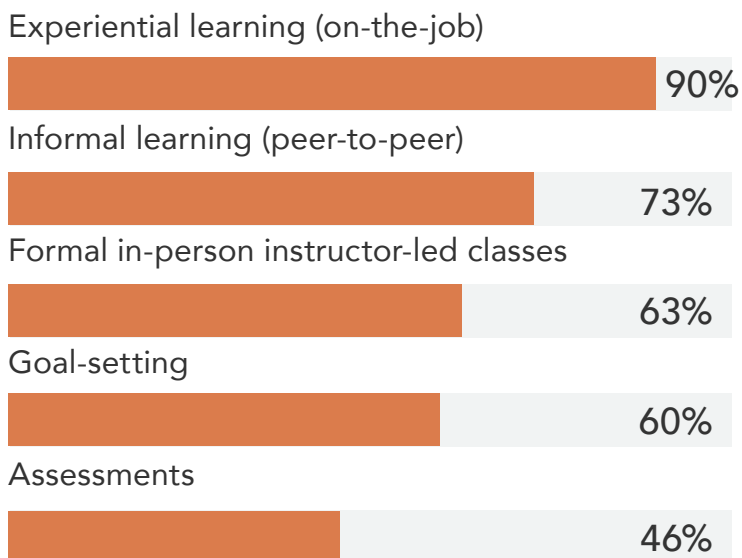
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Informal learning is a perfect way to supplement the learning process but isn't used nearly as much as on-the-job training.

Brandon Hall Group research has shown that while many organizations make use of some aspects of L&D, many others do not, so there is room for improvement in the use of both formal and informal learning types.

Top 5 Learning and Development Approaches Used During Onboarding



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Develop Great Coaches and Mentors?



Adapt Coaching and Mentoring for Informal Settings

Coaching and mentoring are vital parts of the skill set of a good manager but they are also important components of an HR strategy. To be effective in supporting the organization, HR cannot be restricted to simply telling the organization what it must do. Coaching and mentoring are part of informal learning and increasingly important to building a culture of continuous improvement.

To maximize experience-sharing in a dynamic work environment, leaders

and managers across the organization must be trained to coach and mentor employees so they can grow in their jobs and build their potential.

However, six out of 10 organizations believe their managers don't offer enough coaching to their employees, according to Brandon Hall Group research. The research also reveals the lack of coaching and feedback is the top barrier impeding competency and skill development.

25%

75%

On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the current quality and effectiveness of coaching and mentoring in your organization.

(1 = Not at all effective; 5 = Excellent)

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How Can We Develop Great Coaches and Mentors?



Be Adaptive About Returning to Work

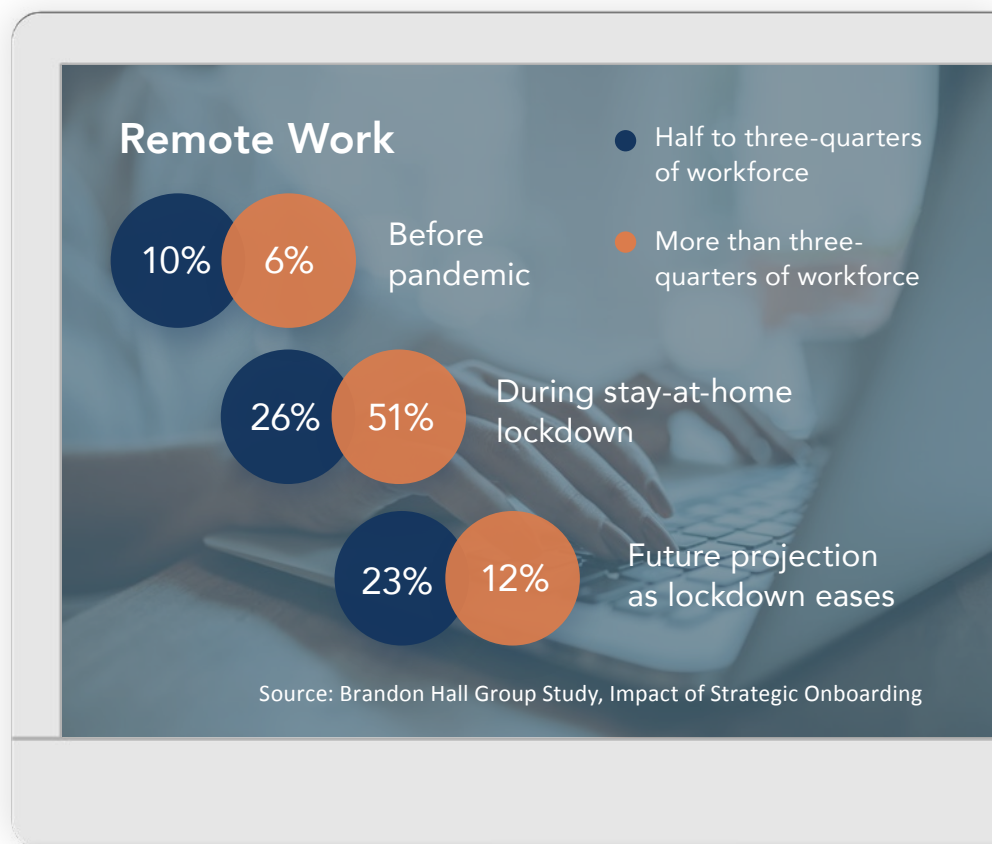
There has been a lot of discussions recently about the disconnect between employers and employees when it comes to returning to work. The Great Resignation may even reflect some of this disconnect. For many organizations, discovering that their workforce could be just as, if not more productive when working from home, has been welcome news and changed the hiring practices at many leading organizations, allowing them to recruit workers from new geographies.

