



Elucidat

Training Trends Report 2022

Exploring current digital learning challenges
and future opportunities to help you **grow**
quality and **scale-up** in 2022

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Overview

Over the last couple of years, organizations across the globe have seen huge changes. From new hybrid working to emerging skill gaps, the L&D team has stepped up and provided the support employees need to adapt. But what's next?

Insights from your peers in L&D, as well as the learners using training, should inform your choices. And that's where our 2022 Training Trends Report comes in.

Our data

This report brings together the views of the leaders and experts who shape learning experiences, and the employees who complete the training. We surveyed:

250+

L&D professionals

800+

Learners in a corporate environment

8

L&D industry experts

Our findings

We've taken the results of this survey and distilled it down to key stats and insights. Our findings cover four key areas:

Current challenges

Following another year of global uncertainty, it's not surprising that businesses faced some common L&D challenges. We explore the factors that combine to create these challenges.

Future trends

We've all learnt a lot from the rapid adoption of new tech and different learning approaches over the last few years. It's now time to build on this. We uncover five L&D trends that will go to the next level in 2022.

The modern learner

If L&D is going to be truly effective it needs to be people-centered. So how well do you know the people at the heart of your work? We explore the changing experiences and preferences of today's learners.

Industry expert insights

We've interviewed leading digital learning managers and industry experts about the year they see ahead. We explore the trends they want to take hold and the practical steps you should take to maximize your impact.

With these insights to hand, you can plan the best way to deliver value to your business going forward.

Top Industry Challenges

As businesses continue to adapt to shifting needs and evolving ways of working, L&D has proved key to keeping pace with change. Whether it's new skills programs or elearning updates, **training demand has remained high**. And this doesn't appear to be changing any time soon.

Of course, this renewed focus on employee's development is very welcome. But increased demand can also bring challenges. **Over 80%** of the L&D leaders we surveyed highlighted that they struggled with the combination of:

Responding at speed

Maintaining quality

Managing stakeholders

Producing training that delivers real-life impact across global organizations can be a complex process. It requires focused input from lots of people – all with different priorities and experience. Faced with urgent deadlines and training requests building up, the L&D team can easily become a bottleneck. With **over 25%** of learning leaders struggling to consider their future needs – short term necessities get prioritized over longer-term interests. These pressures only intensify if you need to scale up production. It can often feel like the only choices are to slow down and not deliver everything, or steam ahead with the risk that oversight is lost and quality reduced.

Demand is so fast moving. We're feeling overwhelmed and under equipped to manage the speed and scale of production while keeping on top of quality.

Anonymous learning leader

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Of course, there's no point delivering lots of training solutions at speed if they're not effective. As well as responding to increased demand, L&D teams are under pressure to make better use of learners' time and deliver greater impact. With **40%** of leaders highlighting a lack of investment or budget, it's essential that L&D teams can demonstrate their value to the business. And for large organizations, the main L&D cost isn't the software or effort involved in producing solutions. It's the time employees spend away from their day-to-day work while training. This time needs to be well spent.

When asked what approaches weren't working well in their organizations, many learning leaders weren't completely sure. But one thing was clear: **quality matters**. Long, text heavy and unengaging online learning was falling flat.



*Online learning that lacks engagement isn't working. It feels forced upon the employees and there's resistance, as they **don't see the benefits or any real world application.***

”

Anonymous learning leader

Faced with employee burnout, the need for shorter, sharper and more relevant learning experiences is greater than ever. It's about hitting that sweet spot: reducing learning time, while delivering better business performance impact.

So, how can busy learning managers meet all these needs? As you start to explore our key trends for 2022 you'll notice that they all have one thing in common. Whether it's the latest tech, updated methodology or a new content, these trends put people at the center of the solution. By underpinning all your work with the core principle of **people-centered learning**, you can deliver impact and value for your business and colleagues.



5 Corporate Training Trends

Years of rapid, ad hoc adoption of technology and pivoting approaches have offered lots of new insights. Some changes were reactive, but as things settled down it was clear that they weren't temporary. As we move into 2022 and beyond, L&D professionals are building on these changes and new trends are coming to the fore.

