



HCI

Human Capital Institute
The Global Association
for Strategic Talent Management

 **CGS**[®]

Talent Pulse

Learning Unbound:
Agile Employee Development



About the Research Partner



CGS Learning

Enterprise Learning & Training Solutions

<http://www.cgsinc.com/en/enterprise-learning>

CGS Learning is the leading provider of **outcome-based professional development solutions** and a trusted partner to many of the world's most admired companies.

Focused on the needs of organizations operating in fast-paced industries, **CGS Learning delivers expert learning and training solutions** (instructor-led training, custom eLearning, staff augmentation, blended learning, and learning collaboration) that connect and strengthen core functions.

We can deliver one **comprehensive end-to-end solution** that reaches across the entire organization — addressing the fundamental needs of employees — from management to interns — or **develop core custom learning solutions one at a time**, growing the program along with the company.

Talent Pulse from the Human Capital Institute (HCI) explores the latest trends and challenges in talent management. Each quarter, a new report is released in conjunction with one of the four HCI Communities. Talent Pulse is designed to provide practitioners and decision makers with prescriptive methods to rehabilitate the health and wellness of human capital, and empower employees and leaders to effectively address future challenges.

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Learning Unbound: Agile Employee Development

In 2012, U.S. organizations spent \$164,200,000,000 dollars on training and development and, on average, employees receive 38.5 hours of training per year.¹ **Do all these dollars and hours add up to better employee performance and increased organizational agility and value for the business?** To be sure that they do L&D practitioners need to continuously evaluate their programs and initiatives, but this rarely happens. Only 39% of practitioners report that their organization regularly reviews and improves delivery of L&D programs² and only 21% measure if learning used on the job.³

To address these L&D challenges and become an agile organization, HCI recommends **creating a learning culture where learning happens for everyone, everyday**. An organization with a strong learning culture values and places a high priority on the learning and development of all its employees. There is a belief demonstrated by leadership that learning is a continuous process, and challenges, mistakes, and risks are opportunities to gain experience and knowledge and not situations to be avoided. Ideas and feedback are encouraged and valued. Developmental programs are matched to immediate and long-term business needs, delivered through various channels but mostly on the job, and evaluated and measured for impact. This growth mindset paired with developmental opportunities for all causes employees to adapt well to changing business environments, thus creates an agile organization.

1. ASTD. (2013). *State of the Industry Report*. Retrieved from <https://www.td.org/Publications/Blogs/ATD-Blog/2013/12/ASTD-Releases-2013-State-of-the-Industry-Report>.
2. Profitability. *Learning with Impact: How L&D Can Deliver Better Business Results*. Retrieved from http://www.profitability.com/images/uploads/resources/learning_with_impact_-_research_2014.pdf
3. CIPD. (2015). *Annual Survey Report: 2015 Learning and Development*. Retrieved from http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/learning-development_2015.pdf



Key Takeaways

- Organizations are abandoning the strategy of learning and development solely for high-potentials and leaders to learning for all employees. Formal mentoring programs are expected to grow 131% over the next two years and there are plans in place to invest more in learning technologies such as, LMS and knowledge sharing platforms. Most developmental programs are focused on on-the-job learning.
- In the next two years, the overwhelming majority (81%) of surveyed practitioners plan to increase their development of managers as coaches of employees. In that same amount of time, developing a learning culture and evaluation of L&D will be of higher priority for 74% and 67%, respectively, of the HR and L&D practitioners surveyed.
- A strong learning culture is where learning is viewed as a process not an event and risk-taking and mistakes are seen as growth opportunities. Only 11% of surveyed organizations embody this belief, and these organizations are more likely to have a strong leadership pipeline and be confident in their high-potentials. A strong learning culture evolves the Learning and Development (L&D) function. L&D is better aligned to business objectives and is seen as a value add for the organization. In this environment learning is embedded into everyday activities, and L&D practitioners are viewed as learning consultants rather than gatekeepers of employee development.
- Currently, the measurement of L&D programs is focused on tactical, present-focused metrics rather than being anticipatory of future needs or evaluating the business impact. Most organizations are auditing their L&D offerings on a yearly basis. With the lack of measurement and infrequent strategy discussions, L&D functions can miss opportunity to add value to the business and its employees.



