

HR & L&D INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

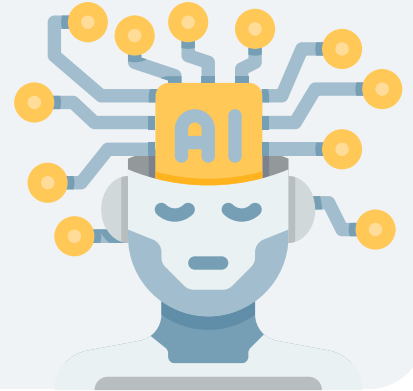
A summary of trends from interviews with HR and L&D leaders

TRENDS IN L&D

AI Integration Is Front and Center

L&D leaders are grappling with how best to adopt and integrate AI:

- Training employees on AI tools and language models is a high priority in organizations of all sizes and industries.
- Within L&D departments, teams are exploring how to use AI to accelerate content development, conduct skills assessments for employees, and enhance asynchronous learning.



Time Is the Biggest Barrier to Training

Every organization mentioned “lack of time” as the number one obstacle to learning. Leaders and learners alike struggle to prioritize professional development amid the demands of day-to-day work.

Teams are experimenting with multiple solutions to create time for learning:



1

Calendar Integration

Sync the LMS with employee calendars so sessions appear automatically, embedding learning in the workday.

3

Manager Buy-In

Link development goals to performance reviews so managers grant time for training and reward progress.

2

Sprint Planning

Add learning stories to Scrum sprints, ensuring teams set aside time each cycle for growth.

4

Extended Scheduling

Split courses into shorter sessions across many weeks to boost retention and cut disruption.

Shift from Open Enrollment to Needs-Based Learning

Traditional open-enrollment courses are often misaligned with business needs, leading to low engagement. Needs-based learning, in contrast, emphasizes strategic alignment, role relevance, and measurable outcomes.

Here's how L&D leaders are supporting needs-based learning:



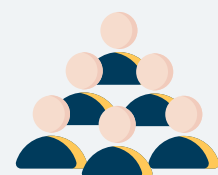
Consultative Partnerships

L&D teams partner with leaders to co-create goal-aligned learning roadmaps.



Targeted Training

Identify skill gaps and design targeted, role-specific training programs.



Cohort Delivery

Deliver learning in cohorts tackling real challenges for accountability and leader backing.

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TOP EMERGING CONTENT AREAS IN L&D

AI Literacy and Adoption

AI is no longer a future consideration—it's a current business imperative. Organizations are prioritizing training on AI fundamentals, ethics, limitations, and role-specific upskilling (e.g., how marketers or engineers use AI tools). L&D teams also face mounting pressure to drive adoption of approved platforms and demonstrate ROI.



Power Skills

In a world where technical tasks are increasingly automated, interpersonal skills are critical. Many organizations are investing in leadership, communication, and emotional-intelligence programs. A key challenge: these skills often don't "stick" unless they're reinforced through culture, daily team rituals, and manager role-modeling.

Leadership Development

Leaders at all levels are linchpins for engagement, retention, and performance. Companies are building multi-year pipelines that teach coaching, feedback delivery, and psychological-safety practices—and shifting from ad-hoc workshops to quarterly cohorts and peer communities to ensure real-world application.



Change Resilience and Adaptability

Volatility is the norm—organizations need teams who can pivot quickly. L&D leaders are seeking out programs that will help employees build skills to navigate change, ambiguity, and uncertainty. These programs often focus on cultivating a growth mindset, strengthening emotional resilience, and building confidence in uncertain environments.

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WHAT LEADERS ARE ASKING FOR

A Preference for In-Person Learning or Hybrid Learning Models

Why it matters:

Despite digital trends, leaders value in-person sessions for engagement and connection. At the same time, remote teams need on-demand flexibility—so many organizations are piloting hybrid formats combining live kickoffs, virtual or onsite cohorts, and microlearning bursts to reinforce content over time.

What you can do:

- Craft a blended journey with instructor-led launches, followed by staggered asynchronous modules.
- Embed accountability into self-paced tracks using automated reminders and quick post-module quizzes.

Ability to Prove Impact

Why it matters:

With tighter budgets and executive scrutiny, L&D must deliver more than completion rates and satisfaction scores. Leaders are demanding clear, data-driven evidence of business outcomes—whether that's revenue growth, process efficiency gains, or improvements in team health.

What you can do:

- Align each program to specific KPIs (e.g., sales growth, adoption rates, engagement scores) before launch.
- Use dashboards and pulse surveys to track correlations between learning activities and performance metrics.

Supportive Partnerships

Why it matters:

Learning leaders are seeking vendors that are true collaborators rather than just service providers. They value vendors who take time to understand their unique challenges, co-create tailored solutions, provide strategic learning guidance, and actively support implementation and long-term success.

What you can do:

- Invite vendors into early strategy workshops to map skill gaps, timelines, and success metrics together.
- Schedule regular check-ins for vendors to present benchmarks, advise on emerging trends, and adjust rollout plans.

Marketing Learning Internally

Why it matters:

Even top-tier programs can underperform if visibility is low. Leaders recognize that L&D must become its own marketer—promoting offerings through the right channels, aligning messages with company goals, and creating buzz to drive adoption.

What you can do:

- Launch internal campaigns featuring success stories, intranet spotlights, and live demos to showcase program value.
- Activate “learning champions” in each department to amplify awareness, answer questions, and sustain momentum.