Here are our 5 corporate training trends we expect to see going to the next level in the coming year.

1. Microlearning goes from strength to strength

Over the years, the move from courses to resources has become increasingly popular. Bite-sized, easy to digest learning content can fit around schedules, so it's no wonder this approach was widespread during the pandemic.

In fact, our survey saw both **leaders and learners** calling out for **even shorter learning experiences**. Average learning session times are now just **8 minutes!**

25% of leaders highlighted microlearning as the approach that worked best in their organization.

But microlearning has more to offer than just being short. And that's why it continues to be a focus in 2022. Emerging skill gaps combined with new hybrid working created an increased focus on employees managing their own development. But self-directed learning is only effective with support. By providing a structure and shape to a self-guided journey, microlearning ensures it has an impact.

2. Blended learning gets reinvented

With face-to-face training largely impossible during the pandemic, different learning methods have taken hold. Mixing webinars with elearning has become the norm. But, as people return to face-to-face, new **hybrid ways of working** are taking shape.

30% of businesses are returning to face-to-face training, but offering learners a choice of alternatives.

Strict blended learning models don't suit the varied demands of the new learning landscape. This new workplace needs a modern blend that offers the flexibility that employees need. Look at all the formats available. Consider your online learning alternatives, like Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT) and webinars – as well as elearning.

3. Video empowers employees to learn from each other

Isolated workplace setups have made it harder to maintain social connections. Whether it's conference calls or webinars, video has been critical to employees' **continued collaboration** and **relationship building**.

41% of learning leaders are looking to push video learning in the coming year.

Video comes up time and time again as a focus for L&D teams. It's not a new medium, but it's often not used effectively. While recordings of live training sessions offered flexibility for people who needed to catch up later, the real power of video learning has not been harnessed. Apply the insights from day-to-day video use and explore what video can do for social learning. Whether it's sharing knowledge or telling stories, user generated videos don't just give your learners a voice, they encourage **self-directed** and **peer learning**.

4. AI transforms personalized learning experiences

With employees busier than ever, the drive to make learning effective and efficient continues. From elearning and articles to videos and blogs, there's lots of great content online. But with so much out there, finding the **right thing at the right time** can prove tricky.

Organizations want to optimize their content so that employees receive the information they need, when they need it most – on the job. Digital tools that leverage artificial intelligence (AI) can do just that by delivering adaptive learning. These tools create a personalized learning path through content. From responsive campaigns to nudge learning, the next step is translating this into employees' work experience targeted at the point of need.

15% of L&D teams are exploring how AI can help them personalize learning.

It's about using data to find out what works for different learners and adapting to meet these needs. So, even if you don't have access to AI, you can gather insights and use the tools available to you to create data personalized learning experiences.

5. Wellbeing becomes a priority

The rapid changes and the increased anxiety of the past years has meant many employees are struggling. The pressure is on to self-learn. Ad hoc on-the-job learning is more difficult. Zoom fatigue has set in.

3 learning experts are giving a new focus to wellbeing and mental health.

While L&D teams have been responding to the demand for shorter, sharper learning experiences, this alone won't support employees' wellbeing.

Learning resources, peer videos and interactive learning experiences are just some of the ways that L&D can help. With the right support, employees can develop the skills and strategies needed to better support their own wellbeing, as well as that of their colleagues, friends and family.

What is the modern learner looking for in 2022?

We surveyed more than **800 learners** across the **retail**, **finance**, **healthcare** and **pharma** industries to explore their changing experiences and preferences.



Speed and delivery

86% of training in large organizations is either all online or has an online element. Where and how are these employees completing all this online training?



60% of retail workers take training on the shop floor or in the staff room.



The most common (and preferred) device to take training on is a laptop. **57%** of retail employees take training at a desktop or till point, but would prefer to use a laptop or other device.



Mobile learning is the **preferred device** in the tech and manufacturing industries.

What learners get

60% of training courses are 30 mins or over.



What learners want

Learners would prefer training courses under 20 minutes.



Quality

Over 45% of training in large organizations is rated medium to low. So, how can this be improved?