For other organizations, strict rules about who is expected to return to work caused rifts in the workplace. Brandon Hall Group research shows there will be much higher numbers of remote workers than before the pandemic and the trend will only continue. Instead

of attempting to “return to normal,” organizations should assume that 2022 is “post-normal” and adopt newer policies more in line with workers’ wants and needs.

Even if certain types of workers must be in the physical location, it is worth looking at their job structure and giving opportunities for days where all work is

performed remotely (administrative work, for instance). Also, some workers who cannot or are strongly opposed to working in the office should be given the choice to transition to jobs where remote work is more feasible. Either way, employees and employers will benefit from having a more flexible work arrangement.



Look for New Ways to Measure Culture

The change to more informal workplaces means that there must be similar changes in how we measure culture. Metrics that rely on observable behaviors will be less valuable as more employees work in various locations, for example, and pulse surveys and some sentiment analyses can be unreliable due to external factors changing how people feel in the moment. Instead, organizations should look for measures that show the informal communications between employees such as network analyses, the adoption of wellness programs or employee-developed social clubs. Regardless of approach, there are certain principles worth remembering:

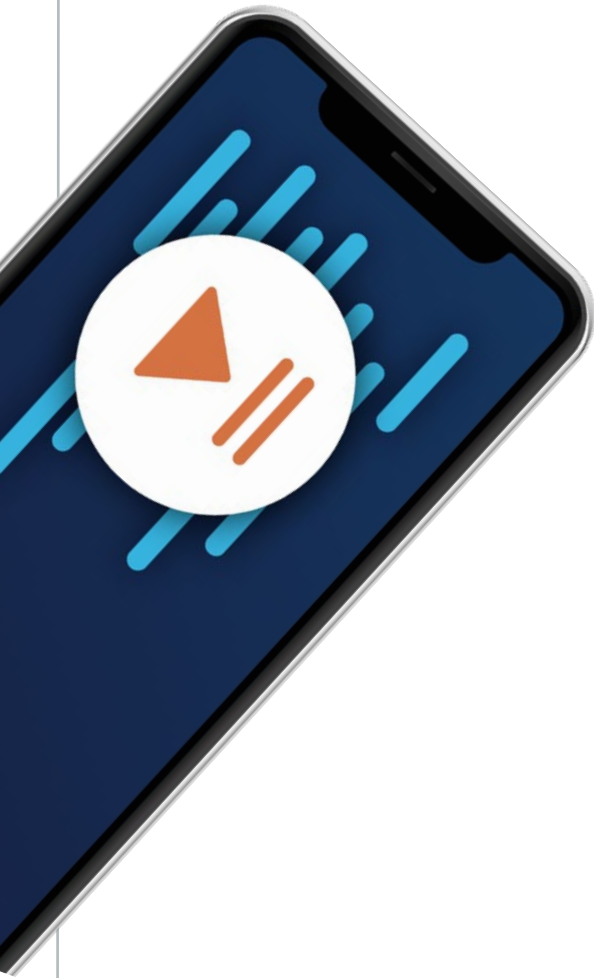


- › **There is no “right” approach.** The metrics measured must reflect the starting state and the end goal. There is an incorrect approach, however, which is to use the metrics themselves as a goal rather than business results, which is the ultimate goal.
- › **Use constant feedback on whichever metrics are chosen.** Review weekly at a minimum to ensure the metrics are a) not being overly affected by external factors (e.g., vaccine rollouts, weather, back-to-school) and b) relevant to the change you want to see, measured by a more objective set of metrics such as revenue or market share.
- › **Do not tie rewards to cultural adoption.** This will only result in a superficial set of learned behaviors that will be extinct the moment the reward goes away or shifts.

43%

of organizations said culture was one of the key influences on their ability to implement their workforce strategy.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Workforce Management Maturity



Anton Maletich

Director of Learning & Development
Cushman & Wakefield

“Our salespeople are the primary people in our offices right now.”

“There are exceptions like the office staff, the people in the copy room or the people who run office operations. But the salespeople are the ones who have come back to the office first and continue to come back, and they are coming back because they thrive on that collaboration.”