Planning and Priorities

“

Learning and development in our organization is currently given a lot of lip service, but because of budget limits, it generally defaults to mission critical individuals and capabilities getting the most exposure and access to learning and development.

- Survey Respondent

”



Selective Learning Opportunities

E-learning is the most popular method for all employees, including high potentials. Leaders and future leaders are more likely to have opportunities to learn and grow on the job and from others, while formal training is available for all employees.

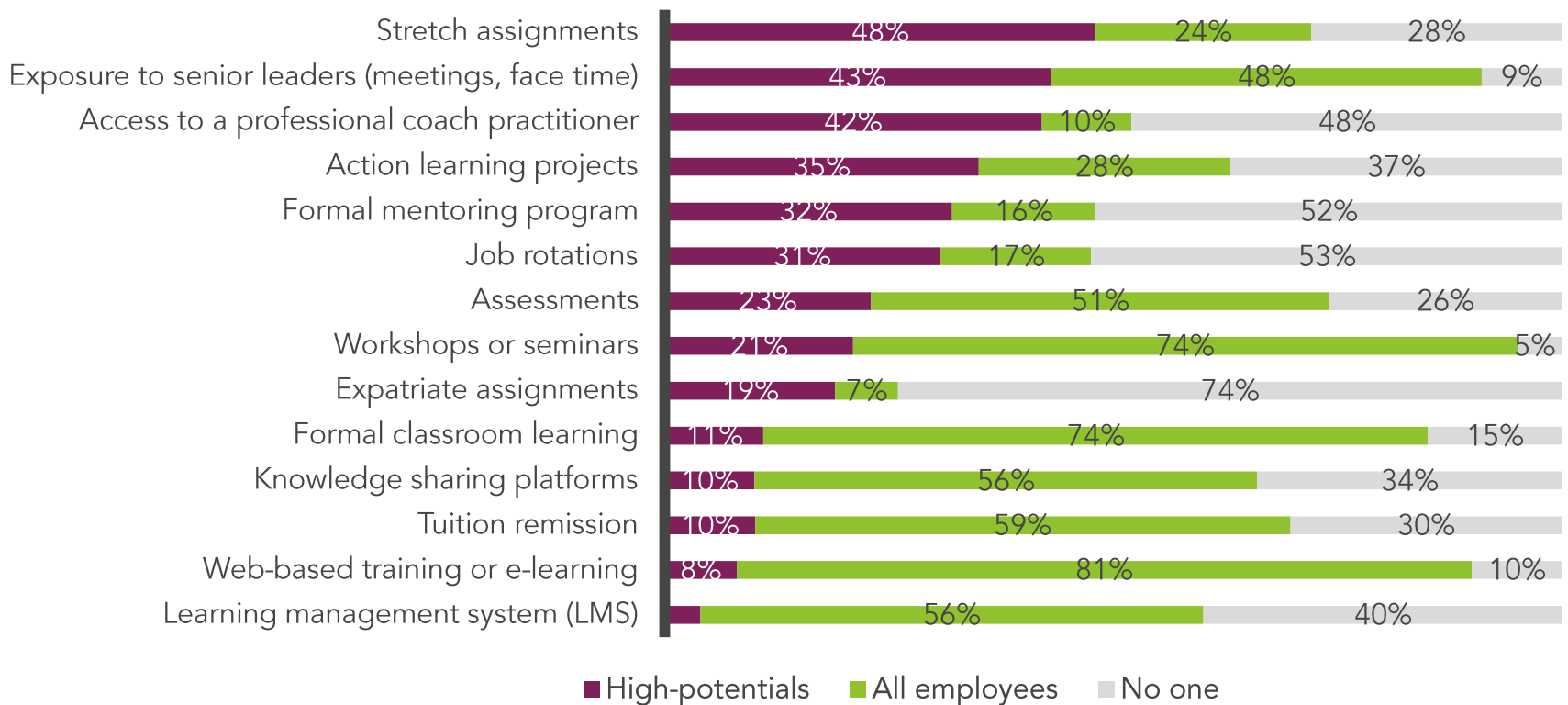


Figure 1. Today, we offer the following to either high-potentials/leaders, all employees, or no one.



Future Learning Opportunities

In two years time, more and more employees, not only high-potentials, will have opportunities for job rotations, action learning projects, stretch assignments, and access to mentors. Organizations will be opening up their learning channels to all employees.