People only take **7 seconds** before deciding whether to move on from learning content.



43% of learners want more video content.



50% of learners want more personalization.

What learners get

Boring, repetitive, time consuming.



What learners want

Quick, easy, interactive.



Industry Expert insights for the year ahead

We spoke to some L&D experts to hear their take on where the industry is going in 2022.

What rising trends or shifts do you think we'll see this year?

People centered learning

Over 30 years in Talent Development, David Perring has transformed organizations through people centered development practices. He believes this approach is going to be a key to preventing burn out in the coming year.

*"In 2022, we'll see an increase in digital learning fatigue. If organizations are going to combat this, they need more **value centered, human focused learning.**"*

David Perring – Director of Research, Fosway Group



Data

Kevin M. Yates uses data to investigate how learning activates performance and business outcomes. He wants to see more people following his lead in 2022.

*"I'm most excited about the kinds of data we can get in the digital workplace and how we **harness that data.**"*

Kevin M. Yates – 'L&D Detective'

Blended learning

Nick Shackleton-Jones is big on learner experiences. He sees a new approach to blended learning as the perfect way to give learners what they want and need.

"We're going to see a swing back towards in-person events, but the proportion of learning delivered digitally will remain far higher than pre-pandemic levels. We'll make much more considered use of in-person events, beginning to think of these as **designed experiences** rather than lectures."

Nick Shackleton-Jones – CEO, Shackleton Consulting



Social learning

Sam Taylor is passionate about developing successful learning cultures. As people continue to work from home, she's looking for new opportunities for collaborative learning.

"In 2022, I want to see how social can be incorporated more broadly into blended and digital design. Features like social polling really **bring people together** when they're remote."

Sam Taylor, Head of Learning and Development, Bank of London

Talent retention

Following 'The Great Resignation' of 2021, Patrick Bowl sees developing and retaining talent as the key to L&D success.

"People are looking for an investment in them from the company. **Learning and growth** are very high on the list."

Patrick Bowl – Director Learning and Development, Worldpay



worldpay
from FIS

Spaced repetition

Paul Westlake is passionate about making a difference. He sees spaced repetition as the key to seeing more lightbulb moments for learners in the next year.

*"In 2022 I want L&D teams to see spaced-repetition as a **critical element to training**, rather than a cool 'add-on'."*

Paul Westlake – Digital Director, PeopleUnboxed



Responsive campaigns

As a key L&D thought and habit shaker and maker, Lori Niles Hofmann makes up half NilesNolan. She wants to see more learning happening when people really need it through nudges and targeted campaigns.

*"**Nudge learning** has been around in various forms for years. But we've not maximized its potential."*

Lori Niles Hofmann – Learning Strategist, NilesNolan

Health and wellbeing

In 2020, Brandon Carson founded non-profit organization, L&D Cares, to support people who had experienced job disruption due to the pandemic. He believes the wellbeing of employees should be at the heart of L&D.

*"I'd like to see a sharper focus on employee health and wellness... I'm most excited about the opportunity to **positively impact the lives of our employees.**"*

Brandon Carson, Vice President, Learning and Leadership Partner at Walmart



What can you do now to ensure success in 2022?

Our experts didn't just highlight the learning methodology that they'd like to see more of in the year ahead. They were equally passionate about the practical steps that enable L&D teams to maximize their impact.

Whichever trends you explore in 2022, here are some practical steps that will set you up for success.

1. Influencing stakeholders

New year, new partnerships



*It all begins with being a **true business partner**. Once you have that relationship, a lot of things start to fall into place.*

Dave Barone – Consultant, Josh Bersin Academy

The new year is a chance to reset how the business views the learning function (and the way it sees itself). L&D shouldn't be a one-way street. Strong stakeholder relationships are key to developing successful learning. From collaborating on strategy with leaders to empowering managers to drive learning forward, make sure your business partners play a central part in your work.



*In 2022, I'd like L&D teams to recognize the role of the manager in embedding learning. It's **not solely the job of the training team** to develop people.*

Paul Westlake – Digital Director, PeopleUnboxed

4 steps to successfully influence stakeholders

1. Become a true business partner by asking yourself how stakeholders would like to work with you.

2. Communicate regularly with news, updates and benefits. Build in opportunities for feedback and have a two-way dialogue.