*MANAGING THE INFORMAL WORK CULTURE
FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE*

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Connect with us today. Email us at success@brandonhall.com.

For those participating in our studies: Your responses remain confidential and your name is not given to external parties nor associated with responses. Survey findings are only reported in aggregate. If you agree, you may be contacted by an analyst to request a confidential, qualitative research interview.

High-Performing Organizations Will Use Analytics for “What-if” Scenarios More Than Ever

Although many organizations try to predict scenarios and possible shifts in the market, no organization could have predicted the global disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, that experience has taught many forward-thinking companies to start scenario-planning for even unlikely scenarios, using advanced analytics to make determinations on how to manage their workforce for many different situations.

People Analytics Will be Used to Make a More Employee-Centric Workplace

It may seem counterintuitive to use numbers and math to create a more people-centric workplace, but organizations that have truly objective, clean data will see it as a way to make unbiased decisions and give a voice to people who might have been missed otherwise. Text analytics, network analysis and machine learning can all be used to give agency to underserved parts of the workforce and more forms of communications also mean more data inputs for organizations to use to listen and respond to the thousands of voices in their increasingly spread-out places of work.

CHAPTER 9:

IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE ANALYTICS IN CREATING AN ENGAGED WORKFORCE

Treating Numbers as People

Integrations of Data Will Allow Organizations to Prove Business Impacts of New HR Efforts

People data is already used by all successful organizations, but unfortunately, much of the metrics generated from HR efforts are circular — engagement efforts only correlated to engagement metrics, for example. However, by integrating data from productivity programs, financial information and operational systems, organizations will now be able to show how engagement efforts affect things like win rate, revenue and profit.

New Engagement Data and Analytical Methods Will be on the Rise to Adapt to a New Workplace

The digitalization of the workforce was well underway long before the sudden rise in remote and hybrid workplaces. Although much of the work that has been done was reactive, now-successful organizations will need to be proactive in identifying new data sources and new ways of looking at that data to gain actionable insights. The companies that do this before their competitors will succeed where others fail.