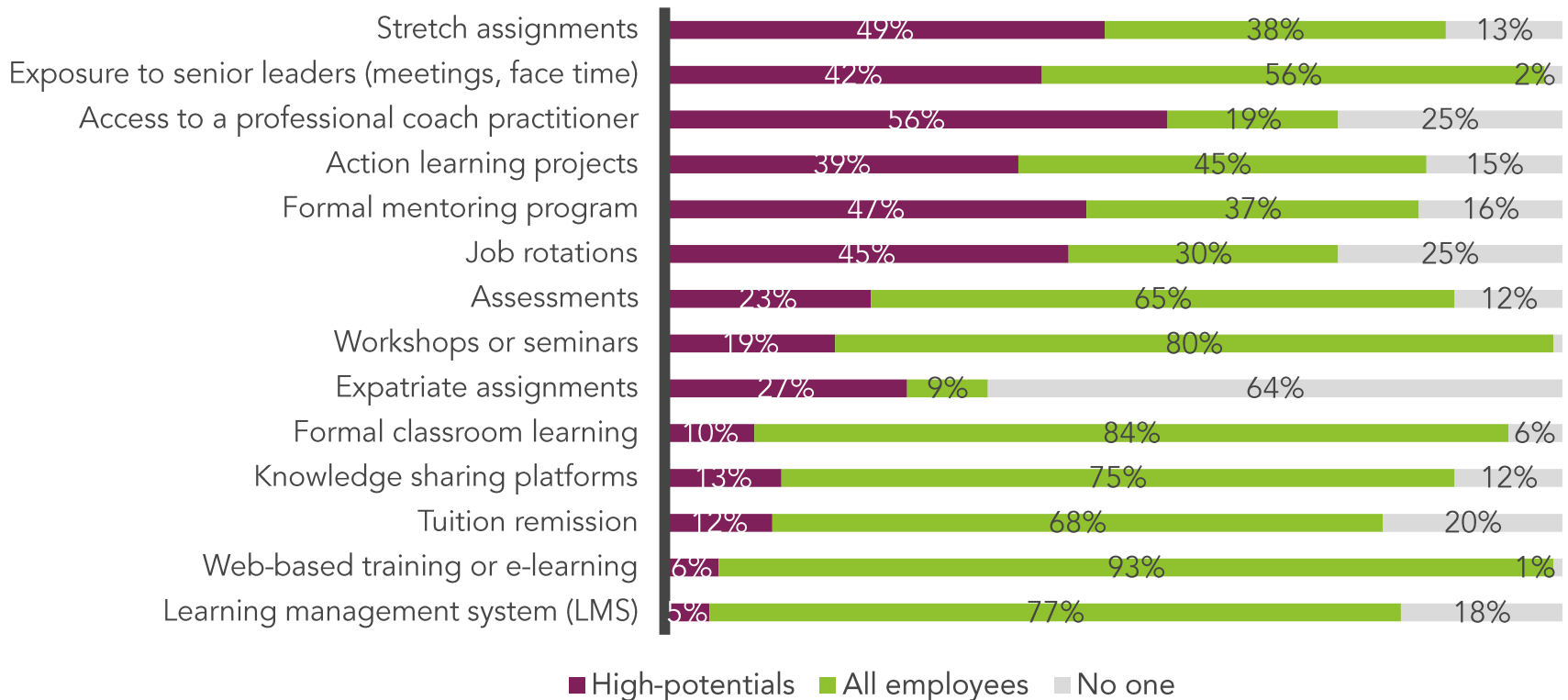


Figure 2. In two years, we will offer the following to either high-potentials/leaders, all employees, or no one.



Largest Growth Areas

Formal mentoring programs for all employees is expected to grow 131% over the next two years. Organizations plan to invest more in learning technologies such as, LMS and knowledge sharing platforms.

Table 1. Areas with the largest growth in usage over the next two years for all employees.

For All Employees	Percentage Growth
Formal mentoring program	131%
A professional coach practitioner	90%
Job rotations	76%
Action learning projects	61%
Stretch assignments	58%
Learning management system (LMS)	38%
Knowledge sharing platforms	34%
Expatriate assignments	29%
Assessments	27%



L&D Plans

Managers will be the primary developers of talent by using coaching skills. Developing a learning culture and evaluating L&D programs are upcoming priority areas for most organizations.