3. Share the load by inviting others to take ownership and accountability, with shared goals and performance measurement.

4. Simplify your processes and tools to make it as easy as possible to partner with you.



*It's about showing them the art of possible, **how easy it is to collaborate** and not work in silos.*

Jason Edwards – Global Digital Learning Partner, Kingfisher plc

2. Set a clear vision

Start the year working towards the same goal



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If we don't know where we're going, it really doesn't matter how we get there.

Patrick Bowl – Learning & Development Director, Worldpay

The last few years have seen businesses responding quickly to huge changes. But moving quickly can mean it's harder to move in the same direction. A clear vision helps people from across the organization to work towards the same goal.



*L&D is at an inflection point brought to us by the forces of the digital age and the pandemic. We're the **central driver of employee satisfaction and capability** in an intensely challenging time. It's incumbent that we rise to the occasion and lead our companies and people through these times.*

Brandon Carson – Vice President, Learning and Leadership Partner at Walmart

Whether you're pivoting your approach or scaling up digital learning development, a clear vision will inspire others to join you on your journey.

4 ways to set an effective vision

1. Make it easy for everyone to understand by keeping it short, but telling an engaging story.

2. Sell your vision by outlining the value you're going to bring and tailoring this to the person you're talking to.

3. Be prepared to pivot when things change but stay true to the essence of your vision.

4. Make it in collaboration with people from across the organization. Find out what they would like to see and feed this into your vision.



*You want to inspire people to be the best that they can be. But you want them to be **channeling their thinking in the right direction**.*

Guy Wilkins – Senior Digital Learning Manager, Clyde & Co

3. Lead with need

Don't chase after impact, proactively plan for it



The business is seeing an issue and thinking L&D can fix it. It's our job to look a little further.

Lori Niles Hofmann – Learning Strategist, NilesNolan

With fast paced change and skills gaps rapidly appearing, it's no wonder training demand has skyrocketed. Faced with lots of urgent requests, it can be easy to steam ahead. But without robust needs analysis you can't be sure that you're really solving the business problem.



The biggest challenge in learning and development is chasing after impact without proactively planning for it. More often than not, impact is an afterthought. Not knowing the intention proactively makes impact difficult, maybe even impossible to measure.

Kevin M. Yates – 'L&D Detective'

Needs analysis enables you to identify how the business must improve and the change that will deliver it. This understanding should influence everything you and your team do in 2022.

4 steps to lead with need

1. Talk to learners, early and often to get their input on everything from the training need to the method of completion

2. Do your research to find out what's really going on in your organization and advise on the best learning solution.

3. Connect the solution with the need so you can be clear on how it solves the business problem.

4. Question everything and dig deeper into what's really happening so you can be sure your learning solution is the right approach.



Let the needs analysis drive the content. Rather than the idea behind the content being loosely associated with the need.

Jason Baker – Digital Learning Specialist, Snowfish

4. Implement a clear process

Create a framework for quality at speed and scale



SGS

*It's about having a **consistent learner centric approach with clear outcomes**, so everyone can produce engaging content with diversified learning methodologies.*

Luz Hoyos Rossier – Global Head Talent Development at SGS

If, like many L&D teams, you've been struggling to keep pace with training demand, take another look at your process. Building in a consistent framework will enable you to grow quality and scale-up elearning production with less stress. Taking time to put tools and guidelines in place pays off by empowering everyone involved and producing quality results faster.

An effective process will embed data collection and review points so you can learn and adapt as you go.

4 insights into implementing an effective process

1. Cover the fundamentals as certain steps are key to the success of any project.

2. Get your team toolled up so they feel comfortable and able to create consistent, high-quality results.

3. Set your SMEs up for success by talking to them and finding out how best to harness their expertise.

4. Recognize that the process can flex to best suit the project and the people involved.



*Having control of our templates makes our job easy because we can basically plug and play... and **when we're working with SMEs and stakeholders there's a sense of comfort.***

Alex Barley – Senior nCino University Experience Designer, nCino

5. Measure what counts

Leverage data to ensure success in 2022



PARADOX
learning

*We use data to support decision-making. So, you want not just understanding, not just insights, but you want to act on it. **You want to do something about it.***

Stella Lee – Director at Paradox Learning

In these challenging times, impact feels more important than ever. Whether it's a nudge campaign on employee wellness or a blended programme on reskilling, only one thing really matters: how well it has achieved what it set out to do.