PREDICTIONS



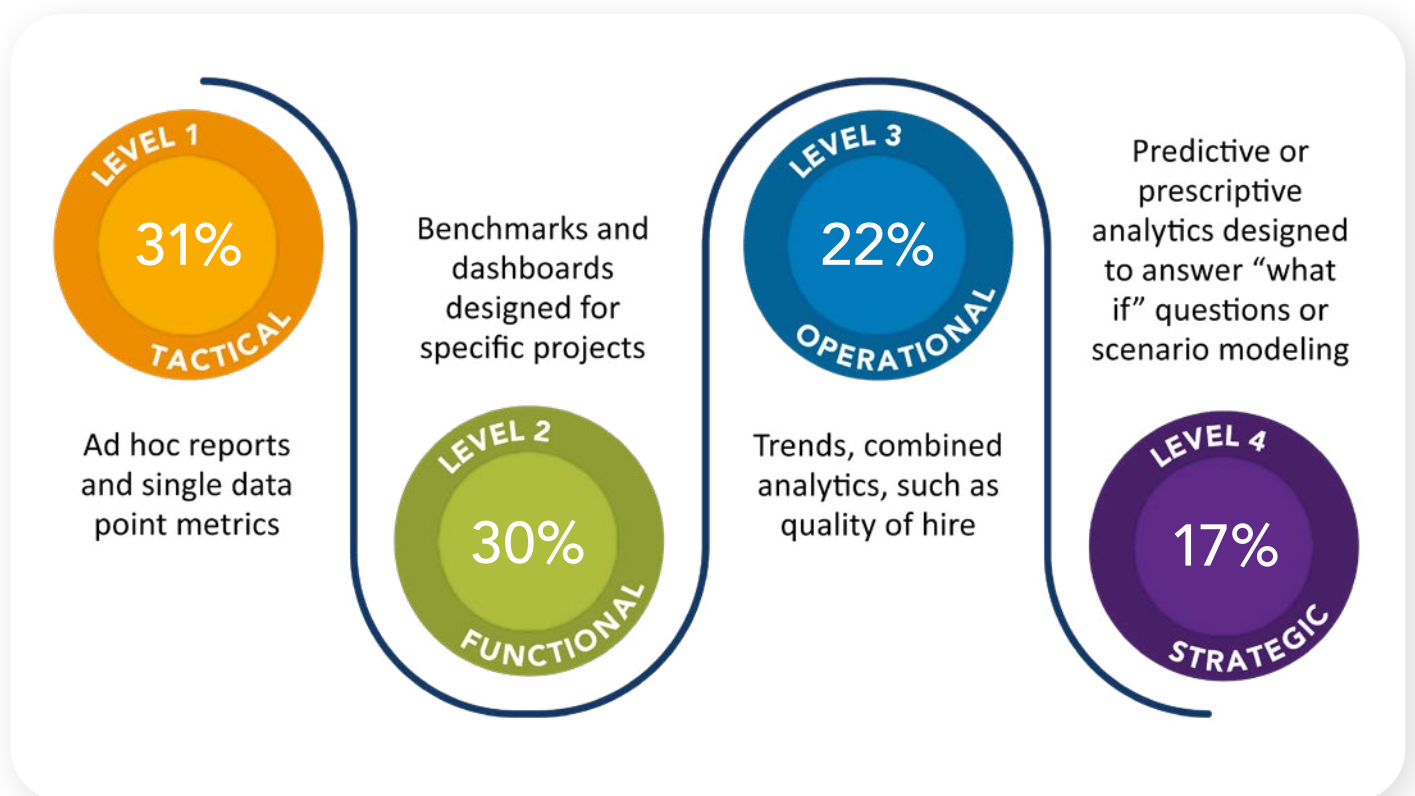
At first glance, it might seem a little strange to suggest that the key to having a more people-centric workplace is to rely on data, but think about it like this: If the data at your organization is good, then the only way to know the truth about your workers, including stress levels and interpersonal communication, is through data.

*CURRENT
STATE*

Using objective measures and making data-driven decisions creates trust, as it shows that leaders are not relying on subjective observations nor influenced by biases and temporary emotions that plague many unstable organizations.

The problem with using data to create a more engaged workforce, though, is that much of the data at companies is not good or not integrated across multiple platforms. Before organizations can begin to make predictions about their workforce to increase engagement, they must first ensure they have the necessary people skills and technology to allow them to do so.

Analytics Maturity in 2021



Source: Brandon Hall Group People Data and Analytics Study



There are three main concerns when it comes to using data to make people-related decisions: **security, privacy** and the **dehumanization of the workforce**.

productivity or to allow managers to have more direct reports on their teams. Employees see this and become distrustful of how machine learning and algorithms may be treating them as merely a number or a part of some vast machine rather than as an actual person. It is difficult to overcome this distrust but a good first step is in maintaining complete transparency when using people analytics for any reason.

The first two are matters of policy, technology and procedure, addressed through standardized processes and proven technology but the dehumanization of the workforce is trickier.