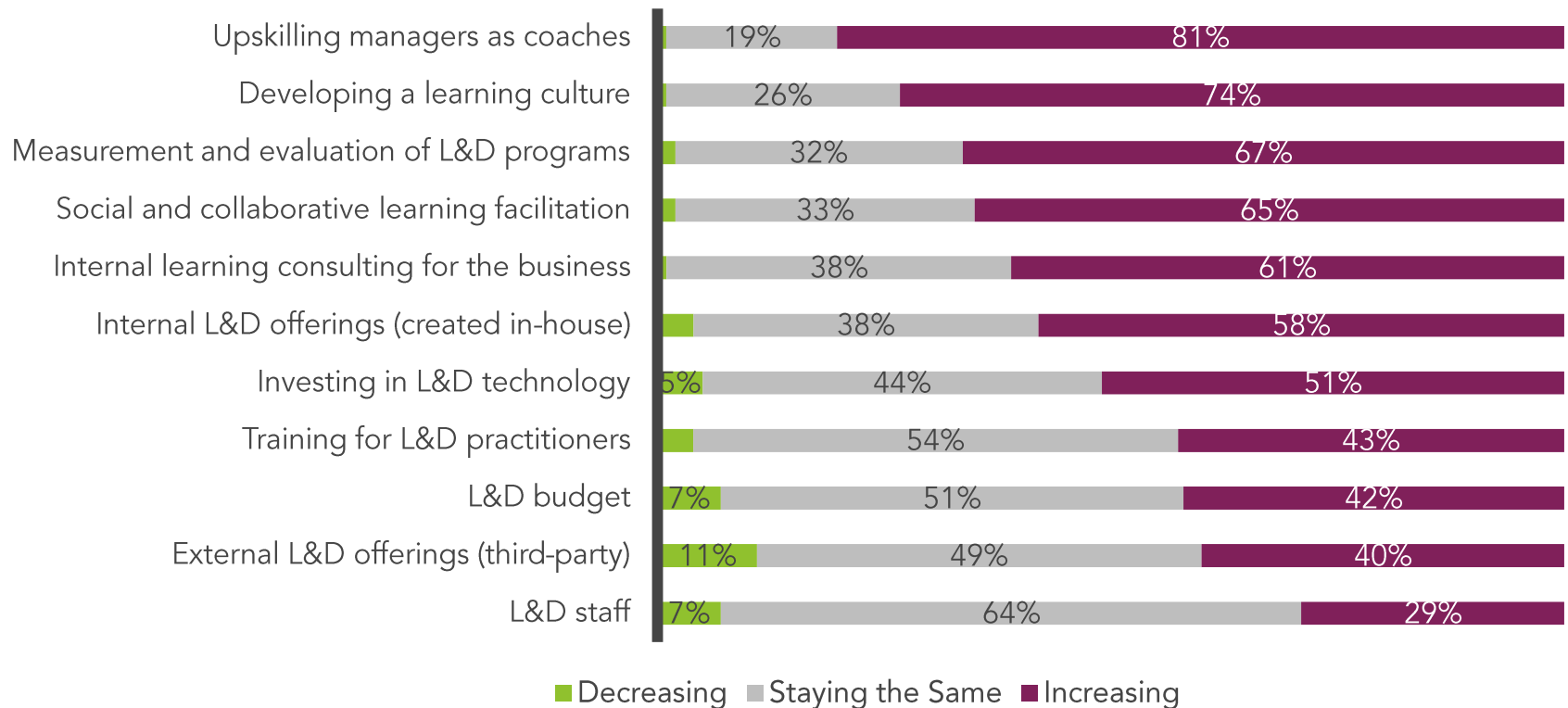


Figure 3. Will each of the following items decrease, increase, or stay the same in the next two years?



Learning Champions

Senior leaders are most likely to set the L&D priorities for the organization, while HR and L&D practitioners are not usually involved in these conversations.



Figure 4. What groups work together to determine the L&D priorities for your organization? (Select all that apply.)



Benefits of a Learning Culture

“

I want this organization to understand, embrace, and SUPPORT a learning culture! We compete with ourselves. We say we don't have the time or budget to send employees and managers through training. The time and money we "don't have now" results in twice as much down the road when our people aren't properly trained.