*I'm hoping to see **a deeper dive into leveraging data** to create 'one-size-fits-one' learning. Moving away from the omnipresent 'one-size-fits-all' factory model currently used by so many corporate learning functions.*

Brandon Carson – Vice President, Learning and Leadership
Partner at Walmart

By communicating your successes and what you've learnt, you can help everyone improve and demonstrate the value of L&D at your organization.

4 steps to make sure you're measuring what counts

1. Consider measurement from the start of the project so you can put the process in place to capture the relevant data.

2. Don't just measure, evaluate your success by exploring what your measurements really mean.

3. Look for data that helps your decisions so you're able to act on your findings.

4. Use your data powerfully by communicating it across the business and telling a compelling story.



*Where we can demonstrate the impact and share that with stakeholders, we can **drive momentum.***

Thomas Swallow, Learning Operations Senior Manager at Deloitte UK

Summary

The new year is about more than soon forgotten fads and resolutions. It's a chance to look back, re-evaluate and make the changes you need for success in the year ahead. L&D leaders and learners alike were certain that they wanted to see training that is quick, easy, engaging and – more than anything – relevant. Whether you're deploying microlearning, blended learning, videos, or data personalization as part of your L&D mix, it's clear that you need to keep it **people-centered** to make a real impact.

Of course, producing training that delivers results across global organizations isn't straightforward. In fact, we found that most learning leaders were facing the same challenges: **responding at speed while managing stakeholders and maintaining quality**. But creating effective learning solutions at an enterprise scale with less stress is possible. Whether it's key stakeholders, L&D team members or your learners, you need to put people at the center of everything you do.

From influencing stakeholders through to measuring results, four key factors will help you do this throughout your work:

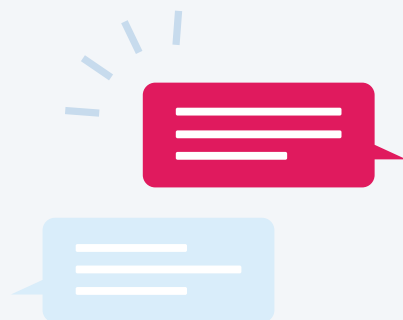
Flexibility

Choose tech, processes and methodologies that enable you to respond quickly to emerging skills gaps and easily scale up production as and when the business needs it. It's about reducing the time to produce and update solutions, but also enabling people to complete learning at their own pace and around their work – wherever and whenever.



Collaboration

Unleash the power of in-house learning by enabling everyone to get involved. Get stakeholders' input throughout the process. Empower SMEs to produce quality digital learning with ready-to-go mobile friendly templates based on microlearning principles. Encourage peer learning using video. Effective collaboration speeds up the process and allows the L&D team to focus on quality and consistency.



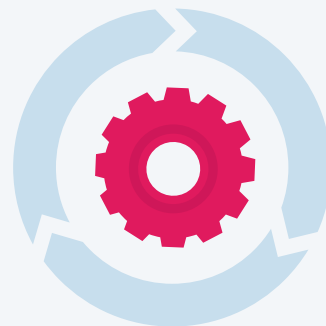
Personalization

Modern learners expect adaptive digital experiences. Provide a range of training experiences. Offer different routes through blended learning. Employ role selectors and diagnostics to tailor content. Use AI to target the right content at the right time. Creating more relevant learning experiences reduces training time, while delivering impact.



Continuous improvement

Every training solution is a learning opportunity for you and your team. Look at your tools, processes and approaches to understand where you could make things quicker and easier for everyone involved. Gather data and understand the impact of your solution. Pivot your approach if it isn't having the right effect. Tell the story of your successes so the business understands the value you create.



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