Up until recently, much of the available HCM technology has been marketed as a way to increase



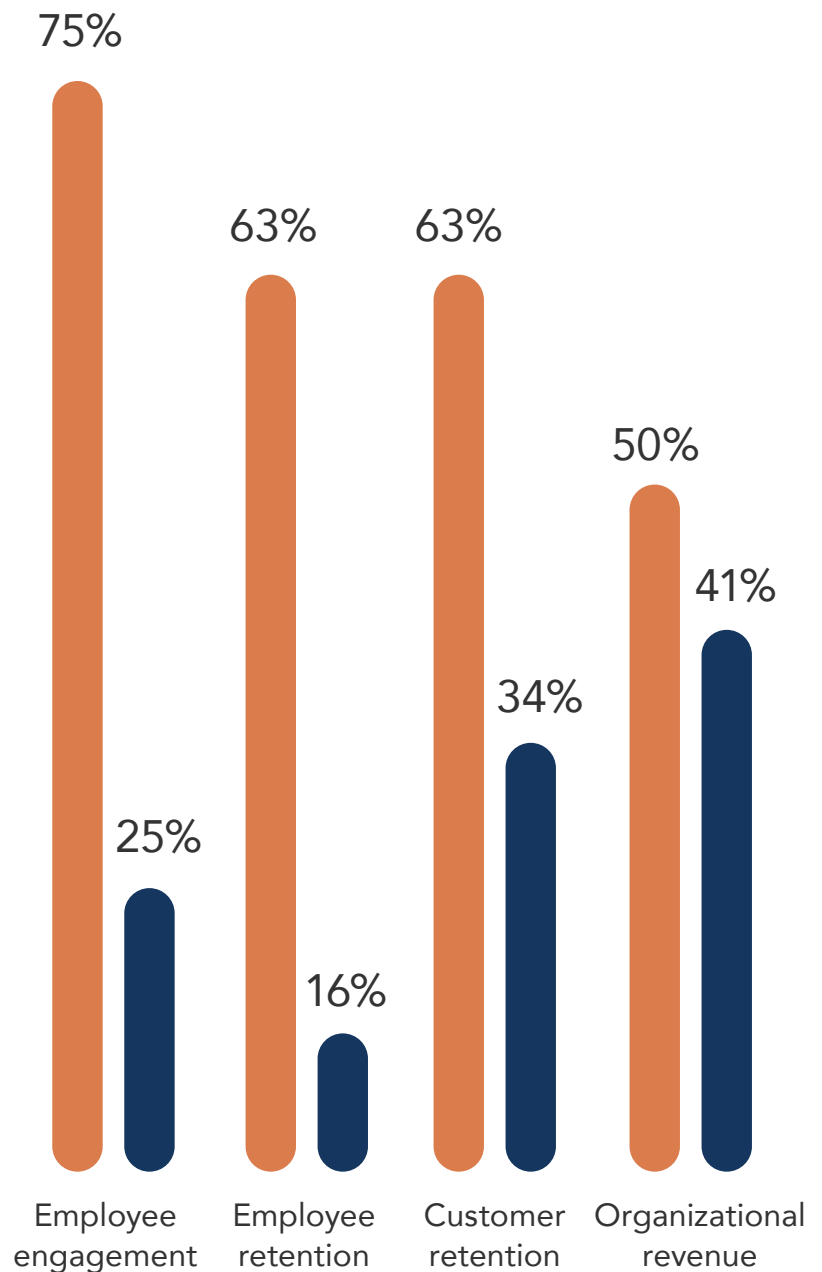
Taking a more data-driven approach to improving employee engagement is proven to work by the data. Organizations that rate themselves higher on the people analytics maturity curve consistently outperform their peers on all employee engagement metrics, including other metrics that are affected by engagement, such as employee retention or customer satisfaction.

157 CONSEQUENCES

Customer retention is a highly underrated data point when it comes to employee-centric data. It stands to reason employees feeling more engaged with their company are passing along those feelings, however indirectly, to the customers they interact with. However, that is also true for those organizations with fully functioning data systems in such a strong way (29% more organizations see an increase in customer retention if they have fully automated data collection and analysis), it shows the connection between those systems and employee engagement.

People Analytics

- Percentage of organizations with fully automated data collection and analysis that saw an increase in this KPI
- Percentage of organizations with non-automated data collection or integration that saw an increase in this KPI



Source: Brandon Hall Group
People Data and Analytics Study

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Using people data and analytics are not enough to improve workforce engagement. There are many questions to consider before making a big investment in becoming a more analytically driven organization.