- Survey Respondent

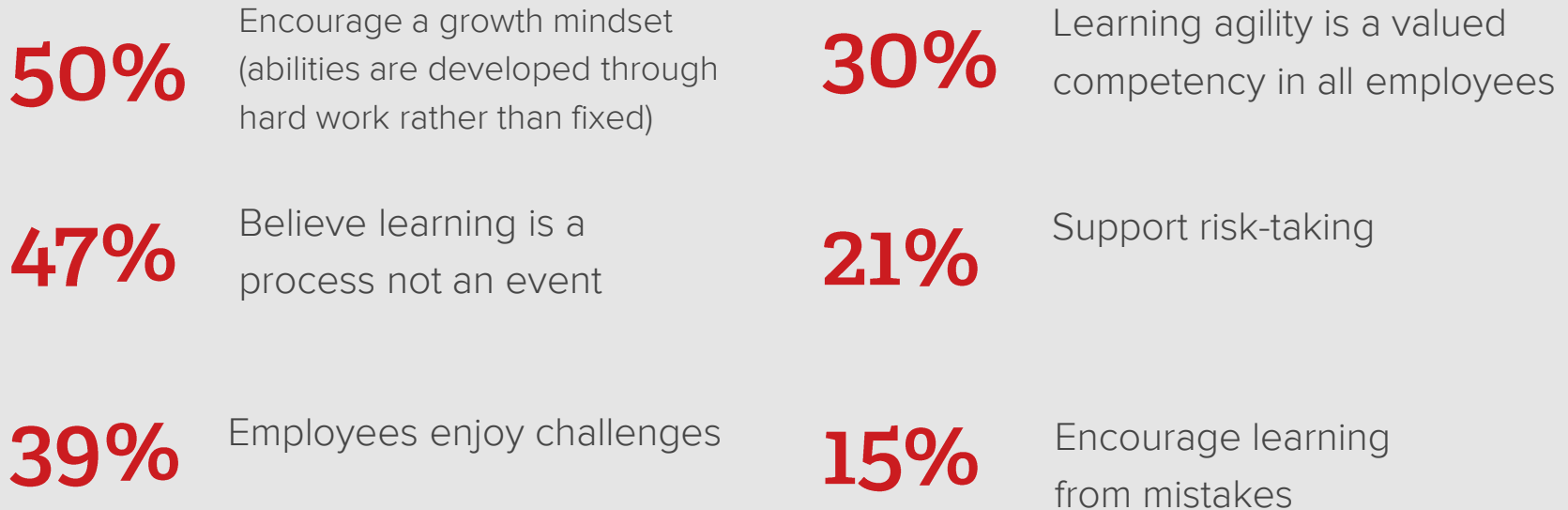
”



What is a Learning Culture?

Based on secondary research, we define a learning culture with the characteristics below. Only 11% of the organizations surveyed embody 5 or more of these values and beliefs.

Figure 5. To what extent to the following statements describe your organization, on average? (Percentage of respondents who chose “Exactly Descriptive”)





Learning Culture Outcomes

Organizations with a learning culture are more likely to have a strong leadership pipeline and be confident in their high-potentials. L&D is better aligned to business objectives and is seen as a value add for the organization.