Here are some things to consider when thinking about using analytics to drive engagement:

- › Who should be in charge of collecting and analyzing data?
- › What systems do we currently have in place to gather engagement data and are those integrated with our other HCM systems?
- › What are the overall business reasons for improving engagement and what data can we use to prove the link between business outcomes and our engagement efforts?
- › How do we collect people data and communicate the collection and use of that data to our employees?
- › What engagement data and analysis will have the biggest impact on our business and future decisions?



Start by Understanding the Current Analytics Capabilities at Your Organization

Not all business decisions need objective data but there are very few that would not benefit from it. Be creative when thinking about the types of data your organization might gather, then audit your own organization's ability to gather and use that data.

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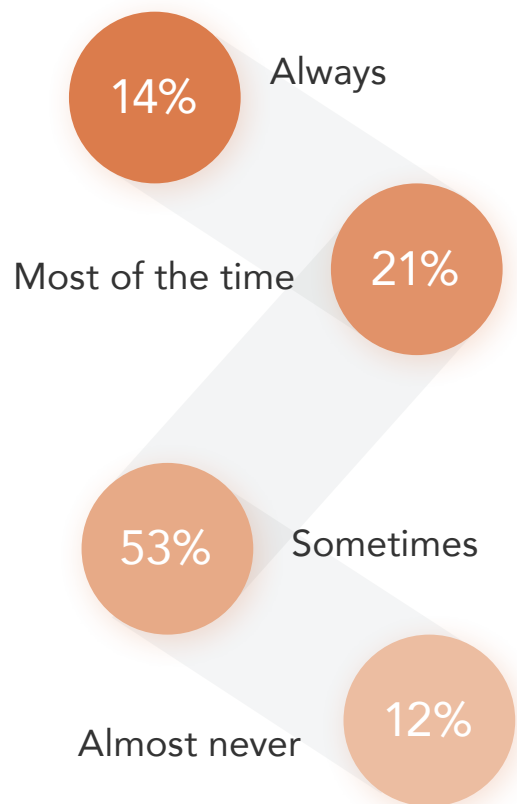
GROUP POV

Remember that there are capabilities in terms of people (analytical skills), technology (data collection and analyses) and process (security and privacy). Using data to create a more people-centric view of your organization is not only reasonable but also the only way to remain competitive in today's market. But that does not mean that your organization is currently capable of an entire cultural transformation. Starting too early can be disastrous for later efforts if your organization is not truly ready yet.

Improve the Foundational Elements of Your Organization's Data Collection First, then Deploy and Make Use of the Insights from that Data

Decision-makers are distrustful of data that has not been properly collected and scrubbed. No matter how refined a model or algorithm might be, it cannot make up for improper or incorrect data being fed in; garbage in, garbage out, as the adage goes. All data must be checked for reliability (are the same data points being seen in identical circumstances?) and validity (is the data a reliable indicator of objective truth?) before it can be used. Once that is done, then it is up to the data leaders at an organization to make sure the right resources, in time and technology, are given for using the data for improving engagement.

When your organization undertakes an initiative that requires data analysis, are the proper resources and timelines provided to produce a meaningful result that will significantly impact the business?



Source: Brandon Hall Group People Data and Analytics Study

Integrate People Data from Across the Organization to Find the Biggest Engagement Impact Areas

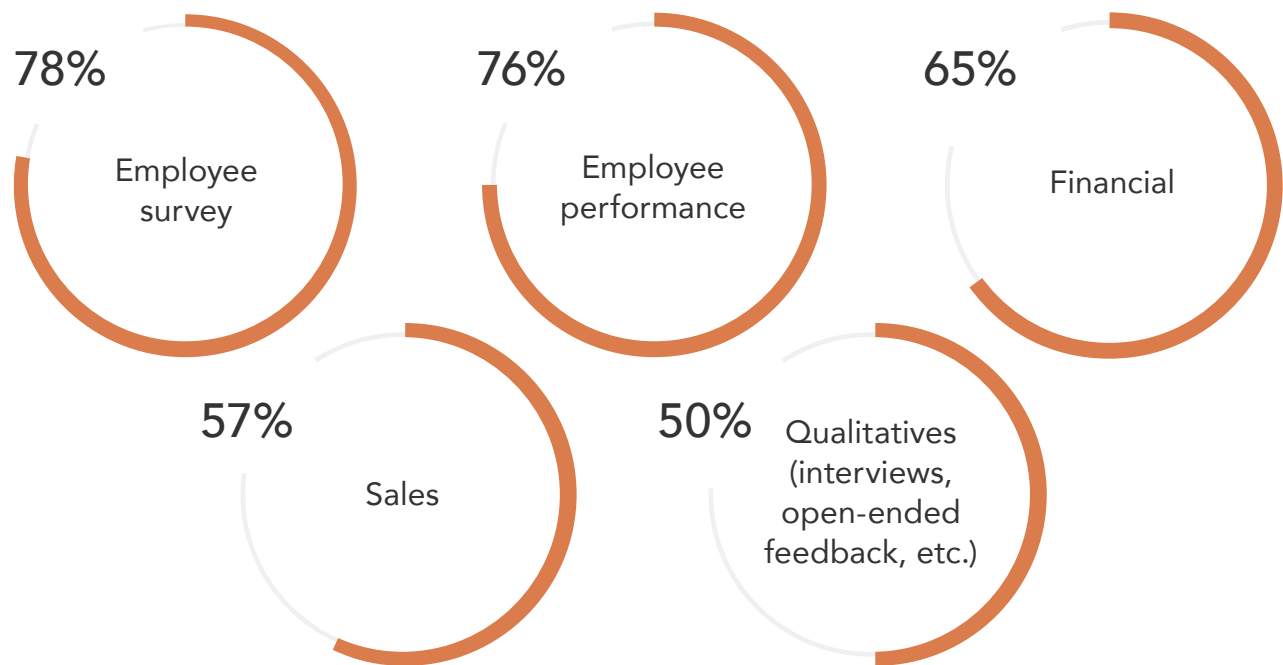
Integration is considered the most important feature of an analytics technology platform but not all integration is created equal. Many integration types are available and several systems are marketed as being fully integrated but that can mean many things. It's one thing for systems to have a single login but quite another to be able to use data from an onboarding system, for example, and have it used to determine impact on engagement metrics by a fully integrated system. This is the power of HCM software that is truly full-suite; the ability to see the impact of efforts made in one aspect of HCM and see it affect another, or even broader business metrics such as revenue or profitability. Of course, technology alone is not a cure for an organization struggling with people skills or a data-driven-resistant culture; a successful organization must have all the pieces in place to deploy its analytical capabilities.



Look for New Data Sources and New Metrics to Determine Engagement

Many organizations have traditional KPIs they have monitored for years but that does not mean those are the only metrics to monitor or that the data presently being collected is the only data available. It is worth the time to reevaluate strategic-level KPIs and data sources to ensure that engagement analytics are optimized and data sources are thoroughly vetted.

What types of data does your organization collect?



Source: Brandon Hall Group People Data and Analytics Study

Employee surveys are the most common type of data collected but even those may have different sources. Many talent management and engagement technology platforms have options for instant feedback, pulse surveys and daily check-ins that could be considered data sources for analyzing engagement. Similarly, although open-ended feedback sources are not used as often as other forms of people data, modern HCM technology often comes with the ability to do text analytics or other means of scouring qualitative data for things such as sentiment analysis or keyword analytics. Work with the stakeholders to ensure that all possible data sources are considered.

Find Ways to Improve Engagement Now, but also Use Analytics to Plan for Possible Future Scenarios

The need to improve engagement is real and should be the first priority, but if the last two years taught us anything, it is the importance of planning for scenarios in which traditional methods of monitoring and improving engagement may not suffice. Start by using the clean, true data available at your organization now to make recommendations based on current conditions to improve engagement outcomes. After that, use data that comes in over time to look for trends.

Once historic trends and effects of changes made in real-time are seen in the data, the final step is to see how results might change due to several plausible scenarios based on your organization type, size and industry. The final culmination of any analytical endeavor is to not present information but to make predictions and see how changes to some aspects of the employee experience may affect employee engagement levels in any number of realistic scenarios.





Michael M. Moon, Ph.D.

Global Director, Learning
Experience and People Analytics
Align Technologies

“Many HR leaders are afraid to bring data into the conversation for fear of losing touch with the human element.”

“In reality, by applying a data-driven approach to managing an organization’s people, we uncover what really matters and can tailor our approach to ensure we are maximizing the value of our human capital and making decisions based on what is really going on versus what we ‘think’ is going on.”



***KNOWING WHEN TO USE DATA
TO DETERMINE ENGAGEMENT***

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