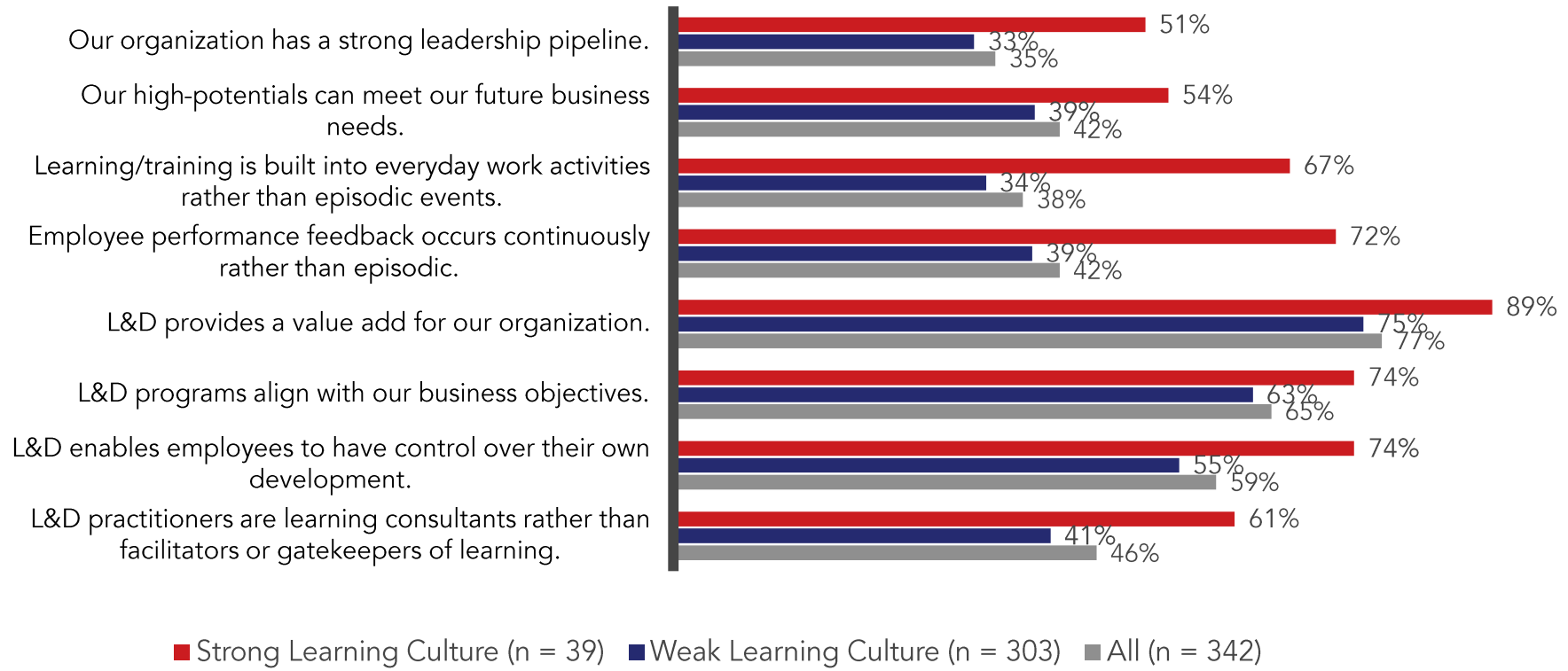
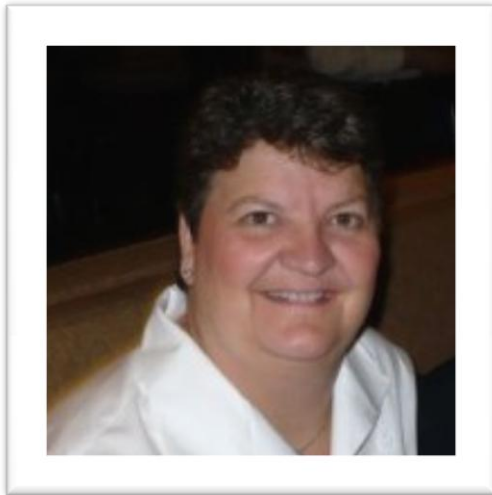


Figure 6. Percentage of respondents “Agree” and “Strongly Agree”.



(((🎙️))) Talent Pulse Podcast



The Ingredients of a Successful Learning Culture

Carmen Allison

Vice President, Global Talent Development
Williams- Sonoma, Inc

“

When we look at turnover, we look at where they went and whether it was a promotion or not. If they went as a promotion we consider that a success. What we have done successfully is develop that person, their competency, and their ability to move up to another level.

”



Measurement and Alignment of L&D

“

L&D needs to get much more tight into the long-term business strategies for companies, especially as seasoned employees retire and leave open major leadership roles. L&D accountability is a real issue in my company and companies in many industries.

– Survey Respondent

”



L&D Evaluation

Measurement of L&D programs is focused on tactical, present-focused metrics rather than being anticipatory of future needs or evaluating the impact.



Figure 7. How often do you measure the following with regard to L&D programs and initiatives?



Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model

One of the best known evaluation methods is the Kirkpatrick model. Again, most measurement is of reactions to the training rather than behavior change or ROI.

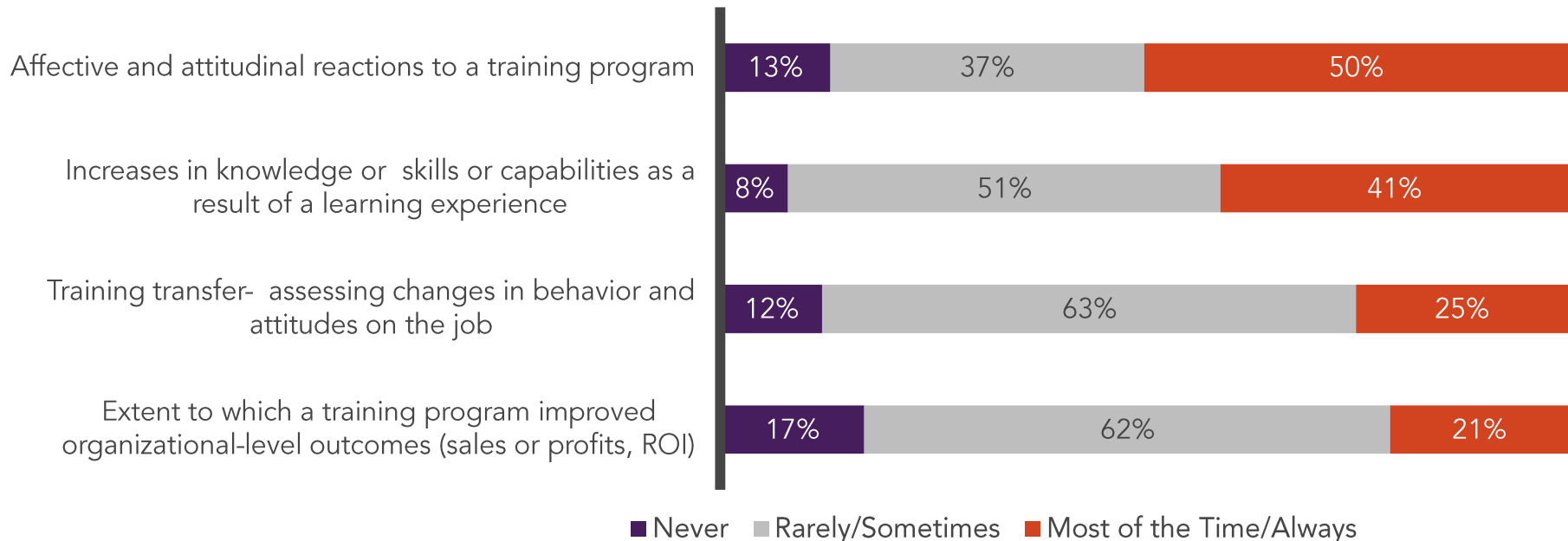
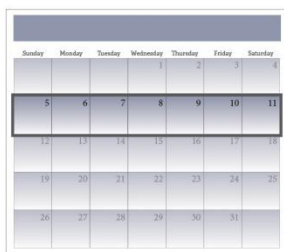


Figure 8. How often do you measure the following with regard to L&D programs and initiatives?



Conduct a Learning Audit

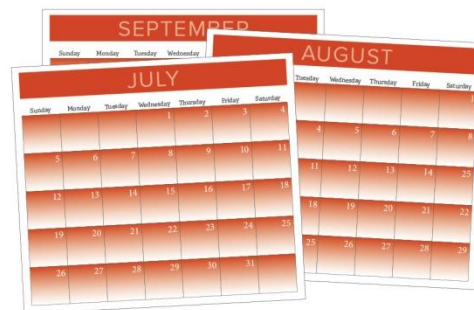
Most organizations address their learning strategy yearly.



Weekly
2%



Monthly
6%



Quarterly
21%



Yearly
46%



Every 2 to 3 years
18%



Never
8%

Figure 9. How often does your organization revisit and revise L&D offerings and programs?



Talent Pulse Podcast



Design Learning Solutions that Improve Business Reaction Time

Lisa Jackson
Executive Strategy Director
frog design



An emerging way of measuring learning is the equivalent of the quantified self. Putting sensors around the organization and collecting data... organizations are starting to see where they are benefiting from the initiatives they put in place.





Prescribe and Apply

Training managers to use coaching skills is the number one priority area from our study. Our members share their strategies for empowering managers to be more effective at developing and coaching their employees.

- **Have development opportunities available at your organization**
 - *“All employees are required to take a minimum of 24 hours of training and development. This is an opportunity for the employee to reach out to the manager with development opportunities. This enables the manager and employee to discuss if the development opportunity assists the employee in reaching his /her professional goals.”*
- **Offer training to managers on how to lead and engage people**
 - *“Last year we eliminated formal written appraisals in favor of a coaching approach. Training, tools, and resources are being provided to both supervisors and staff as this new approach moves forward. Over 400 training sessions have been provided to all levels and new tools have been developed in response to supervisor and staff requests.”*
- **Hire coaches for managers**
 - *“We are hiring coaches for our senior management team members. This will help our communication breakdown issues. The plan is to improve our culture by helping our managers see that in order to take risks their employees must not be afraid to make mistakes in fear of repercussions.”*
- **Set expectations and hold managers accountable**
 - *“We have a 12-week program that combines three-hour lab every other week aligned with leadership competencies and behaviors, action learning assignments, and coaching sessions to hold learners accountable and analyze their personal development. There is a 30-day expectation that each participant continues to focus on their one competency with their three to four person team.”*



Prescribe and Apply

Our members share their strategies for empowering managers to be more effective at developing and coaching their employees.

- **Be future-focused**
 - *“Managers are encouraged to create development plans, look ahead to future needs of their business units, and close any gaps identified.”*
- **Supply tools and templates**
 - *“We are currently designing an employee development form that supervisors can use as a tool when discussing career goals and training needs with their employees. We have plans to offer training to supervisors on why employee development is so critical and how to use the form we are creating.”*
- **Reinforce the practice**
 - *“We provide frequent reminders on best practices in developing and coaching people, tools and guides, and training.”*
 - *“Our managers are encouraged as well as rated upon how they develop their teams. We highly encourage them to coach and have trained them to do so”*
- **Use assessments and surveys to measure outcomes**
 - *“We began implementing a 360 tool to help give individuals more feedback. We started a yearly employee engagement survey which results in action plans and performance objectives for managers.”*



Learn More - HCI Library



Solution Suites

- [Engage Your Learning Audience with Mobile Content](#)
- [Implementing 3D Learning](#)



Research Reports

- [How to Accelerate Leadership Development](#)
- [Building a Coaching Culture](#)



Events and Keynotes

- [2015 Learning and Leadership Development Conference Remodeling Learning and Leadership Development to Adapt to a Disruptive Talent and Business Landscape](#)
- [Standing the Test of Time: Accelerating the Leaders of Tomorrow to Drive our Culture and Longevity](#)



Webcasts

- [Design a Learning Strategy with Cross-Functional Collaboration and Partnership](#)
- [Learning ROI — Alignment, Technology, and Measurement Essentials for Results](#)
- [Agile L&D: How to Meet the Needs of the Business and the Learner](#)



About the Research

Level of Seniority	
C-level	11%
VP-level	9%
Director-level	27%
Manager-level	37%
Individual Contributor	14%

Role	
Human Resources / Talent Management	59%
Learning and Development	22%
Executive Management	6%

Number of Employees	
< 100	20%
100 to 999	32%
1,000 to 9,999	31%
10,000+	17%

Industry	
Business/Professional Services	14%
Financial Services/Real Estate/Insurance	12%
Auto/Industrial/Manufacturing	11%
Health care	8%
Chemicals/Energy/Utilities	8%
Government	8%

From June 4 to 24, 2015, a survey link was distributed via e-mail to a 16-item questionnaire to HCI members who opted into the HCI Survey Panel and into HCI electronic mailings. The results of this questionnaire, subject-matter expert interviews, and secondary sources form the basis of this research.

Note. $n = 342$ Only categories with at least 6% of the sample are displayed and 85% of respondents' organization are headquartered in North America.



HCI is the global association for strategic talent management and new economy leadership, and a clearinghouse for best practices and new ideas. Our network of expert practitioners, Fortune 1000 and Global 2000 corporations, government agencies, global consultants, and business schools contribute a stream of constantly evolving information, the best of which is organized, analyzed, and shared with members through HCI communities, research, education, and events.

For more information, please visit www.hci.org.

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